

FRIDAY REVIEW

LEGISLATIVE AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

April 15, 2022

Cannabis

Cannabis Business Licensing -The Department of Cannabis Control launched a **comprehensive online compliance portal named CannaConnect**. The DCC asks for regulated entities to share input on the services offered online and suggest improvements. To access compliance resources and submit feedback click [CannaConnect Compliance Hub - Department of Cannabis Control](#) Staff: Peter Ansel; pansel@cfbf.com; 916-446-4647

Climate Change

The California Department of Food and Agriculture is now accepting grant applications for the [Alternative Manure Management Program](#) and [Dairy Digester Research and Development Program](#) due Monday, May 9, 2022 by 5:00 PM. These programs provide funds to install dairy digesters and non-digester-based manure management practices. The Department has received \$32 million for award. Staff: Taylor Roschen, troschen@cfbf.com or 916-446-4647

Land Use

A bill by Assemblymember Jim Patterson, [AB 1773](#) will be heard by the Assembly Local Government Committee on Wednesday, April 20th. This bill would appropriate \$40 million for subvention funding for counties with lands enrolled in the Williamson Act. Farm Bureau is leading a large coalition in support. Staff: Taylor Roschen, troschen@cfbf.com or 916-446-4647

Nutrition

The California Department of Food and Agriculture is currently accepting proposals for the 2022 [California Nutrition Incentive Program \(CNIP\)](#). This program supports shoppers using nutrition benefits such as CalFresh (Food stamps) by providing matching funds for every dollar spent on California-grown fruits and vegetables at participating sites, including certified farmers' markets, CSAs, farm stands and small corner stores. CNIP incentives enable benefit recipients to purchase nutritious, locally grown fresh fruits and vegetables for their families while supporting California farmers. Applications must be submitted by email to cafarmtofork@cdfa.ca.gov, by 6 p.m. on May 16, 2022. Further information on the grant program, including the RFP, timeline and application criteria are available [here](#). Staff: Taylor Roschen, troschen@cfbf.com or 916-446-4647.

Organic

The California Department of Food and Agriculture has announced vacancies on the [California Organic Products Advisory Committee \(COPAC\)](#) responsible for advising the Department on the State Organics Program. The current vacancies include a wholesale distributor representative; technical representative; consumer representative and alternates for the producer representative, wholesale distributor representative, processor representative, retail representative, environmental representative, technical representative; and consumer representative. The term of office for committee members is three years. Individuals applicants should complete a [questionnaire](#) and submit a letter of recommendation from an industry member to Thomas Osborn, CDFA Inspection and Compliance Branch, 1220 'N' Street, Sacramento, CA 95814 or via e-mail to Thomas.Osborn@cdfa.ca.gov. Staff: Taylor Roschen, troschen@cfbf.com or 916-446-4647.

Pesticides

The Department of Pesticide Regulation will be hosting a second public hearing on Tuesday, April 19th starting at 9am to discuss the presence of imidacloprid residue in groundwater in Fresno, Santa Barbara, and Tulare counties. The finding triggered a review process for imidacloprid which includes a hearing process to assess allowing continued agricultural use. DPR conducted the first hearing on March 22nd where the state provided evidence of potential groundwater pollution. The second hearing will be about receiving rebuttal evidence and public comments. The meeting will be held in person (at the CalEPA headquarters in Sacramento in the Byron Sher Auditorium) or via Zoom with the link found [here](#) (Webinar ID: 886 7904 0342 / Passcode: 697531). Participants can also view the hearing [here](#). A third hearing will likely be set for May 17th with more information to follow. Staff: Taylor Roschen, troschen@cfbf.com or 916-446-4647

