



Utility Wildfire Mitigation Symposium

March 25, 2025

CA Natural Resource Agency Auditorium
715 P Street, Sacramento, CA



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Agenda

The California Office of Energy Infrastructure Safety, in coordination with the California Public Utilities Commission, is hosting a meeting to discuss California’s approach to utility wildfire mitigation and ongoing efforts to address persistent challenges. Other state commissioners and experts are invited to share their experiences and discuss lessons learned and challenges across the US. Speakers will reflect on the progress made and solutions in accelerating utility wildfire mitigation efforts amid extreme climate-driven weather conditions and discuss what more needs to be done. Key discussion topics will include insurance, power reliability, securitization, and grid modernization—and how affordability must be managed across all needs. California’s whole-state approach will be showcased.

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| 7:30a – 8:30a | Registration, Coffee and Light Breakfast Provided |
| 8:30a – 8:35a | Welcome and Opening Remarks , Caroline Thomas Jacobs, Director, California Office of Energy Infrastructure Safety |
| 8:35a – 9:00a | Keynote - Secretary Wade Crowfoot, California Natural Resources Agency |
| 9:00a – 10:00a | California’s Innovative Model for Proactive Wildfire Investment (AB 1054)
Facilitator: Caroline Thomas Jacobs, Director, California Energy Safety
Panelists:
Ana Matosantos, Public Policy Institute of California, (former) Cabinet Secretary Governor Newsom
Chris Holden, (former) California Assemblymember (author AB 1054)
Marybel Batjer, Wildfire Safety Advisory Board and (former) President, California Public Utilities Commission |
| 10:00a – 10:20a | Break, Coffee Provided |

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- 10:20a – 11:10a** **Emerging Approaches to Address Escalating Costs**
Facilitator: Commissioner Ann Rendahl, Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission

Panelists:

Tony Marino, Deputy Director, Electrical Infrastructure Directorate, California Energy Safety

Tom Welsh, CEO, California Earthquake Authority

Forest Kaser, Deputy Executive Director, Safety & Enforcement Division, California Public Utilities Commission
- 11:10a – 12:00p** **Disaster Resilience Across the West**
Facilitator: Caroline Thomas Jacobs, Director, California Energy Safety

Panelists:

Letha Tawney, Commissioner, Oregon Public Utilities Commission

Leo Asuncion, Commissioner, Hawaii Public Utilities Commission

Jon Axtman, Director of Wildfire Mitigation & T&D Engineering, Idaho Power
- 12:00p – 1:00p** **Box Lunches Provided**
- 1:00p – 1:50p** **California Led Wildfire Mitigation and Forest Resilience Initiatives**
Facilitator: Kimberly Carr, Senior Policy Advisor, Energy Safety

Panelists:

John Morgan, Staff Chief, CAL FIRE Wildfire Risk Reduction

Lisa Lien-Mager, Deputy Director of Forest & Wildfire Resilience, California Natural Resources Agency

Nick Wobbrock, Co-Founder, Blue Forest
- 1:50p – 2:40p** **Wildfire Investments & the Modern Grid**
Facilitator: Darcie Houck, Commissioner, California Public Utilities Commission

Panelists:

Larry Bekkedahl, Senior Vice President of Advanced Energy, Portland General Electric

Curt Mansfield, Senior Vice President of Power Delivery, PacifiCorp

Sumeet Singh, COO, Pacific Gas & Electric

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- 2:40p – 3:00p** **BREAK, Coffee/Sodas Provided**
- 3:00p – 3:50p** **Climate and Wildfire Risk Modeling**
Facilitator: Mark Wenzel, Program and Project Supervisor, California Wildfire Safety Advisory Board
- Panelists:
- Sandeep Aujla, Director, Fire Science and Climate Adaptation, San Diego Gas & Electric
- Jessica Block, Chair, California Wildfire Safety Advisory Board and UC San Diego FireLab
- Dave Sapsis, Research Manager, CALFIRE Fire & Resource Assessment Program
- 3:50p - 4:50p** **Wildfire Risk, Insurance, and Other Sources of Funding**
Facilitator: Letha Tawney, Commissioner, Oregon Public Utilities Commission
- Panelists:
- Michael Wara, Director, Climate & Energy Policy Program, Woods Institute for Environment, Stanford University
- Deborah Halberstadt, Special Advisor on Biodiversity and Inclusive Insurance, California Department of Insurance
- Nancy Watkins, Principal, Milliman Inc.
- 4:50p – 5:00p** **Closing Remarks**, Darcie Houck, Commissioner, California Public Utilities Commission

March 26th 8:00 – 2:00 PM PG&E Site Visit near Camino:

Participants will meet at the CRNA building and be driven to 3 locations to see 1) system hardening, including covered conductors and a powerline underground project, 2) vegetation management with heavy equipment, and 3) system inspections with live drones and monitor for participants to view the data. Three groups will rotate through three project sites.

Boxed lunches and transportation will be provided. These are active construction sites; long pants/sleeves and closed-toe shoes are required. PPE, including vests, hard hats, and eyewear, will be provided.