



COUNTY OF SAN MATEO

DEPARTMENT OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT



Emergency Services Council Meeting

****IN-PERSON WITH REMOTE PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AVAILABLE****

July 30, 2026 5:30PM – 7:00PM

**Regional Operations Center
501 Winslow Street, Redwood City CA 94063**

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://smcgov.zoom.us/j/83444380819>

Meeting ID: 834 4438 0819

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AGENDA

- | | |
|--|-----------------|
| 1) Roll Call (2 minutes) | Chair |
| 2) Public Comments, Correspondence (Clerk), Announcements (2 minutes) | Clerk |
| 3) Action to Set Agenda and Approve April 30, 2026 Meeting Minutes (2 minutes) | Chair |
| 4) Wildfire Season Outlook & Countywide Mitigation Efforts (50 minutes) | |
| • California Fire Safe Council County Coordinator Overview | Director |
| • CAL FIRE Presentation | Guest |
| • San Mateo County Resource Conservation District Presentation | Guest |
| • Midpeninsula Regional Open Space Presentation | Guest |
| • San Francisco Public Utilities Commission Presentation | Guest |
| • Caltrans Presentation | Guest |
| • Pacific Gas & Electric Presentation | Guest |
| 5) HazMat Program Update – VOTE REQUIRED (25 minutes) | Director |
| 6) Severe Winter Storm Readiness (5 minutes) | Staff |
| 7) Report Outs Related to Emergency Services Council (4 minutes) | Chair & Members |
| 8) Adjournment | Chair |

Meetings are accessible to people with disabilities. Individuals who need special assistance or a disability-related modification or accommodation (including auxiliary aids or services) to participate in this meeting, or who have a disability and wish to request an alternative format for the agenda, meeting notice, agenda packet or other writings that may be distributed at the meeting, should contact the Agenda Administrator of the Emergency Services Council at least 2 working days before the meeting at (650) 363-4790 and/or DEM_Info@smcgov.org. Notification in advance of the meeting will enable the County to make reasonable arrangements to ensure accessibility to this meeting and the materials related to it. Attendees to this meeting are reminded that other attendees may be sensitive to various chemical-based products.

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COUNTY OF SAN MATEO

DEPARTMENT OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT



Emergency Services Council Committee Meeting Minutes

April 30, 2026

This meeting was called to order at 5:33 PM by Chair Mueller.

I. Roll Call

Atherton	Council Member Bill Widmer	Present
Belmont	Council Member McCune	Not Present
Brisbane	Council Member Lentz	Present
Burlingame	Council Member Pappajohn	Not Present
Colma	Council Member Slaughter	Present
Daly City	Council Member Sylvester	Present
East Palo Alto	Council Member Dinan	Present
Foster City	Council Member Sullivan	Present
Half Moon Bay	Council Member Jonsson	Present
Hillsborough	Council Member Chuang	Present
Menlo Park	Council Member Combs	Not Present
Millbrae	Council Member Rainaldi	Present (Virtual)
Pacifica	Council Member Boles	Present
Portola Valley	Council Member Hufty	Present
Redwood City	Council Member Eakin	Present
San Bruno	Council Vice Chair Medina	Present
San Carlos	Council Member Dugan	Present
San Mateo	Council Member Newsom	Present
South San Francisco	Council Member Nicolas	Present
Woodside	Council Member Goeld	Present
County of San Mateo	Council Chair Mueller	Present

Attending County Representatives:

- Deputy County Executive Calderon, County Executive's Office
- Chief Deputy County Attorney Wong, County Attorney's Office
- Management Analyst Loke, County Executive's Office
- Director Dhapodkar, Department of Emergency Management
- Assistant Director Reynolds, Department of Emergency Management
- Clerk of the Committee Corteway, Department of Emergency Management
- Secretary of the Committee Haddad, Department of Emergency Management

- II. Remembering Dina Gunning
 - Vice Chair Medina
- III. Public Comments, Correspondence, and Announcements
 - No public comments or announcements.
- IV. Action to Set Agenda and Approve January 29, 2026 Meeting Minutes
 - Hillsborough Council Member made the recommendation to approve the January 29, 2026 meeting minutes, and the Atherton Council Member seconded. The meeting minutes were unanimously approved.
- V. Advancing “One County, One Voice” – Toward a Unified Communication Framework
 - Director Dhapodkar outlined San Mateo County Emergency Management’s (SMC EM) work to establish the Public Information Council, bringing together key public information officers (PIOs) from the County Executive Office (CEO), Sheriff’s Office, Cal Fire, and all city, law, and fire agencies. The initiative was developed in response to lessons learned from the December 2024 tsunami warning. Director Dhapodkar stated that “One County, One Voice” will be shared with City Managers in June 2026 and requested Emergency Services Council (ESC) support to advance the initiative.
 - The focus on public information coordination follows SMC EM’s Alert and Warning training series, which brought subject matter experts from all over the world to talk about how they do alert and warning.
 - The Public Information Council helps ensure consistent public messaging across agencies, reduces hesitancy to act, provides a platform for sharing information, and enables city PIOs to amplify local messages while sharing updates with the Joint Information Center (JIC).
 - The Public Information Council identifies trusted spokespersons, develops standardized holding statements, and builds relationships among city, law, and fire PIOs in blue skies. The Public Information Council is activated to coordinate spokespersons and deploy pre-developed messaging during grey skies or before an emergency. When a Joint Information Center (JIC) is activated, the same coordinated approach continues through dark skies.
 - The next step is to exercise “One County, One Voice” during the Golden Eagle Functional Exercise on May 12, 2026 and the Great ShakeOut on October 15, 2026.
 - San Carlos Council Member commended SMC EM for acting on lessons learned from the December 2024 tsunami warning, stating that “One County, One Voice” is a good example of government working as intended.
 - Hillsborough Council Member emphasized the importance of getting to know stakeholders in advance to support cohesive messaging during emergencies. They asked if “One County, One Voice” is intended for regional disasters or small-scale incidents. Director Dhapodkar stated that the framework continues to be developed collaboratively with participating agencies. Director Dhapodkar noted that the City of Burlingame recently used this shared platform to communicate about its gas leak incident, for which they needed County PIO support.
 - Chair Mueller noted that previous incidents have involved different agency approval processes for public messaging and asked whether “One County, One Voice” centralizes message approval or serves as a multi-agency framework. Director Dhapodkar clarified

that it is a collaborative, multi-agency framework that builds consensus on messaging and spokespersons rather than centralizing message approval.

VI. Tsunami Preparedness

- Assistant Director Reynolds updated the ESC on SMC EM's tsunami preparedness over the past year. During Tsunami Preparedness Week in March 2026, SMC EM met with Emergency Medical Services (EMS), fire and law agencies, and city managers to develop a shared understanding of tsunami hazards across San Mateo County (SMC).
- Assistant Director Reynolds reported that SMC EM developed jurisdiction-specific tsunami maps and a countywide tsunami dashboard, which have been shared with fire departments, law agencies, and cities. Since July 2025, the dashboard has received approximately 80,000 views and allows users to identify their location, determine whether they are in a tsunami hazard zone, and understand recommended evacuation actions. He noted that most people only need to travel a few blocks to reach higher ground.
- Hillsborough Council Member asked whether SMC Alert will be used to notify residents of tsunami hazards. Assistant Director Reynolds responded that both Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEA) and SMC Alert will be used to maximize public notification. He added that warning times may range from only a few minutes to as much as seven to eight hours before tsunami arrival.
- Assistant Director Reynolds noted that tsunami hazard zones are limited along the coast, with many uninhabited areas. Half Moon Bay Council Member noted that only the Miramar area would need to evacuate to higher ground in Half Moon Bay. Director Dhapodkar added that East Palo Alto has two buildings within tsunami hazard zones whose occupants would need to move to a higher floor or evacuate the hazard area.
- Director Dhapodkar stated that the overall goal is to ensure everyone has access to the same information, so residents understand the appropriate public safety actions during future tsunami warnings.
- Chair Mueller commended SMC EM's outreach efforts, including community listening sessions on the coast. He noted that Highway 1 poses evacuation challenges and highlighted the updated tsunami signage directing people to higher ground. He added that additional work is needed on traffic management and public education about tsunami warnings. Assistant Director Reynolds confirmed that tsunami signage is standardized statewide to support consistent messaging.
- Pacifica Council Member asked about coordination with the Tsunami Warning Center. Assistant Director Reynolds responded that SMC EM uses warning language tailored to the County. Following a Tsunami Warning Center alert, SMC EM would send a follow-up message linking residents to the SMC Tsunami Map Viewer to identify their hazard zone and recommended safety actions.
- Hillsborough Council Member asked whether cities are responsible for coordinating public education with the County, so residents understand tsunami sirens and emergency alerts. Assistant Director Reynolds responded that SMC EM is working with EMS, fire, and law agencies to ensure responders understand hazard zones and can clearly communicate appropriate public safety actions to the public.

