



**CALIFORNIA
LICENSED
FORESTERS
ASSOCIATION**

*The Voice of
California's
Licensed
Foresters*

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California Licensed Foresters Association

November 2019 - Newsletter

President's Message Chris Dow, CLFA President

As of the distribution of this article, it will be almost the one-year anniversary since the Camp Fire in Paradise, CA. I feel like I have a unique perspective concerning the fire, and I'd like to share it. Although I did not live or own a home in Paradise, I grew up just a few miles away in Chico, CA, so Paradise was always there. My parents moved from Chico to Paradise almost 15 years ago, and the home that they lived in was exactly what they were looking for, right down to having the same door as the home I grew up in. Years of dedication and work on the home and they had their piece of serenity in the pines.

In 2008, as some will recall, there was an enormous outbreak of dry lightning caused fires. Several of these merged to become the Butte Complex, which threatened all of Paradise. I remember the burning debris falling around my parent's house, packing their belongings, and waiting for them to evacuate their elderly neighbors. They were allowed to stay as long as possible so as to reduce stress on their neighbors who were in their 90's. That night, the winds shifted, and the fire never made it to Paradise. After that day, I warned my parents that the day would come, probably 10 years or so down the road, when there was enough fuel between the Jarbo Gap and Paradise, that a freight train of a fire would come roaring through the West Branch of the Feather River, and explode into Paradise. It had happened before, the Storrie Fire, became the starting point for the Chips Fire. I watched as the warning signs were ignored, the landscape was treated the same as it always had been. It was beautiful, and it would stay that way. Sadly, I was only a few months off in my prediction.

I was in Paradise, CA on the morning of November 8th. At 7AM, I was concerned. I could see the smoke, knew there was a fire, but could not tell where it was coming from. At 7:25 AM, I walked out of the meeting I was in, informing everybody in the building that it was time to leave, and get to your families. I called my Dad at 7:30. "Prep your loins, this is the big one" were the first words out of my mouth. I told him that I'd be at their house in 15 minutes, but I had to get gas for my truck first. I arrived at their home at 7:45. My mom was still in the shower with a recently surgically replaced hip, and a walker with tennis balls that my dog would not leave alone. She knew there was a fire, but didn't know how bad. In the short time she was in the shower, it went from sunny, to pitch black with an eerie red glow to the sky. Propane tanks exploded all around, the echoes ringing through our ears. By 8:30 we were on the road with all of the neighbors, leaving everything behind but the essentials and animals. My parents were able to make it down to Chico on two different roads, Pentz and Clark. They both encountered fire, and it took them 2 hours to make it to safety in Chico. I was not so lucky, my chance to follow them closed with a steady stream of traffic flowing down Billie Road. I followed, for 5 hours. I could not escape, at points it was just smoke and the sounds of explosions, others it was fire on both sides of the road. 5 hours. I prayed. I sent text messages to the people I loved. I didn't know if I would get out. I had my dogs, my go-bag with water and snacks, some tools, and my boots. I was ready to jump out of my truck and run if I had to. I watched as the fire got closer and closer, offering rides to anybody that I passed. I picked up an evacuee and she rode with me for 5 miles to get to safety. When I made it down to Chico, I knew the town was largely gone. That night, backfiring operations commenced on the east side of Chico where I was staying with my family. We were 15 people in one home, one in a wheel chair, one 85, 4 that had just lost their home, 2 that didn't know if their home burned, and we were evacuated again. It wouldn't be for almost a week before we found out my parent's home made it. They are finally preparing to move back in after a year. Debris removal, tree removal, water, cleaning, insurance, new housing, new offices. All of this was lost on November 8, and it is finally starting to come back.

That is my story of that day. Afterwards, I found it had had more than one profound effect on my life. I never wanted to see or hear of anybody having to go through that hell ever again. To say that there were effects of the fire on me, is really a minimization. That day is seared into my memory, and I can still hear the explosions if I close my eyes and picture that morning. This is also where I find myself shocked at the negative and positive responses.



President's Message cont.

I have seen drastic change following that fire. The California Licensed Forester's Association has been at the forefront of a lot of that change: SB 901 and a revision to all exemptions, the Emergency Notice was overhauled, huge fuels reduction projects, alternative fuels management techniques are being visited, agencies not involved in forestry, like CALTRANS, are reducing fuels along highway corridors to create defensible fire-breaks. Recently, the California Economic Summit released a document "California's Wildfire Crisis: A Call to Action." If you have not read it, you should. The perspective is changing and support for projects that protect public safety and forest health are occurring state wide.

