



# High Hazard Zone Update

*CA Forest Biomass Working Group*

*October 21, 2020*

*Happy Bioenergy Day!*

# Outline

- High Hazard Zone Creation
- High Hazard Zone Evolution
- Current High Hazard Zone Definition
  - Tier 1
  - Tier 2
  - Local Designation Process
- Resources



# State of Emergency

## High Hazard Zone Creation



### Executive Department State of California

#### PROCLAMATION OF A STATE OF EMERGENCY

**WHEREAS** the State of California is experiencing record drought conditions, which have persisted for the last four years; and

**WHEREAS** on January 17, 2014, I proclaimed a State of Emergency to exist throughout the State of California due to severe drought conditions; and

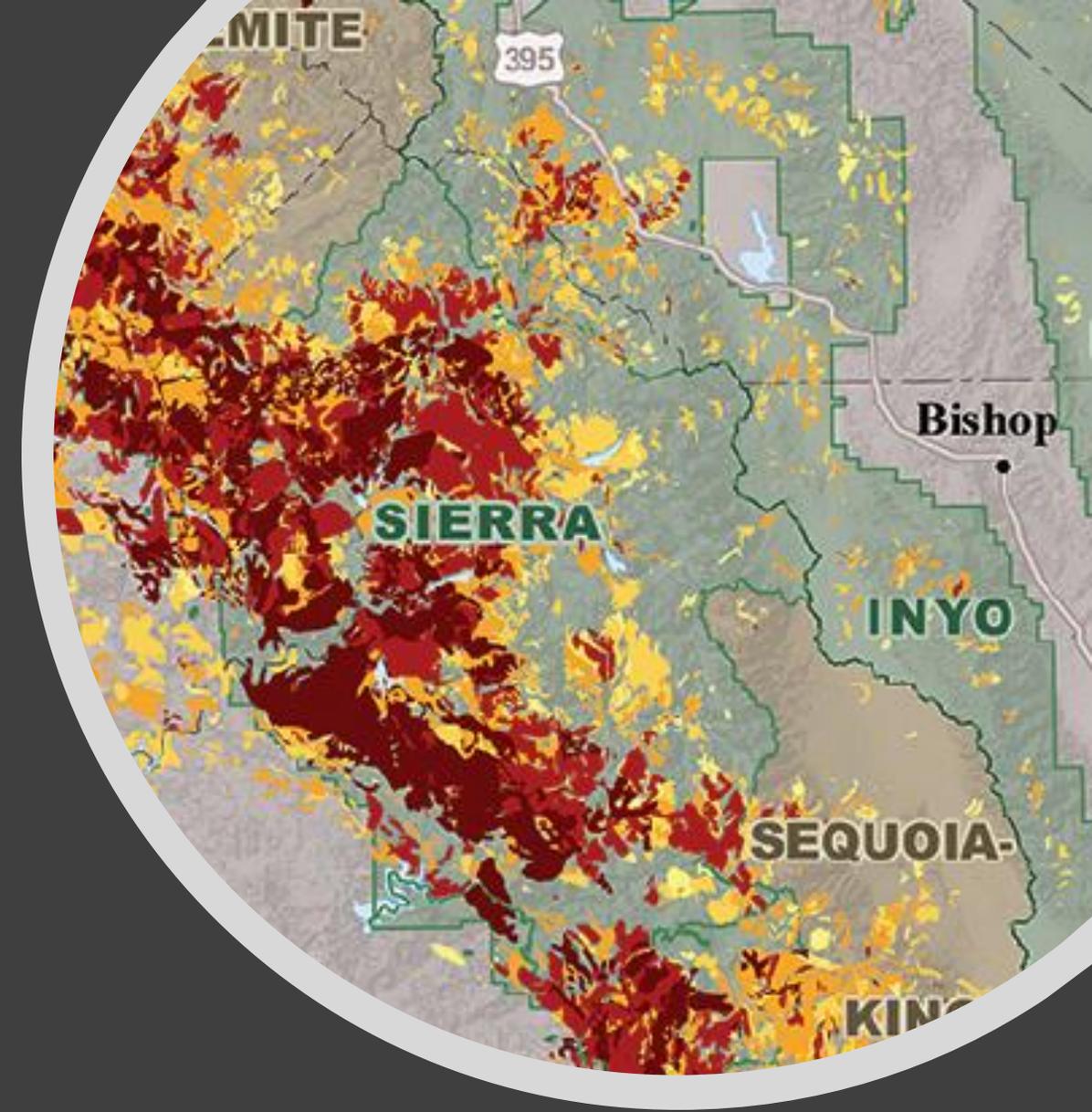
**WHEREAS** a lack of precipitation over the last four years has made trees in many regions of California susceptible to epidemic infestations of native bark beetles, which are constrained under normal circumstances by the defense mechanisms of healthy trees; and

**WHEREAS** these drought conditions and resulting bark beetle infestations across broad areas have caused vast tree mortality in several regions of the state, with the United States Forest Service estimating that over 22 million trees are dead and that tens of millions more are likely to die by the end of this year; and

