

THE MARIN WILDFIRE PREVENTION AUTHORITY  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING  
12:00 p.m. Thursday, January 21, 2021  
Via teleconference due to Coronavirus (COVID-19)  
MINUTES

1. Call to Order- President Goines called the meeting to order at 12:01 p.m.

2. Roll Call and Introductions

Directors – In Attendance: Steve Burdo (San Anselmo), Barbara Coler (Fairfax), Kathryn Donohue (Inverness), Tom Finn (Sleepy Hollow Fire), Bruce Goines (Novato Fire), Cathryn Hilliard (Southern Marin Fire), Paul Jeschke (Muir Beach), David Kimball (Bollinas Fire District), Sashi McEntee (Mill Valley), Julie McMillan (Ross), Gabe Paulson (Larkspur), Rachel Kertz (San Rafael), Bob Ravasio (Corte Madera), Dennis Rodoni (County of Marin), Mark White (Stinson Beach)

Directors Absent: Barry Evergettis (Kentfield Fire), Bill Shea (Marinwood)

Staff in Attendance: Executive Officer Mark Brown

3. Agenda Adjustments

There were no adjustments.

4. Open Time for Public Expression

There were no comments.

5. Executive Officer's Report

Executive Officer Brown reported on the following: 1) Recent wildfires in the State of California; 2) Executive Committee meeting; 3) Upcoming Finance Committee meeting; 4) Upcoming Operations (OPS) Committee meeting; 5) Upcoming Advisory/Technical Committee meeting; 6) Citizens' Oversight Committee meetings; 7) Recruitment for Planning and Program Manager; 8) Marin Wildfire Authority layer on MarinMaps; 9) Implementation of Granicus; 10) MWPA Website upgrades

He answered questions from the Board.

6. Consent Calendar

a. Acknowledge December 1, 2020 MWPA Citizens' Oversight Committee minutes

b. Acknowledge December 3, 2020 MWPA Executive Committee minutes

c. Acknowledge December 3, 2020 MWPA Operations Committee minutes

d. Acknowledge December 8, 2020 MWPA Finance Committee minutes

e. Acknowledge December 9, 2020 Advisory/Technical Committee minutes

f. Approve December 17, 2020 MWPA Board of Directors Meeting minutes

g. Acknowledge December 22, 2020 Advisory/Technical Committee minutes

- h. Acknowledge December 29, 2020 MWPA Citizens' Oversight Committee minutes
- i. Acknowledge January 7, 2021 MWPA Executive Committee minutes
- j. Approve Annual Contract for Zonehaven Evacuation Management Platform
- k. Acknowledge appointments to the Executive, Finance and Advisory/Technical Committees
- l. Adopt MWPA Board Resolution No. 21-01 Electing to be Subject to the California Uniform Public Construction Cost Accounting Act
- m. Introduce MWPA Board Ordinance No. 01 Establishing Informal Bidding Procedures Under the California Uniform Public Construction Cost Accounting Act
- n. Adopt the Housing and Urban Development household low income limits from 2020 for the Low-Income Senior Tax Exemption
- o. Review FIRESafe Marin Report
- p. Review MWPA Budget Report

President Goines opened the meeting to public comments.

There were no public comments.

President Goines closed the meeting to public comments.

M/s, Hilliard/Kimball, to approve the Consent Calendar as submitted.

Ayes: All

Abstain: Kertz

(through a roll call vote)

## 7. MWPA Board of Directors Remote Retreat

Executive Officer Brown introduced the facilitators: Ms. Jean Bonander, Ms. Gina Bartlett, and Mr. Ekow Edzie.

President Goines opened the meeting to public comments.

Mr. Stephen Keese, stated the evacuation route issues pertaining to traffic flow problems and "bottlenecks" have been largely solve with MWPA putting pressure on the Transportation Authority of Marin (TAM) and local public works departments. Local Planning Commissions also need to get on board with respect to future development and home hardening techniques.

Ms. Belle Cole, OFA Marin, discussed the need to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The Ecologically Sound Practices (ESP) partnership has this as a priority.