VII. San Mateo Consolidated Fire Department HazMat Program Presentation

- Battalion Chief Thorne provided an overview of the San Mateo Consolidated Fire Department's (San Mateo Consolidated) Hazardous Materials (HazMat) program, based in Belmont. The team serves all of SMC and provides support to San Francisco International Airport (SFO). It is designated as a State Type 1 HazMat team, the highest certification level. Without the team, the County would need to rely on costly third-party contractors for hazardous materials emergency response.
- Battalion Chief Thorne reported that the HazMat team responds to 100–200 incidents annually, with call volume doubling since 2024 due to an increase in lithium battery fires and toxic smoke incidents.
- South San Francisco Council Member asked about the HazMat team's work with life science companies. Foster City Council Member asked whether Gilead and Genentech are required to report incidents to the team. Battalion Chief Thorne responded that the team supports major incidents involving life science companies and that these businesses are required to submit HazMat business plans identifying the chemicals and quantities on site.
- South San Francisco Council Member asked how the HazMat program uses drones and other emerging technologies. Battalion Chief Thorne responded that the team partners with Menlo Park to use drones for advanced reconnaissance and situational awareness.
- Daly City Council Member and Brisbane Council Member asked what support is needed to sustain the HazMat program and whether staffing is a constraint. Battalion Chief Thorne responded that the program has been supported through internal budget reallocations by the San Mateo Consolidated, with additional grant funding from SMC EM. He added that increased staffing would allow incidents to be resolved more quickly.
- Brisbane Council Member asked about mutual aid agreements with neighboring counties. Battalion Chief Thorne explained that mutual aid is unlikely to meet the County's HazMat response needs because few neighboring jurisdictions have comparable capabilities or available resources. Battalion Chief Thorne stated that San Mateo Consolidated has a mutual aid agreement with Santa Clara County, and the two teams regularly train together. He noted that Alameda County declined a mutual aid agreement due to capacity concerns related to the Port of Oakland, and its distance also limits its usefulness. San Francisco has also declined a mutual aid agreement because of limited staffing.
- Pacifica Council Member asked about cost recovery for HazMat responses. Battalion Chief Thorne responded that the County Environmental Health Department bills for HazMat cleanup.
- Fire Chief Lorenzen, Menlo Park Fire Protection District, expressed concern about the aging HazMat vehicle and equipment. He noted that the primary response vehicle is 16 years old, replacement parts become increasingly difficult and expensive to obtain after 20 years, and it takes approximately five years to procure a replacement vehicle.

VIII. FY2026-27 Emergency Services Council Joint Powers Authority Proposed Budget

- Assistant Director Reynolds presented the Fiscal Year (FY) 2026-27 SMC EM budget of \$4.5 million, compared to \$4.7 million in FY 2025-26. Budget changes include increased salary costs and the removal of grant funding that is no longer available.
- Foster City Council Member asked whether training could serve as a revenue stream for SMC EM. Assistant Director Reynolds responded that SMC EM does not currently have sufficient staffing capacity to offer training as a revenue-generating service.
- Public comments on the SMC EM budget indicated that some stakeholders, particularly from the private sector perspective, viewed the budget as low.
- Assistant Director Reynolds reported that individual city contributions range from 7% to 16% based on tax roll and census data. In response to a question from San Carlos Council Member, he explained that each city's cost share is calculated using this formula.
- Redwood City Council Member expressed appreciation for the County covering over 40% of the budget. Daly City Council Member noted that SMC EM has relatively low staffing costs.
- Redwood City Council Member asked why ESC membership costs increase across all jurisdictions. Assistant Director Reynolds explained that changes are driven by increases in population and/or tax roll data.
- Hillsborough Council Member moved to approve the budget, seconded by Daly City Council Member. The budget passed with a unanimous vote in favor.

IX. Exemption to Trust Fund \$500k Minimum Balance

- Director Dhapodkar presented a request for ESC approval to draw from the reserve fund to support the purchase of a new HazMat vehicle, which would bring the balance below the previously established \$500,000 minimum. She explained that a larger upfront payment would reduce long-term costs, noting that vehicle prices continue to increase and delaying the purchase could result in higher expenses.
- Director Dhapodkar estimated the new HazMat vehicle cost at approximately \$1.9–\$2 million and noted that current estimates have increased from \$1.5–\$1.9 million last year due to market conditions.
- Chief Lorenzen supported using available funds upfront, noting that it is more cost-effective than financing a vehicle over a four- to five-year period.
- Director Dhapodkar shared that previous HazMat vehicles were purchased using grant funding, but those resources are no longer available. She noted that using reserve funds now would reduce future financial impacts, while delaying the purchase would likely increase costs over time.
- Menlo Park Council Member asked whether future vehicle replacement needs would be included in budget forecasting to ensure they are not overlooked. Director Dhapodkar explained that vehicle replacement funding is expected to fluctuate based on replacement cycles.
- San Carlos Council Member asked about SMC EM's history of using reserve funding. Director Dhapodkar explained that funds have historically been used when annual costs increased significantly, with the intent of balancing short-term budget impacts.
- Hillsborough Council Member provided context on the JPA funding structure, noting that the County contributes 50% of the budget and cities contribute based on a

membership formula. The Council Member emphasized that shared services reduce overhead and that reserves provide flexibility for future operational needs.

- Hillsborough Council Member explained that SMC EM's reserve fund is similar to municipal reserves, intended to provide financial stability during emergencies or unexpected cost increases. The Council Member noted that if reserves are depleted, the agency may need to return to member jurisdictions for additional funding.
- Pacifica Council Member requested more information on how trust funds are used during emergencies and how the balance would be managed if reduced below \$500,000.
- Daly City Council Member requested options showing the impact of using different trust fund amounts, noting that using approximately \$500,000 would represent a smaller portion of the overall purchase cost.
- Brisbane Council Member asked how funds would be replenished after use. Director Dhapodkar explained that the goal would be to cycle funds between the trust fund and vehicle replacement fund over time to rebuild reserves.
- San Carlos Council Member questioned whether the JPA structure should be revisited to better address long-term funding challenges.
- Brisbane Council Member asked whether outside funding opportunities, such as contributions from companies that rely on HazMat services, could be explored. Director Dhapodkar confirmed that an RFP process through the County could be considered.
- The ESC unanimously approved a motion to withdraw the request from consideration and refer it for further review and development of additional funding options.

X. Authorization to HazMat Vehicle Initiate Procurement

- The ESC unanimously granted approval for SMC EM to initiate procurement of the new HazMat response vehicle.