**WHEREAS** recent scientific measurements suggest that the scale of this tree die-off is unprecedented in modern history; and

# Evolution of High Hazard Zones

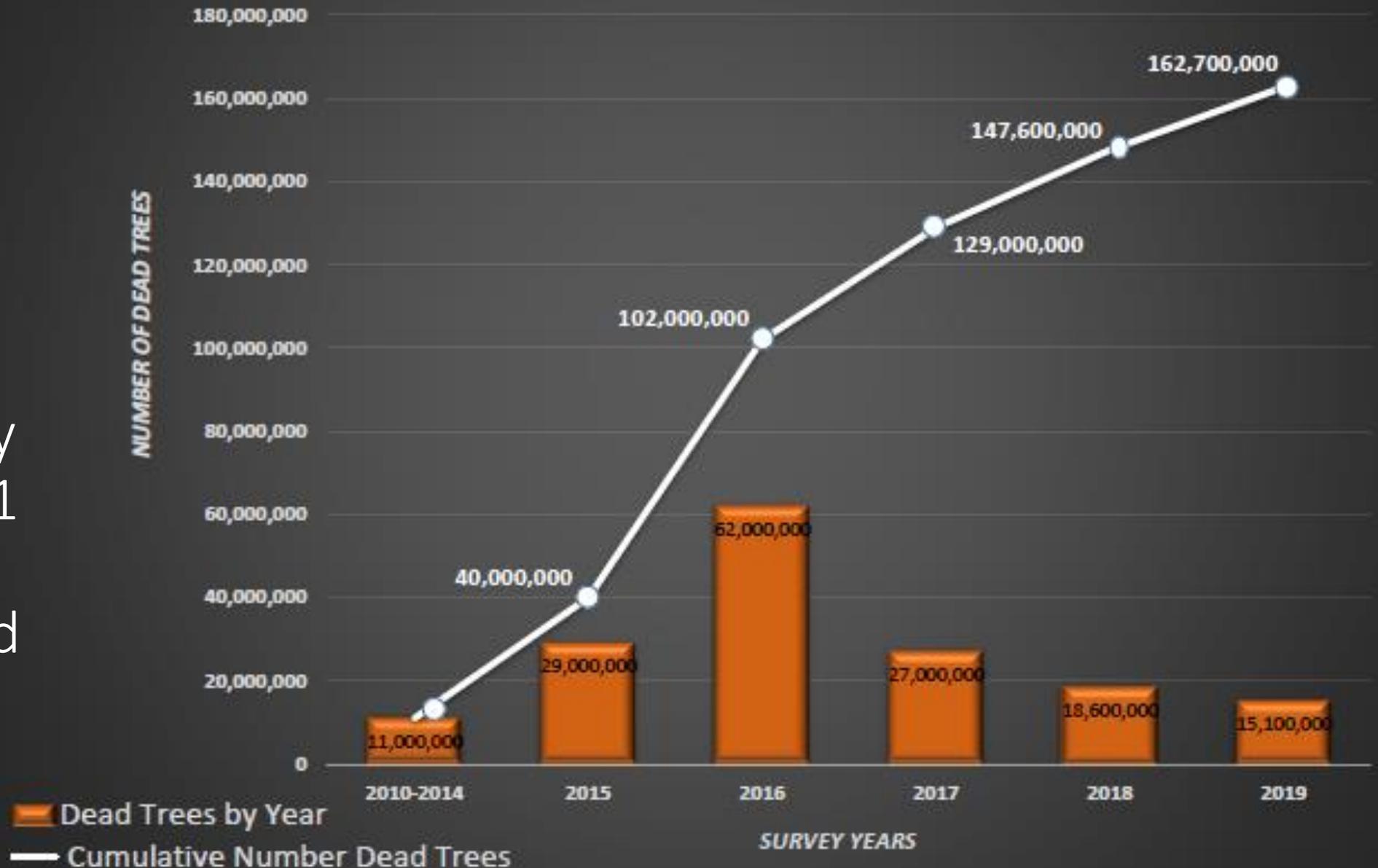
- October 30, 2015
  - Authority provided by Gov. Brown
  - Tier 1: Tree mortality coinciding with critical infrastructure
  - Tier 2 - Watersheds: HUC 12 watersheds with elevated mortality and public infrastructure.
- September 14, 2016
  - SB 859
- September 21, 2018
  - SB 901