This is not to say that some of these measures are less than ideal. Over 100 years of fire suppression has left our forests drastically overstocked and in a treatment deficit that will require enormous numbers of treated acres per year, a task that when put on paper is daunting. Millions of acres to treat, and most of the infrastructure that used to be in place for this kind of massive forest management, is gone. We have to learn and work within the constraints we are given. The problem we are trying to solve is not easy. It will take extraordinary amounts of effort for years to come and that effort is on all of us involved in our forests. It is private industry, CALFIRE, CGS, Water Quality, DFW, contractors, loggers, and truckers, the US Forest Service, and utilities to name just a few. Although it is easy to blame PGE for the power outages and the problems, the "different perspective" I refer to exists here. What about the other side of the coin? We talk at length about our forests being overcrowded, drought stressed and in a condition that promotes high severity fire. Where does that blame fall? What about the education of the general public on the need for active forest management and fuels reduction, which is still largely non-existent? Where does that blame fall? In my mind, nobody is to blame for all of it, but we are all a part of the solution. I've found myself explaining to those that are angry over power outages, that the alternative I witnessed, when the power isn't shut off, and it starts a fire, and it rages through unmanaged land, is far worse than a few days with no power. This problem will not be fixed overnight, it will take years, decades to properly safeguard our communities and forests. Instead of focusing on the problem, I choose to focus on and openly discuss the solution. There is no blame, no inconvenience, and no anger. As foresters, we know what the solution is, and we are working as hard and as fast as we can to forge a path toward a solution. We have been challenged, called to action by the State, our families and our friends. The question to ask ourselves is, what am I doing to be a part of the solution?



Pruning trees above my power lines during the power outage



November 13, 2018: A view from my parent's backyard into the nothingness left after the Camp Fire



Forest Practice—BOF
Andrea Eggleton—Regulatory Rep to CLFA

Board was dark in October



Legislation
Jason Wells —Committee Chair

Attached are reports from Brian White, KP Public Affairs.



Water & Wildlife

Gwyndolyn Ozard — Committee Chair

Gwyndolyn Ozard – Committee Chair

WATER QUALITY

North Coast: <http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/northcoast>

The Board last met on October 17 in Santa Rosa. No forestry action items were on the agenda.

https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/northcoast/board_info/board_meetings/10_2019/October%2017%20Agenda_190920.pdf

The next Board meeting is scheduled for December 18-19; the agenda is not yet available:

Central Valley: <https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalley/>

The Board last met on October 10-11 in Redding; no forestry items were on the agenda.

The next meeting is scheduled for December 5-6 in Rancho Cordova; the agenda is not yet available:

Lahontan: <https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/lahontan/>

The Board last met on September 18-19 in South Lake Tahoe; no forestry items were on the agenda. Minutes

from the meeting are not yet available, but the agenda is: https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/lahontan/board_info/agenda/2019/sept/sept2019_agenda_announcement.pdf

The next meeting is scheduled for November 20-21 in Barstow; the agenda is not yet available:

Central Coast: <https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralcoast/>

The Board last met on September 19-20 in Watsonville. Minutes from the meeting are not yet available but the

agenda is: https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralcoast/board_info/agendas/2019/september/agenda/09_sep_agenda.pdf

The next meeting is scheduled for December 12-13 in San Luis Obispo; the agenda is not yet available:

WILDLIFE

The Fish and Game Commission: <http://www.fgc.ca.gov/meetings/2019/index.aspx>

The Fish and Game Commission (FGC) last met on October 9-10 in Valley Center. Minutes from the meeting are not available. Agenda: <https://nrm.dfg.ca.gov/FileHandler.ashx?DocumentID=174494&inline>

Agenda Item of Note:

CONSENT ITEMS 3. Foothill yellow-legged frog. The FGC received the Department's one-year status review report on the petition to list foothill yellow-legged frog (*Rana boylei*) as an endangered or threatened species under the California Endangered Species Act.

Findings: (See Figure 6 of the report below for DFW's clade recommendations.)

In addition to evaluating the petitioned action to list the species as threatened or endangered, DFW evaluated whether listing the species was warranted for six unique genetic clades (a clade being a group of organisms that consist of a common ancestor and all its lineal descendants). The status review contains DFW's recommendation that listing the foothill yellow-legged frog is warranted at this time for five of the six genetic clades, with three specific recommendations:

List the Feather River and Northeast/Northern Sierra clades as **threatened**;

List the East/Southern Sierra, West/Central Coast, and Southwest/South Coast clades as **endangered**;

Do not list the Northwestern/North Coast clade; listing is **not warranted** at this time.



Water & Wildlife cont.

The full Status Review Report is available on the DFW webpage: <https://nrm.dfg.ca.gov/FileHandler.ashx?DocumentID=174602&inline>

Tentative Expected Timeline for Action and Implementation

The FGC received DFW's status review of the Foothill yellow-legged frog at the October meeting. The FCG will vote at the December 11-12 meeting to determine if the proposed listing is warranted. Findings will be adopted at a later future meeting.