Mr. Larry Minikes agreed with the comment made by Director Finn- "Let's do a few things really well".

Ms. Carolyn Longstreth, representing FERN, stated the organization submitted a metrics letter that identifies the environmental goals that should be accomplished over the next ten years.

President Goines closed the meeting to public comments.

8. Informational Items

There were no comments.

9. Board Members Request for Future Agenda Items

Director Hilliard asked if a follow-up of this meeting would be on the next Board agenda.

President Goines stated the Executive Committee suggested scheduling a Brown Act session for all committee members.

10. Adjournment- President Goines adjourned the meeting at 2:04 p.m. The next meeting would be held on Thursday, February 18, 2021.

Respectfully submitted,

Toni DeFrancis,  
Recording Secretary

# BOARD RETREAT SUMMARY

Work Session / Retreat Held: January 21, 2021

## INTRODUCTION

The Marin County Wildfire Authority Board held its first strategic planning work session / retreat as part of its Jan. 21<sup>st</sup> regular meeting. The goals of the session were to begin developing core values, vision, and mission for the Authority and to get to know each other better. This summary provides a high level overview of discussion with the purpose of informing future strategic planning sessions.

Board members introduced one another after holding a pre-meeting virtual coffee as a tool to get to know one another better.

Several experts presented on wildfire science to deepen understanding of the best available science and how it can be integrated into the Authority's work.

Board members then participated in two separate breakout sessions: the first focused on creating core values and guiding principles for the Authority and the second, on defining the Authority's mission, vision, and legacy.

The public attend the retreat and participated in breakout group discussions, sharing summary notes attached in the appendix. The public also shared public comments during a comment period or via email.

Overall, the session was deemed an inaugural success. Staff will rely upon the conversations held during the session to develop straw proposals for a vision, mission, and guiding principles, which the Board will discuss in future public board sessions. The purpose of this report is to summarize the major themes captured around three central questions:

1. Core Values: *What are the principles / values that we hold as an organization will guide all of our work?*
2. Achievements in 8 Years: *Looking eight years out, as we look back on our work and our legacy, what would we have achieved if we were amazing successful in our work?*
3. Achievements in 2 Years: *Given where we are headed, what should be our focus over the next two years?*

## CORE VALUES / GUIDING PRINCIPLES

*What are the principles / values that we hold as an organization will guide all of our work?*

### PREVENTION IS OUR FOCUS

Board members discuss the importance of staying mission-driven: staying focused on prevention and carrying forward implementation wisely and urgently. This involves being effective at protecting life and property loss from wildfire. Members recognize that wildfires cannot be avoided completely, but saving lives and structures is paramount, and preparation should reduce fear and panic. Within this rubric, Board members would like to help shift community culture from fear and ignorance to embracing prevention.

### BOLD ACTION AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Board members talk about the need to act urgently with a bias toward action. Committees advance their work to the best of their ability, and all avoid micromanagement. Rather, members commit to doing and learning from mistakes.

### TRANSPARENCY AND FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY

Board members believe that communicating with all constituents, stakeholders, and partners with a high degree of transparency is central. Board members hope to collect data and demonstrate achievements and accomplishments to report to communities that the Authority serves.

