

Date of Hearing: April 13, 2026

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Rhodesia Ransom, Chair

AB 2473 (Committee on Emergency Management) – As Amended April 7, 2026

SUBJECT: Wildfire Forecast and Threat Intelligence Integration Center: forecasted extreme, life-threatening fire weather conditions

SUMMARY: Requires the Wildfire Forecast and Threat Intelligence Integration Center (WFTIIC) to proactively coordinate with the National Weather Service (NWS) and the California State Warning Center to share forecasted extreme, life-threatening fire weather conditions with all potentially impacted agencies and create, and widely share, a written report analyzing extreme, life-threatening fire weather conditions; and specifies a state of emergency or a local emergency may be proclaimed based on information in the report. Specifically, **this bill:**

- 1) Requires the WFTIIC to proactively coordinate with the NWS and the California State Warning Center to share forecasted extreme, life-threatening fire weather conditions to ensure wide distribution of information for all potentially impacted agencies.
- 2) Requires the WFTIIC to create a written report analyzing any extreme, life-threatening fire weather conditions, as specified, and disseminate it to the California State Warning Center and requires the report to contain, at a minimum, the following:
 - a. Whether the NWS has issued a Particularly Dangerous Situation (PDS).
 - b. Whether the NWS has issued a Red Flag Warning.
 - c. Wind speeds.
 - d. Relative humidity.
 - e. Fuels status.
 - f. Narrative of the threat and recommended protective actions.
 - g. Geography of impacted area, including a list of counties.
 - h. Urgency and timeliness of action.
- 3) Requires the California State Warning Center to proactively disseminate the report and related information to the relevant operational area duty officers and public safety answering points. As part of this requirement, the Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES) duty officers must proactively make contact via phone, text, email, or radio with operational area duty officers when sharing the report.
- 4) Specifies a state of emergency or a local emergency may be proclaimed based on information in the report.
- 5) Requires WFTIIC to create and disseminate, via the standardized emergency management system structure (SEMS), a training program for operational areas, and their emergency managers, to interpret the analysis of the reports and learn the level of urgency, information, and potential actions to take when receiving this report.

EXISTING LAW:

- 1) Requires Cal OES and Cal FIRE to jointly establish and lead the Wildfire Forecast and Threat Intelligence Integration Center (WFTIIC), and sets forth the functions, duties, and membership of the center, including serving as the state's integrated central organizing hub for wildfire forecasting. (Government Code § 8586.7)
- 2) Declares the WFTIIC's primary mission is to collect, assess, and analyze fire weather data, atmospheric conditions, and other threat indicators that could lead to catastrophic wildfire and to reduce the likelihood and severity of wildfire incidents that could endanger the safety of persons, property, and the environment by developing and sharing intelligence products related to fire weather and fire threat conditions for government decisionmakers. (Government Code § 8586.7)
- 3) Requires the WFTIIC to provide intelligence and data in compliance with National Fire Danger Rating System standards and guidelines about wildfire threats to government agencies and designated alerting authorities, as specified, and develop intelligence products for use by public and private sector entities engaged in wildfire risk mitigation efforts. (Government Code § 8586.7)
- 4) Under the California Emergency Services Act, establishes the California Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES) within the office of the Governor for the purpose of mitigating the effects of natural, manmade, or war-caused emergencies. (Government Code § 8550)
- 5) Authorizes the Governor to proclaim a state of emergency, when specified disaster conditions are met (Government Code § 8625 and 8558)
- 6) Authorizes local officials and local governments to proclaim a local emergency, when specified disaster conditions are met (Government Code § 8630)
- 7) Grants the Governor or local government who have proclaimed an emergency to exercise certain powers in response to that emergency (Government Code § 8571)
- 8) Under the California Emergency Services Act, defines a state of emergency to mean the duly proclaimed existence of conditions of disaster or of extreme peril to the safety of persons and property within the state caused by conditions such as, among others, air pollution, fire, flood, and storm. (Government Code § 8558)
- 9) Under the California Emergency Services Act, defines a local emergency to mean the duly proclaimed existence of conditions of disaster or of extreme peril to the safety of persons and property within the territorial limits of a county, city and county, or city, caused by conditions such as, among others, air pollution, fire, flood, and storm. (Government Code § 8558)
- 10) Establishes the standardized emergency management system, as specified. (Government Code § 8607)
- 11) Requires all state agencies to use the standardized emergency management system, as specified, to coordinate multiple jurisdiction or multiple agency emergency and disaster operations. (Government Code § 8607)

FISCAL EFFECT: Unknown. This bill has not been analyzed by a fiscal committee.

COMMENTS:

Author Statement: “As California continues to face catastrophic wildfires, the state must fully leverage its existing forecasting capabilities to ensure local emergency managers receive timely, actionable intelligence ahead of extreme fire weather. This bill requires the Wildfire Forecast & Threat Intelligence Integration Center to proactively provide written reports to all potentially impacted agencies when life-threatening conditions are forecasted, including clear information on the severity, urgency, and timing of the threat. By ensuring this information is consistently shared in advance, the bill equips state and local officials with the situational awareness needed to take early action, including making timely emergency declarations that can save lives and protect communities.”

Equity Statement: “As we have seen in many recent emergencies, disasters disproportionately affect vulnerable populations. These communities often face barriers to timely information, evacuations, aid, and recovery. This bill ensures emergency managers across the state have the situational awareness needed to take early action and make emergency declarations that will help save lives.”

