



CNPS Conservation Symposium
In the Hot Seat: The Flora and Fire
Saturday, September 11, 2021

Schedule

9:00 – 9:15 am	Introduction	Nick Jensen
9:15 – 10:00 am	Nexus Between Wildfires, Climate Change and Population Growth in California	Jon Keeley
<p>This talk will discuss the vast differences in the driving forces of wildfires across the state. In particular, it will highlight the differences in the roles of climate, weather, fuel treatments and human demography between northern and southern California.</p>		
10:00 - 10:30 am	The Role of the Legislature in Setting Fire Policy & Priorities	Kim Delfino
<p>The California legislature has enormous influence in setting fire policy and priorities through legislation and the budget. This year, the legislature has considered many issues, including prescribed fire and cultural burning, the goals of the Fire Management Task Force, grant funding for fire prevention and forest health, and how to deal with type conversion. In addition, the legislature and administration decided on nearly \$1.5 billion in spending for fire. The talk will focus on the various bills and budget items from this year that will affect how our native plants and landscapes will be managed to reduce fire risk – for better or worse.</p>		
10:30 - 10:45 am	<i>Break</i>	
10:45 – 11:15 am	The California Vegetation Treatment Program: Background and Where the Program Stands Today	Carolyn Longstreth and Isabella Langone
<p>This talk will cover the basics of the California Vegetation Treatment Program (“CalVTP”), a statewide program whose objective is to facilitate and streamline the implementation of fuel management and wildfire prevention projects within approximately 31 million acres of California (known as the “State Responsibility Area”). The CalVTP was approved on December 30, 2019 and, to date, thirteen projects have been approved through the VTP.</p> <p>CNPS Marin Chapter Board Member, Carolyn Longstreth, and Conservation Analyst, Isabella Langone, will provide an overview of how the program functions, the standard project requirements and mitigation measures in place to protect biological resources, and how volunteers and the public can learn more about the projects approved and implemented under the CalVTP.</p>		

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11:15 – 11:30 am	Pursuing ecologically-rooted “vegetation fuel management” practices with local agencies and fire departments	Jim Hanson
<p>“Vegetation fuel management” treatments often follow a few standard rules, but can lack sufficient science and contract specifications to enable native plant community diversity to be maintained, and even enhanced. The East Bay Chapter serves an urban region surrounded mostly by oak woodland, grasslands, coastal scrub, and chaparral. We will describe how the Chapter connected with two city fire departments, a large water district, and a regional park district over the last two years to observe, discover, and share some simple field practices to sustain local native plant community diversity as part of a long-term strategy for fire resiliency.</p>		
11:30 – 11:45 am	Marin County: A Collaborative Effort to Bring Environmental Values to Fire Prevention Vegetation Management	David Long
<p>Over the last year and half the Marin Chapter has work collaboratively with other environmental organizations and our recently created Marin Wildfire Prevention Authority (MWPA) to bring environmental values to fire prevention vegetation management in the County. This has included the creation of ecologically sound practices for both vegetation treatment projects in wildlands and for defensible space. We have also established channels of regular communications with the MWPA to discuss environmental issues as they arise.</p>		
11:45 am – 12:00 pm	Using Volunteers to Prepare Legacy Trees for Prescribed Fire	Lester Lubetkin
<p>In preparation for bringing prescribed fire into a Roadless Area, the El Dorado Chapter, CNPS and Sierra Forest Legacy coordinated volunteers to protect large legacy conifers by removing ladder fuels and raking duff and vegetation from around the base of these magnificent trees. Volunteers treated about 200 legacy trees over about 100 acres between June and September of 2019. In late September 2019, the Forest Service lit the understory prescribed fire, which unfortunately turned into a wildfire due to unanticipated extremely high winds. Within the area of prescribed burn, the legacy trees all survived the burn, whereas in the wildfire area, mortality of the legacy conifers reached about 25%.</p>		
12:00 -12:15 pm	Fire Treatments in the Cambria Monterey Pine Forest	Neil Havlik
<p>This talk will provide a background of the fire treatment projects and proposals in the Cambria Monterey pine forest, and will focus on CNPS’s efforts to address our concerns with the project, especially as it moves toward implementation.</p>		



CALIFORNIA
NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

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Speaker Bios

Nick Jensen, PhD, CNPS Conservation Program Director. As Director, Nick Jensen oversees the day-to-day operations of the CNPS Conservation Program. Nick received his PhD in botany from Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden/Claremont Graduate University where he studied the flora of Tejon Ranch and evolutionary patterns in jewelflowers (*Streptanthus*). He has also worked as a botanist/ecologist for Chicago Botanic Garden, UC Davis, the US Forest Service, and as a private consultant. Nick can be reached at njensen@cnps.org.

