



# STAFF REPORT

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**Meeting Type:** Board of Directors  
**Title:** Biodiversity, Fire, & Fuels Integrated Plan (BFFIP) Updates to Increase Annual Broadcast Prescribed Burning and Addendum to the Biodiversity, Fire, and Fuels Integrated Plan Program Environmental Impact Report  
**From:** Shaun Horne, Director of Watershed Resources  
**Through:** Ben Horenstein, General Manager  
**Meeting Date:** June 16, 2026

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**TYPE OF ITEM:**      X      Action                      Information

**RECOMMENDATION:** Adopt an Addendum to the Biodiversity, Fire, and Fuels Integrated Plan Program Environmental Impact Report (PEIR), which incorporates updates to the BIFFIP to allow for up to a total of 1,000 acres of broadcast prescribed burning annually

**SUMMARY:** In October of 2019, the District adopted the Biodiversity, Fire, and Fuels Integrated Plan (BFFIP), which describes the actions the District will implement to reduce wildfire hazards and maintain and enhance ecosystem function on District watershed lands. Since adoption of the BFFIP, the District has implemented vegetation management and prescribed burning activities to reduce hazardous fuel loads, support ecological restoration, and improve wildfire resilience.

The BFFIP includes an adaptive management framework that allows the District to refine management approaches based on implementation experience, monitoring results, and evolving best practices. In July 2023, the District approved an Addendum to the BFFIP Program Environmental Impact Report (PEIR) prepared pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) to address refinements to vegetation management activities and prescribed burning<sup>1</sup> procedures under the BFFIP.

The District is now proposing revisions to the broadcast burning components of the BFFIP to allow for an increase in annual broadcast burning acreage, up to a maximum of 1,000 acres annually. The proposed revisions would expand the proposed use of broadcast fire within identified habitat types and management actions as previously analyzed in the certified PEIR. The proposed revisions would better align treatment levels with historic fire return intervals and regional wildfire resilience goals.

An Addendum to the certified BFFIP PEIR has been prepared pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15164. The Addendum evaluates the proposed revisions and concludes that the changes would not

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<sup>1</sup> Prescribed burning is inclusive of pile burning and broadcast burning.

result in new significant environmental impacts or substantially increase the severity of previously identified impacts.

**DISCUSSION:** California continues to face increasing wildfire risk as a result of climate change, historical fire suppression practices, prolonged drought conditions, and accumulated vegetation fuels. In many California ecosystems, periodic fire plays an important role in maintaining biodiversity, ecosystem function, and overall forest resilience. The District manages approximately 22,000 acres of watershed lands on Mount Tamalpais, where vegetation management activities are conducted to reduce wildfire hazards, protect water supply infrastructure, support ecological restoration, and improve ecosystem resilience.

Under the BFFIP, the District implements vegetation management activities including fuelbreak maintenance, forest thinning, invasive species management, habitat restoration, and prescribed fire. Vegetation management is conducted continuously throughout the year with the goals of reducing fuel loads, improving forest health, maintaining biodiversity, and reducing risks to District infrastructure and surrounding communities. The BFFIP also includes an adaptive management framework that allows the District to evaluate implementation activities and refine management approaches based on monitoring results, operational experience, and evolving best practices.

Since adoption of the BFFIP in 2019, the District has successfully implemented prescribed pile and broadcast burning projects in coordination with Marin County Fire Department and regional partners. These projects have demonstrated the effectiveness of prescribed fire for reducing hazardous fuel loads, supporting native ecosystems, controlling invasive vegetation, and improving landscape resilience. Broadcast burning under the current BFFIP is authorized within several Management Actions, including treatments within conifer forests, mixed hardwood forests, grasslands, oak woodlands, and habitat restoration areas. Existing BFFIP parameters currently allow for 180 acres of broadcast burning annually.

Based on six years of implementation experience, increasing regional use of prescribed fire, and updated scientific understanding regarding the ecological and wildfire resilience benefits of managed fire, staff is proposing revisions to the broadcast burning components of the BFFIP. The proposed revisions would allow for an increase in annual broadcast burning acreage, up to a maximum of 1,000 acres annually. The revised program would expand the use of broadcast burning within habitat types and management actions already analyzed in the certified PEIR and would better align treatment levels with historic fire return intervals and regional wildfire resilience goals.

The Addendum evaluates the environmental impacts associated with the proposed revisions to the BFFIP and concludes that implementation of the revised broadcast burning program would not result in new significant environmental impacts or substantially increase the severity of previously identified impacts. The Addendum further concludes that no substantial changes have occurred with respect to the project or the circumstances under which the project would be undertaken that would require preparation of a Subsequent or Supplemental EIR.

**ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW:** The District's Board of Directors certified the Program Environmental Impact Report (PEIR) for the Biodiversity, Fire, and Fuels Integrated Plan (State Clearinghouse No. 2017012007) on October 15, 2019. In July 2023, the District approved an Addendum to the BFFIP PEIR addressing refinements to vegetation management activities and broadcast burning procedures. The

current Addendum evaluates additional revisions related to the expansion of broadcast burning activities under the BFFIP.

Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15164, an Addendum to a certified EIR is appropriate when only minor technical changes or additions are necessary and none of the conditions described in CEQA Guidelines Sections 15162 or 15163 requiring preparation of a Subsequent or Supplemental EIR have occurred. The Addendum concludes that the proposed revisions would not result in new significant environmental impacts or substantially increase the severity of previously identified impacts, and that no new information of substantial importance has become available requiring additional environmental review. Accordingly, preparation of an Addendum is the appropriate level of CEQA review, additional circulation and review of public comments are not required.

**FISCAL IMPACT:** None.

**ATTACHMENT(S):**

- 1. BFFIP Addendum

DEPARTMENT OR DIVISION	DIVISION MANAGER	APPROVED
Watershed	 Shaun Horne Watershed Resources Director	 Ben Horenstein General Manager