



California Wildfire Mitigation Program Board Meeting

Workshop Notes – Tuesday, May 20, 2025



Board Members Present

Abby Browning, Board Chair, Chief, Private Sector / Non-Governmental Organization Coordination, Cal OES

Frank Bigelow, Board Vice-Chair, Deputy Director, Community Wildfire Preparedness & Mitigation and Fire Engineering & Investigations, CAL FIRE

CWMP Staff Present

J. Lopez, Executive Director

Jordon Boyer, Staff Manager

Sarah Glenn, Program Coordinator

Kenneth Jacobs-DeLeon, Program Coordinator

Shawn Oberbruner, Program Coordinator

Cal OES Staff Present

Ron Miller, Branch Chief, Hazard Mitigation Assistance

Matthew Delgado, Staff Services Manager I, Hazard Mitigation Special Projects

Julie Leo, Associate Governmental Program Analyst, Hazard Mitigation Special Projects

Angelica Quezada, Associate Governmental Program Analyst, Hazard Mitigation Special Projects

Brandon Gresham, Associate Governmental Program Analyst, Hazard Mitigation Special Projects

CAL FIRE Staff Present

Heather McCulley, Deputy Chief of Wildfire Preparedness

Randy Northup, Battalion Chief

Justine Grafton, Associate Governmental Program Analyst, Home Hardening

Will Brewer, GIS Analyst, Home Hardening

Jillian Fisher, Staff Services Manager I

Carrie Lewis, Associate Governmental Program Analyst, OSFM Support Services

Danh Dao, Staff Services Analyst, OSFM Support Services

Madison Nicholas, Staff Services Analyst, OSFM Support Services

I. CALL TO ORDER & WELCOME – 10:00 AM

- a. The workshop was called to order at 10:00 AM and welcome remarks provided by Board Chair A. Browning.

II. ROLL CALL/QUORUM ESTABLISHED

- a. Roll call, no quorum established as two Board Members were not present.
 - A. Browning – Present
 - F. Bigelow – Present
 - D. Berlant – Absent
 - R. Troy – Absent

III. CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS

- a. Review and approval of Meeting Minutes from March 19, 2025. No public comments received.

Motion: The motion was postponed to the next scheduled meeting as no quorum was established.

Action: Postponed to June 17, 2025, meeting.

IV. INFORMAL UPDATES

- a. Receive CWMP Pilot Program update (Information item)
 - Cal OES Hazard Mitigation Assistance (HMA) Special Projects Unit (SPU) Update
 - Matthew Delgado, Staff Services Manager I, Hazard Mitigation Special Projects
 - i. Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) Expenditures
 - 1. Update on Total Project Costs per Sub-Applicant
 - ii. CWMP Engage Portal Enhancements
 - 1. Ongoing enhancements
 - a. Site specific Cost Capture
 - b. Site Specific Retrofits
 - c. Site Closeout
 - i. Board Vice-Chair Bigelow suggested the addition of a cover sheet with CAL FIRE, Cal OES, and CWMP Branding for more formality
 - ii. Also, suggested a final report with before and after photos at closeout
- iii. CWMP Framework
 - 1. Framework Documents
 - a. Primary aim is to support the development of Home Hardening Projects across the state
 - b. Intended to be used at any scale and agnostic of funding
 - c. Aligned with PJ0512 deliverables for Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)

