



PROTECTING YOUR CITY FROM WILDFIRE

February 2 - 3, 2021 | 9:00 AM - 4:00 PM PST | Virtual

Tuesday, February 2, 2021

Virtual Conference Day 1:

Understanding Today's Wildfire Realities & Community Planning Needs

9:00-9:05 PST **Welcome Message by Infocast**

9:05-9:30 Session 1 Presentation: **Climate Change: The Connection between Drought, Heat Waves & Wildfire in California – Lessons Learned for Santa Barbara, CA**
Record breaking heat waves, California's ongoing drought, and hundreds of thousands of acres with dry, overgrown vegetation created an unprecedented fire season in 2020. Hear how climate change factors are contributing to more and larger fires, the interplay of the conditions that created the 2020 fire season, and how climate change will continue to affect communities all over California in the years to come.

Presenter:

Leila Carvalho, *Professor of Meteorology & Climate Science, UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SANTA BARBARA*

9:30-9:40 *Live Q&A*

9:40-10:00 Session 2 Presentation: **Extreme Fire Behavior**
Fire whirls, fire tornadoes, fire clouds, and dry lightning. Wildfires burned in unusual ways in 2020, with puzzling behavior that eluded firefighters' control, allowing them to grow even without much wind. Fueled by record-setting temperatures with low humidity, and spawning towering columns of smoke and ash, these fires have even formed their own weather systems. On August 15, the National Weather Service issued what may be its first ever fire tornado warning. What are the causes of these mega fires? How do they behave, and what can we do to fight them safely? Today many forest fires have extreme behavior and they are damaging human communities and ecosystems. Restoration actions can be taken today to reduce fire behavior and effects which can also help protect homes and lives.

Presenter:

Scott Stephens, *Professor of Fire Science, Dept of Environmental Science, Policy & Management, UC BERKELEY*

10:00-10:15 *Live Q&A*

- 10:15-10:40 **Session 3 Presentation: Cal Fire 2020 Lessons Learned & Plans for Wildfire Prevention & Mitigation Moving Forward**
Hear a recap and lessons learned from the 2020 fire season, including rest break procedures, convict firefighters, and other coronavirus-related issues, followed by the Calfire plan for the future. Hear what the challenges were and what the future of firefighter efficacy looks like: hiring more firefighters, rest & recovery, tools & intel, weather modeling output, identifying the best use of resources.
- Thom Porter**, *Director*, CALFIRE
- 10:40-10:50 *Live Q&A*
- 10:50-10:55 *Coffee Break*
- 10:55-11:55 **Session 4 Panel: The Price of Fire: Funding Issues & Grants for Projects**
The coronavirus-related economic shutdowns have lowered tax revenues during a year when more funding is desperately needed to address wildfire issues in California. While variety of ways for local communities to obtain funding remain, including many grant programs geared toward forest health and fire, more is needed. The current yearly competitive grant system may no longer work for local communities moving forward to accommodate the long-range planning needed, especially since the number of applications far outweighs grants awarded. Panelists will discuss where gaps are, what prioritization needs to happen, and how cities can gain access to different types of available funding, both pre-and post-fire event: Cal Fire and FEMA grants, federal reimbursement, general fund appropriations, and disaster response accounts.
- Moderator:
Steven Weissman, *Lecturer*, UC BERKELEY GOLDMAN SCHOOL OF PUBLIC POLICY
- Panelists:
Christopher Danch, *Executive Director & Grants Specialist*, OJAI VALLEY FIRE SAFE COUNCIL
Russell Mills, *Director of Risk Management & Treasurer*, SMUD and *Treasurer*, CMUA
Jessica Morse, *Deputy Secretary*, Forest Resources Management, CA NATURAL RESOURCES AGENCY
- 11:50-12:10 *Live Q&A*
- 12:10-12:40 *Lunch Break*
- 12:40-1:40 **Session 5 Panel: Aligning Insurance Provider & Community-Wide Home Hardening Efforts**
Home hardening and defensible space work: CA's 2008 building code requiring installment of fire-resistant materials preserved 51% of the homes in the Camp Fire, and defensible space gives firefighters a statistically significant chance to save a structure. California residents in high-risk wildfire zones are losing the ability to be insured while these incredibly cost-effective measures could mitigate home loss. Panelists will discuss how insurers and community leaders can help residents by aligning efforts to educate

the public on home hardening and defensible space, strengthening the entire community and making individual homes more insurable.