Pollinators

CDFA released a draft proposal of the [Pollinator Habitat Program](#) last month. This new program, within the Department's Office of Environmental Farming and Innovation, was established by the Budget Act of 2021 ([SB 170](#), Skinner). An allocation of \$15 million to CDFA was made for fiscal year 2021-2022 to provide grant funding for the establishment of pollinator habitat on agricultural lands throughout California. CDFA was directed to administer the Pollinator Habitat Program and to prioritize the planning of native habitats for the benefit of native biodiversity and the use of locally appropriate native plant seed mixes when feasible. Farm Bureau will be submitting comments by the deadline on Monday, April 18. The proposed draft has problematic language including exclusively awarding grants to third party entities, such as Resource Conservation Districts, California Universities, or non-profits, instead of directly funding farmers and ranchers. It also allows these third parties to use up to 25% of the grant funds towards administrative costs – a percentage which CAFB feels is exorbitant and could ultimately be applied to more project acreage. Staff: Katie Little, klittle@cfbf.com or (916) 446-4647.

Rural Crime

[AB 2613](#), introduced by Assemblymember Robert Rivas (D – Salinas), is a Farm Bureau sponsored measure to allow farmers and ranchers direct access funds to help clean up illegally dumped waste on their property. It would add a state-wide pilot program to the current

[Farm and Ranch Solid Waste Cleanup and Abatement Grant Program](#) housed within CalRecycle. The pilot program could be funded up to \$1 million, in addition to the current program's \$1 million allocation. The current program funds many cleanup projects on publicly owned land, or land that is merely zoned for agriculture and not in active use. As the program has recently become oversubscribed, these kinds of projects could be taking away opportunities from farmers and ranchers which are confronted with this problem on a regular basis. This bill would make *pilot* program funds exclusively available for private and active agricultural lands, in hopes that it will help members with this growing problem. The bill will be heard in the Assembly Natural Resources Committee on Monday, April 18. If you have faced issues with illegal dumping, please feel free to reach out to staff. Staff: *Katie Little*, klittle@cfbf.com or (916) 446-4647.

Wildfire

Tax Credits in Wildfire Zones - Assembly member Frank Bigelow amended his [AB 2892](#) last week to provide tax credits for the purchase of a backup generator. The bill would allow a credit against the Personal Income Tax Law and Corporate Tax Law for each taxable year beginning on or after January 1, 2022, and before January 1, 2027, in an amount that is equal to 50% of the amount incurred by a person or a small business, during the taxable year for the purchase. The bill sets a maximum credit of \$18,000 for a backup generator for use in a residence or commercial property in a designated wildfire zone. The bill is set to be heard in Assembly Revenue and Taxation Committee on April 25, 2022. Staff: *Peter Ansel*; pansel@cfbf.com; 916-446-4647

Wildfire and Livestock - In 2021, University of California Co-operative Extension (UCCE), along with the Placer, Nevada, and Yuba County Agriculture Departments, worked with ranchers in all three counties to create California's first multi-county Livestock Access Pass program. This program provides training and certification for commercial livestock producers to safely access and care for their animals in an evacuation zone. Placer, Nevada, and Yuba Counties are included in a single program, corresponding to CAL FIRE's Nevada-Yuba-Placer Unit. The program, which was developed in coordination with CAL FIRE, local law enforcement, and local offices of emergency management, defines a Commercial Livestock Operator as an owner of livestock consisting of 50 + head of livestock (including in utero, e.g., 25 + bred cows), 100 + poultry or rabbits, or 50 + beehives that reside in Placer, Nevada, or Yuba County for at least a portion of the year, or a person who, through an agreement with that owner of livestock, has authority and is responsible to oversee the care and well-being of the owner's livestock. Commercially raised species of livestock include cattle, sheep, goats, hogs, poultry, rabbits, llamas, alpacas, and bees, and "commercially raised" means the livestock are raised as part of a business. Livestock Access Passes are provided by the agricultural department in the operation's home county. Each department also maintains a database of pass holders, that will be made available to first responders in an emergency. To gain access to livestock, pass holders will notify the County Agricultural Department and/or UCCE before receiving permission to enter an evacuation zone. Commercial ranching operations often include too many livestock to evacuate in a single trailer. Many ranchers shelter their livestock in place, but need access to feed, water, and care for their animals when it's safe.