2. Core Document
 - a. Questions
 - b. Concerns
 - c. Feedback
 - i. Board Vice-Chair Bigelow would like to add an overview of the Local Match process for communities providing local funds in addition to the CWMP and federal funds
- CAL FIRE Update – Battalion Chief Randy Northup
 - i. CAL FIRE completed the Home Ignition Zone/Defensible Space Assessor Training. Two new assessors for the San Diego County Fire Protection District, one new assessor and one new construction manager for North Coast Opportunities (NCO) in Lake County, completed the training.
 - ii. Developing the Wildland Urban Interface Fire Safety Building Standards Compliance training.
 - iii. CAL FIRE has continued to support the California Wildfire Mitigation Program with technical assistance with home hardening recommended retrofits.
 - iv. CWMP Assessment Application v2.0 was released, and the desktop tool and training were provided to all communities.
- California Wildfire Mitigation Program (CWMP) Pilot Program Update –
 - i. San Diego County/San Diego County Fire Protection District (SDCFPD) – Program Coordinator, Sarah Glenn
 1. FEMA Environmental Historical Preservation (EHP) Update -
 - a. Submitted four Phase II reports for “Issue Properties”, Pending FEMA Review
 - b. Five additional Phase II reports submitted this month
 - c. Pending Record of Environmental Consideration (REC) for the additional “No-Issue” properties in the expanded area
 2. Site-Work Updates –
 - a. Three Homes Complete
 - b. Four additional contracts being awarded, construction to start early June
 - c. Three Scopes of Work (SOW) in development, will go out for solicitation
 - d. Anticipating having 12 to 15 homes complete by August
 3. Staffing –
 - a. Two additional assessors have been hired and are in training
 - b. Going out for solicitation for more contractors this month
 - ii. Siskiyou County/Shasta Valley Resource Conservation District (SVRCD) – Sarah Glenn
 1. Site Work Updates – Batch One – Eight Homes
 - a. All site work is complete
 2. Site Work Updates – Batch Two – Seven Homes

- a. All site work nearly complete
- 3. Site Work Updates – Batch Three – 11 Homes
 - a. Contracts awarded, Tri-party Agreements going out for signature
- 4. Portal Training
 - a. Conducted training on Portal updates, SVRCD will be updating sites with retrofit and cost info, dashboard will reflect updates
- iii. Shasta County/Shasta County Fire Safe Council (SCFSC) –Program Coordinator Shawn Oberbruner.
 - 1. Site Work
 - a. First home has been Hardened on April 25, 2025
 - b. Nine Defensible space projects completed
 - i. Six in Whitmore, Three in Oak Run
 - c. Contractor Walkthroughs for 8 homes took place May 15/16, 2025
 - d. Five No-Issue SOW in progress
 - e. 15 Issue SOW being updated and prepared for SME Review
 - 2. Staff
 - a. RCD hired an employee to focus on and assist construction manager with SOW
 - 3. Project Area
 - a. CWMP, SPU and CAL FIRE attended a Project area visit on April 29, 2025
 - b. CWMP and CAL FIRE will be attending the SCFSC Board meeting on May 22, 2025
- iv. Lake County/North Coast Opportunities (NCO) – Shawn Oberbruner
 - 1. Site Work
 - a. 24 Homes have been completed
 - b. Two homes in active construction
 - c. Two more to start in the next few weeks
 - d. Two to start the bid process this week
 - 2. Staff
 - a. Looking to double staffing and home production in 2025
 - b. Hired a Full-time Assessor
 - c. Hired a Construction Coordinator
 - d. Hired an Administrative Employee
 - 3. Project Area
 - a. Attended a site visit March 20, 2025, organized by NCO.
 - b. Representatives from Sonoma and Napa counties toured several completed homes and were able to ask questions about the program
- v. Tuolumne County – Shawn Oberbruner
 - 1. EHP Phase I Update
 - a. Biological Assessment (BA) has been completed
 - 2. Staff

- a. In the process of hiring two staff members
 - b. One additional analyst
 - c. One Project Manager
 - 3. Project Area
 - a. CAL FIRE attended the Home and Garden Show on April 12, 2025
 - i. Showcased Material and engaged with the public
 - b. CWMP attended a Project area tour on April 14, 2025
- vi. El Dorado County – Shawn Oberbruner
 - 1. EHP Phase I
 - a. Phase I Deliverables have been submitted to FEMA
 - b. 74 No Issue Properties
- vii. Program Documents
 - 1. Continuing to work on drafts of the Master Agreement, Right of Entry and Tri-Party Agreement
- viii. Staff
 - 1. They are actively working with five qualified construction management firms for cost estimates to make a final decision on one firm.
- ix. Community Outreach
 - 1. Attended a Placerville Fire Safe Council community event and were able to hand out informational flyers and talk to residents about the Weber Creek Project.
 - 2. They are scheduling a stakeholder meeting in June to identify long term, landscape wide wildfire resilience across the entire Weber Creek project area. CWMP and CAL FIRE will be in attendance.
- The Home Assessment Process - Sarah Glenn
 - i. Travel to Homesite
 - 1. Average travel time 60 to 90 minutes
 - 2. Group several assessments per trip
 - ii. Homeowner Meeting
 - 1. Introductions
 - 2. Build relationship with property owner
 - iii. Explain assessment process
 - 1. Answer homeowner questions
 - iv. Conduct Assessment
 - 1. Average One to Two hours per site
 - 2. Answer up to 375 questions
 - 3. Take 30 to 50 photos
 - 4. Take detailed notes
 - 5. Document special circumstances
 - v. Homeowner Closing Meeting
 - 1. Explain overview of findings, discuss potential issues
 - 2. Explain next steps, timelines, set expectations
 - 3. Obtain homeowners commitment to the program
 - vi. Return to office

