

**Department Of  
AGRICULTURAL COMMISSIONER / WEIGHTS & MEASURES  
(ACWM)**



**Community Services Cluster Presentation  
April 13, 2022**

**Weed Abatement Program**

# Weed Abatement Program



## ABOUT THE PROGRAM

**Removal of hazardous vegetation (weeds & brush) and rubbish:**

- Joint enforcement and clearance effort between
  - **County Fire (District)**      and      - **Ag. Comm./Wts. & Meas. (ACWM)**
- **ACWM:** Focus on unimproved properties (vacant lots)
- **DISTRICT:** Focus on improved properties (parcels w/structures)
- Administered in areas served by Consolidated Fire Protection Dist. of L.A. Co.  
*(All Unincorporated areas & Cities contracting Fire via District)*
- ACWM also serves some Cities outside District via mutual agreements:  
*(Glendale, La Verne, So. Pasadena, Arcadia, Santa Fe Springs, Monterey Park)*
- Legal Authority: CA Health & Safety Code (*HSC §§ 13879 & 14875-14922*)
- Buffer Zones - Los Angeles Fire Code Title 32



# Weed Abatement Program



## ABOUT THE PROGRAM

California Health and Safety Code (*HSC §§ 13879 and 14875-14922*)

- Our legal authority to conduct Weed Abatement activities
- Enables County Boards of Supervisors to declare weeds, brush & rubbish on private property to be public nuisances which must be abated



# Weed Abatement Program

## ABOUT THE PROGRAM

What is a Public Nuisance?

- Vegetation & Rubbish that pose a fire hazard to people, homes & roads
- Grows or Occurs upon declared property



# ***Weed Abatement Program***



## ABOUT THE PROGRAM

### BUFFER ZONES

Los Angeles Fire Code Title 32

- Firebreak up to 100 ft from a structure
- Firebreak up to 200 ft from structure in Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone

CAL FIRE designation based on a combination of:

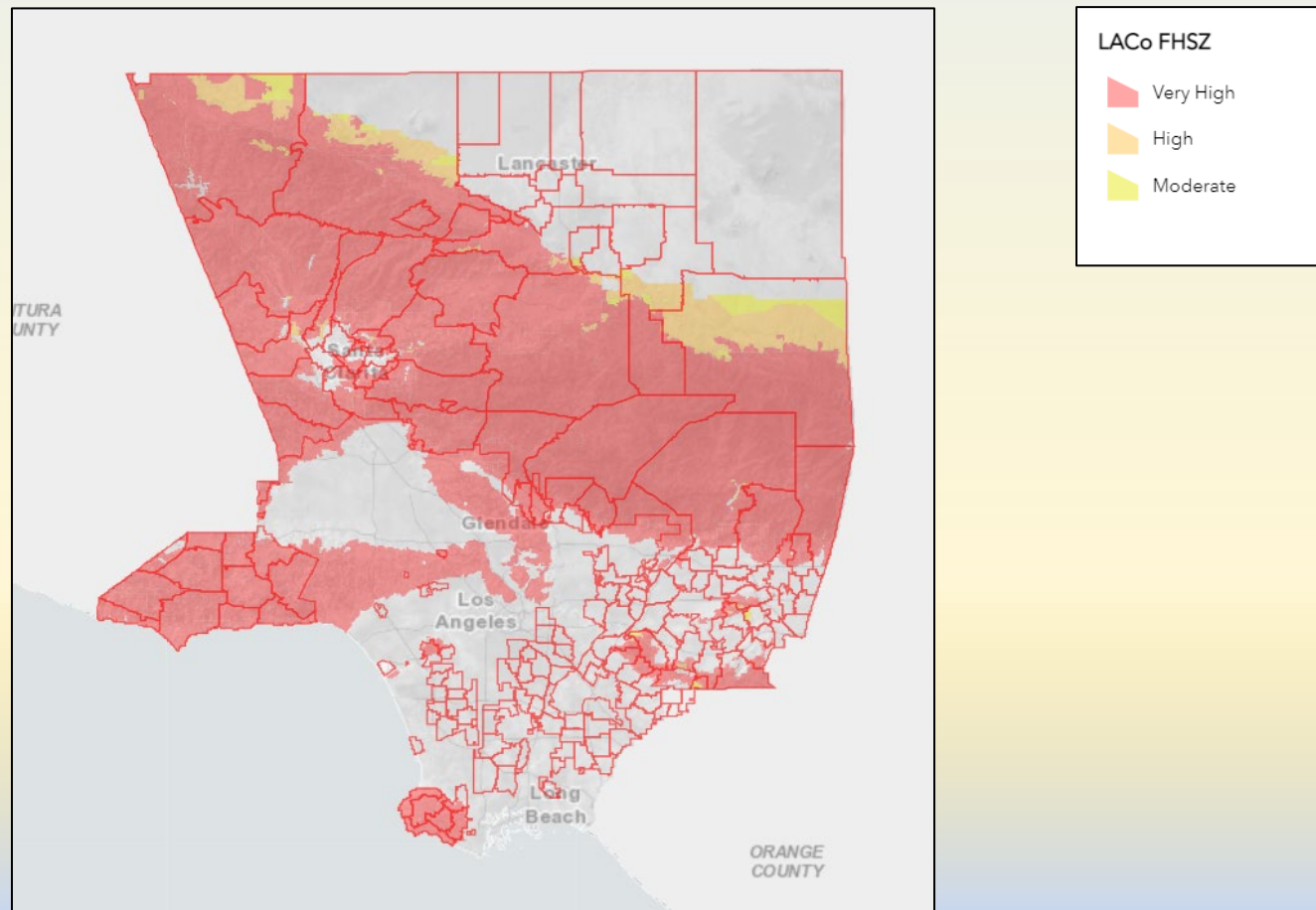
- How a fire will behave
- and*
- Probability of flames and embers threatening buildings



