

COUNTY OF SAN MATEO
DON HORSLEY
SUPERVISOR, 3RD DISTRICT

County Government Center
400 County Center, 1st Floor
Redwood City, CA 94063
650-363-4569
dhorsley@smcgov.org

June 14th, 2021
Barbara Kossy, President of the Board
San Mateo Resource Conservation District
80 Stone Pine Road, #100
Half Moon Bay, CA 94019

Re: Forest Health and Fire Resilience Public Works Plan

Dear Ms. Kossy,

I am writing to express my support of the Resource Conservation District's (RCD) proposed Forest Health and Fire Resilience Public Works Program (PWP). This PWP was designed in collaboration with staff from the California Coastal Commission (CCC), San Mateo County Planning and Building Department, CalFire, and California State Parks. As such, this PWP provides a planning framework to review and authorize individual vegetation management projects in San Mateo County over the next ten years using principles, strategies, and best management practices that align fire prevention planning with coastal resource protection.

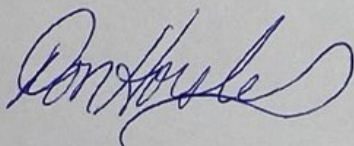
Like many areas of the state, forest, woodland, and grassland landscapes across the Santa Cruz Mountains are undergoing significant change. Altered fire regimes and increased fuel loads are driving larger and more catastrophic wildfires. The 2020 CZU Lightning Complex fires are a stark example of the level of risk, wildfire severity, and impact to our human and biological communities in this landscape. The CZU fires exhibited extreme fire behavior; burning 86,509 acres in San Mateo and Santa Cruz Counties and destroying 1490 buildings. Initial estimates suggest that over 50% of the impacted area burned at high fire severities. Many forested stands that were topographically exposed to the extreme fire behavior experienced significant tree mortality and habitat losses that will take decades to recover.

In the wake of the 2020 CZU fires, partners across the Santa Cruz Mountains are redoubling their efforts to design, permit, and implement critical, high-priority vegetation treatment activities that will reduce future risk of catastrophic, severe intensity fires and create a mosaic of climate and fire resilient native ecosystems. Due to the unique confluence of biological diversity, historic development patterns, water supply infrastructure, and the array of economic activity associated with farming, tourism, and forestry, our Coastal Zone is a critical area for implementing vegetation management projects that result in improved forest health and fire resilience.

We need to increase the pace and scale of implementing projects that protect our environment and our communities.

I support this PWP and ask that the San Mateo RCD Board approve it at their public hearing.

Sincerely,



Don Horsley, San Mateo County District 3 Supervisor





June 16, 2021

Barbara Kossy, President of the Board

San Mateo Resource Conservation District

80 Stone Pine Road, Suite 100

Half Moon Bay, California 94019

Re: Forest Health and Fire Resilience Public Works Plan (PWP)

Dear Ms. Kossy,

I am writing on behalf of PMAC - Pescadero Municipal Advisory Council in support of the RCD's proposed Forest Health and Fire Resilience Public Works Program (PWP). PWP has been designed in collaboration with staff from the California Coastal Commission (CCC), San Mateo County Planning & Building Department, CalFire, and California State Parks. PWPs are meant to provide a single document that establishes a framework for comprehensive planning, reviewing, and permitting. This then allows a suite of related activities that would otherwise trigger the need for individual Coastal Development Permits (CDPs) to instead be analyzed as an integrated and coordinated system, thus expediting the permitting process and saving money through use of a comprehensive permit vehicle. This PWP has also been developed to function as a companion to CalFire's statewide Vegetation Treatment Program (CalVTP) and its associated Programmatic Environmental Impact Report (PEIR). In addition to the CalVTP, the collaborators developed the Coastal Vegetation Treatment Standards (Coastal VTS) to provide additional guidance and clarity for projects to be implemented within the Coastal Zone and within and/or in proximity to Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Areas (ESHAs). As such, this PWP provides a planning framework to review and authorize individual vegetation management projects in San Mateo County over the next ten years using principles, strategies, and best management practices that align fire prevention planning with coastal resource protection.

Like many areas of the state, forest, woodland, and grassland landscapes across the Santa Cruz Mountains are undergoing significant change. The climate here is becoming warmer and drier, endemic species are at risk, invasive species are on the move, and sudden oak death has taken an immeasurable toll on regional ecosystems and overall forest health. At the same time, drier site-adapted conifer species are displacing hardwoods and other sensitive plant species, reducing biodiversity and affecting the suitability of these habitats for rare and special-status wildlife. Altered fire regimes and increased fuel loads are driving larger and more catastrophic wildfires. The result has been damaging changes to ecosystems that require environmentally sensitive landscape-level treatments to redirect the path of both changing climates and ecological conditions impacting the Santa Cruz Mountains and surrounding communities. The 2020 CZU Lightning Complex Fire is a stark example of the level of risk, wildfire severity, and impacts to our human

and biological communities in this landscape. The CZU burned 86,509 acres in San Mateo and Santa Cruz Counties, destroyed 1490 buildings, and exhibited extreme fire behavior. Initial estimates suggest that over 50% of the impacted area burned at high fire severities. Many forested stands that were topographically exposed to the extreme fire behavior experienced significant tree mortality and habitat losses that will take decades to recover.

In the wake of the 2020 CZU fire, partners across the Santa Cruz Mountains are redoubling their efforts to design, permit, and implement critical, high-priority vegetation treatment activities that will reduce future risk of catastrophic, severe intensity fires and create a mosaic of climate and fire resilient native ecosystems. Due to the unique confluence of biological diversity, historic development patterns, water supply infrastructure, and the array of economic activity associated with farming, tourism, and forestry, our Coastal Zone is a critical area for implementing vegetation management projects that result in improved forest health and fire resilience.

We need to increase the pace and scale of implementing projects that protect our environment and our communities. PMAC is always trying to improve the safety and well-being of our very special communities and we believe approving this is an important step in the right direction.