1. Average travel time 60 to 90 minutes
- vii. Finalize Assessment
 1. Review of questions, responses, and notes
 2. Upload additional supporting photos
- viii. Conduct Quality Assurance (QA) Process
 1. Initial 10 to 20 Assessments are QA'd with CWMP and CAL FIRE Staff
 2. Approximately one hour to review each Assessment
 3. After Initial 10 to 20, QA using internal process
 4. Resubmission of revised/edited assessment after QA
 5. Generate updated report
- ix. Complete Report Includes:
 1. Responses to all questions
 2. All Photos taken
 3. All recommended retrofits suggested based on responses
 4. The report is used to develop the Scope of Work
- Accountability and Oversight - CWMP and CAL FIRE - Kenneth Jacobs-DeLeon
 - i. Scheduled meetings
 1. Monthly check-in meetings with each of the six communities individually
 2. Monthly All Community meetings
 3. Attended by CWMP, CAL FIRE and Cal OES SPU
 - ii. Track project statistics
 1. Number of trained assessors and pre-qualified contractors
 2. Number of sites in progress and their status
 3. Number of sites out for bid
 4. Number of SOW in development
 - iii. Address any questions between contractors, assessors and homeowners
 1. Application process
 2. Contractor licensing requirements
 3. Training certifications
 - iv. Encourage and assist in collaboration between the communities
 1. Share and address any issues that arise to avoid the making same mistakes (Accepting applications too early, material shortages, cost variances)
 2. Coordinate with Cal OES Hazard Mitigation regarding FEMA Program and EHP related issues
 3. Assist the construction managers with SOW, material options and retrofit recommendations
 - v. Assist communities with homeowner outreach and public presentations
 1. Town hall meetings
 2. Community events
 3. Share the CWMP outreach material toolkit
 - vi. Assist with use of reporting platforms i.e. Salesforce and Smartsheet
 1. Individual sites

2. Entire Project area
3. Site specific Cost Tracking
- Accountability and Oversight – Cal OES HMA SPU – Matthew Delgado
 - i. Grant Management
 1. Review and approve Quarterly Progress Reports
 2. Support subrecipients with reimbursement requests
 3. Assist subrecipients to request time extensions, modifications, etc.
 4. Submit deliverables and Request for Information (RFI) responses to FEMA
 5. Manage project closeout
 - ii. Subrecipient Cost Tracking
 1. Review reported expenditures, invoices, activity logs, time and attendance, mileage, Subrecipient Management Costs (SRMC) etc.
 2. Track and log monthly expenses
 3. Upload supporting documentation in system of record (Engage)
- b. Executive Director Update – J. Lopez
 - Monthly CWMP Report
 - i. Updates to the Financial Dashboard
 - ii. Board Chair Browning suggested the addition of cost averages to the Status Report, CWMP will look into reporting on cost per square foot for a standard home
 - Support to Local and State Wildfire Home Hardening Efforts
 - i. Continue assistance to wildfire home hardening projects: Napa County, Sonoma County, California Fire Safe Council
 - ii. Assistance to new wildfire home hardening projects grant applications: City of Yreka
 - General Liability Insurance Acquisition
 - i. Pending request for a copy of the CWMP Budget from OES
 - Meeting Minutes
 - i. Reminder that the official meeting minutes are posted to the CWMP website, they are reviewed and approved before posting and are the only minutes that should be referenced
 - Wildfire Prepared Home
 - i. CWMP is working with IBHS for their pilot program, IBHS will take the annual report to see if homes qualify, the communities will help provide property information into IBHS's Fuego Program.
 - ii. We are planning that the first 150 properties in the program will have the fees waived for the designation for the first year.
 - Firewise USA
 - i. We did a comparison between Firewise and the communities we are working in. Not all of our communities are Firewise, we want to assist them to become Firewise with the work that is being done. We also want to set them up to maintain the work being done and maintain the Firewise status
 - ii. There are currently 1,212 Firewise communities in California and 26