# Weed Abatement Program



Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone (In Red)



# Weed Abatement Program



## BOS ROLE

Each year in **January**, the Board of Supervisors passes a **resolution** declaring weeds/brush/rubbish, etc., on designated parcels as “**potential public nuisance**”

Following the resolution, each property owner is sent an Annual Notice:

- Informing of the resolution & associated public (Referee) hearings
- Outlining responsibilities as property owners
- Establishing general deadline by which properties should be cleared
- Explaining how to obtain additional information

To date in **2022**, there are **26,979 declared parcels**.

- After inspection, any property owner who does not meet the general deadline is issued a Weed/Brush Letter which includes a second clearance deadline.
- If deadline is still not met, the parcel is subject to clearance by County crews with charges assessed to the property tax. *(Typically 3K-4K sites annually)*

# Weed Abatement Program



## BOS ROLE (cont'd)

Each year in March, a second Board Letter is introduced:

- ACWM prepares & includes a Report of Referee Hearings (*Joined by Fire*)
- ACWM seeks order to enforce removal of hazardous brush, dry grass, weeds, rubbish, illegal dumping, combustible growth or flammable vegetation (*incl. native & ornamental vegetation*) from unimproved properties in L.A. County

Each year in July, a third Board Letter is introduced:

- ACWM provides a list of hazardous vegetation/rubbish abatement work and enforcement charges
- Includes Annual Fee
- Once confirmed, Auditor-Controller enters the amounts of the assessments against respective parcels of land as they appear on the assessment roll.



# *Weed Abatement Program*

## TUMBLEWEED REMOVAL ON EASTERN HILL





# *Weed Abatement Program*



## TRACTOR MOWING & DISCING (VENDOR)



# ***Weed Abatement Program***



## **ANNUAL FEE**

- In 1989, Board of Supervisors authorized ACWM to place an inspection fee on each parcel included in the program,  
whether or not actual clearance work proves necessary by ACWM
- Result: Program is operated at no cost to the general taxpayers
- Each year, the inspection fee is re-evaluated and receives approval from the L.A. County Auditor-Controller
- The annual fee is adjusted every year, but generally ~ \$43 - \$48 range

**2022 Annual Fee: \$45.05.**



# ***Weed Abatement Program***



## **ANNUAL FEE**

### **WHAT DOES THE ANNUAL FEE COVER?**

**Recovers costs ACWM incurs for Program-related activities, such as:**

- **Inspections** *(At least two physical inspections of properties per year)*
- **Property Ownership** *(determine who owns each of Program's 26K+ properties)*
- **Notices and Owner Response**  
*(each year, ACWM mails tens of thousands of letters to property owners & responds to thousands of inquiries from various property owners)*
- **Onsite Meetings** *(ACWM staff meets w/any owner to discuss requirements)*
- **Investigation of Hazard Complaints** *(Respond to 100s of reported hazards)*

# ***Weed Abatement Program***



## **ABOUT THE PROGRAM**

### **CAN THE ANNUAL FEE BE REMOVED?**

Parcel owners can contact ACWM's office at any time to inquire if their parcel is required to be declared, thus relieving them of the annual fee.