We strongly support this PWP and urge the San Mateo RCD Board and the Coastal Commission to approve it at their respective public hearings.

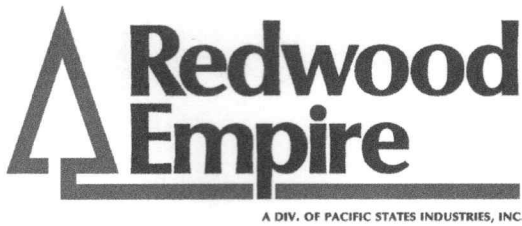
Thank you for your consideration of this important effort. Please feel free to contact me if you have further questions.

Sincerely,



Casey Dunn, Chair
Pescadero Municipal Advisory Council
cdunn@pescaderocouncil.org
www.pescaderocouncil.org

David LoCoco, Vice Chair - District 4 Loma Mar
Nic Erridge, District 1 Pescadero
Rob Skinner, Corresponding Secretary - District 1 Pescadero
Carolyn Shade, District 1 Pescadero
Heather Gibbons, Treasurer - District 1 Pescadero
Monica Ventrice, Secretary - District 4 Loma Mar
Kassi Talbot, District 1 Pescadero



1395 41st Avenue, Suite D, Capitola, CA 95010
(831) 464-8788 • FAX (831) 464-8780

June 16, 2021

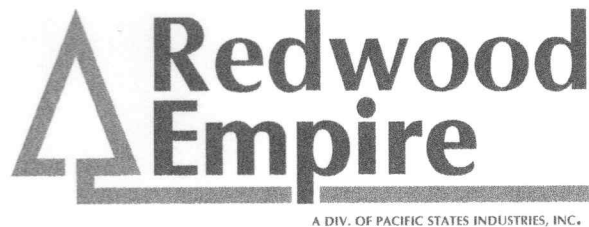
Barbara Kossy, President of the Board
San Mateo Resource Conservation District
80 Stone Pine Road, Suite 100
Half Moon Bay, California 94019

Re: Forest Health and Fire Resilience Public Works Plan (PWP)

Dear Ms. Kossy,

Even prior to the 2020 CZU Lighting Complex fire, landowners across the Santa Cruz Mountains were dramatically increasing their efforts to design, permit, and implement critical, high-priority vegetation treatment activities to reduce the risk of catastrophic, severe intensity fires and create a mosaic of climate and fire resilient native ecosystems. The catastrophic nature of the CZU fire has tragically reinforced the dire necessity of such work. Due to the unique confluence of biological diversity, historic development patterns, water supply infrastructure, and the array of economic activity associated with farming, tourism, and forestry, our Coastal Zone is a critical area for implementing vegetation management projects that result in improved forest health and fire resilience. Redwood Empire Sawmills would like to express our support of the RCD's proposed Forest Health and Fire Resilience Public Works Program (PWP).

Like much of California, the forest landscapes of the Santa Cruz Mountains are undergoing significant change. The climate here is becoming warmer and drier, endemic species are at risk, invasive species are on the move, and sudden oak death has taken an immeasurable toll on regional ecosystems and overall forest health. At the same time, drier site-adapted conifer species are displacing hardwoods and other sensitive plant species, reducing biodiversity and affecting the suitability of these habitats for rare and special-status wildlife. Altered fire regimes and increased fuel loads are driving larger and more catastrophic wildfires. The result has been damaging changes to ecosystems that require environmentally sensitive landscape-level treatments to redirect the path of both changing climates and ecological conditions impacting the Santa Cruz Mountains and surrounding communities. The 2020 CZU Lighting Complex Fire is a stark example of the level of risk, wildfire severity, and impacts to our human and biological communities in this landscape. The CZU burned 86,509 acres in San Mateo and Santa Cruz Counties, destroyed 1490 buildings, and exhibited extreme fire behavior. Initial estimates suggest that over 50% of the impacted area burned at high fire severities. Many forested stands that were topographically exposed to the extreme fire behavior experienced significant tree mortality and habitat losses that will take decades to recover. Our managed timberlands sustained devastating damaged that will take decade to recover.



A DIV. OF PACIFIC STATES INDUSTRIES, INC.

SANTA CRUZ FORESTRY
1395 41st Avenue, Suite D, Capitola, CA 95010
(831) 464-8788 • FAX (831) 464-8780


The PWP has been designed in collaboration with staff from the California Coastal Commission (CCC), San Mateo County Planning & Building Department, CalFire, and California State Parks. PWPs are meant to provide a single document that establishes a framework for comprehensive planning, reviewing, and permitting. This then allows a suite of related activities that would otherwise trigger the need for individual Coastal Development Permits (CDPs) to instead be analyzed as an integrated and coordinated system, thus expediting the permitting process and saving money through use of a comprehensive permit vehicle. This PWP has also been developed to function as a companion to CalFire's statewide Vegetation Treatment Program (CalVTP) and its associated Programmatic Environmental Impact Report (PEIR). In addition to the CalVTP, the collaborators developed the Coastal Vegetation Treatment Standards (Coastal VTS) to provide additional guidance and clarity for projects to be implemented within the Coastal Zone and within and/or in proximity to Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Areas (ESHAs). As such, this PWP provides a planning framework to review and authorize individual vegetation management projects in San Mateo County over the next ten years using principles, strategies, and best management practices that align fire prevention planning with coastal resource protection.

Across the region we need to increase the pace and scale of implementing projects that protect our environment and our communities. We have learned through CZU Fire that the efforts of individual landowners are rendered insignificant by severe fire events. Addressing fuels and infrastructure on the watershed and landscape level is the only feasible approach to reducing the impacts from future fires. The timber industry can not survive in our region if we can not protect our timber resources. We will need the cooperation from our neighbors and agencies to keep our forests healthy and thriving.

Redwood Empire Sawmills strongly supports this Forest Health and Fire Resilience Public Works Program (PWP) and urge the San Mateo RCD Board and the Coastal Commission to approve it at their respective public hearings.