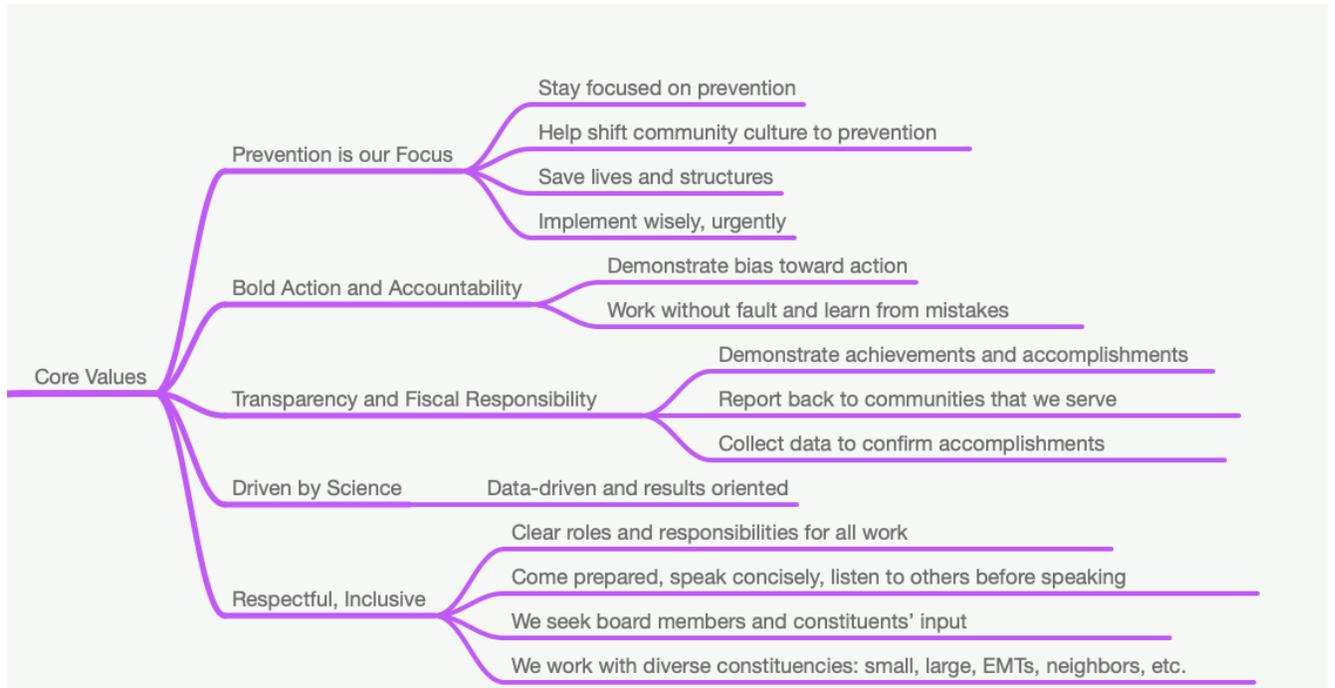
### DRIVEN BY SCIENCE

Board members would like to base the Authority's work on state-of-the-art science. Members envision relying on science to understand how fires burn and how fires *should* burn to prevent loss of property and life. The Authority is data-driven and results oriented.

### RESPECTFUL, INCLUSIVE

Board members would like to foster an environment of mutual respect generally and when managing differences. To support this, members anticipate articulating roles and responsibilities for all work, including committees, arriving at meetings prepared, speaking concisely, and listening to others before speaking. Members envision the board as a place to learn from scientists, professionals, the community, and each other.

In addition, Board members commit to working with diverse members of the community: small and large entities, EMTs, seniors, neighbors, disadvantaged communities, etc. Board members are inclusive - seeking stakeholder and other Board members' input on its endeavors.



## HOPED-FOR ACHIEVEMENTS IN 8 YEARS

*Looking eight years out, as we look back on our work and our legacy, what would we have achieved if we were amazing successful in our work?*

### FIRE-ADAPTED COMMUNITIES

Fire-adapted communities are prepared for and hardened against wildfire. More concretely, Marin County experiences no loss of life during wildfire. Citizens are ready to interact with fire.

The public understands its role in prevention, such that a critical mass (70%) of citizens are engaged and feel accountable for their contributions to prevention. Wildfire outreach specialists have knocked on every door. Residents are knowledgeable and active.

Board members envision a culture change occurring in which residents understand and appreciate what they should and should not have around their house that affects fire.

A MEMBER OF THE PUBLIC WILL “KNOW AS MUCH ABOUT WILDFIRE AS YOU DO ABOUT COVID-19 RIGHT NOW.”