To determine if a parcel may be removed, the following questions are posed:

- Is the parcel vacant?
- Is parcel within 100/200 ft from structures (*portions or in its entirety*)?

Any "NO" answer is reason for a parcel's removal from our program.

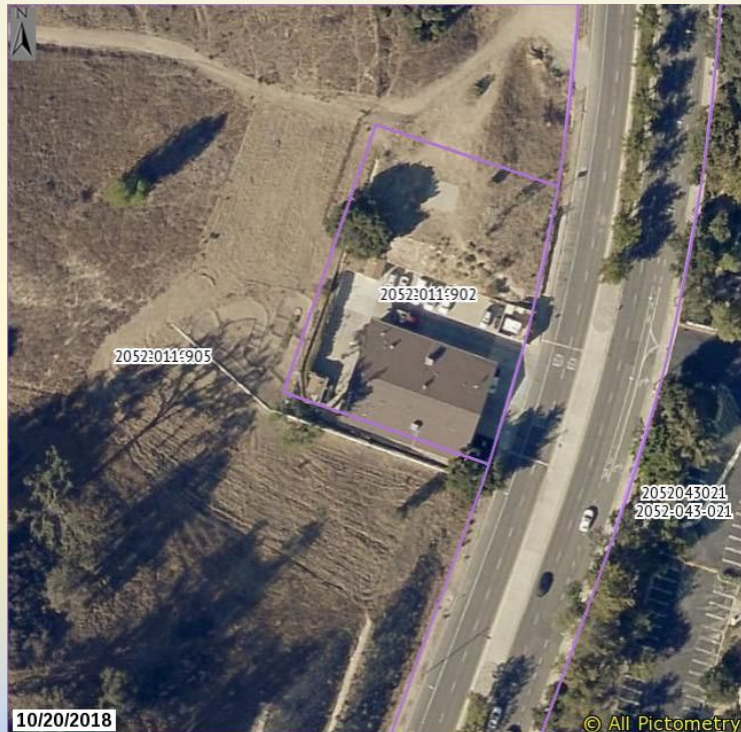
# Weed Abatement Program

## PROGRAM IN ACTION

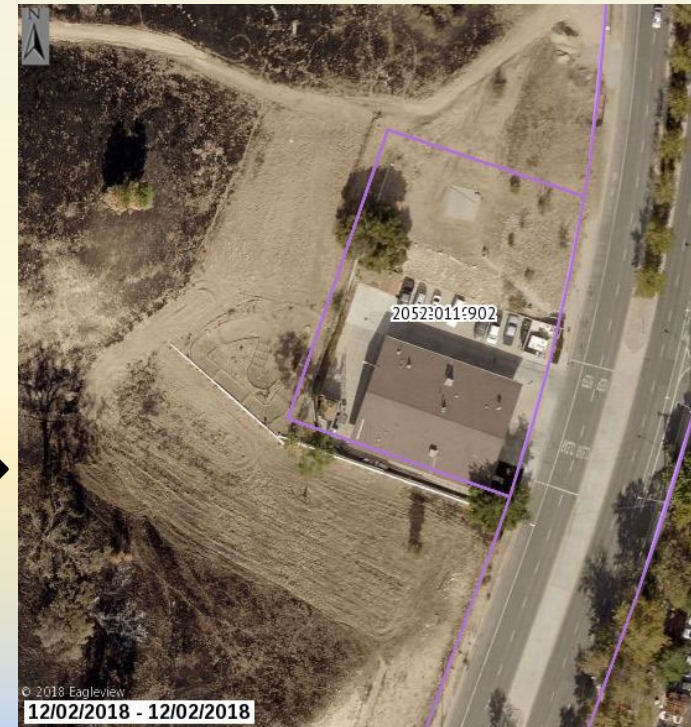


- For decades, the Program has provided **defensible space** for firefighters, demonstrably **saved countless homes** from fires, and most undoubtedly **prevented hundreds of fires from starting** in the first place.