XI. Report Outs Related to Emergency Services Council

- ESC welcomed San Bruno's new Fire Chief.
- Daly City Council Member provided an overview of Daly City's Real-Time Information Center (RTIC), which integrates drones, cameras, police body-worn cameras, automated license plate readers (ALPR), and patrol car systems. The Council Member highlighted the value of integrating these tools to enhance situational awareness and serve as a force multiplier for public safety operations. Daly City Council Member suggested that SMC consider a similar regional approach and invited interested agencies to visit Daly City's RTIC, learn more about the system, and share best practices. Agencies interested in visiting were encouraged to contact the Daly City Police Chief.

XII. Adjournment

- Vice Chair Medina adjourned the meeting at 8:00pm.



**COUNTY OF SAN MATEO
EMERGENCY
MANAGEMENT**

Dr. Shruti Dhapodkar
Director

County Government Center
501 Winslow Street
Redwood City, CA 94063
(650) 363-4790
www.smcgov.org/dem

Date: July 30, 2026
To: Emergency Services Council (ESC)
Cc: Nicholas Calderon, Deputy County Executive
From: Dr. Shruti Dhapodkar, Director
Subject: Wildfire Season Outlook & Countywide Mitigation Efforts

Wildfire Season Outlook

As California enters the 2026 wildfire season, San Mateo County (SMC) continues to face wildfire risk driven by seasonal weather patterns, vegetation conditions, and the presence of communities within or adjacent to wildland areas. While winter rainfall contributed to vegetation growth across the region, warmer temperatures and prolonged dry conditions throughout the summer months may increase the potential for fire spread and elevated wildfire risk during periods of critical fire weather.

California Fire Safe Council County Coordinator Grant Program

The California Fire Safe Council is a statewide nonprofit organization dedicated to reducing wildfire risk through community-based planning, education, and mitigation efforts. Through the County Coordinator Grant Program, the California Fire Safe Council provides funding to support local coordination among wildfire stakeholders, public outreach and education initiatives, and the advancement of projects that strengthen wildfire preparedness, prevention, and resilience throughout San Mateo County.

Subject Matter Expert Guest Speaker Panel

Individually and collectively, numerous agencies operate within SMC implementing a broad range of wildfire prevention or mitigation activities, including fuel reduction, vegetation management, prescribed fire, defensible space programs, infrastructure hardening, public education, and interagency coordination efforts that reduce wildfire risk and enhance community resilience across the County.

CAL FIRE

CAL FIRE serves as California's state fire agency and is responsible for protection, prevention, and emergency response on State Responsibility Area lands, as well as the County's Coastside and unincorporated areas. The agency conducts fire prevention inspections, fuels reduction projects, prescribed fire operations, defensible space enforcement, and public education efforts, while coordinating wildfire response and recovery activities with local, state, and federal partners.

San Mateo Resource Conservation District

The San Mateo County Resource Conservation District (RCD) is a special district that works with landowners, communities, and partner agencies to conserve natural resources and enhance environmental resilience throughout the County. Its wildfire mitigation efforts include implementation fuel reduction projects, supporting prescribed fire and grazing programs, assisting with defensible space initiatives, and advancing landscape-scale strategies that reduce wildfire risk while promoting ecosystem health.

Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District

The Midpeninsula Regional Open District (MidPen) manages more than 70,000 acres of public open space across the San Francisco Peninsula and Santa Cruz Mountains. The district reduces wildfire risk through vegetation management, fuel reduction treatments, prescribed fire, strategic grazing, emergency access improvements, and collaborative planning efforts designed to protect both natural resources and neighboring communities.

San Francisco Public Utilities Commission

The San Francisco Public Utilities Commission (SFPUC) manages regional water, power, and wastewater infrastructure that serves millions of Bay Area residents, including critical facilities located within the County. The agency supports wildfire resilience through vegetation management, fuel reduction projects, infrastructure maintenance, emergency preparedness planning, and watershed management practices that help reduce fire risk and protect essential public services.

Caltrans

Caltrans is responsible for planning, constructing, operating, and maintaining California's state highway system and transportation infrastructure. The department contributes to wildfire mitigation through roadside vegetation management, fuel reduction activities, emergency response coordination, evacuation route maintenance, and infrastructure improvements that enhance public safety during wildfire events.

Pacific Gas & Electric (PG&E)

Pacific Gas & Electric provides electric and natural gas services to communities throughout Northern and Central California, including the County. The utility implements a comprehensive wildfire mitigation program that includes vegetation management, system hardening, enhanced inspections, weather monitoring, public safety power shutoffs, and advanced technologies designed to reduce wildfire ignition risk and improve grid resilience.



Date: July 30, 2026

To: Emergency Services Council (ESC)

Cc: Nicholas Calderon, Deputy County Executive

From: Dr. Shruti Dhapodkar, Director

Subject: HazMat Program Update - VOTE REQUIRED

HazMat Vehicle Procurement Update

The San Mateo Consolidated Fire Department provides the County's sole hazardous materials (HazMat) response capability. Its Type 1 certification reflects the highest level of training and equipment to manage complex and highly dangerous emergencies.

The current primary HazMat vehicle operated by San Mateo Consolidated Fire Department, purchased in 2009, is approaching the end of its service life. We need to replace the Type 1 vehicle to continue providing HazMat response capability to our communities.

The anticipated cost of a fully equipped new Type 1 HazMat vehicle is approximately \$2 million, with annual cost escalation at ~10% if we delay the purchase. The average build time is approximately 47 months.

Given the cost of the HazMat vehicle, the ESC must decide how to best use available funds while minimizing cost increases for all its members. The funding options presented below differ primarily in the amount paid from the Trust Fund and whether the \$135,000 pre-payment discount is captured. These factors determine how much the annual cost to ESC members will increase.

The Trust Fund is not a Reserve Fund. A Reserve Fund is money set aside to protect the organization during unexpected financial challenges. The Trust Fund is intended to accumulate over time and be used for larger, strategic investments that benefit the ESC and its members. Using the Trust Fund for this vehicle purchase is consistent with how the fund has been used in the past.

Note: Numbers throughout the staff report are estimates, not actual. They illustrate the different options available to the ESC.

In reviewing the table on the next page, the key considerations for the ESC are:

- **Options A and C have the same impact on the Trust Fund.** Both require a \$613,000 contribution and leave the Trust Fund with a \$50,000 balance. From a Trust Fund perspective, there is no difference between the two options.
- **The primary decision between A and C is timing of payment and cost savings.** Option A allows the ESC to capture a **\$135,000 discount through partial pre-payment**, while Option C preserves the cash

until the vehicle is delivered but requires payment at the full purchase price.

- **Option A provides the greatest overall financial value** if the ESC commits funds in advance. The \$135,000 discount represents direct savings which would limit the increase of annual assessment.
- **Options B and D preserve a higher Trust Fund balance**, providing greater financial flexibility, however, that flexibility comes at the expense of **higher costs to ESC members**.
- **Option E shifts the greatest financial burden to ESC members**, resulting in the largest annual increases in member contributions. While it preserves the Trust Fund, it does so by increasing ongoing costs to the agencies that fund the ESC.