Moderator:

Amy Bach, *Executive Director*, UNITED POLICYHOLDERS

Panelists:

Daniel Gorham, *Research Engineer*, INSURANCE INSTITUTE FOR BUSINESS & HOME SAFETY (IBHS)

Steven Hawks, *Staff Chief of Wildfire Planning and Engineering Division*, CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FORESTRY AND FIRE PROTECTION (CAL FIRE)

Mark Sektnan, *Vice President, State Government Relations (CA, HI, NV, WA)*, AMERICAN PROPERTY CASUALTY INSURANCE ASSOCIATION

1:40-1:55 *Live Q&A*

1:55-2:05 *Coffee Break*

2:05-2:50 **Session 6 Panel: Aligning Land Use Planning & CWPPs**

Understanding wildfire hazards and creating strong mitigation measures are a collaborative effort requiring the involvement of many parties. Often, a city will have hazard mitigation and/or zoning restrictions for safety in existing plans. How can local officials align the safety elements of General Plans, Natural Hazards Mitigation Plans (NHMPs), and their Community Wildfire Protection Plans (CWPPs)? Panelists will discuss best practices in creating CWPPs and integrating lessons learned from existing plans, coordinating between departments, and obtaining community involvement.

Moderator:

Tracy Katelman, *Owner*, FOREVERGREEN FORESTRY

Panelists:

Matt Damon, *Deputy Chief of Land Use Planning Program*, CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FORESTRY AND FIRE PROTECTION (CAL FIRE)

Roberta MacIntyre, *Board President*, FIRE SAFE SONOMA

Chris Vestal, *Captain/Paramedic, Public Information Officer, Community Relations Division*, SACRAMENTO METROPOLITAN FIRE DISTRICT

2:50-3:05 *Live Q&A*

3:05-3:30 **Session 7 Presentation: Wildfire Smoke: Health Hazards & Air Quality Management**

Much of the west endured widespread poor air quality over extended lengths of time during 2020, none more pronounced than California. The SF bay area alone had a record-breaking 30 consecutive days of Spare the Air restrictions, and it further complicated coronavirus efforts for hospitals and public health officials. Breathing in wildfire smoke can have immediate health effects, particularly for people with pre-existing conditions. What are the health implications for all of this smoke, and who are most at risk? How can communities prepare to help their citizens during these times, and what can be done to educate the public?

Presenter:

Jason Mandly, *Senior Air Quality Planner*, BUTTE COUNTY AIR QUALITY MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

- 3:30-3:45 *Live Q&A*
- 3:45-3:50 **Day 1 Closing Remarks by Infocast**
- 3:50 *Virtual Conference Day 1 Adjourns*
- 3:50-4:50 *Conference Platform Open for Virtual Networking*

Wednesday, February 3

**Virtual Conference Day 2:
Meeting Immediate Community Needs in Mitigation & Emergency Preparedness**

9:00-9:05 PST **Day 2 Opening Message by Infocast**

9:05-10:00 **Session 8 Panel: Updating Vegetation & Forest Management Practices**
An estimated 23 million acres are in need of fuel reduction in California, in part due to the now outdated belief that all fire is bad. From ancient measures like prescribed burns to new ones like goats, fuel reduction projects have risen in importance as a means of mitigating the severity of wildfires. Panelists will discuss the changing way we look at fire and forest health in CA, the best and most cost-effective vegetation management practices, the level of coordination that should exist with local communities, Cal Fire, and the US Forest Service, and funding these practices.

Moderator:

Rich Gordon, *President & CEO*, CALIFORNIA FORESTRY ASSOCIATION

Panelists:

Christopher J. Fettig, Ph.D., *Research Entomologist*, USDA

Sara Ghafouri, *Staff Attorney*, AMERICAN FOREST RESOURCE COUNCIL (AFRC)

Paul Mason, *Vice President, Policy & Incentives*, PACIFIC FOREST TRUST

David R. Weise, Ph.D., *Research Forester*, US FOREST SERVICE

10:00-10:15 *Live Q&A*

10:15-10:45 Session 9 Presentation: **Case Study: Shaver Lake Fuel Reduction Project**

Presenter:

Ryan Stewart, RPF, *Supervisor*, EDISON FORESTRY and *Vice President*, HIGHWAY 168 FIRE SAFE COUNCIL

10:45-10:55 *Live Q&A*

10:55-11:00 *Coffee Break*

11:00-11:50 **Session 10 Panel: WUI Issues: State and Local Perspectives**
Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) expansion continues across CA, as various projections predict that the state could have up to 1.7 million homes in Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones (VHFHSZs) by 2050. City leaders and local officials face the challenge of permitting development in VHFHSZs to accommodate growing populations while juggling the safety risks involved. New builds must comply with Chapter 7A; however, many communities struggle with both engaging residents in retrofit and enacting local building codes and defensible space ordinances. This panel will discuss lessons learned in land use planning for WUIs, mitigation standards, how they are best adopted, followed, and enforced.