### INDICATORS

Board members highlight indicators that will demonstrate achievements, including:

- CWPP areas of concern are at maintenance level

- Fuel loads
- Operational wildfire alert and notification system
- # of houses are WUI-compliant
- Evacuation routes
- Inventory of roads needing additional fire safety egress work
- Every homeowner would have an evaluation and prescription into a fire-adapted property

### **PARTNERSHIPS**

Board members envision that MWPA is a model statewide for multi-agency operation and coordination. The Authority has highly developed operations and evacuation planning and drills with partner agencies. This includes effective cross jurisdictional cooperation with clear rules and functions. The Authority functions as a task force building on the strengths of its partners.

### **WORK PLAN**

The work plan is key to success. The work plan establishes goals and projects and creates tangible results and visible rewards. Members would like the work plan to be aspirational, yet achievable.

### **FUNDING**

Board members foresee a future in which the Authority can leverage federal and state funds to multiply its efforts. The \$20 million anticipated funding for the Authority can be used as seed money. The Authority can be an active voice in shaping funding and policy that expands access to funds. The Authority generates funds to support prevention work in disadvantaged communities and with individual homeowners who lack funds to be fire-adapted.

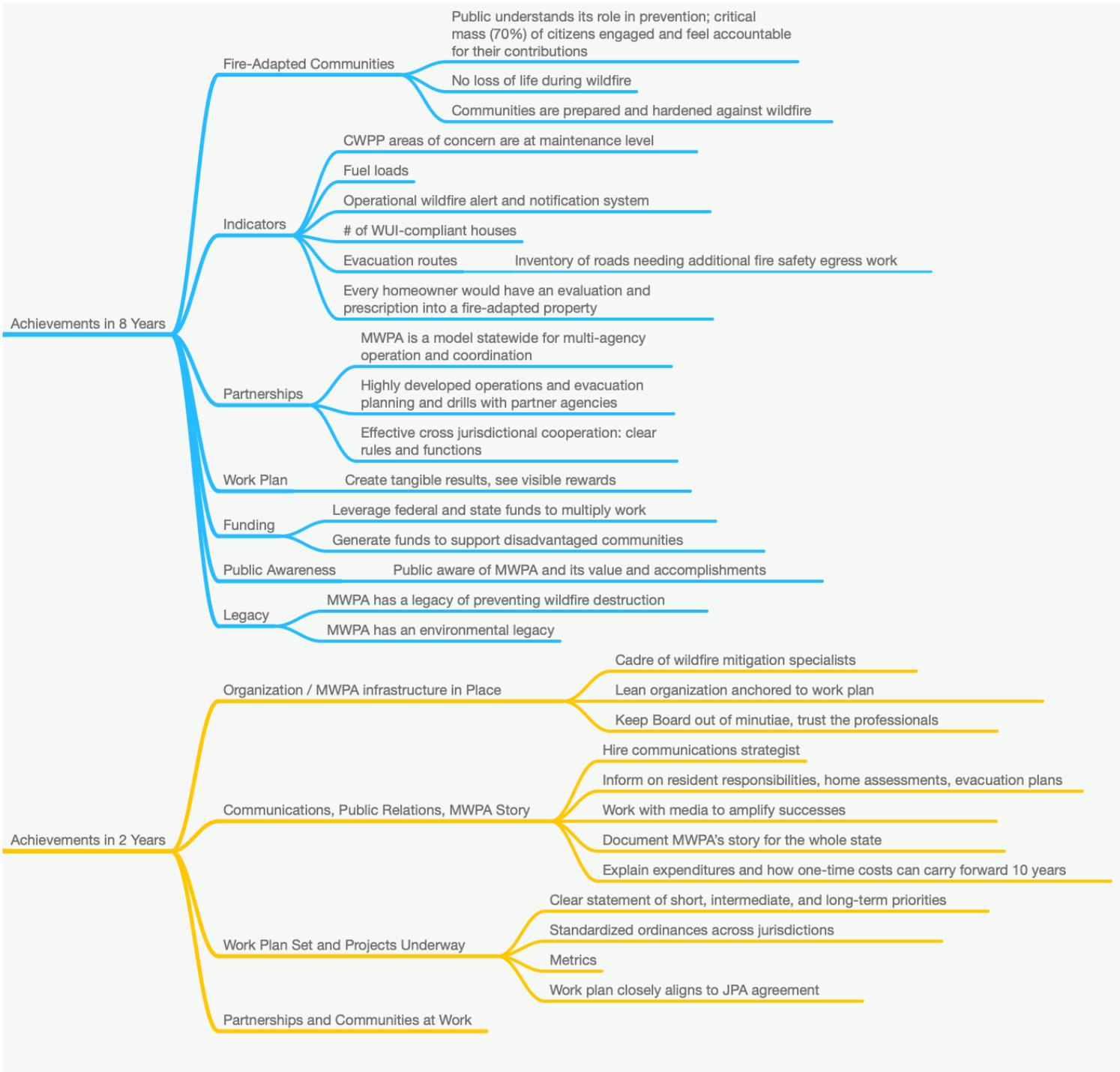
### **PUBLIC AWARENESS OF THE AUTHORITY**

