



OFFICE OF ENERGY INFRASTRUCTURE SAFETY

WILDFIRE SAFETY ADVISORY BOARD

STAFF DRAFT: WILDFIRE MITIGATION PLAN REVIEW PROCESS

AUGUST 2026

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

California's publicly owned utilities and electrical cooperatives are required to submit wildfire mitigation plans to the Wildfire Safety Advisory Board, who must review the plans and provide comments, advisory opinions, and recommendations. The Wildfire Safety Advisory Board intends that its recommendations contribute to the continuous improvement of utility wildfire mitigation plans. This document describes the process the Wildfire Safety Advisory Board and Wildfire Safety Advisory Board Branch staff will use to review the utility wildfire mitigation plans and develop well-informed and targeted advice and recommendations.

Wildfire Safety Advisory Board staff has divided wildfire mitigation strategies into "focus areas." Staff has developed a review template based on these focus areas. For each focus area, staff will review the wildfire mitigation plans for completeness; goals; progress and improvement; and implementation. Every utility with overhead lines in the High Fire Threat District should expect advice for additional actions.

Staff will draft a single document with all the advisory opinions and submit it to Board Members for their review. After responding to Board Member feedback, staff will publish a draft advisory opinions document for public comment. After responding to the public's feedback, staff will publish a final draft for the Wildfire Safety Advisory Board's consideration at a board meeting.



1. INTRODUCTION

California Public Utilities Code (PUC) section 8387 requires that each “publicly owned utility or electrical cooperative shall prepare a wildfire mitigation plan and shall submit the plan to the California Wildfire Safety Advisory Board at least once every four years on a schedule determined by the California Wildfire Safety Advisory Board.” PUC section 8387(b)(2) describes the minimum considerations for the wildfire mitigation plan (WMP).

PUC section 326.2(a) requires the Wildfire Safety Advisory Board (WSAB) to “[r]eview and provide comments and advisory opinions to local publicly owned electric utilities and electrical cooperatives regarding the content and sufficiency of their wildfire mitigation plans and recommendations on how to mitigate wildfire risk.” WSAB’s mission is “to advise and make recommendations to reduce the risk of utility-related wildfires.”¹ WSAB intends that its comments, advisory opinions, and recommendations contribute to continuous improvement of utility wildfire mitigation plans.

2. APPROACH

WSAB endeavors to contribute through recommendations that are well-informed and targeted. “Well-informed” means that to the best of Board Members’ and staff’s ability, advice incorporates current wildfire mitigation practices and an understanding of practicalities of implementation. “Targeted” means that the advice is for reasonable next steps in the context of a utility’s risk and resources.

To better understand POUs’ and co-ops’ risk and resources, WSAB has organized sessions of the WSAB–POU and Co-op Working Group and participated in meetings and site visits. In determining the submission schedule for WMP submissions, WSAB planned time for “early collaborative exchanges” with utilities. In spring and summer 2026, WSAB staff met with 12 utilities with overhead lines in the High Fire Threat District whose WMPs were due that year.

To better understand potential wildfire mitigation strategies, WSAB staff learns from interactions with POU and co-op staff, interactions with subject matter experts at the Office of Energy Infrastructure Safety and the Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, attendance at conferences and trainings, and through independent research. WSAB staff cataloged wildfire mitigation strategies and categorized them in “focus areas.”² WSAB’s Advisory Opinions adopted in December 2025 included descriptions of two focus areas. Staff published a draft report describing two more in July 2026. Researching focus areas positions staff for better-informed reviews of those areas in WMPs.

¹ Wildfire Safety Advisory Board, [2024 – 2027 Strategic Plan](https://efiling.energysafety.ca.gov/eFiling/Getfile.aspx?fileid=56784&shareable=true), June 2024, URL: (https://efiling.energysafety.ca.gov/eFiling/Getfile.aspx?fileid=56784&shareable=true)

² Wildfire Safety Advisory Board Staff, [Wildfire Mitigation Plan Potential Focus Areas](https://energysafety.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/2026/01/wsab-potential-focus-areas-outlined-april-2026.pdf), May 2026, URL: (https://energysafety.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/2026/01/wsab-potential-focus-areas-outlined-april-2026.pdf)

3. WILDFIRE MITIGATION PLAN REVIEW

WSAB Branch staff has developed a review template based on the focus areas. For each utility, staff will review the strategies in the submitted WMP along with previous years' WMPs and WSAB Advisory Opinions. WSAB Branch staff will review each submitted WMP for, in each focus area:

- **Completeness:** Whether the utility clearly describes its approach to wildfire mitigation, including its consideration of a range of strategies.
- **Goals:** Whether the utility has goals, including quantitative or qualitative targets that are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound.
- **Progress and Improvement:** Whether the utility demonstrates progress and maturation from its previous WMPs, and whether it incorporated previous WSAB advice.
- **Implementation:** Whether the utility will have the information it needs for decisions, describes the decisions to be made, and has ability to act on these decisions.

4. ADVISORY OPINION

Board staff will endeavor to draft advisory opinions that summarize and recognize each utility's risk context, emphasis, and evolution over time, and provide advice for additional actions. Advice may include recommendations to provide more detail on a strategy; to set and report on specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound goals, including any barriers encountered; evaluate a strategy not currently in use and include the results of the evaluation in the next WMP; or to advance a certain strategy. Every utility with overhead lines in the High Fire Threat District should expect advice for additional actions.

The advisory opinions to POUs and co-ops will be collected into a single document. Staff will circulate an informal draft to Board Members for their review and input, expected in November 2026. After Board Member comments are incorporated, a staff draft of the advisory opinions will be published for public comment, expected in January 2027. WSAB will consider adoption of a final draft at a board meeting, expected in March 2027.

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