“Before/After” aerial pictures of structure in Woolsey Fire path (Nov. 8-21, 2018)



Note:  
← Discing marks  
around structure....  
and  
.....Charred earth  
approaching them →





# ***Weed Abatement Program***



**ACWM:  
Proud of  
all we do...**



**Teaming with  
prop. owners  
where we can...**

**Enforcing where  
we must.....**



**Saving lives,  
properties,  
homes and  
communities  
from wildfires**



# Equity in Infrastructure Update

Community Services Cluster  
April 13, 2022

# Addressing Infrastructure Inequity

## August 10, 2021 Board Motion: “Addressing Infrastructure Inequity”



- Assess existing infrastructure framework
- Conduct meaningful community engagement
- Define key terms/metrics relative to Equity
- Develop proposed infrastructure framework



# Collaborative Partners



## County Department Partners



# Justice40



POLLUTION

Elevated exposure to pollution & associated health problems.



CLIMATE

Uneven distribution of climate-related effects on the most vulnerable communities and residents.



FUNDING & CAPACITY

Unequal local government resources, community capacity, & opportunities.



OCCUPATIONAL IMPACTS

Disproportionate access to jobs during the transition to a clean economy.



ENVIRONMENTAL  
POLICY COSTS &  
BENEFITS

Uneven distribution of costs & benefits of green investments and environmental programs.

# Process

**Phase I:** On-Boarding  
and Assessment  
(February –  
April)

**Phase II:** Listening,  
Learning, and  
Making  
Meaning  
(May – August)

**Phase III:** Crafting the  
Framework  
(September –  
December)

**Phase IV:** Supporting  
Effective  
Implementation  
(January –  
March)



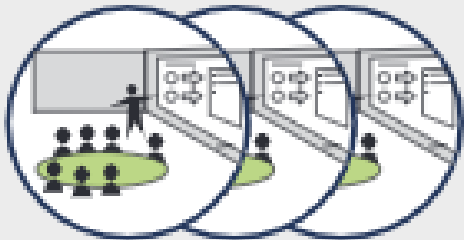
# Stakeholder Engagement



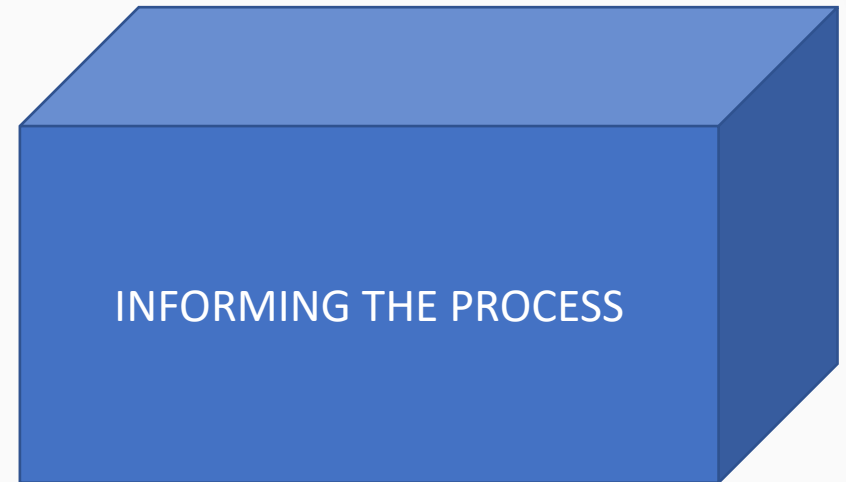
Stakeholder  
Interviews (30)



Board Advisory Committee Meetings



Community Engagement



# Moving Forward



**Report back to Board with Progress**

**August 2022**



**Report back to Board with proposed  
Equity-informed Infrastructure Framework**

**December 2022**



**Implement Equity-Informed  
Infrastructure Framework**

**March 2023**

Questions?