# 2010 – 2019 Tree Mortality Progression

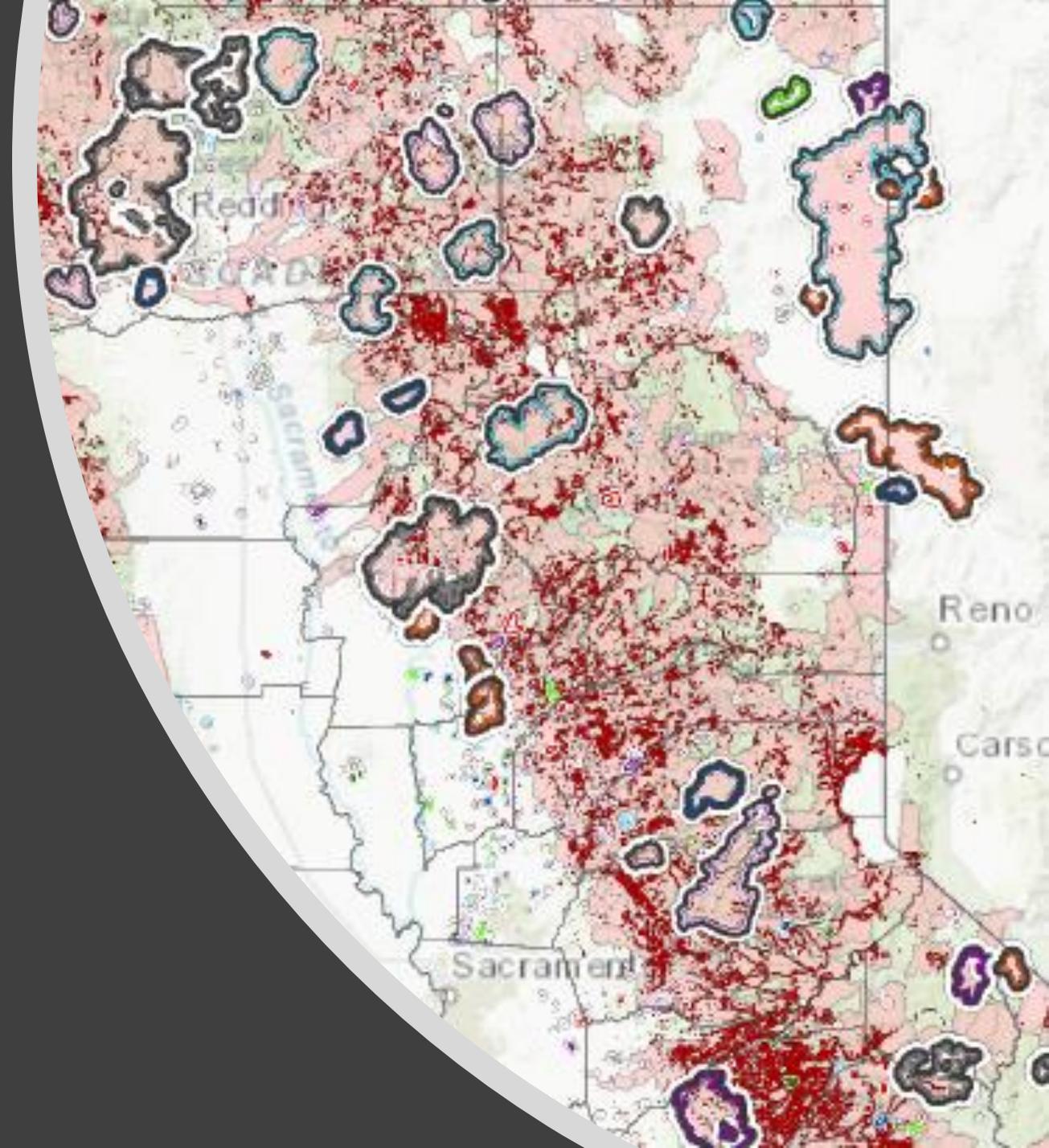
USFS Aerial  
Detection Survey  
is basis for Tier 1  
and Tier 2  
Watershed based  
designations

### Number of Dead Trees in California 2010 to 2019 (all lands)



# Evolution of High Hazard Zones

- March 1, 2019
  - Added Perimeter of any wildland fire since 2012
- July 9, 2020
  - Added High and Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones
  - Definition modified October 16, 2020 for efficient implementation



# Current High Hazard Zone Definitions

## Tier 1

Areas where tree mortality, caused by drought, coincides with critical infrastructure, including but not limited to roads, utilities, and public schools.

## Tier 2

- 1) Watersheds (HUC12, average 24,000 acres) that have significant tree mortality combined with community and natural resource assets; or
- 2) The perimeter of any wildland fire since 2012 (the beginning of the drought); or
- 3) High and Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones.

Locally  
Designated  
Tier 2  
High Hazard  
Zone -  
Watersheds

- Recognition that GIS exercise may mis-characterize local conditions.
- Opportunity for proponent to discuss mortality, infrastructure, and fire threat.
- Requires approval of USFS Forest Supervisor and CAL FIRE Unit Chief.
- As of October 7, 2020, a total of 27 watersheds have been designated through this process.

# Resources

- Web Viewers
  - Tree Mortality Viewer
  - High and Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones
  - <https://frap.fire.ca.gov/mapping/viewers/>
- Current year wildfire information
  - <https://www.fire.ca.gov/incidents/>
- GIS datasets
  - <https://frap.fire.ca.gov/mapping/gis-data/>
- Locally Designated Tier 2 Watersheds
  - <https://fmtf.fire.ca.gov/working-groups/tree-mortality/>
- Any other questions
  - [Kevin.Conway@fire.ca.gov](mailto:Kevin.Conway@fire.ca.gov)





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