Five Options, Side-by-Side

	Partial Pre-Payment		Payment-Up-on-Delivery		
	A	B	C	D	E
Vehicle Purchasing Price	\$1,865,000	\$1,865,000	\$2,000,000	\$2,000,000	\$2,000,000
Projected Vehicle Replacement Fund in 5-Years	\$900,000	\$900,000	\$900,000	\$900,000	\$900,000
Trust Fund Contribution to Purchase	\$613,000	\$463,000	\$613,000	\$463,000	\$163,000
Total	\$1,513,000	\$1,363,000	\$1,513,000	\$1,363,000	\$1,063,000
Total Fund Gap	\$352,000	\$502,000	\$487,000	\$637,000	\$937,000
Trust Fund Balance at the time of Purchase	\$50,000	\$200,000	\$50,000	\$200,000	\$500,000
Annual Funding Needed (FY 2027 – 2030)	\$88,000	\$148,000*	\$122,000	\$160,000	\$235,000
Annual % Increase to the Member Agencies for Vehicle Cost (FY 2027 – 2030)	2.70%	3.80%	3.70%	4.80%	7.10%

*The contribution will be approximately \$170K in the first year and approximately \$125K in the subsequent years

Option A versus Option C, Side-By-Side

A Partial Pre-Payment \$1,865,000 Cost of Vehicle		C Payment-Up-on-Delivery \$2,000,000 Cost of Vehicle	
Funding gap	\$352,000	Funding gap	\$487,000
Total Annual increase, FY 2027–2030	\$88,000	Total Annual increase, FY 2027–2030	\$122,000
% Member assessment increase	2.70%	% Member assessment increase	3.70%
Trust Fund balance	\$50,000	Trust Fund balance	\$50,000
✓ Gains Locks the \$135,000 discount, lowest cost, smallest increase to cities, ~2.7% yearly.		✓ Gains Capital stays liquid until the apparatus arrives, single payment.	
⚠ Risk Commits ~\$1M to a vendor across a ~5-year build.		⚠ Risk Costs \$135,000 more and higher member assessment versus Option A.	

VOTE IS REQUIRED

SMC EM recommends Funding Pathway Option A or Option C:

1. Option A: authorizes the Director to maintain the Trust Fund Balance at \$50,000 and increase member agencies' annual assessment by ~2.7% for vehicle replacement over FY 2027 - 2030.
2. Option C: authorizes the Director to maintain the Trust Fund Balance at \$50,000 and increase member agencies' annual assessment by ~3.7% for vehicle replacement over FY 2027 - 2030.

Independent Fire District Funding Update

At the July ESC Finance and full committee meetings, Supervisor Mueller recommended that SMC EM contact the independent fire districts in the county to request financial contributions to the HazMat vehicle replacement. No fire authority committed funds for vehicle replacement. However, the Menlo Park Fire Protection District is willing to absorb the Hazmat response and training costs for Atherton, East Palo and Menlo Park. The town and cities will provide the ESC with a letter confirming the agreement.

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MANAGEMENT

Dr. Shruti Dhapodkar
Director

County Government Center
501 Winslow Street
Redwood City, CA 94063
(650) 363-4790
www.smcgov.org/dem

Date: July 30, 2026
To: Emergency Services Council (ESC)
Cc: Nicholas Calderon, Deputy County Executive
From: Dr. Shruti Dhapodkar, Director
Subject: Severe Winter Storm Readiness

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) Climate Prediction Center projects an 81% likelihood of a very strong El Niño event developing between October 2026 and December 2026, with a 97% chance that El Niño persists through early spring 2027. This points to an above-average wet-weather season for San Mateo County (SMC). The exact totals and timing of precipitation remain unknown this far in advance.

SMC's most severe recent storms occurred during a La Niña winter between December 2022 and January 2023. The storms brought flooding, power outages, and record rainfall across the County. Severe storms can occur during La Niña, El Niño, and neutral years, so SMC EM maintains year-round preparedness.

From July 2026 through October 2026, preparedness efforts will focus on planning, identifying flood-prone areas, and sharing community preparedness actions. Emergency Services Council (ESC) members can support these efforts by encouraging residents and staff to sign up for free emergency alerts through SMC Alert at smcalert.info. Preparedness for El Niño will take a whole community effort, with actions undertaken by members of the public, municipal and agency partners, and the County.



SEVERE WINTER STORM READINESS BRIEF

Forecasted Pattern: El Niño Advisory, Very Strong Event Expected, Winter 2026-2027
SMC EM | Updated July 2026

STATUS: MONITORING | El Niño Advisory, Very Strong Event Expected

El Niño is a natural, temporary warming of the tropical Pacific Ocean that shifts winter storm patterns across the West Coast. **NOAA is now tracking one of the strongest El Niño events on record for this winter**, which raises the odds of a wetter than average season for the Bay Area. Impact strength in San Mateo County specifically remains uncertain, since El Niño's connection to winter rain is stronger and more reliable for Southern California than for the Bay Area.

CURRENT OUTLOOK

NOAA's Climate Prediction Center issued an El Niño Advisory on July 9, 2026. **There is an 81% chance of a very strong El Niño between October and December 2026, and a 97% chance El Niño persists through early spring 2027.** Even the strongest events do not produce the same impact everywhere, so SMC EM is tracking the outlook without assuming severe impacts.

- **Rain Outlook:** Above-average precipitation is favored for the Bay Area, though El Niño's connection to winter rain is weaker and less reliable here than in Southern California.
- **Historical Range:** Past Bay Area El Niño winters have ranged from significantly above normal rainfall to near normal conditions.
- **Timing:** November risk is conditional on fall rainfall. December through February is the core wet season. March carries elevated risk from saturated soils rather than a season-closing tail end.
- **Recent Precedent:** San Mateo County's most severe recent storm sequence, December 2022 into January 2023, struck during a La Niña winter, not El Niño. SMC EM prepares for severe weather every year, regardless of which conditions are present.

SEASONAL TIMELINE

JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR
READINESS WINDOW				SEVERE WINTER STORM SEASON				

Readiness: planning, identifying flood-prone areas, and sharing community preparedness actions, from July through October, ahead of the storm season.

Emergency Services Council Meeting



July 30, 2026



Agenda

01
Roll Call
Chair

02
Public Comments, Correspondence,
Announcements
Clerk

03
Action to Set Agenda and Approve
April 30, 2026 Meeting Minutes
Chair

04
Wildfire Season Outlook & Countywide
Mitigation Efforts
Director & Guests

05
HazMat Program Update
VOTE REQUIRED
Director

06
Severe Winter Storm Readiness
Staff

07
Report Outs Related to Emergency
Services Council
Chair & Members

08
Adjournment
Chair



Roll Call

Chair

01



02

*Public Comments,
Correspondence,
Announcements*
Clerk



03

Action to Set Agenda & Approve April 30, 2026 Meeting Minutes

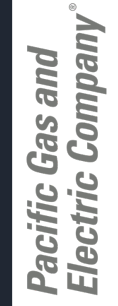
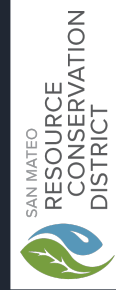
Chair



04

Wildfire Season Outlook & Countywide Mitigation Efforts

Guests



California Fire Safe Council County Coordinator Overview

- *Significant wildfire mitigation efforts are underway throughout the County to reduce wildfire risk and enhance community resilience.*
- *Partners are actively coordinating and implementing risk-reduction projects. Key partners include:*
 - *CAL FIRE*
 - *San Mateo Resource Conservation District*
 - *Midpeninsula Regional Open Space*
 - *San Francisco Public Utilities Commission*
 - *Caltrans*
 - *Pacific Gas & Electric*





CAL FIRE - Santa Cruz Unit

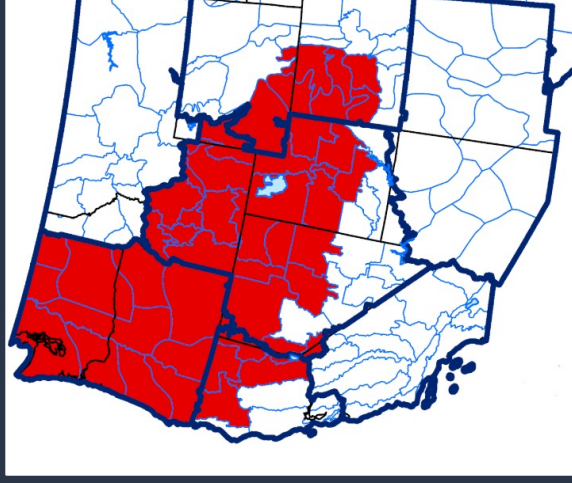


Unit Chief Jed Wilson



Wildfire Outlook

- July remained dry throughout the state
- Above normal fire potential is expected for Northeast California in August
- Fire potential over the next three months is projected to be normal near the coast and the Greater Bay Area