Thank you for your consideration of this important effort. Please feel free to contact me if you have further questions.

Sincerely,



Michael J. Duffy
Redwood Empire Sawmills



June 15, 2021

**Girl Scouts of
Northern California
800-447-4475**

Greater Bay Area

1650 Harbor Bay Parkway
Alameda, CA 94502
510-562-8470

1310 S. Bascom Avenue
San Jose, CA 95128
408-287-4170

GirlScoutsNorCal.org

Barbara Kossy, President of the Board
San Mateo Resource Conservation District
80 Stone Pine Road, #100
Half Moon Bay, California 94019

Re: Forest Health and Fire Resilience Public Works Plan (PWP)

Dear Ms. Kossy,

I am writing on behalf of Girl Scouts of Northern California in support of the RCD's proposed Forest Health and Fire Resilience Public Works Program (PWP). We understand that the PWP is meant to provide a single document that establishes a framework for comprehensive planning, reviewing, and permitting. This then allows a suite of related activities that would otherwise trigger the need for individual Coastal Development Permits (CDPs) to instead be analyzed as an integrated and coordinated system, thus expediting the permitting process and saving money through use of a comprehensive permit vehicle. As such, this PWP provides a planning framework to review and authorize individual vegetation management projects in San Mateo County over the next ten years using principles, strategies, and best management practices that align fire prevention planning with coastal resource protection.

Like many areas of the state, forest, woodland, and grassland landscapes across the Santa Cruz Mountains are undergoing significant change. The climate here is becoming warmer and drier, endemic species are at risk, invasive species are on the move, and sudden oak death has taken an immeasurable toll on regional ecosystems and overall forest health. Altered fire regimes and increased fuel loads are driving larger and more catastrophic wildfires. The result has been damaging changes to ecosystems that require environmentally sensitive landscape-level treatments to redirect the path of both changing climates and ecological conditions impacting the Santa Cruz Mountains and surrounding communities. The 2020 CZU Lighting Complex Fire is a stark example of the level of risk, wildfire severity, and impacts to our human and biological communities in this landscape. Many forested stands that were topographically exposed to the extreme fire behavior experienced significant tree mortality and habitat losses that will take decades to recover. Our own Camp Skylark Ranch was in a severe burn area and sustained major damage to buildings, infrastructure and the surrounding forest.

In the wake of the 2020 CZU fire, partners across the Santa Cruz Mountains are redoubling their efforts to design, permit, and implement critical, high-priority vegetation treatment activities that will reduce future risk of catastrophic, severe intensity fires and create a mosaic of climate and fire resilient native ecosystems. Due to the unique confluence of biological diversity, historic development patterns, water supply infrastructure, and the array of economic activity associated with farming, tourism, and forestry, our Coastal Zone is a critical area for implementing vegetation management projects that result in improved forest health and fire resilience.

We own three camps in the Santa Cruz Mountains and are very lucky to be working with Cal Fire and the RCDs of San Mateo and Santa Cruz Counties on collaborative grants to improve the health of the forests that make our camp properties so unique. Our camps provide an environment for girls to connect with the natural world, learn new skills, and develop their potential. We want our campers to be comfortable on our sites so they can enjoy the beauty surrounding them. To that end, we need to ensure that it is a safe place for them to explore and experience a sense of awe and wonder while living in the outdoors. It is our responsibility to do everything we can to mitigate any hazards, and forest management is part of a long-term strategy for fire prevention and keeping our forests healthy.

We need to increase the pace and scale of implementing projects that protect our environment and our communities. The PWP will help us move more quickly to provide a safe place for girls to build courage, confidence and character so they can make the world a better place. We strongly support this PWP and urge the San Mateo RCD Board and the Coastal Commission to approve it at their respective public hearings.

Thank you for your consideration of this important effort. Please feel free to contact me if you have further questions.

Sincerely,

Michelle McCormick

Michelle McCormick
Chief Mission Delivery Officer
Girl Scouts of Northern California
✉: 1310 S. Bascom Ave. San Jose, Ca 95128 |
☎: 408-287-4170 ext 1105 |
mmccormick@gsnorcal.org

COUNTY OF SAN MATEO
PLANNING AND BUILDING

455 County Center, 2nd Floor
Redwood City, CA 94063
650-599-7310 T
www.planning.smcgov.org

June 14, 2021

Barbara Kossy, President of the Board
San Mateo Resource Conservation District
80 Stone Pine Road, #100
Half Moon Bay, CA 94019

Re: Forest Health and Fire Resilience Public Works Plan (PWP)

Dear Ms. Kossy,

I am writing on behalf of San Mateo County Planning and Building Department in support of the RCD's proposed Forest Health and Fire Resilience Public Works Program (PWP), which has been designed in collaboration with staff from the California Coastal Commission (CCC), San Mateo County Planning and Building Department, CAL FIRE, and California State Parks. PWPs are meant to provide a single document that establishes a framework for comprehensive planning, reviewing, and permitting. This then allows a suite of related activities that would otherwise trigger the need for individual Coastal Development Permits (CDPs) to instead be analyzed as an integrated and coordinated system, thus expediting the permitting process and saving money through use of a comprehensive permit vehicle. This PWP has also been developed to function as a companion to CalFire's statewide Vegetation Treatment Program (CalVTP) and its associated Programmatic Environmental Impact Report (PEIR). In addition to the CalVTP, the collaborators developed the Coastal Vegetation Treatment Standards (Coastal VTS) to provide additional guidance and clarity for projects to be implemented within the Coastal Zone and within and/or in proximity to Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Areas (ESHAs). As such, this PWP provides a planning framework to review and authorize individual vegetation management projects in San Mateo County over the next ten years using principles, strategies, and best management practices that align fire prevention planning with coastal resource protection.

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burned 86,509 acres in San Mateo and Santa Cruz Counties, destroyed 1490 buildings, and exhibited extreme fire behavior. Initial estimates suggest that over 50% of the impacted area burned at high fire severities. Many forested stands that were topographically exposed to the extreme fire behavior experienced significant tree mortality and habitat losses that will take decades to recover.