Board members view public awareness as key to success: to raise awareness about wildfire prevention, to promote individual responsibility and action, and to demonstrate the impact of the Authority's funding and work. Board members commit to designing and delivering messages of value and accomplishments.

### **LEGACY**

Board members hope to establish a legacy in which prevention is synonymous with the Authority. And, the work of the Authority yields a future with reduced chances of major wildfires, and in the event of wildfire, damage is significantly reduced.

The Authority is positioned to deal with climate change for adaptation and mitigation and has an opportunity to establish an environmental legacy through its work.



## HOPED-FOR ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2 YEARS

*Given where we are headed, what should be our focus over the next two years?*

### ORGANIZATION / MWPA INFRASTRUCTURE IN PLACE

Over the next two years, board members would like to establish the Authority as a lean organization, anchored to a work plan, with infrastructure in place to carry out its

work. Members talk about maintaining strong fiscal standards, limiting layers of staff and bureaucracy, and staying focused on the work plan. Members remind that board members' roles are to stay focuses on policy, not minutiae.

A board member envisions a cadre of wildfire mitigation specialists up and running within two years.

### COMMUNICATIONS, PUBLIC RELATIONS, MWPA STORY

Board members believe that establishing a communications and outreach strategy and employing someone(s) to carry that forward are essential to near- and long-term success. A communications strategy includes information about necessary homeowner fire-prevention strategies, evacuation plans, home fire-assessment opportunities, and Authority responsibilities and accomplishments. Members envision working with the media on immediate successes. Also, explaining how early expenditures carry the Authority forward over the ten years is also important.

### WORK PLAN SET AND PROJECTS UNDERWAY

In two years, board members envision a set work plan with a clear statement of short, intermediate, and long-term priorities. One thought is to immediately proceed with projects that already have environmental clearance while the Authority conducts the necessary study to comply with environmental regulations. One specific suggestion is to explore some standardized ordinances across jurisdictions. Another is to closely align the work plan to the Joint Powers Authority agreement. Establishing metrics for the work plan is also a must, and example indicators are listed under eight-year achievements.

### PARTNERSHIPS AND COMMUNITIES AT WORK

Board members talk about laying the foundation for partnerships immediately by advancing inter-agency cooperation on most endeavors. Enforcement is one area that the Authority may need to explore over the next few years. Evacuation plans are another area ripe for agency coordination.

Board members hope to see communities at work on wildfire prevention within two years, anticipating that almost every member of the community will welcome home inspectors. Board members envision engaging the community by signing up for local alerts, organizing around evacuation, advancing chipper days, and having board members conduct outreach.

## NEXT STEPS

Board Chair Bruce Goines closed the work session. Chair Goines expressed hope that this would be the first of several conversations when board members would be able to spend time thinking together about the Authority's vision, mission, and core values, eventually setting priorities and developing a strategic plan and work plan. All efforts are geared toward commitment and fulfillment of realizing the safety of Marin County citizens.