Source: National Interagency Fire Center. August 2026 Outlook



Mitigation Efforts



Camp Glenwood

Camp Glenwood Open House

Wednesday, October 7, 2026
9:30AM – 11:00AM

400 Log Cabin Ranch Road
La Honda, CA 94020

- Log Cabin Ranch
- Two Type I Firefighter Crew
- Fuel Reduction
- Suppression



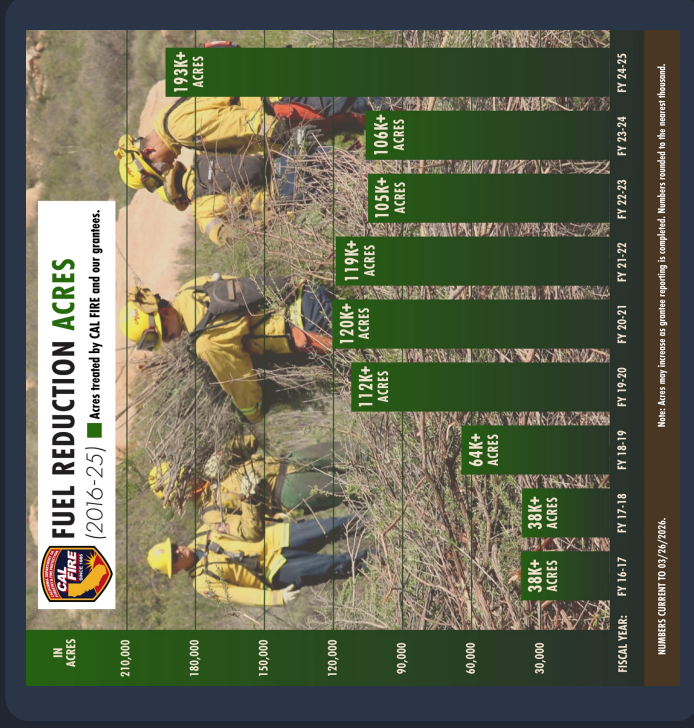
CAL FIRE Resources

- *Helitack: CAL FIRE HAWK Alma and Hollister Night Flight Capable; 1000 gallons*
- *C-130: Seven C-130 authorized and in various stages, with three in service; 4000 gallons*
- *CAL FIRE 66 HR WW: Additional year-round engines; conversion of FFI's to FFI's; traditional staffing*



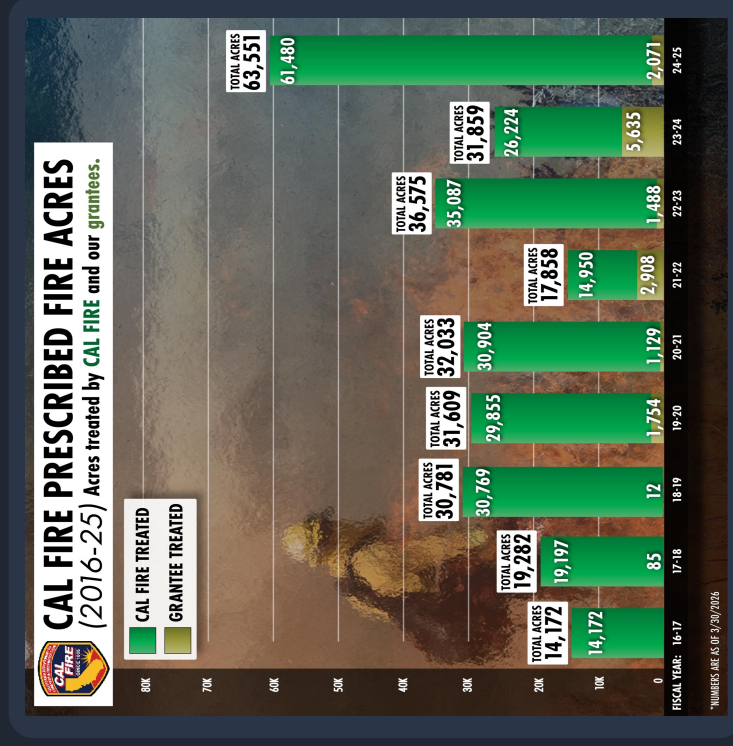
Fuel Reduction

- *Removing and thinning vegetation to lower wildfire risk*
- *SMC fuel reduction completed since 2024: 114.2 acres or ~86.4 football fields*



Prescribed Fires

- Carefully planned application of fire to reduce risk
- CAL FIRE has significantly expanded its prescribed fire program over the past decade
- SMC prescribed burns completed since 2024: 469.2 acres or ~355.5 football fields
- Total CAL FIRE grant-funded work completed since 2024: 2145.5 acres or ~1625.4 football fields



San Mateo Resource Conservation District Wildfire Mitigation Efforts

RCD's Forest Health and Fire Program connects regional priorities to resources, resulting in funded, permitted, cross-boundary implementation.

\$2.8M → ~\$25M

County funds leveraged into outside grants since 2019

AREA SERVED San Mateo County, including rural and wildland-urban interface communities, public lands, and private properties. Focusing on connecting efforts across jurisdictions to achieve landscape-scale resilience.

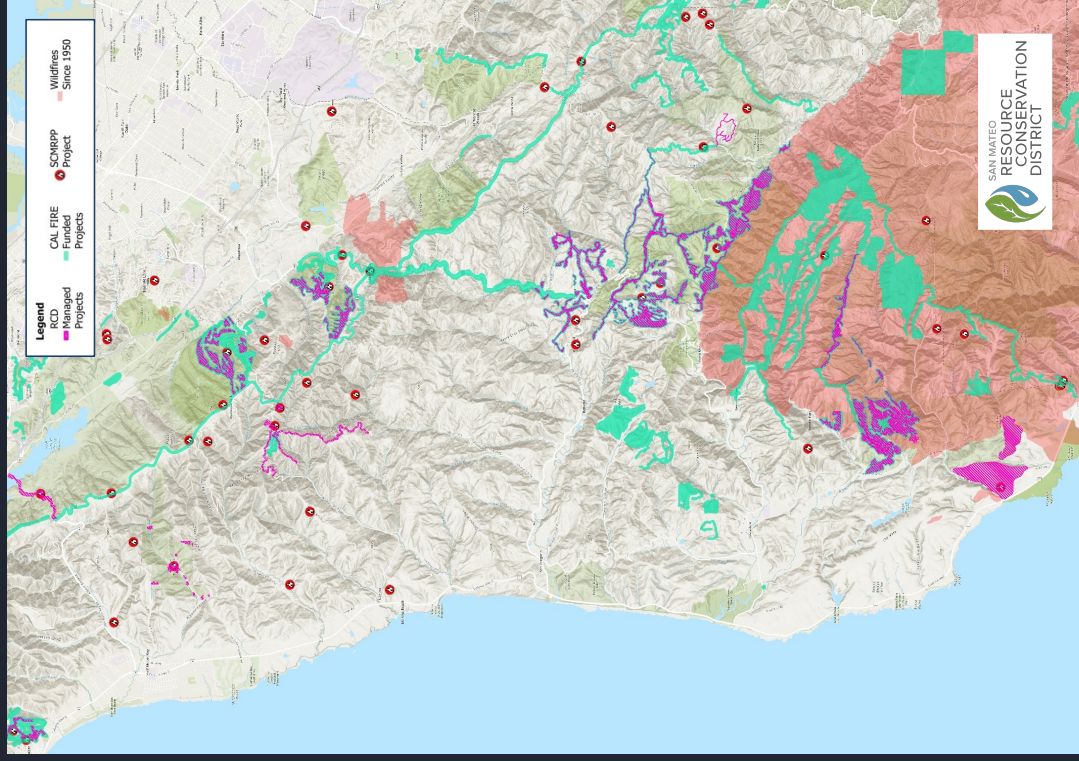
MITIGATION GOALS Improve forest health, habitat condition, resilience of natural and human communities, and landowner access to wildfire resilience resources. Identify, plan, fund, and implement projects to achieve these goals.