In the wake of the 2020 CZU fire, partners across the Santa Cruz Mountains are redoubling their efforts to design, permit, and implement critical, high-priority vegetation treatment activities that will reduce future risk of catastrophic, severe intensity fires and create a mosaic of climate and fire resilient native ecosystems. Due to the unique confluence of biological diversity, historic development patterns, water supply infrastructure, and the array of economic activity associated with farming, tourism, and forestry, our Coastal Zone is a critical area for implementing vegetation management projects that result in improved forest health and fire resilience.

We need to increase the pace and scale of implementing projects that protect our environment and our communities. The proposed PWP will enable this to happen by significantly reducing and streamlining the permitting process that property owners who want to carry out such projects would otherwise have to go through.

We therefore strongly support this PWP and urge the San Mateo RCD Board and the Coastal Commission to approve it at their respective public hearings.

Thank you for your consideration of this important effort. Please feel free to contact me if you have further questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Steve Monowitz". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, sweeping "S" at the beginning and a long, horizontal stroke at the end.

Steve Monowitz

Community Development Director



County of Santa Cruz

DEPARTMENT OF PARKS, OPEN SPACE & CULTURAL SERVICES

979 17TH AVENUE, SANTA CRUZ, CA 95062

(831) 454-7901 FAX: (831) 454-7940 TDD: (831) 454-7978

JEFF GAFFNEY
DIRECTOR

June 16, 2021

Barbara Kossy, President of the Board
San Mateo Resource Conservation District
80 Stone Pine Road, Suite 100
Half Moon Bay, California 94019

I am writing on behalf of the Santa Cruz County Department of Parks, Open Space and Cultural Services in support of the RCD's proposed Forest Health and Fire Resilience Public Works Program (PWP). Having a PWP starting in Santa Cruz County has made it clear that the program brings important value to enabling the important vegetation management projects in the region. Having a similar program in San Mateo County will bring additional value to the region.

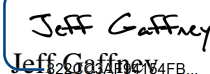
Recently, the CZU fire illustrated that fire risk is a paramount issue for human property and safety, as well as for ecological resilience in the landscape. The importance of investing in vegetation management in the coastal areas, throughout the region, will only increase in importance as time goes on with the climate becoming warmer and drier. At the same time, the fire has illustrated that managing fuels and landscape resiliency does not follow county boundaries. The management of vegetation in San Mateo County, through the PWP, would benefit the region including Santa Cruz County along with San Mateo County, and surrounding areas and communities.

We strongly support this PWP and urge the San Mateo RCD Board and the Coastal Commission to consider it at their respective public hearings.

Thank you for your consideration of this important effort. Please feel free to contact me if you have further questions.

Sincerely,

DocuSigned by:


Jeff Gaffney

Jeff Gaffney
Parks Director



June 10, 2021

Barbara Kossy, President of the Board
San Mateo Resource Conservation District
80 Stone Pine Road, Suite 100
Half Moon Bay, California 94019

Re: Forest Health and Fire Resilience Public Works Plan (PWP)

Dear Ms. Kossy,

I am writing on behalf of Save the Redwoods League in support of the RCD's proposed Forest Health and Fire Resilience Public Works Program (PWP). PWP has been designed in collaboration with staff from the California Coastal Commission (CCC), San Mateo County Planning & Building Department, CalFire, and California State Parks. PWPs are meant to provide a single document that establishes a framework for comprehensive planning, reviewing, and permitting. This then allows a suite of related activities that would otherwise trigger the need for individual Coastal Development Permits (CDPs) to instead be analyzed as an integrated and coordinated system, thus expediting the permitting process and saving money through use of a comprehensive permit vehicle. This PWP has also been developed to function as a companion to CalFire's statewide Vegetation Treatment Program (CalVTP) and its associated Programmatic Environmental Impact Report (PEIR). In addition to the CalVTP, the collaborators developed the Coastal Vegetation Treatment Standards (Coastal VTS) to provide additional guidance and clarity for projects to be implemented within the Coastal Zone and within and/or in proximity to Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Areas (ESHAs). As such, this PWP provides a planning framework to review and authorize individual vegetation management projects in San Mateo County over the next ten years using principles, strategies, and best management practices that align fire prevention planning with coastal resource protection.

Like many areas of the state, forest, woodland, and grassland landscapes across the Santa Cruz Mountains are undergoing significant change. The climate here is becoming warmer and drier, endemic species are at risk, invasive species are on the move, and sudden oak death has taken an immeasurable toll on regional ecosystems and overall forest health. At the same time, drier site-adapted conifer species are displacing hardwoods and other sensitive plant species, reducing biodiversity and affecting the suitability of these habitats for rare and special-status wildlife. Altered fire regimes and increased fuel loads are driving larger and more catastrophic wildfires. The result has been damaging changes to ecosystems that

require environmentally sensitive landscape-level treatments to redirect the path of both changing climates and ecological conditions impacting the Santa Cruz Mountains and surrounding communities. The 2020 CZU Lightning Complex Fire is a stark example of the level of risk, wildfire severity, and impacts to our human and biological communities in this landscape. The CZU burned 86,509 acres in San Mateo and Santa Cruz Counties, destroyed 1490 buildings, and exhibited extreme fire behavior. Initial estimates suggest that over 50% of the impacted area burned at high fire severities. Many forested stands that were topographically exposed to the extreme fire behavior experienced significant tree mortality and habitat losses that will take decades to recover.

In the wake of the 2020 CZU fire, partners across the Santa Cruz Mountains are redoubling their efforts to design, permit, and implement critical, high-priority vegetation treatment activities that will reduce future risk of catastrophic, severe intensity fires and create a mosaic of climate and fire resilient native ecosystems. Due to the unique confluence of biological diversity, historic development patterns, water supply infrastructure, and the array of economic activity associated with farming, tourism, and forestry, our Coastal Zone is a critical area for implementing vegetation management projects that result in improved forest health and fire resilience.