- more in the portal
 - iii. We will also work with the communities to become Fire Safe Councils as well.
- Governor's Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation (LCI)
 - i. They have a program to utilize wood for projects other than firewood. The CWMP is aligning with this program as well. Support the State and The Governor's goals
- California Natural Resources Agency (CNRA) AirTable
- CWMP Website [California Wildfire Mitigation Program](#)
 - i. Highly recommend reviewing the website, we are making improvements every day
- Federal Legislation Update
 - i. Disaster Mitigation and Tax Parity Act 2025_
 - 1. Text - S.336 - 119th Congress (2025-2026): A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to exclude from gross income amounts received from State-based catastrophe loss mitigation programs. | Congress.gov | Library of Congress
 - ii. H.R.7849 - Disaster Resiliency and Coverage Act of 2024
 - 1. Text - H.R.7849 - 118th Congress (2023-2024): Disaster Resiliency and Coverage Act of 2024 | Congress.gov | Library of Congress
 - 2. The legislation includes four main provisions.
 - a. 1st creates a grant program, administered through State governments, through which individual households in designated disaster-prone regions (with certain limitations) are eligible for up to \$10,000 for specified disaster resiliency work on their homes.
 - b. 2nd and 3rd provisions (Sections 3 and 4 of the legislation) mirror existing legislation (H.R. 4070) stipulating that payments from State-run disaster resiliency programs and payments from various federal emergency agricultural programs are not considered income for federal tax purposes.
 - c. 4th section provides a 30% tax credit for qualified disaster risk mitigation activities conducted by individuals or businesses. The credit is meant to complement the grant program by providing meaningful assistance to larger property owners for whom mitigation activity costs would far exceed \$10,000
- State Legislation Update
 - i. SB616 Community Hardening Commission: wildfire mitigation program
 - 1. Require the joint powers authority to revise the wildfire mitigation program in accordance with prescribed community hardening standards and guidelines developed pursuant to the bill's provisions, as specified.
 - 2. Establish the Community Hardening Commission as an independent unit within the Department of Insurance, to be composed of specified members, including, among others, the

Insurance Commissioner and the State Fire Marshal or Secretary of the Natural Resources Agency, or their designee.

ii. AB1 Residential property insurance: wildfire risk

1. Require the Department of Insurance, on or before January 1, 2030, and every 5 years thereafter, to consider whether or not to update its regulations to include additional building hardening measures for property-level mitigation efforts and communitywide wildfire mitigation programs. As part of this consideration, the bill would require the department to consult with specified agencies to identify additional building hardening measures to consider, as well as to develop and implement a public participation process during the evaluation

iii. AB1143 State Fire Marshal: home hardening certification program

1. This bill would require, on or before January 1, 2027, the Office of the State Fire Marshal to develop a home hardening certification program that identifies the best appropriate combination of those listed products and construction assemblies, and other home hardening techniques, including defensible space, to substantially reduce the risk of loss during a fire. The bill would require the Office of the State Fire Marshal, for the purpose of developing the home hardening certification program, to convene and facilitate a workgroup, as specified. The bill would authorize the Office of the State Fire Marshal to expend funds from the Building Standards Administration Special Revolving Fund, upon an appropriation by the Legislature, for the purposes of developing the home hardening certification program and convening and facilitating the workgroup.

iv. SB662 Wildfires: defensible space: education efforts

1. Existing law requires the Director of Forestry and Fire Protection, until January 1, 2026, to establish a statewide program to allow qualifying entities to support and augment the Department of Forestry and Fire Protection in its defensible space and home hardening assessment and education efforts and requires the director to establish a common reporting platform that allows defensible space and home hardening assessment data, collected by qualifying entities, to be reported to the department, among other things.
2. Existing law requires the department, until January 1, 2026, to develop and implement a training program to train individuals to support and augment the department in its defensible and home hardening assessment and public education efforts.
3. This bill would extend those programs to January 1, 2031.

v. AB1457 Wildfires: training programs: defensible space: inspections

1. Existing law requires the department, until January 1, 2026, to develop and implement a training program for individuals to support and augment the department in its defensible and

home hardening assessment and public education efforts. Existing law requires the training program to do specified things.