SUCCESS STORY Led the Santa Cruz Mountains Regional Priority Plan, developing a shared framework to identify, and prioritize wildfire resilience projects and position them for funding from Prop 4.

IMPACT Reduce barriers for agencies and landowners, increase project readiness, and align wildfire mitigation with habitat, water, access, and community resilience outcomes.

WHAT'S DIFFERENT Partnership focus, regional prioritization, programmatic permitting, landowner assistance, and implementation of diverse priorities move work faster and at larger scale.

Core partners include County Parks, SFPUC, Caltrans, MROSD, CAL FIRE, POST, State Parks, DPW, SMCEM, Fire Safe SMC, GGNRA, land trusts and private landowners.



Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District Wildfire Mitigation Efforts

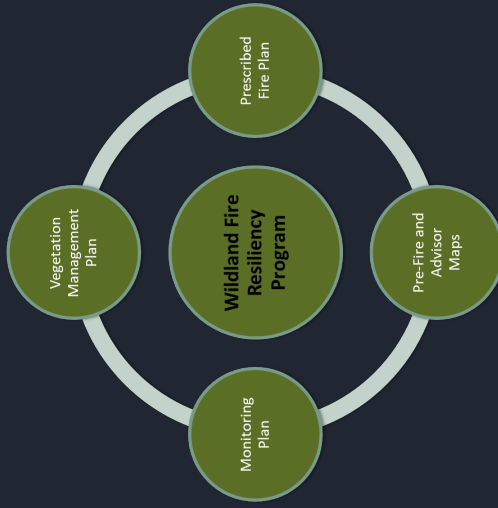


Midpen Wildland Fire Budget

- Agency budget: ~\$106M (FY27)
- Wildfire related work: ~20-25%

Impact

- Areas treated: 676 acres in 2025
- Two full-time fire crews with five personnel on each crew
- Environmentally Sensitive Vegetation Management that reduces significant wildfire risk
- Strong collaboration with partners



For more information, visit www.openspace.org/fire

San Francisco Public Utilities Commission Wildfire Mitigation Efforts

Cross-agency organization to enhance readiness, fuel reduction, and response

Cross-Agency Coordination

Bridge Gaps Between Agencies

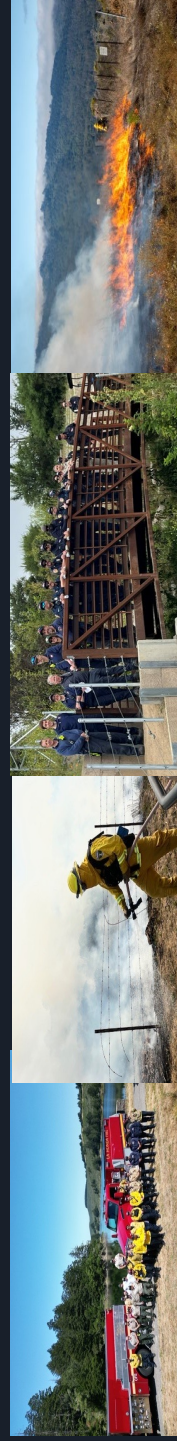
- 1 Training**
Common standards and safe execution
- 2 First responder collaboration**
Joint planning, communications, and response
- 3 Prescribed Fire Program**
Coordinated burns with Cal Fire and shared lessons learned
- 4 Vegetation management**
Aligned priorities across boundaries
- 5 Agency Tours**
Situational awareness in the watershed



San Francisco Peninsula Watershed

Operational Scale

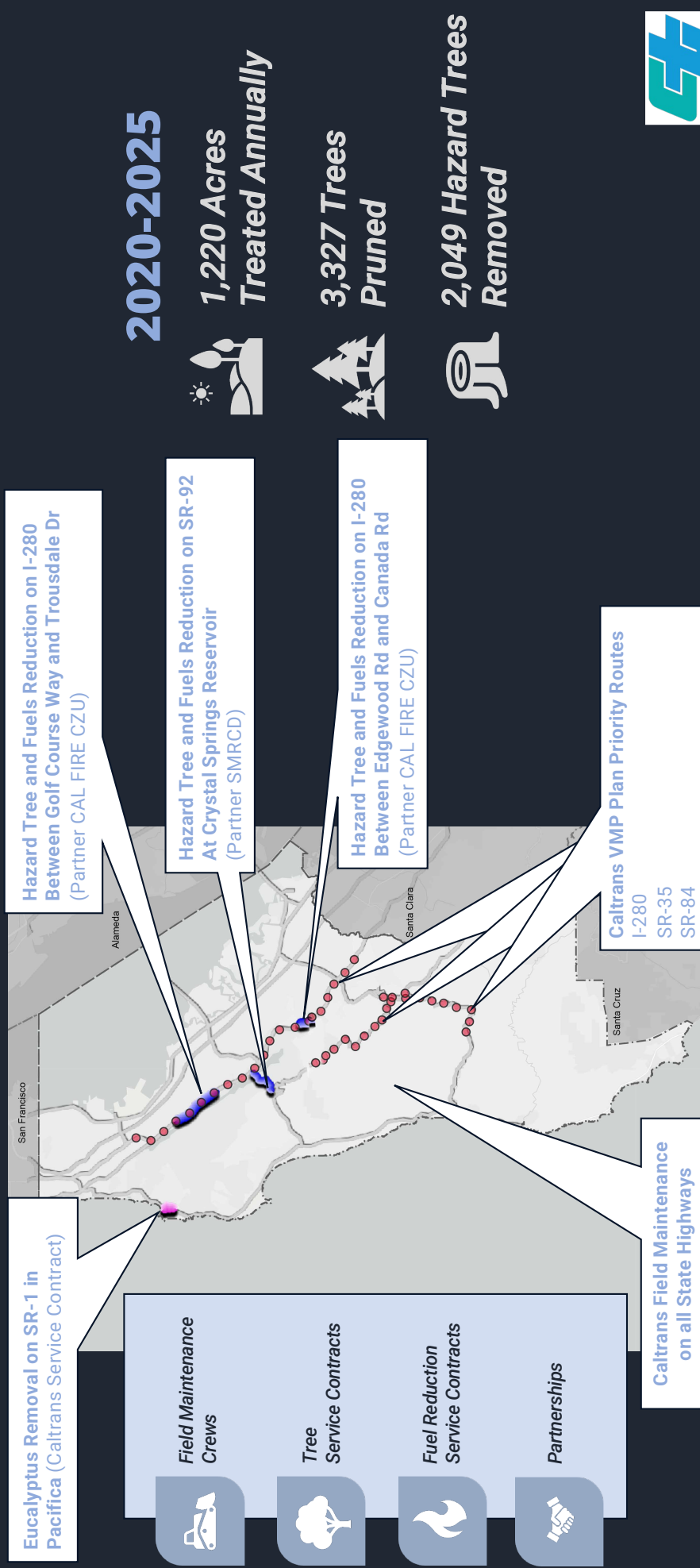
23,000 acres
15 miles urban edge
47 miles fuel breaks
112 miles roads
37 miles trails
4 reservoirs