We need to increase the pace and scale of implementing projects that protect our environment and our communities. Protecting and stewarding the California landscape serves to support the healthy and longevity of our ecosystem.

We strongly support this PWP and urge the San Mateo RCD Board and the Coastal Commission to approve it at their respective public hearings.

Thank you for your consideration of this important effort. Please feel free to contact me if you have further questions.

Sincerely,

Paul Ringgold
Chief Program Officer
Save the Redwoods League



6/8/2021

Jim McKenna, President of the Board
Resource Conservation District of Santa Cruz County
820 Bay Avenue, Suite 136
Capitola, California 95010

Barbara Kossy, President of the Board
San Mateo Resource Conservation District
80 Stone Pine Road, Suite 100
Half Moon Bay, California 94019

Re: Forest Health and Fire Resilience Public Works Plans (PWP)

Dear Mr. McKenna

I am writing on behalf of the Natural Resources function of the Santa Cruz District of California State Parks in support of the San Mateo RCD and RCD of Santa Cruz County's proposed Forest Health and Fire Resilience Public Works Plans (PWP). The PWP have been designed in collaboration with staff from the California Coastal Commission (CCC), San Mateo and Santa Cruz County Planning Departments, CalFire and California Department of Parks and Recreation.. PWP are meant to provide a single document that establishes a framework for comprehensive planning, reviewing, and permitting. This then allows a suite of related activities that would otherwise trigger the need for individual Coastal Development Permits (CDP) to instead be analyzed as an integrated and coordinated system, thus expediting the permitting process and saving money through use of a comprehensive permit vehicle.

These PWP have been explicitly developed to function as a companion to CalFire's statewide Vegetation Treatment Program (CalVTP) and its associated Programmatic Environmental Impact Report (PEIR). In addition to the CalVTP, the collaborators developed the Coastal Vegetation Treatment Standards (Coastal VTS) to provide additional guidance and clarity for projects to be implemented within the Coastal Zone and within Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Areas (ESHAs). As such, these PWP provides a planning framework to review and authorize individual vegetation management projects in both counties over the next ten years using principles, strategies, and best management practices that align fire prevention planning with coastal resource protection.

Like many areas of the state, forest, woodland, and grassland landscapes across the Santa Cruz Mountains are undergoing significant change. The climate here is becoming warmer and drier, endemic species are at risk, invasive species are on the move, and sudden oak death has taken an immeasurable toll on regional ecosystems and overall forest health. At the same time, drier site-adapted conifer species are displacing hardwoods and other sensitive plant species, reducing biodiversity and affecting the suitability of these habitats for rare and special-status wildlife. Altered fire regimes and increased fuel loads are driving larger and more catastrophic wildfires. The result has been damaging changes to ecosystems that require environmentally sensitive landscape-level treatments to redirect the path of both changing climates and ecological conditions impacting the Santa Cruz Mountains and surrounding communities. The 2020 CZU Lightning Complex Fire is a stark example of the level of risk, wildfire severity, and impacts to our human and biological communities in this landscape. The CZU burned 86,509 acres in San Mateo and Santa Cruz Counties, destroyed 1490 buildings, and exhibited extreme fire behavior. Initial estimates suggest that over 50% of the impacted area burned at high fire severities. Many forested stands that were topographically exposed to the extreme fire behavior experienced significant tree mortality and habitat losses that will take decades to recover.

In the wake of the 2020 CZU fire, partners across the Santa Cruz Mountains are redoubling their efforts to design, permit, and implement critical, high-priority vegetation treatment activities that will reduce future risk of catastrophic, severe intensity fires and create a mosaic of climate and fire resilient native ecosystems. Due to the unique confluence of biological diversity, historic development patterns, water supply infrastructure, and the array of economic activity associated with farming, tourism, and forestry, our Coastal Zone is a critical area for implementing vegetation management projects that result in improved ecological health and fire resilience.

We need to increase the pace and scale of implementing projects that protect our environment and our communities. This need is particularly urgent for State Parks, due to the extensive acreage of land we own and manage in the Coastal Zone. The PWP's reflect our commitment to balancing environmental stewardship with fuel load reduction and restoration of evolutionarily appropriate fire regimes that contribute to more resilient and diverse ecosystems.

We strongly support these PWP's and urge the Boards of both the RCD of Santa Cruz County and the San Mateo RCD, as well as the Coastal Commission to approve them at their respective public hearings.

Thank you for your consideration of this important effort. Please feel free to contact me if you have further questions.

Sincerely,

Tim Hyland
Senior Environmental Scientist
California State Parks
Santa Cruz District

June 16, 2021

Barbara Kossy, President of the Board
San Mateo Resource Conservation District
80 Stone Pine Road, #100
Half Moon Bay, CA 94019

Re: Forest Health and Fire Resilience Public Works Plan

Dear President Kossy:

I write on behalf of the San Mateo County Parks Department and in support of the San Mateo RCD's proposed Forest Health and Fire Resilience Public Works Plan (PWP).

The PWP has been designed in collaboration with staff from the California Coastal Commission (CCC), San Mateo County Planning and Building Department, CAL FIRE, and California State Parks to provide a single document that establishes a framework for comprehensive planning, reviewing, and permitting. This then allows a suite of related activities that would otherwise trigger the need for individual Coastal Development Permits (CDP) to instead be analyzed as an integrated and coordinated system, thus expediting the permitting process and saving money through use of a comprehensive permit vehicle.

The PWP has also been developed to function as a companion to CAL FIRE's statewide Vegetation Treatment Program (CalVTP) and its associated Programmatic Environmental Impact Report (PEIR). In addition to the CalVTP, the collaborators developed the Coastal Vegetation Treatment Standards (Coastal VTS) to provide additional guidance and clarity for projects to be implemented within the Coastal Zone and within and/or in proximity to Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Areas (ESHAs). As such, this PWP provides a planning framework to review and authorize individual vegetation management projects in San Mateo County over the next 10 years using principles, strategies, and best management practices that align fire prevention planning with coastal resource protection.