These passes are intended to allow commercial ranchers to enter an evacuation zone and care for livestock once first responders feel it is safe for them to do so. Pass holders must participate in 4-

hour training session to receive their first pass. This initial training includes information on the incident command system, wildfire behavior and terminology, the responsibilities of pass holders, and ranch-scale disaster planning. Once a rancher has received initial training, a one-hour refresher course is required each year.

Important dates for 2022: For new passholders, an initial 4-hour training session will be held on Saturday, May 21, 2022, at the UC Sierra Foothill Research and Extension Center in Browns Valley, CA (with lunch provided by the Yuba-Sutter Farm Bureau). A one-hour refresher course for 2021 passholders will be provided virtually. To apply for a Livestock Access Pass (even if you received one in 2021), please complete the form [here](#) or contact UCCE advisor Dan Macon at (530) 889- 7385 or dmacon@ucanr.edu to receive a paper application. *Staff: Peter Ansel; pansel@cfbf.com; and Katie Little; klittle@cfbf.com; 916-446-4647*

Federal Wildfire Funding in California - The United States Department of Agriculture announced its Wildfire Crisis Landscape Investments through 2024 for California with two significant projects identified and budgeted for over \$80 million in funding over two years. The funding will target high risk wildfire zones with a variety of forest health and resilience treatments.

The 313,000-acre North Yuba Landscape watershed is one of the largest contiguous “unburned” landscapes remaining in the Sierra Nevada Mountains. The North Yuba watershed is also an important water source for residential and agricultural areas surrounding Sacramento. It feeds a reservoir retained by the tallest dam in California, which also provides power to the Sacramento area. To ensure that native forest practices are integrated with the North Yuba Landscape project, the Nisenan of the Nevada City Rancheria partnered in 2019 with the National Forest Foundation, The Nature Conservancy, Blue Forest Conservation, Yuba Water Agency, Sierra County, South Yuba River Citizens League, and the Camptonville Community Partnership to create the North Yuba Forest Partnership. These entities have demonstrated commitment and success in transitioning the North Yuba watershed to a healthier and more resilient state, reducing wildfire risk to communities, and enabling the watershed to withstand other disturbances associated with a changing climate.

Through ecologically based thinning and prescribed fire, the North Yuba Forest Partnership seeks to protect North Yuba communities from the threat of catastrophic wildfire and restore the watershed to a healthier, more resilient state. The North Yuba Landscape project is the proving ground for innovations, including community-based biomass utilization development, large-scale planning, and conservation finance through the issuance of the first two Forest Resilience Bonds that leverage substantial private sector investments to help fund implementation of this work. In addition to reducing the fire risk to the communities of Camptonville, Goodyears Bar, Downieville, Sierra City, the Yuba Water Agency infrastructure, and others within the North Yuba watershed, the project will improve forest conditions across the landscape to enhance fire resilience and adaptability to a changing climate. The project aims to improve watershed resilience by protecting 260,000 acre-feet of water supply for 60,000 acres of productive farmland while also protecting water quality in the Sacramento Delta.

The second project in California to receive funding is the Stanislaus Landscape Project, which aims to apply a full suite of needed treatments to restore forest resilience at a landscape scale in the Stanislaus National Forest. These treatments include mastication, biomass removal, machine piling for burning, hand piling for burning, hand thinning, timber harvest, hazard tree removal, prescribed fire, and fuel break construction and maintenance. Combined, these efforts will reduce hazardous fuels and create a landscape that can better withstand disturbances such as wildfire, insects, disease, and drought conditions, while also protecting local communities, providing for critical species habitat, and supporting forest use and recreational opportunities. Within the Stanislaus Landscape Project, the newly signed Social and Ecological Resilience Across the Landscape (SERAL) project uses emerging models to demonstrate how vegetation treatments will help wildland fire play its natural role within the fireshed, leading to greater ecosystem integrity and protection of collaboratively identified high-value resources and assets (communities, California Spotted Owl and other habitat, water systems, powerlines, roads, communication sites, and more).

