

TUOLUMNE COUNTY FIRE SAFETY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

DRAFT MEETING MINUTES

Date/Time: Wednesday, August 27, 2025, at 3:00 pm
Location: Board of Supervisors Chambers, 4th Floor, 2 S. Green Street Sonora, CA 95370
Contact: Office of Emergency Services at oes@co.tuolumne.ca.us (209) 533-6395

Chair

Supervisor Ryan Campbell

Vice Chair

Supervisor Steve Grier

Member Representatives

- Tuolumne County Fire
- Tuolumne County Sheriff
- City of Sonora
- Tuolumne County Fire Chiefs Association
- Public Representatives
Scott Fremd
Charles Sloan
Betsy Hurst-Younger

Advisory Members

- Chicken Ranch Band of Me-Wuk Indians
- Tuolumne Band of Me-Wuk Indians
- Tuolumne Fire Safe Council
- USFS Stanislaus

Staff

OES Assistant Director
Dore A. Bietz

2025 Strategic Goals

1. Support recommendations to improve and secure sustainable funding for fire safety.
2. Support increased education and outreach of Fire Safety and Wildfire Preparedness campaigns.
3. Support coordinated fuels reduction projects and secure funding for prioritized fuels management projects.
4. Support advocacy to address fire insurance rate impacts for Tuolumne County residents and businesses.

I. CALL TO ORDER at 3:05 pm

II. ROLL CALL – In attendance (Y).

Supervisor Campbell (Y)
Supervisor Grier (Y)
Tuolumne County Fire – Chief Nate Gorham (Y)
Tuolumne Fire Chiefs Assn – Neil Gamez (Y)
Sonora Fire – Chief Carlson (A)
Tuolumne County Sheriff – David Vasquez (Y)
Public Rep – Scott Fremd (Y)
Public Rep – Charles Sloan (Y)
Public Rep – Betsy Hurst-Younger (A)
Confirm quorum requirements are met (Quorum = 5 members) –
MET w/7

Tuolumne County
Dore Bietz – OES Staff

III. PUBLIC FORUM

Public question about OES mandate to provide Public Safety should include OES as a public safety and budget should not have been cut. Talked about history of OES in Tuolumne County staff.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FOR MEETING 7/23/2025

Motioned by Supervisor Grier 2nd by Sheriff Vasquez. All in favor no abstentions. Motion approved.

V. PARTNER AGENCY UPDATES/PRESENTATIONS

a. Partner Updated

USFS – general update. Several lightening 15 total on forest. Picked up 3 more today. Several up in the rocks but still suppressing them. Committee member asked about let it burn policy and USFS said not full suppression.

Tuolumne Fire Safe Council – will be advertising for an Executive Director. Also recruiting for Board members.

b. Presentation by Tuolumne County GIS on Fire Incident public facing map, fuels mitigation hub, critical infrastructure internal planning.

Public comments – how do we find info out, what about vulnerable communities. Also asked about other counties how we access. You can access the others directly from our map.

VI. COMMITTEE BUSINESS

Staff Reports, Updates, Recommendations

Presentation on California Department of Insurance approval of Wildfire Risk Model.

Public Comment (limited to three minutes per person)- If you take the VERISK model, Tuolumne County would be rated high in risk. Staff to bring back a letter to oppose the model.

VII. DISCUSSION and APPROVAL (as applicable)

- a. Approval of recommendation to the BOS approving the adoption of ordinance adopting the 2025 Fire Hazard Severity Zone Map as recommended by the California State Fire Marshal.

Motion by Chief Gamez, Seconded by Scott Fremd. All in favor.

Public Comment (limited to 3 minutes per person) –

VIII. COMMITTEE MEMBER REPORTS-

Sheriffs office reported on Fuels reduction grant application, awaiting notice. Chipper back from servicing. School Resource Officers are out there in the schools, three in total rotating. Important to be visible. Several fires and grateful for partnerships with various agencies. Jail work crew is at 12 currently. Spoke about recent SAR mission and found person lost along with Poncho the chihuahua.

Cal Fire/County Fire – fully staffed, several engines out of county. New type 6 out of county on an assignment. No vacancies in program. Put in for the SAFER Grant to continue the 12 staff. Received California Fire Foundation grant for PPE.

District 4 has had a lot of fires, appreciates response.

District 2 nothing to report

IX. ADJOURNMENT at 4:48 pm

Next meeting will be held September 24, 2025.

Location: ANF Building – Committees & Commissions Room (3rd Floor)