## MWPA Board Retreat – Notes from the Public

### 1. Why be involved?

Pat R-- service on grand jury, visited some fire sites, helped form a group, Citizens for Wildfire Protection

Bill Davis-- lived in Santa Rosa, friends lost everything, Marin poorly prepared, wants to contribute. Concerned about pyrophytic landscape plants like pyracantha, juniper.

Carolyn-- Attended a meeting of environmental activists early on, before Measure C was approved, sent some environmental goals to BOS in hopes they'd be added to JPA language.

Dave-- concerned about environment impacts of veg management projects. MWPA has a lot of money to use. Marin has exceptional vegetation and plant diversity.

### 2. Values

Fire Safety

Environmental protection

Science

Lives and Structures

Motivations:

- Save lives
- Efficiency
- Transparency
- Focus on wildfire prevention
  - As opposed to focus on environmental protection
- Create a model for others

Vision for great success

- Evacuation route choke points fixed
- Culture changed for homeowner behavior (like seat belts)
- Native species thriving
- Only small fires even in the worst fire season
- Prescribed burns, goats, broom pulls, etc. are regular community events
- Planning Commissions uniformly requiring high level of hardening for all new construction and remodels

Looking back on our achievements in eight years and assuming that we will be in the midst of renewing the tax we hope that:

MWPA will have been successful in preventing or being clearly prepared for wildfire.

Each community covered by MWPA will be able to see signs of this success.

Information about this success will have been regularly communicated over the years to citizens/voters of Marin.

A wildfire authority that is successful in preventing wildfires while at the same time sustaining the environment, and reducing carbon emissions

Given this goal, the focus in the next two years should be:

To be fully established and have efficient operations.

To have a communications plan in place.

To have priorities set.

To have CEQA issues resolved.

To make progress with evacuation planning.



January 5, 2020

Dear MWPA Board of Directors and Member Agencies

On behalf of FERN and our member organizations, thank you for the opportunity to submit this position paper for your consideration in the Strategic Planning process. We understand you will be identifying goals and quantifiable objectives for the Strategic Plan for MWPA.

### **Recommended Strategic Plan Goal**

## **Maintaining ecosystem health while reducing the frequency and destructiveness of wildfires**

We recommend one Strategic Plan Goal: Maintain ecosystem health while reducing the frequency and destructiveness of wildfires. We also recommend the following objectives to ensure meeting that goal. We appreciate your thoughtful consideration of these objectives. They are supported by both the CalFire Vegetation Treatment Plan (VTP) Best Management Practices (BMPs) and, where they deviate, by recommendations from local natural resource experts.

### **Regulatory Context**

As projects are funded and implemented, we believe that MWPA should be the lead agency under the California Environmental Quality Act for projects for which they provide the majority of funding.

The MWPA and any other agency or organization receiving funds from Measure C must fully comply with the California Environmental Quality Act and other environmental laws, such as the state and federal Endangered Species Acts, Clean Water Act, etc. We believe compliance with these laws, which can be complicated and difficult, should be the responsibility of MWPA in projects for which they provide the majority of funding. This will reduce the burden on member agencies and will avoid potential legal errors as well as unnecessary and wasteful repetition of expensive analyses and compliance documents.

Mitigation must be provided for impacts to wetland and riparian communities, oak woodlands, and other sensitive native habitats as well as to special-status plant and wildlife species. Type conversion from native to non-native vegetation communities must be avoided