The 2020 CZU Lightning Complex Fire is a stark example of the level of risk, wildfire severity, and impacts our human and biological communities now face. The fire burned 86,509 acres in San Mateo and Santa Cruz counties, including 2,800 acres in Pescadero Creek County Park, destroyed 1490 buildings, and exhibited extreme fire behavior. Initial estimates suggest that over 50% of the impacted area burned at high fire severities. Many forested stands that were

topographically exposed to the extreme fire behavior experienced significant tree mortality and habitat losses that will take decades to recover.

In the wake of the 2020 CZU Lightning Complex Fire, partners across the Santa Cruz Mountains are redoubling their efforts to design, permit, and implement critical, high-priority vegetation treatment activities that will reduce future risk of catastrophic, severe intensity fires and create a mosaic of climate and fire resilient native ecosystems. Due to the unique confluence of biological diversity, historic development patterns, water supply infrastructure, and the array of economic activity associated with farming, tourism, and forestry, our Coastal Zone is a critical area for implementing vegetation management projects that result in improved forest health and fire resilience.

Given the current conditions, the San Mateo County Parks Department has identified the need to increase the pace and scale of implementing projects that protect our environment and residents. San Mateo County owns and manages more than 13,000 acres of parkland in the Santa Cruz Mountains. These parks provide important recreational and environmental education opportunities for millions of visitors each year. This area of great biological diversity also serves as a water source for small local communities and provides valuable habitat for plant and animal species of importance, including the marbled murrelet.

San Mateo County Parks has identified, evaluated and scoped 32 projects where action can be taken to improve forest conditions and public safety through fuel reduction effort and the creation of fuel breaks and shaded fuel breaks. Most of these projects are located in parks that are near private dwellings, also known as the wildland urban interface. We are fortunate that at least 3 of the 32 projects will be implemented in partnership with San Mateo RCD.

The communities we serve are well aware of current forest and climate conditions and we regularly hear from community members requesting these projects to be hastened and even expanded. The PWP is an important and needed process element that can help move projects from a list into action on the ground in a timely manner.

We strongly support this PWP and urge the San Mateo RCD Board and the Coastal Commission to approve it at their respective public hearings.

Thank you for your consideration of this important effort.

Sincerely,



Nicholas J. Calderon
Parks Director
San Mateo County

CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION

455 MARKET STREET, SUITE 228
SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94105
PHONE: (415) 904-5200
FAX: (415) 904-5400
WEB: WWW.COASTAL.CA.GOV



June 16, 2021

Barbara Kossy, President of the Board
San Mateo Resource Conservation District
80 Stone Pine Road, Suite 100
Half Moon Bay, California 94019

SUBJECT: Draft Forest Health and Fuel Reduction Public Works Plan

Dear Ms. Kossy:

Commission staff supports the efforts of the San Mateo Resource Conservation District (RCD) to reduce risks from catastrophic wildfires through targeted vegetation treatment activities to be conducted under the proposed Forest Health and Fuel Reduction Public Works Plan (PWP). The PWP will allow for the design and streamlined authorization of individual vegetation treatment projects consistent with the environmental protections of the Coastal Act and the San Mateo County Local Coastal Program (LCP) to address wildfire hazards and benefit coastal resources over the next ten years, and it is primed to become an important tool and vehicle for helping to reduce fire danger in the County. We commend the RCD for undertaking such an effort, and stand ready to assist in its implementation once adopted.

As you know, over the past year and a half, Commission staff has collaborated with the RCD to develop the PWP as the primary avenue to permit the RCD's vegetation treatment projects in the County's coastal zone. PWPs are a unique type of authorization similar to programmatic or 'master' permits that ensure the upfront evaluation of proposed programs while streamlining the review of subsequent projects. Unlike typical coastal permit authorizations, future projects will be reviewed for consistency with the standards of the PWP, rather than the LCP, because the PWP, once certified, is designed to ensure coastal resource protection. In addition, such future project review is through the Coastal Commission directly, rather than by the County, eliminating the possibility of an appeal resulting in two separate project evaluations and hearings, thus greatly streamlining the approval process. Further, given the up-front work that is to be embedded in the PWP, any such approval process itself is also streamlined, including because the substantive performance standards and requirements are already approved when the PWP is approved. Nonetheless, the PWP process provides for important public and stakeholder participation, and requires public oversight by the Commission, ensuring the development and implementation of individual vegetation treatment projects that are consistent with the environmental protections laid out in the PWP.

We want to clarify that although this PWP will provide an efficient mechanism for authorizing specific types of projects carried out by the RCD and its partners, all project applicants can continue to propose vegetation treatment projects in the coastal zone outside of this PWP process, and Coastal Commission staff is available to coordinate on such proposals.

Importantly we note that the proposed PWP adheres to the extensive mitigation and monitoring requirements of the California Board of Forestry's CalVTP Programmatic Environmental Impact Report (PEIR) and also includes a series of coastal vegetation treatment standards. Although the mitigation and monitoring measures in the PEIR ensure environmental protections consistent with other applicable laws, these coastal vegetation treatment standards represent an incremental refinement to those measures while still dovetailing and integrating with PEIR requirements to ensure coastal resources are protected as required by the County's LCP (i.e., the legal standard of review for the PWP under the Coastal Act). The PWP will thus serve as an integral companion to the PEIR to ensure that the State's efforts to increase the pace and scale of forest management and wildfire resilience can be realized in San Mateo County's coastal zone while still respecting coastal resource protections embedded in the Coastal Act and the LCP. We believe that this approach represents an important harmonizing of state statutes and objectives in a very practical and very meaningful way, and we are excited to see it put into use as soon as possible.