The US Forest Service is working with Tuolumne Band of Me-Wuk to develop a Tribal Forest Protection Act (TFPA) component that will capitalize on existing agreements with the Tribe to support implementation of the Stanislaus Landscape Project. Outcomes include reduced fire risk to several foothill communities (Sonora, Columbia, Cedar Ridge, Twain Harte, Strawberry, Pinecrest, Long Barn); protection of power infrastructure (hydropower facilities and transmission and distribution lines); reduced risk to multiple communication sites and facilities both on private and public lands; and road improvements (to provide access for various treatments, as well as improved public recreation and access for emergency response). The South and Middle Forks of the Stanislaus River are the primary water sources for Tuolumne County and provide potable water for other municipalities throughout the Central Valley, as well. Additional outcomes include less risk to community infrastructure (beyond homes), including the watershed, water reservoirs (Pinecrest Lake, Lyons Lake) and the historic wooden flume that provides 90 percent of the water to the local area. These watersheds provide substantial water for agricultural uses and habitat for several species of conservation concern. *Staff: Peter Ansel; pansel@cfbf.com; 916-446-4647*

Wildfire and Insurance - California Farm Bureau and California Forestry Association submitted a joint public comment letter to the California Department of Insurance proposed regulations on Mitigation in Rating Plans and Wildfire Risk Models. As discussed previously, these regulations would require insurers to provide premium discounts for property level wildfire mitigation measures (home hardening) and consider community level fire safe certifications and designations (community hardening) in an effort to ensure that California homeowners do not face discriminatory rates, and to create a healthy competitive insurance marketplace. CAFB and Calforests' combined public comments express concerns that the proposed regulations do not go far enough in ensuring that rural residents will stop facing non-renewals and unfair rates. CAFB and Calforests request that CDI's proposed rules need to account for the state and federal governments investment of billions of newly budgeted spending on wildfire mitigation and forest health and resilience projects at landscape scale (for example, as described in detail in the review of the Stanislaus Landscape Project and North Yuba Landscape Project funded by USDA).

CAFB and Calforests are concerned that the very communities that will benefit from direct fire risk reduction at landscape scale may be small, rural areas or individual farms and homesteads

that will not be grouped into community attainted fire safe certifications, and thus will be overlooked by insurers. CAFB and Calforests feel that in addition to considering home and community hardening, insurers need to consider billions of dollars in investments to decrease wildfire risk at scale for every policy holder, even if located in smaller communities or situated farther out in the wildland interface. A lack of a community designation should not work against policy holders that have also benefited from these mitigation investments, and the regulations must account for landscape scale reduction efforts. *Staff: Peter Ansel; pansel@cfbf.com; 916-446-4647*

Water

The Department of Water Resources (DWR) released new features this week for their domestic and irrigation well dashboards. DWR has added two new drought-related features to the [Domestic Well](#) and [Irrigation Well](#) Dashboards within [California's Groundwater Live](#). The first is a series of new interactive well density layers that summarize the number of domestic and irrigation well completion reports received by DWR, allowing users to view the density of wells installed over four distinct time periods:

1. Since 1977,
2. The last 5-Years,
3. The last 3-Years, and
4. The last year.

Users can toggle between time periods to see how well density has changed over time across California and in their local areas. The other new feature has added monthly well statistics for both domestic and irrigation wells, allowing users to compare the number of new domestic and irrigation wells installed month-by-month since 1977. Users can see how the number of new well installations have changed over time both Statewide and within any County or Groundwater Basin due to climatic conditions, seasonal trends, and other factors. For questions or more information about California's Groundwater Live or these new features, email calgw@water.ca.gov.

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