The next FGC meeting is scheduled for December 11-12 in Sacramento; the agenda is not yet available:

*Status Review of the Foothill Yellow-legged Frog in California
California Department of Fish and Wildlife—September 20, 2019*

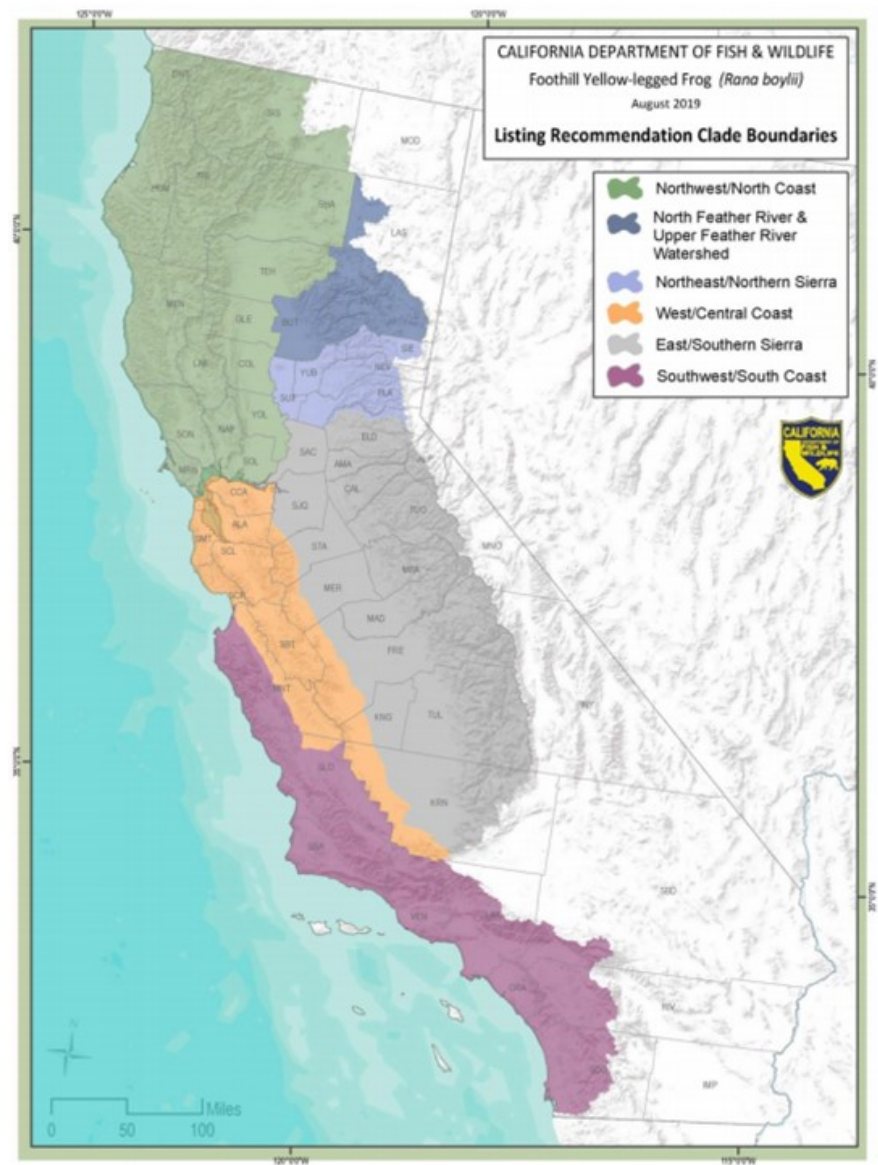


Figure 6. Foothill Yellow-legged Frog clade boundaries for management purposes and the Department's listing recommendation



2018/2019 CLFA BOARD MEETING WORKSHOP/CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

BOARD MEETINGS

- ◆ December—Dark
- ◆ January 25, 2020—Granzellas, Williams—9:00 am to 3:00 pm
- ◆ February 15, 2020—GoToMeeting—9:00 am to 12:00 pm
- ◆ March 5, 2020—Gaia Hotel & Spa, Anderson—11:00 am to 4:00 pm
- ◆ April 18, 2020—GoToMeeting— 9:00 am to 12:00 pm
- ◆ May 15, 2020—CLFA Audit—Granzellas, Williams—6:00 pm
- ◆ May 16, 2020—Granzellas, Williams—9:00 am—3:00 pm

CLFA WORKSHOPS / CONFERENCES

- ◆ March 6 & 7, 2020—Spring Workshop—Gaia, Anderson
- ◆ March 23—27, 2020—Rescheduled 5-day Initial Archaeology Class—Gaia, Anderson

Brochures and registration for all workshops & conferences will be accessible on the CLFA website!

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