Thank you for your continued collaboration on this effort. We believe that the PWP will result in improved forest health, intact ecosystems, and increased wildfire resilience in the San Mateo County coastal zone. We also believe it to be an example of good planning and good public policy brought to reality, and again we appreciate your contributions to making that so. We urge your approval of the PWP, and we look forward to working collaboratively with you over the next ten years of its implementation to further its important state and local objectives. If you have any questions or wish to discuss these comments, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

DocuSigned by:

E6E6330F9F9C4F4...
Dan Carl

North Central Coast District Director
California Coastal Commission

cc: Jessica Morse, California Natural Resources Agency
Matt Dias, Board of Forestry
Gabriel Schultz, CalFIRE
Rich Sampson, CalFIRE
Tim Hyland, State Parks

County of Santa Clara

Parks and Recreation Department

298 Garden Hill Drive
Los Gatos, California 95032-7669
(408) 355-2200 FAX (408) 355-2290
Reservations (408) 355-2201

www.parkhere.org



Ms. Barbara Kossy, President of the Board
San Mateo Resource Conservation District
80 Stone Pine Road, Suite 100
Half Moon Bay, California 94019

Re: Forest Health and Fire Resilience Public Works Plan

Dear Ms. Kossy,

I am writing on behalf of Santa Clara County Parks in support of the RCD's proposed Forest Health and Fire Resilience Public Works Program (PWP). We understand this PWP was developed in collaboration with the California Coastal Commission (CCC), San Mateo County Planning & Building Department, CalFire, and California State Parks, and support the partners' approach of creating a PWP that establishes a framework for comprehensive planning, reviewing, and permitting of forest health and fire risk reduction efforts.

The PWP appropriately consolidates the various forest health and fire resiliency actions such that they may be analyzed as an integrated and coordinated system, thereby expediting the environmental review and permitting process. This PWP is an important step forward in implementation of CalFire's statewide Vegetation Treatment Program (CalVTP) and its associated Programmatic Environmental Impact Report (PEIR). The Coastal Vegetation Treatment Standards (Coastal VTS) will provide additional guidance and clarity for projects in the Coastal Zone and within and/or in proximity to Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Areas (ESHAs) and will serve as a model for resource zone-specific protection.

Santa Clara County Parks is invested in partnering with other land management agencies to effectively address the changing landscape of the Santa Cruz Mountains. In the wake of the 2020 CZU Lightning Complex fire, we and our partners across the Santa Cruz Mountains are intensifying efforts to deliver priority vegetation treatment programs that will reduce the risk of catastrophic uncontrolled fires and create a mosaic of climate adaptive and fire resilient ecosystems. We are pleased to see that the RCD, San Mateo County, State Parks, CalFire and the Coastal Commission are collaborating on a proactive approach to forest health, fire risk reduction and asset protection on a regional scale.

We strongly support this PWP and urge the San Mateo RCD Board and the Coastal Commission to approve it at their respective public hearings. Thank you for your consideration of our perspective on this important effort.

Please feel free to contact me if you have further questions.

Sincerely,

Michael Rhoades
Program Manager
Natural Resources Management

Board of Supervisors: Mike Wasserman, Cindy Chavez, Otto Lee, Susan Ellenberg, S. Joseph Simitian

County Executive: Jeffrey V. Smith



**DEPARTMENT OF FORESTRY AND FIRE PROTECTION**

6105 Airport Road
REDDING, CA 96002
(530) 224-2486
Website: www.fire.ca.gov



June 16, 2021

San Mateo Resource Conservation District
80 Stone Pine Road, Suite 100
Half Moon Bay, California 94019

RE: Draft Public Works Plan

To Whom It May Concern:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Draft San Mateo County Forest Health and Fire Resilience Public Works Plan (PWP) prepared by the San Mateo Resource Conservation District (SMRCD). We would also like to thank the Coastal Commission's time to further discuss our concerns that were presented in the June 8th letter to the Santa Cruz Resource Conservation District on their proposed draft PWP. The conversation helped provide additional details to our concerns and gave us hope about continued efforts to work together to ensure environmental protections for projects in the Coastal Zone

CAL FIRE understands the importance of coordination and permit streamlining to complete forest health and fire prevention work statewide to protect valuable resources in California. This is critical to our statewide approach and should be accomplished whenever possible. We also support and encourage projects within the Coastal Zone, and we are often the funding source for these projects. It is our understanding that this approach represents a new process that will be evaluated and potentially modified as needed to increase its success. We support the approach to evaluate new processes to streamline permits and expedite fuel reduction projects. It is also our understanding that this is not the only process moving forward to address other CEQA compliant fuel reduction projects as we explore the integration of existing programs including current and new mechanisms

San Mateo Resource Conservation District

June 16, 2021

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to achieve similar goals. We see the Cal VTP as an alternative opportunity for Coastal Act compliance through incorporation of Coastal Commission recommendations into project design and development. This will efficiently provide protections within the Coastal Zone through existing CEQA compliance efforts, without the duplicative efforts of a PWP. Consequently, we look forward to further discussions with the SMRCD and Coastal Commission on streamlining additional projects in the Coastal Zone to protect California resources.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to comment and we look forward to working with the SMRCD and Coastal Commission.

Sincerely,



Gabriel Schultz
Staff Chief, Regional Resource Manager
Northern Region

BOARD OF FORESTRY AND FIRE PROTECTION
THE NATURAL RESOURCES AGENCY
STATE OF CALIFORNIA

KEITH GILLESS, CHAIR
Wade Crowfoot, Secretary
Gavin Newsom, Governor

P.O. Box 944246
SACRAMENTO, CA 94244-2460
(916) 653-8007
(916) 653-0989 FAX
[BOF Website \(www.bof.fire.ca.gov\)](http://www.bof.fire.ca.gov)



June 16, 2021

Barbara Kossy, President of the Board of Directors
San Mateo Resource Conservation District
80 Stone Pine Road, Suite 100
Half Moon Bay, California 94019

SENT VIA EMAIL TO: fire@sanmateorcd.org

RE: SMRCD Forest Health and Fuel Reduction Public Works Plan

Dear President Kossy and Board Members:

The State Board of Forestry and Fire Protection (BOF) appreciates the opportunity to comment on the Draft Forest Health and Fuel Reduction Public Works Plan (Draft PWP) being considered by the San Mateo Resource Conservation District (RCD) at its June 17, 2021, meeting of the Board of Directors.

