

(July 2015)

The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) monitors and evaluates the Fire Environment as it influences the various aspects of fire protection and fire prevention. The Public Resources Code (PRC) provides CAL FIRE with this authority. The PRC requires the Board of Forestry to classify lands, determine the intensity of protection, and to provide a plan for fire protection. Board policy further clarifies this mandate by stating that the fire plan should recognize those factors affecting resource values, such as degree of fire hazard and risk, and difficulty of fire control.

One of the primary factors defining the degree of hazard and risk and the difficulty of fire control is the weather. The three principle factors influencing fire behavior are fuels, weather, and topography, otherwise known as the Fire Environment. Of all the Fire Environment factors, weather is the most dynamic and difficult to predict. Furthermore, weather greatly influences the ways in which the other two factors affect fire behavior.

In addition to the mandates of the Board of Forestry, Section 4113 of the PRC defines the charge of forest officers as "preventing and extinguishing forest fires." Implicit in this charge is the need to know and predict the effect of those factors that most influence the fire environment.

[\(see Next Section\)](#)

[\(see Handbook Table of Contents\)](#)

[\(see Forms and Form Samples\)](#)