2. This bill would require the training program to include training consistent with the "Home Ignition Zone/Defensible Space Inspector" course plan, established by the State Fire Marshal, to ensure that individuals are trained to conduct home ignition zone inspections. The bill would also extend the operative date of both programs described above indefinitely.

vi. SB499 Fire prevention: home hardening: defensible space: data usage

1. Existing law requires the Director of Forestry and Fire Protection, until January 1, 2026, to establish a statewide program to allow qualified entities to support and augment the Department of Forestry and Fire Protection in its defensible space and home hardening assessment and education efforts. Existing law requires the director to establish a common reporting platform that allows defensible space and home hardening assessment data, collected by the qualified entities, to be reported to the department and requires the director to establish any necessary quality control measure to ensure that the assessment data is accurate and reliable. Existing law authorizes the director to use the assessment data, as specified.
2. This bill would instead require the director to use that assessment data, as specified.

vii. SB269 Personal income taxes: Fire Safe Home Tax Credits Act

1. This bill would require the department to create a standardized accreditation framework for counties to accredit local governments, fire safe councils, and homeowners for following wildfire prevention practices, as provided. The bill would require the department to maintain a publicly available database with specified information, including the counties that have opted into the accreditation framework

viii. AB888 California Safe Homes grant program

1. This bill would establish the California Safe Homes grant program to be developed by the department to reduce local and statewide wildfire losses, among other things. The bill would require the department to prioritize specified needs when awarding grant funds, and would require eligible program applicants, which would include individuals, cities, counties, and special districts, to meet specified criteria. The bill would establish the Sustainable Insurance Account within the Insurance Fund, which would be continuously appropriated to fund the program. The bill would require 40% of the amount of the gross premiums tax collected from property and casualty insurance above the amount collected from those insurers in 2023 to be deposited into the account. By depositing general fund moneys into a continuously appropriated account, the bill

would make an appropriation. The bill would require the department to collect specified information about the performance of the program and, on or before January 1, 2027, and every 2 years thereafter, to publish a performance report that would be posted to its internet website and submitted to the Legislature

ix. SB514 Wildfire prevention: accreditation

1. This bill would require a qualified taxpayer to reserve a credit for qualified costs relating to qualified home hardening or qualified vegetation management to be eligible for the above-described credits and provide all necessary information for this purpose, as specified.

a. This bill also would include additional information required for any bill authorizing a new income tax credit and would require the Legislative Analyst's Office to prepare a written report regarding the credits, as provided.

b. This bill would take effect immediately as a tax levy.

x. SB90 Safe Drinking Water, Wildfire Prevention, Drought Preparedness, and Clean Air Bond Act of 2024: grants: improvements to public evacuation routes: mobile rigid water storage: electrical generators.

1. This bill would include in the list of eligible projects grants to the above-mentioned entities for improvements to public evacuation routes in very high and high fire hazard severity zones, mobile rigid dip tanks, as defined, to support firefighting efforts, prepositioned mobile rigid water storage, as defined, and improvements to the response and effectiveness of fire engines and helicopters. The bill would also include grants, in coordination with the Public Utilities Commission, to local agencies, state agencies, special districts, joint powers authorities, tribes, and nonprofit organizations for backup electrical generators for water reservoirs.

xi. AB441 Wildfire prevention: Office of Wildfire Technology Research and Development: wildfire mitigation program.