In the last five years alone, wildfires have burned a staggering 180,151 acres of land within the coastal zone subject to the Coastal Act of 1976. Last year, almost 1500 structures were lost in the CZU Complex fire that burned 86,509 acres in Santa Cruz and San Mateo counties. As such, the BOF is an enthusiastic advocate for responsible vegetation management projects within the coastal zone, including the types of individual projects being considered under the draft PWP, such as the Girl Scouts of Northern California Camp Butano Creek project. However, there may be more efficient approaches to addressing fuel hazard reduction environmental compliance within the coastal zone.

As California continues to shatter wildfire records on an annual basis, increasing the pace and scale of wildfire resilience is imperative to both climate resilience and public safety. The state is embracing new strategies for wildfire prevention that utilize appropriate vegetation treatment activities to preserve and maintain natural ecological balance and restore natural wildfire regimes. Under Executive Order B-52-18, former Governor Jerry Brown set a goal of treating 500,000 acres of vegetation per year to reduce wildfire risk. Even more recently, the Governor's California Wildfire and Forest Resilience Task Force released its Wildfire and Forest Resilience Action Plan, which calls upon state agencies to increase the pace and scale of forest health and wildfire prevention projects. Key components of this goal include reducing regulatory burdens and streamlining permitting processes.

As part of this statewide effort, the BOF developed and implemented the California Vegetation Treatment Program, commonly known as CalVTP. The CalVTP includes robust environmental analysis across many vegetation types across the state to support the use of prescribed burning, mechanical treatments, manual treatments, herbicides, and prescribed herbivory as tools to reduce hazardous vegetation and to restore healthy fire regimes by restoring and maintaining ecological balance. The CalVTP streamlines California Environmental Quality Act compliance for vegetation treatment projects under a Programmatic Environmental Impact Report (PEIR) certified by the BOF in December 2019. The CalVTP PEIR provides a powerful tool to expedite the implementation of vegetation treatments to reduce wildfire risk while conserving natural resources.

A core purpose of the CalVTP is restoring and maintaining ecological balance in sensitive areas, including the coastal zone, thereby also establishing less destructive natural fire regimes in those areas. Although the CalVTP is a statewide program, its goals are consistent with, and actively further, those of the

Coastal Act to "protect the ecological balance of the coastal zone and prevent its deterioration and destruction" and to "[p]rotect, maintain, ... enhance and restore the overall quality of the coastal zone."

Accordingly, the BOF contends that the CalVTP – in the coastal zone and elsewhere – is one of the state's most effective tools for fire prevention via responsible and ecologically beneficial vegetation management. Companion regulatory efforts that focus upon environmental compliance for evaluating and approving fuel hazard reduction projects could increase costs and delay in project implementation without gaining additional environmental protections. Requiring project proponents to obtain multiple agency approvals and imposing separate notification requirements under the PWP process complicates, rather than streamlines, regulatory burdens. Likewise, by incorporating different terminology for similar activities the draft PWP ensures increased confusion and inconsistencies, such as recategorizing the three types of CalVTP activities into two differently named activities under the Coastal Vegetation Treatment Standards. Additionally, the lack of any definitive review period by the Coastal Commission for individual projects submitted under the draft PWP is likely to result in unacceptable delays in approving deserving projects. Finally, the draft PWP process establishes standards, practices, and data collection requirements that are different from and in addition to those in the CalVTP, thereby fostering confusion and making the projects more costly and difficult to complete in a timely fashion.

It is unnecessary to subject CalVTP projects to the same regulatory permitting process that serves the state well in the development of apartment buildings, mini-malls, and other transformative-use projects in the coastal zone. Timber operations conducted under a Timber Harvest Plan (THP) approved pursuant to the Z'berg-Nejedly Forest Practice Act of 1973 are already exempt from Coastal Commission permitting. Solid precedent exists to suggest that treating similar vegetation treatment activities as exempt under a THP could also apply to vegetation treatments pursued under the CalVTP. The objectives of the Coastal Commission would be well served by recognizing the CalVTP as a standalone program that may be used in the coastal zone without the need for additional permits or programmatic requirements.

The BOF enthusiastically supports SMRCD's efforts to pursue CalVTP projects but is concerned that the Coastal Commission's PWP process imposes significant barriers to the efficient and successful administration of future CalVTP projects in the coastal zone. The CalVTP offers a fully vetted statewide standard that can be applied consistently throughout the coastal zone. The Coastal Commission should empower SMRCD and other organizations to commence CalVTP projects in the coastal zone today, without the need for a PWP.

Respectfully,



Keith Gilles
Chair
State Board of Forestry and Fire Protection

Sheena Sidhu

From: Lisa Ketcham [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, May 16, 2021 7:23 PM
To: Fire
Subject: draft PWP comments

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the draft SMC Forest Health & Fire Resilience Public Works Plan.

Maps: I'm concerned that available vegetation maps (including the 2020 SMC Routine Maintenance Manual) do not depict or mention the Monterey pine woods that since the 1980's have spread over approximately 40 acres of Pillar Point Bluff southwest and adjacent to Pillar Ridge manufactured home community (2019 CA Coastal Records image attached).

County Parks Apr 2021 list includes Pillar Point Bluff project - #22 removal of invasive species along park boundary with Pillar Ridge. Last Feb the project was called Pillar Point Bluff Monterey Pine Removal.

Under ESHA in the PWP, examples include Monterey Pine forest. How do we account for this being an invasive species that has transformed previous natural bluff habitats of coastal scrub and coastal prairie?

I look forward to the June 17 public hearing.

Lisa Ketcham