### **Recommended Objectives Including Quantitative Metrics**

1. Habitat assessments occur on all projects before and after site treatment to avoid significant adverse impacts to native ecosystems. Field assessments are conducted for potentially impacted sensitive wildlife species and sites especially important to reproduction of native species, special-status plants, native plant communities, non-native invasive plants, sensitive wetland and riparian areas, and other habitats as identified in the CalFire VTP.<sup>1</sup>
2. Projects are designed to avoid conversion from a predominantly native habitat type. Areas treated retain habitat function, which is defined here as the arrangement and capability of habitat features to provide refuge, food source, and reproduction habitat to native plants and animals. Some modification of habitat characteristics may occur provided habitat function is maintained (i.e., the location, essential habitat features, and native species supported are not substantially changed). To the extent that habitat function modification cannot be avoided, appropriate mitigation is provided.<sup>2</sup>
3. Projects do not result in a net increase of relative non-native vegetation cover on treatment sites and preferably shall result in a decline in the percentage of relative non-native cover. Best Management Practices (BMPs) and other protective measures are identified in the CalFire VTP. Ongoing maintenance of fuel breaks and other vegetation management projects are fully funded for at least 20 years so that measures can be taken to remediate the re-invasion of the site by non-native vegetation.
4. Vegetation reduction projects that use goats, cattle, or other herbivores are not implemented in plant communities of greater than 10% relative herbaceous cover by native plants or where populations of sensitive plant species (e.g., formally listed or rank 1-3)<sup>3</sup> could be adversely impacted.<sup>4</sup> Herbivores are not used in areas with over 50 percent slope. Herbivores are only used when non-target native vegetation is not susceptible to damage (e.g., when it is

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<sup>1</sup> From CalFire VTP.

<sup>2</sup> From CalFire VTP.

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.cnps.org/rare-plants/cnps-rare-plant-ranks>

<sup>4</sup> <https://wildlife.ca.gov/Data/VegCAMP/Natural-Communities> “a stand is considered native if 10% or more relative cover consists of native taxa that are evenly distributed in the stand and present at any time during growing season.”

dormant or has completed its reproductive cycle for the year). BMPs are identified in the CalFire VTP.

5. Projects are evaluated for erosion and stormwater pollution potential. Preventative measures are taken, adequate mitigations identified, and funding for such measures assured prior to implementation. If project treatments result in bare soil areas, they are treated prior to seasonal rains to prevent loss of soil and sediment discharge. Wetlands and riparian areas are protected from habitat damage and sedimentation. Impacts to native fish and other native wildlife species are avoided.

6. Projects are scheduled to avoid the active nesting season of potentially present native bird species within or adjacent to the treatment site. The exact active nesting season is defined by a qualified biologist. In general, the active nesting season generally extends from March 1<sup>st</sup> through August 31 although many common and uncommon species nest from mid-January through mid-late September. Raptor nesting season extends from January 15 to September 15; nesting season for herons, egrets, and other colonial-nesting species extends from January 15 through late September. If active nesting season avoidance is not feasible due to immediate hazard to human safety, a qualified biologist conducts a survey for nesting birds within one week of planned work. The project shall then either be postponed when feasible or be designed to minimize impacts on nesting birds. Additional requirements may be imposed for bird species which are special-status pursuant to state or federal law. Buffers for wildlife, including nesting sites and burrows, should be identified in the field by a qualified biologist.

7. If habitat for special-status species is present, surveys are conducted by qualified professional biologists. The habitats are mapped and mitigations for any unavoidable significant project impacts are identified and funded prior to project implementation. "No disturbance" buffers sufficient to avoid impacts will be clearly marked, generally with a minimum 50-foot buffer for special-status or sensitive plant communities. Wildlife buffer requirements will be identified in the field by a wildlife biologist.

8. No new fuel breaks are created in natural communities with rarity ranks of S1<sup>5</sup> (critically imperiled) and S2 (imperiled). No new fuel breaks remove more than 5 percent of the native vegetation relative cover from a stand of natural community vegetation in sensitive natural communities with a rarity rank of S3 (vulnerable) or in oak woodlands. In forest and woodland sensitive natural communities with a rarity rank of S3, and in oak woodlands, only shaded fuel breaks are installed, and they are not installed in more than 20 percent of the stand of sensitive natural community or oak woodland vegetation (i.e., if the sensitive natural community covers 100 acres, no more than 20 acres are converted to create the fuel break).<sup>6</sup>

Terri Thomas  
Jerry Meral  
For FERN

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<sup>5</sup> <https://wildlife.ca.gov/Data/VegCAMP/Natural-Communities>. Fern can provide a list of Marin plant communities with rarity rankings

<sup>6</sup> CalFire VTP.