Wildfire Safety Advisory Board Meeting Minutes - DRAFT

October 3, 2023

Meeting Information

The Wildfire Safety Advisory Board (WSAB or the Board) was held in-person and via Zoom on Tuesday, October 3, 2023.

Video Webcast Recording

Video webcast recording: Wildfire Safety Advisory Board Quarterly Meeting - 10/3/2023 - YouTube

Actions Taken or Discussion Points

The relevant documents discussed or approved during the meeting are posted on the Board's webpage at https://energysafety.ca.gov/who-we-are/wildfire-safety-advisory-board/.

Board Member Attendance

The online meeting was led by Chair Jessica Block. Also in attendance were Board Members Diane Fellman, John Mader, Tim Haines, and Ralph Armstrong. Board Member Alexandra Syphard was in attendance online. Vice Chair Chris Porter was absent due to illness.

Agenda	Action Taken/Discussion Points
1. Public Comment	No public comments were received.
2. June 13, 2023 Board Meeting Minutes	A motion was made by Member Fellman to accept the June 13, 2023 Board Meeting Minutes, seconded by Member Haines. Votes: 6 – Ayes 0 – Nays 1-Abstention.
3. Electric Safety Policy Division, Office of Energy Infrastructure Safety Update	Colin Lang, Acting Program and Project Supervisor, provided updates on the following: a) 2023-2025 Wildfire Mitigation Plan submittals – status and next steps. b) Development of new guidelines for the 2025 WMP updates to be published this Fall. c) Energy Safety has held three scoping meetings regarding utility vegetation management best practices for wildfire safety, community vulnerability in wildfire mitigation planning, and climate change modeling as it relates to wildfire risk. They look forward to continued engagement on these issues with the Board. d) The Risk Modeling Working Group plans to meet October 11 to cover the topic, "Standardized Wildfire Risk Type Classifications and in situational Wildfire Risk Assessment." e) Other areas: 2023 safety culture assessment reports schedule, executive compensation, and review of existing safety requirements for the purpose of developing regulatory updates to mitigate climate change impacts to utility-caused catastrophic wildfires.
4. Board Discussion on the topics of Fire Threat Regions, Utility Vegetation Management, and Above-Grade Distribution Systems	Member Mader introduced the topic of techniques being developed for above grade distribution systems (AGDS). After significant discussion and public comment, a motion was made by Member Mader and seconded by Member Fellman to direct staff to organize a workshop on the topic. Votes: 6 – Ayes 0 – Nays.

		Next, Chair Block reviewed the current regulations and exemplary industry practices for vegetation management, including fire climate zones, and discussed a goal of putting forward a proposal for the next Board meeting.
6.	Guest Presentation on the activities of the Climate and Wildfire Institute	Caroline Godkin, Executive Director, Climate and Wildfire Institute presented information that included the incorporation of indigenous knowledge and Western science coming together, needed communication regarding forest thinning, and their partnership with TCSI (Moore Foundation), and the question of how to create use for biomass fuels.
7.	Guest Presentation on the latest research in Utility Wildfire Mitigation	Michael Wara, JD, PhD, Director, Climate and Energy Program, Stanford University, presented information regarding the latest research in utility wildfire mitigation and quantifying the benefit of good fire, policy needs related to wildfire in California such as integrated wildfire mitigation planning and understanding the impacts of smoke.
8.	Meeting Adjourned	After verifying there were no further public comments, a motion to adjourn was made by Member Mader and seconded by Member Armstrong. The motion passed unanimously.