Moderator:

Tracy Katelman, *Owner*, FOREVERGREEN FORESTRY

Panelists:

Arn Andrews, *Assistant Town Manager*, TOWN OF LOS GATOS, CA

Chad Hanson, Ph.D., *Ecologist*, JOHN MUIR PROJECT

Bob Roper, CALIFORNIA FIRE SAFE COUNCIL

Scott Witt, *Deputy Chief of Fire Plan Program*, CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FORESTRY AND FIRE PROTECTION (CAL FIRE)

11:50-12:05 *Live Q&A*

12:05-12:35 *Lunch Break*

12:35-1:25 **Session 11 Panel: Wildfire Prevention Engineering**
Today's wildfire environment is conducive to the mass destruction of both buildings and infrastructure. When thinking about wildfire mitigation planning, it is important to have a deep understanding of where you build and what infrastructure is there in order to assess the risks. Communities and property owners need to look at building and fire code, defensible space, materials, structural placement, and ingress and egress when evaluating wildfire vulnerability at the parcel level. How can community leaders enable sound practices for fire safety in their jurisdictions? How can engineering and planning help to limit fire spread, and how do communities and utilities harden their existing infrastructure effectively?

Moderator:

Matthew Marshall, *Executive Director*, REDWOOD COAST ENERGY AUTHORITY

Panelists:

Frank Bigelow, *Deputy Chief of Wildfire Prevention Engineering Program*, CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FORESTRY AND FIRE PROTECTION (CAL FIRE)

Brian D'Agostino, *Director, Fire Science & Climate Adaptation*, SAN DIEGO GAS & ELECTRIC (SDG&E)

April Rose Maurath Sommer, *Executive & Legal Director*, WILD TREE FOUNDATION

- 1:25-1:40 *Live Q&A*
- 1:40-2:00 Session 12 Presentation: **Emergency Notification & Wildfire Public Education Efforts**
Educating communities in wildfire prevention and evacuation readiness is essential in keeping the lives of citizens safe during a fire event. Residents need to understand their role in wildfire safety efforts; and it helps when they understand the ecology behind wildfires as well. Moreover, having an ongoing dialogue develops trust, and can help to ensure that they will listen and react appropriately if an event occurs. What are the best practices in effectively communicating evacuation warning levels, zones, and routes to residents? How do state and local leaders effectively engage and educate people before a fire, and quickly and efficiently notify residents during and after an event?
- Presenter:
Brian Marshall, *Chief of Fire*, CALIFORNIA GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF EMERGENCY SERVICES (CAL OES)
- 2:00-2:15 *Live Q&A*
- 2:15-2:20 *Coffee Break*
- 2:20-3:15 Session 13 Panel: **Evacuation Planning and Coordination**
Wildfire evacuations have occurred in many communities up and down CA, from Santa Rosa and Paradise to Ventura and Malibu. Even communities with comprehensive evacuation plans struggle with fast-moving fires and getting real-time information, as thousands pour onto a few roads in many of these incidents. It is vitally important for cities and counties to develop robust plans that include granular information on route maps and zones, strategies for the vulnerable, shelter estimates, and contingencies for blocked routes. But not everyone agrees on what to include in an evacuation plan, whether they should be publicly available, how detailed they should be, or whether the state should require them for at-risk areas. This session will tackle these important issues with valuable lessons learned and best practices.
- Moderator:
Christopher Danch, *Executive Director & Grants Specialist*, OJAI VALLEY FIRE SAFE COUNCIL
- Panelists:
Susan Duenas, *Public Safety Manager*, CITY OF MALIBU
Paul Lowenthal, *Assistant Fire Marshal*, SANTA ROSA FIRE DEPARTMENT
Kevin McGowan, *Director*, LOS ANGELES COUNTY, OFFICE OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT
Daryl Osby, *Fire Chief*, LOS ANGELES COUNTY FIRE DEPARTMENT
- 3:15-3:30 *Live Q&A*

- 3:30-3:50 **Session 14 Presentation: Evolving Role of Aircraft Types and Airspace Operations for Aerial Fire Mitigation**
Various sizes and types of aircraft are envisioned to play a critical role in fighting fires. Multiple aircraft, including drones, operating simultaneously to fight fires requires coordination to maintain effectiveness as well as safety. Presently, firefighting is limited to day time, high visibility, and low wind conditions. It is also impacted if unmanned aircraft system operates in the area or nearby. NASA is exploring opportunities where a variety of aircraft and their coordinated airspace management would improve the effectiveness of aerial firefighting. Dr. Kopardekar will discuss future aircraft requirements, approach for coordinated firefighting as well as a path towards improving effectiveness.
- Parimal Kopardekar, PhD, Director, NASA AERONAUTICS RESEARCH INSTITUTE**
- 3:50-4:05 *Live Q&A*
- 4:05-4:10 **Closing Remarks by Infocast**
- 4:10 *Virtual Conference Day 2 Adjourns*
- 4:10-5:10 *Conference Platform Open for Virtual Networking*