Joint planning-Shared Objectives



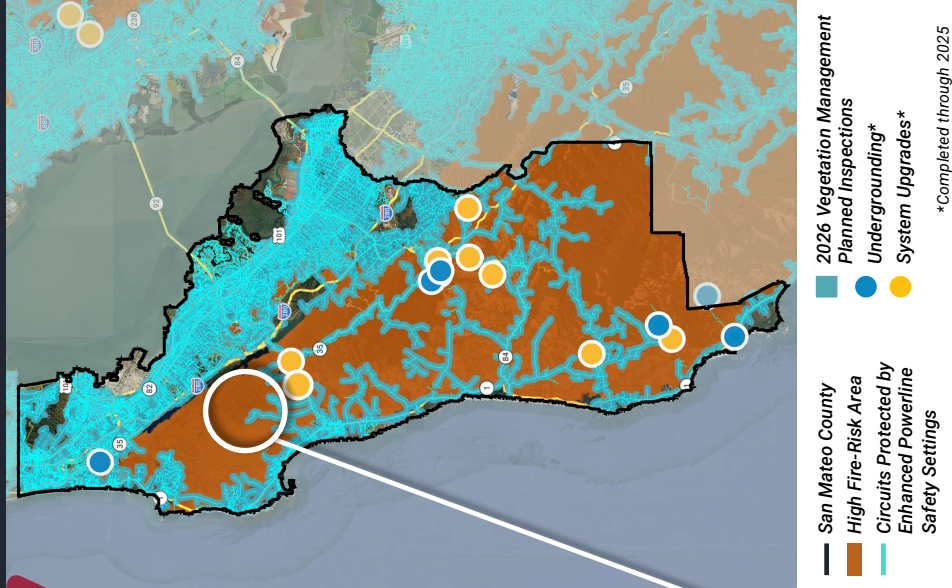
Caltrans District 4 Wildfire Mitigation Efforts



Pacific Gas & Electric's Wildfire Mitigation Efforts

Montara Mountain Emergency Access Project

- Collaboration between PG&E, CAL FIRE and local stakeholders to ensure safety and emergency access
- PG&E trimmed or removed vegetation last year that could block public safety partners from road access during an emergency
- This access helps PG&E maintain safe and reliable power for San Mateo County and decreases wildfire risk



8

Miles of powerlines undergrounded*



3

Miles strengthened poles and covered powerlines installed,* with 5 additional miles planned for 2026



1,739

Miles of trees and vegetation near powerlines inspected annually



Pacific Gas and Electric Company®

Panel Questions

- 1. Why do partnerships matter and how are they built?*
- 2. Share a story when things didn't go as planned.*
- 3. What is the one thing you would like to share with this Council?*
- 4. What would you like your communities to do?*

05

HazMat Program Update

VOTE REQUIRED

Director





EMERGENCY SERVICES COUNCIL · DECISION ITEM

HazMat Vehicle Replacement

VOTE REQUIRED



The numbers in this slide deck are estimated or forecasted and are NOT actuals

HazMat Vehicle Purchase Overview



Full cost of a
replacement
HazMat
apparatus
today

~\$2M



Typical build
time order to
delivery,
nearly four
years

~47 mo



Cost escalation
for every year the
purchase is
delayed

~10% / yr

Types of Funds



Trust Fund

A separate legal entity or account, like the ESC, held as a strategic fund, accumulates over time to support significant investments & opportunities, such as funding major countywide planning initiatives, minimizing operating costs, or capital projects.



Reserve Fund

Internal accounts designated by the organization's governing body. Reserves provide a "rainy day" buffer that gives financial stability during periods of fiscal constraint



Vehicle Replacement Fund (VRF)

An internal reserve used to accumulate money over time, typically through annual internal fees charged to member agencies, to systematically pay for new fleet vehicles when the old ones reach the end of their useful life.

Two Viable Pathways, One Trade-off



Partial Pre-Payment

Options A & B (Estimated)

~\$1,865,000

Captures a ~\$135,000 discount

- Pay portion up front to lock price and start build
- Lowest total cost & smallest member assessment
- Trades some cash now for savings later



Payment-Upon-Delivery

Options C, D & E (Estimated)

~\$2,000,000

No discount, full price paid on delivery

- Pay nothing until the apparatus arrives
- Keeps capital liquid across the build
- Costs ~\$135,000 more than pre-paying



Off the table: 100% pre-payment exceeds available funds, and a lease-purchase is not economically viable because it would still require full pre-payment.

Comparison of Options (Estimated)



	Partial Pre-Payment		Payment-Up-on-Delivery		
	A	B	C	D	E
Vehicle Purchasing Price	\$1,865,000	\$1,865,000	\$2,000,000	\$2,000,000	\$2,000,000
Projected Vehicle Replacement Fund in 5-Years	\$900,000	\$900,000	\$900,000	\$900,000	\$900,000
Trust Fund Contribution to Purchase	\$613,000	\$463,000	\$613,000	\$463,000	\$163,000
Total	\$1,513,000	\$1,363,000	\$1,513,000	\$1,363,000	\$1,063,000
Total Fund Gap	\$352,000	\$502,000	\$487,000	\$637,000	\$937,000
Trust Fund Balance at the time of Purchase	\$50,000	\$200,000	\$50,000	\$200,000	\$500,000
Annual Funding Needed (FY 2027 – 2030)	\$88,000	\$148,000*	\$122,000	\$160,000	\$235,000
Annual % Increase to the Member Agencies for Vehicle Cost (FY 2027 – 2030)	2.70%	3.80%	3.70%	4.80%	7.10%

*The contribution will be approximately \$170K in the first year and approximately \$125K in the subsequent years

Option A versus Option C, Side-by-Side



A

Partial Pre-Payment

\$1,865,000 Cost of Vehicle

Funding gap

\$352,000

Total Annual increase, FY 2027–2030

\$88,000

% Member assessment increase

2.70%

Trust Fund balance

\$50,000

✓ **Gains** Locks the \$135,000 discount, lowest cost, smallest increase to cities, ~2.7% yearly.

⚠ **Risk** Commits ~\$1M to a vendor across a ~5-year build.

C

Payment-Upon-Delivery

\$2,000,000 Cost of Vehicle

Funding gap

\$487,000

Total Annual increase, FY 2027–2030

\$122,000

% Member assessment increase

3.70%

Trust Fund balance

\$50,000

✓ **Gains** Capital stays liquid until the apparatus arrives, single payment.

⚠ **Risk** Costs \$135,000 more and higher member assessment versus Option A.

Vote Required



OPTION A · Partial Pre-Payment

Authorizes the SMC EM Director to commit the estimated \$1,865,000 with partial prepayment option:

- Leaving \$50,000 in Trust Fund
- Increase 2.70% assessment across FY 2027–2030 fill the funding gap of ~\$352,000

OR

OPTION C · Payment-Upon-Delivery

Authorizes the SMC EM Director to commit the estimated \$2,000,000 at the time of vehicle delivery:

- Leaving \$50,000 in Trust Fund
- Increase 3.70% assessment across FY 2027–2030 fill the funding gap of ~\$487,000

Options A and B (Estimated)



A

Partial Pre-Payment

\$1,865,000 Cost of Vehicle

Funding gap	\$352,000
Total Annual increase (FY 2027–2030)	\$88,000
% Member assessment increase	2.70%
Trust Fund balance	\$50,000

✓ **Gains** Locks the \$135,000 discount, lowest cost, smallest ask to ESC, ~2.7% yearly increase.

⚠ **Risk** Commits ~\$1M to a vendor across a ~5-year build.