California’s Wildfire Forecast & Threat Intelligence Integration Center (WFTIIC). The WFTIIC serves as the state’s integrated central organizing hub for wildfire forecasting, weather information, threat intelligence gathering, analysis, and dissemination. Established by SB 209 (Dodd, 405, Statutes of 2019), the WFTIIC also coordinates wildfire threat intelligence and data sharing among federal, state, local agencies, tribal governments, utilities, other service providers, academic institutions, and nongovernmental organizations. WFTIIC’s website includes real-time data on active weather watches and incidents, forecasts, and threat indices. The WFTIIC’s mission is to 1) collect, assess, and analyze fire weather data, atmospheric conditions, and other threat indicators that could lead to catastrophic wildfires and 2) develop and share intelligence products for government decisionmakers to reduce the likelihood and severity of wildfire incidents and safeguard the lives, property, and resources of California.

WFTIIC is comprised of representatives from: Governor’s Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES), CALFIRE, the Public Utilities Commission (CPUC), California Military Department – FireGuard, University of California, California State University, California Utilities Emergency Association, at least one representative of investor-owned utility companies, at least one representative of publicly owned utilities, and any other members as designated jointly by the respective directors of Cal OES and CAL FIRE. Additionally, representatives from the National Weather Service and the United States Forest Service may be invited to join the WFTIIC.

Wildfires: Wildfires are a severe and growing threat to lives, property, and infrastructure in California. The confluence of a changing climate, urbanization, and constraints on forest management increases the urgency to address this threat. According to data from CAL FIRE, 18 of California’s 20 most destructive fires have occurred in the past decade.¹ Collectively, these fires have resulted in 231 deaths and the loss of 66, 810 structures (homes, outbuildings, and commercial properties). While fewer wildfires threatened California in 2023 due to the increased number of weather events and atmospheric rivers, the vegetative growth from the significant

¹ Statistics, CAL FIRE <https://www.fire.ca.gov/our-impact/statistics>

rainfall contributed to devastating wildfires in 2024 and 2025. In 2024, the Park Fire became the fourth-largest fire in California's history. Despite aggressive initial attack suppression efforts, the fire rapidly expanded, ultimately consuming 429,603 acres across Butte and Tehama counties. The Park Fire led to the destruction of 713 structures and damage to 57 others, prompting widespread evacuations and the temporary closure of Lassen Volcanic National Park.

In January 2025, Los Angeles County experienced the second and third most destructive fires in California history: the Palisades Fire and Eaton Fire. The University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) estimated the fires' total property and capital losses could range between \$76 billion and \$131 billion, with insured losses estimated up to \$45 billion. At its height, the fires placed an estimated 331,335 people on an evacuation advisory, with nearly 192,000 residents facing mandatory evacuation and roughly 140,000 subject to warnings. The Eaton Fire resulted in 9,413 buildings being destroyed, 1,074 structures damaged, and 19 confirmed civilian fatalities. The Palisades Fire resulted in 6,833 structures destroyed, 973 structures damaged, and 12 confirmed civilian fatalities. The blazes burned a combined 37,728 acres and leveled entire communities in the Pacific Palisades and Altadena neighborhoods of LA County.

Emergency Preparedness and Response: Cal OES is responsible for addressing natural, technological, or manmade disasters and emergencies, and preparing the State to prevent, respond to, quickly recover from, and mitigate the effects of both intentional and natural disasters. As part of their overall preparedness mission, Cal OES is required to develop a State Emergency Plan (SEP), State Hazard Mitigation Plan (SHMP), and maintains Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS) and the Emergency Management Mutual Aid System (EMMA). Cal OES, in coordination with FEMA and local partners, has developed four Catastrophic Plans to augment the State Emergency Plan.

California State Warning Center: The California State Warning Center (CSWC) is the official State Warning Point. The CSWC is staffed 24 hours a day, seven days a week to identify potential and emerging threats across the state, give alert notification to all levels of government, and provide critical situational awareness during an emergency or disaster. The mission of the CSWC is to be a central intelligence hub for statewide emergency communications and notifications. The CSWC serves as a highly reliable and accurate "one-stop" resource for emergency management, law enforcement, fire, and key decision making personnel throughout the state.

Annually, CSWC staff make over 1,155,000 notifications due to weather related warnings, fires, power outages or power utility Public Safety Power Shutoff (PSPS), seismic incidents, and other significant and potentially significant incidents that may have emergency management impacts to California. In addition, CSWC staff complete an average of 10,000 hazardous material spill reports, which results in more than 395,000 hazardous materials notifications to federal, state and local government agencies.

California's Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS): In order to respond to frequent and multiple disasters occurring anytime and anywhere in the state, it is important that emergency response agencies operate within a clear and consistent organizational structure. SEMS is the cornerstone of California's emergency response system and the fundamental structure for the response phase of emergency management. The system unifies all elements of California's emergency management community into a single integrated system and standardizes key elements.

Related Legislation:

SB 209 (Dodd, Chapter 405, Statutes of 2019) required the Office of Emergency Services (OES) and CAL FIRE to jointly establish and lead the Wildfire Forecast and Threat Intelligence Integration Center, to serve as the state's integrated central organizing hub for wildfire forecasting, weather information, threat intelligence gathering, analysis, and dissemination.

REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:

Support

None on file.

Opposition

None on file.

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