Jon E. Keeley, is Senior ST research scientist with the U.S. Geological Survey, adjunct professor at UCLA, former program director at the National Science Foundation, recipient of a Guggenheim Fellowship and is a Fellow of the Ecological Society of America. He has spent sabbaticals in all five Mediterranean climate regions of the world. His research includes global change impacts on wildfires, and other ecological aspects of fire-prone ecosystems. He has over 400 publications, which have garnered more than 20,000 citations. He is senior author of a 2012 Cambridge University Press book: *Fire in Mediterranean Climate Ecosystems: Ecology, Evolution and Management*.

Kim Delfino is the President and Founder of Earth Advocacy. Kim provides policy and advocacy expertise to nonprofits and foundations with the goal of protecting and restoring our lands, water, and wildlife for future generations. Prior to establishing Earth Advocacy, Kim was the California Program Director for Defenders of Wildlife for two decades. Kim has nearly thirty years of experience in public and private land use planning and policy, species conservation, and water policy, including serving on the California Water Commission from 2010-2015. In addition to serving on the board of the Golden State Salmon Association, Kim serves on the boards of the Water Education Foundation; Sustainable Conservation; and the American Bar Association Section of Environment, Energy and Resources Trends. Kim began her career as an associate attorney in Washington, D.C. with the public interest law firm of Meyer & Glitzenstein, where she specialized in cases involving the Endangered Species Act, Clean Water Act, and other environmental laws. She holds a B.A. from UC Davis and a J.D., cum laude, from McGeorge School of Law at the University of the Pacific.

Carolyn Longstreth, JD, CNPS Marin Chapter. After living many years in Connecticut and practicing law there, Carolyn moved to Marin County in 2006. She was already interested in native plants and joined CNPS right away. In the years since, she has served as chapter council delegate, Board secretary and now Litigation Committee chair. She is also involved at the chapter level as board member and field trip co-chair. She has written numerous CEQA comment letters over the years. Her most recent project is advocating for the incorporation of native plant protections into vegetation projects funded by the newly formed Marin Wildfire Prevention Authority.

Isabella Langone, CNPS Conservation Analyst. Prior to joining the staff at CNPS, Isabella practiced as an attorney in the area of general business litigation. She joined CNPS in 2020 and her work heavily involves analyzing and commenting on projects being reviewed under CEQA and NEPA. She is grateful to be using her legal skills and experience to advocate for the protection and preservation of California's native flora.



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Jim Hanson chairs the Conservation Committee for East Bay CNPS. As a landscape architect on large public works projects, Jim observed how contractors, heavy equipment operators, engineering specialists, and agency standard practices interact with the land, and how even moderate project adjustments can result in greater native plant community preservation.

David Long is Co-President of the Marin Chapter of CNPS and Chapter Delegate. He is also an avid native plant gardener with a home garden that has been on many garden tours. Recently, he has been extensively involved in chapter efforts to ensure that the vegetation management projects of the new Marin Wildfire Prevention Authority protect and foster native plants and plant communities to the extent possible. He is retired from an active legal practice representing children, parents, and school districts in a number of states seeking equal and adequate educational opportunities

Lester Lubetkin is Co-Chair of the Conservation Committee of the El Dorado Chapter, CNPS. His formal training and work experience is as an Engineering Geologist, and also served as the Recreation, Wilderness and Trails Program Manager on the Eldorado National Forest. Lester has been retired for 8 years, which has allowed him to become more active in the CNPS Chapter.

Neil Havlik has been a member of CNPS since 1967. He was the Natural Resources Manager for the City of San Luis Obispo for 17 years, until 2012. He is now retired but serves on the boards of several conservation organizations in the San Luis Obispo area.