B

Partial Pre-Payment

\$1,865,000 Cost of Vehicle

Funding gap	\$502,000
Total Annual increase (FY 2027–2030)	\$148,000
% Member assessment increase	3.80%
Trust Fund balance	\$200,000

✓ **Gains** Captures the discounted price and leaves \$200,000 in the Trust Fund balance, versus \$50,000 under A.

⚠ **Risk** Fund gap of \$502,000 and a member assessment increase of 3.80%, both higher than A. Increase of ~\$170K for FY 2026-27 due to trust fund restriction.



Options C, D, and E (Estimated)

Payment-Upon-Delivery

C

\$2,000,000 Cost of Vehicle

Funding gap	\$487,000
Total Annual increase (FY 2027–2030)	\$122,000
% Member assessment increase	3.70%
Trust Fund balance	\$50,000

✓ **Gains** Capital stays liquid until the apparatus arrives, single clean payment.

⚠ **Risk** Costs \$135,000 more and 1% additional increase in the member assessment versus option A.

Payment-Upon-Delivery

D

\$2,000,000 Cost of Vehicle

Funding gap	\$637,000
Total Annual increase (FY 2027–2030)	\$160,000
% Member assessment increase	4.80%
Trust Fund balance	\$200,000

✓ **Gains** Keeps capital liquid until delivery and holds \$200,000 in trust fund.

⚠ **Risk** Funding gap of \$637,000 and a 4.80% assessment increase, both above option C.

Payment-Upon-Delivery

E

\$2,000,000 Cost of Vehicle

Funding gap	\$937,000
Total Annual increase (FY 2027–2030)	\$235,000
% Member assessment increase	7.10%
Trust Fund balance	\$500,000

✓ **Gains** Preserves the Trust Fund at \$500,000 and keeps all capital liquid until delivery.

⚠ **Risk** Highest funding gap at \$937,000 and highest member assessment increase at 7.10%.

06

Severe Winter Storm Readiness Staff



La Niña vs El Niño

LA NIÑA

Typically brings drier-than-average conditions, fewer major storms, and increasing drought and wildlife concerns

EL NIÑO

Typically brings wetter-than-average conditions, especially to Southern California, with increased potential for flooding, coastal impacts, and strong storms when storm tracks shift north

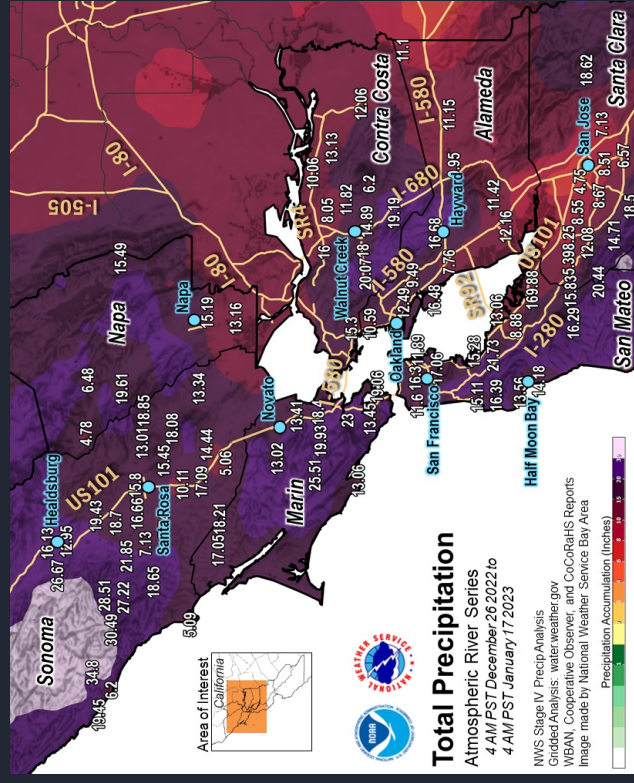
- *Major storms have hit the County in La Niña years, El Niño years, and neutral years*
- *The El Niño label shifts the odds, but it does not decide what any single season brings*

SMC EM prepares for severe weather every year, regardless of whether El Niño conditions are present.



San Mateo County Historical Weather Data

- Roughly six storm systems battered the county over three weeks in December 2022 into January 2023:
- Caused widespread flooding, downed trees, and landslides
- Numerous prolonged power outages across the County
- Parts of the county experienced record rainfall, including 15.28 inches over numerous days.
- 2023 became one of California's wettest years on record



A La Niña Advisory was in place from the U.S. Climate Prediction Center during this period. The storm sequence occurred during La Niña conditions, not El Niño conditions.

Severe Winter Storm Planning

SMC EM's standing all-hazards framework is used for any disaster, with or without notice.

1

Blue Skies

Routine monitoring & planning, no active watches or warnings



2

Grey Skies

Elevated monitoring, coordination calls with partners



3

Dark Skies

EOC activation, full interagency and public alerting

SMC is in currently in Blue Skies: normal operations, with the ability to change our posture if required.



Current El Niño Forecast

NOAA Climate Prediction Center, El Niño Advisory, issued July 9, 2026

81%

chance of a very strong El Niño,
October 2026 through December 2026

97%

chance El Niño persists through early
spring 2027

El Niño strengthened over the past month across the central and eastern equatorial Pacific, per National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) latest monthly discussion.



What This Likely Means

An above-average precipitation signal for the County this winter

NOAA's seasonal signal points here



Below Normal

Near Normal

Above Normal

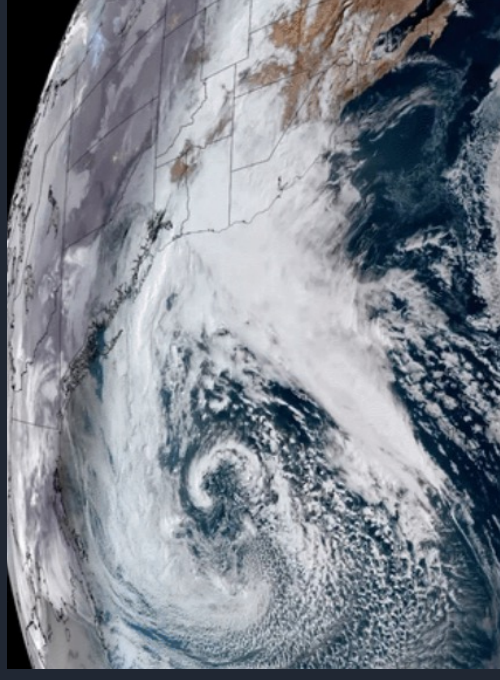
Exact totals, timing, and storm tracks are not yet known this far out.

Above normal covers a wide range, from a genuinely wet winter to conditions only slightly above average. The arrow shows a lean, not a guarantee.



Where We Currently Stand

- 1 El Niño's connection to winter rain is weaker and less reliable here in SMC than in Southern California.
- 2 Past El Niño winters in SMC have ranged from significantly above normal to near normal rainfall
- 3 Storm timing, track, and intensity remain unknown this many months out



SMC EM's posture reflects heightened monitoring appropriate to that uncertainty, not an assumption of severe impacts.



Severe Winter Storm Readiness

Basic Personal Mitigation

- *Clear drains and gutters*
- *Acquire sandbags if the property has a history of flooding*
- *Check property drainage*

What Cities Can Do

- *Plan with internal stakeholders*
- *Identify flood-prone areas with internal stakeholders*
- *Share preparedness actions with the community*

Sign Up For Alerts

- *Ensure that the public is registered for SMC Alert*
- *It is free!*
- *Sign up at smcalert.info*

Readiness actions beyond this will require continued investment.



08

Report Outs Related to Emergency Services Council

Chair & Members





Adjournment

Chair

09

IN COOPERATION
WITH CAL FIRE



Thank You



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