1. (2) Existing law, upon appropriation of the Legislature, requires the Office of Emergency Services to enter into a joint powers agreement with the Department of Forestry and Fire Protection to develop and administer a comprehensive wildfire mitigation program. Existing law requires the department to delegate its duties and responsibilities for this program to the Office of the State Fire Marshal. Existing law requires the State Fire Marshal, in consultation with other officials, to identify measures eligible for financial assistance under the wildfire mitigation program that are both cost effective and provide for appropriate site or structure fire risk reduction, as specified. Existing law requires the joint powers authority to develop eligibility criteria for property owners, community organizations, and local governments who may receive financial assistance under the wildfire mitigation

program. Existing law requires the joint powers authority to submit a report to the Legislature regarding the implementation of the wildfire mitigation financial assistance program that includes, among other things, an evaluation of the cost-effectiveness of the wildfire mitigation program compared to other structure hardening, defensible space, vegetation management, and fuel reduction incentive programs and an evaluation of the overall wildfire risk reduction achieved statewide through awards of financial assistance under the wildfire mitigation program. Existing law repeals these provisions on July 1, 2029.

2. This bill would delete the July 1, 2029, repeal date described above, thereby extending these provisions indefinitely.
3. The bill was previously suspended, there is a hearing this week and we should know something soon

xii. CWMP Pilot Program Next Steps

1. CWMP Funding Budget Act 2022 (AB-179) Funding \$13 Million
 - a. ~\$6 Million Committed to Siskiyou County for HMGP Grant ~\$24 million
 - b. ~\$7 Million Committed to Riverside County for HMGP Grant ~\$26 million
 - c. Both Projects submitted to FEMA on 11/21/2024 utilizing funding opportunity DR-4699-CA (California Severe Winter Storms, Straight-line Winds, Flooding, Landslides, and Mudslides) FEMA Review will take ~7-12 months.
2. SB946, Personal Income Tax Law: Corporation Tax Law: exclusions: wildfire mitigation payments (2023-2024)
3. Proposition 4
 - a. Grants under the Home Hardening Program to retrofit, harden, or create defensible space for homes at high risk of wildfire in order to protect California communities
4. SECTION 1. Section 91510 of the Public Resources Code is amended to read
 - a. 91510. (a) Of the funds made available by Section 91500, \$135,000,000 shall be available, upon appropriation by the Legislature, to the Office of Emergency Services for a wildfire mitigation grant program. The Office of Emergency Services shall coordinate with the Department of Forestry and Fire Protection in administering these moneys. The grant program shall assist local and state agencies to leverage additional funds, including matching grants from federal agencies. Funds may be used to provide loans, rebates, direct assistance, and matching funds for projects that prevent wildfires, increase resilience, maintain existing wildfire risk reduction projects, reduce the risk of wildfires to communities, or increase home or community hardening.

Projects shall benefit disadvantaged communities, severely disadvantaged communities, or vulnerable populations.

- c. Discussion Regarding Updates and Revisions to CWMP Business Plan – J. Lopez
 - The Business plan should be reviewed annually
 - i. Pending comments and feedback, to date there has been one response with comments
- d. Discussion and Action regarding CWMP Joint Exercise of Powers Agreement – J. Lopez
 - i. The amended JPA agreement and resolution have been sent to CAL FIRE and Cal OES legal teams for review. The recommendation was for them to accept the amended dates and sign as is to extend dates, then provide additional feedback for any subsequent changes.
 - 1. CAL FIRE has agreed to sign the Agreement and is going through their processes and will be sent to Cal OES.
 - 2. Cal OES council has stated they will be reaching out soon to set a meeting.

V. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

- a. A. Browning, Budget Hearings are ongoing, Board Member Berlant and the State Hazard Mitigation Officer are attending the meetings and testifying on programs, including the CWMP. It is fire season, already receiving notifications regarding fires, as well as still working on recovery in Los Angeles, moving ahead at amazing speed. Also, wants to acknowledge the Law Enforcement responding to the terrorist attack over the weekend.
- b. F. Bigelow provided year to date numbers regarding fires for 2025, 1,525 fires so far, increase of 233 since last Monday. Compared to same time 2024, 1,130 fires. For five-year average we are a little under. Acres burned so far in 2025 is 66,618. All the more importance why we are here, hopefully a better chance for survivability of homes and property.

VI. PUBLIC COMMENT

- a. No public comments received.

VII. WORKSHOP ADJOURNMENT – 11:34 AM

The Next CWMP meeting is scheduled for June 17, 2025, at 10:00 a.m., 715 P Street, 2nd Floor Conference Room 2-221, Sacramento, CA 95814