



# Wildland Urban Interface Symposium



## Speaker and dignitary Bios:

### **California State Senator Mike McGuire**

Senator Mike McGuire is a third generation Northern Californian, whose family farmed prunes and grapes in the Alexander Valley for nearly a half century. Raised by his mom and grandma, Mike worked his way through high school and college and enjoyed a career in the radio and television industries.

Mike has always been a tireless advocate for our environment. He has helped protect and preserve tens of tens of thousands of acres of open space, watersheds and coast and he successfully fought to keep our regional and state parks open to the public.

### **Robert Pesapane, FEMA Branch Director and Federal Preparedness Coordinator, Region IX**

In 2016, Robert M. Pesapane was an Emergency Management Specialist at the Federal Emergency Management Agency in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. He began working at the Federal Emergency Management Agency in 2010 .

### **Eric Lamoureux, Cal OES Acting Deputy Director, Response and Recovery**

Mr. Lamoureux began his career in 1993 with the California Integrated Waste Management Board where he handled media relations activities, managed three successful statewide environmental education campaigns, and edited the agency's award-winning "Waste Watcher" newsletter. In 1999 he was the California Environmental Protection Agency's lead spokesperson on-scene for the Westley Tire Fire in Stanislaus County.

### **Jodi Traversaro, Cal OES Regional Administrator**

The California Governor's Office of Emergency Services exists to enhance safety and preparedness in California through strong leadership, collaboration, and meaningful partnerships. We protect lives and property by effectively preparing for, preventing, responding to, and recovering from all threats, crimes, hazards, and emergencies.

### **Chief Deputy Commissioner Joel Laucher**

Joel Laucher is the Chief Deputy Commissioner for the Department of Insurances. He joined the Department in 1985 as a market conduct examiner and has managed the market conduct, consumer services, and rate regulation activities during his tenure there. Joel is a graduate of UC Santa Cruz.

### **Marin County Supervisor Damon Connolly**

Sworn in January, 2015 as Marin County Supervisor, Damon represents District 1 which includes San Rafael and its unincorporated neighborhoods. He is the Board's chair for 2018. He previously served on the San Rafael City Council, and Dixie School Board. Damon was also a founding member of the MCE Clean Energy Board of Directors.

Damon is Marin County's representative on the Metropolitan Transportation Commission, serves on the SMART Board and chairs the Workforce Alliance of the North Bay. His Board of Supervisors subcommittee assignments include Homelessness Planning, Affordable Housing, Climate Action Plan Implementation, and Medical Cannabis.

Before opening his own law practice in San Rafael, Damon was a Supervising Deputy California Attorney General. A Bay Area native, Damon graduated college and law school at UC Berkeley. He resides in North San Rafael with his wife, Dawn, and their two daughters.

### **City of San Rafael Mayor Gary O. Phillips**

In 1994, Gary ran for a seat on the San Rafael City Council and won the election. Ultimately, he was re-elected to the Council three times serving from 1995 to 2007, and elected Mayor in 2011. As a Mayor, Gary is known for his abilities to bring consensus, make decisions based on his principles and provide strong leadership at critical times. During his service on the San Rafael City Council, Gary has worked tirelessly to revitalize Downtown, improve our City parks and community centers and make sound environmental choices. Gary's professional skills as a Certified Public Accountant also give him an expert understanding of fiscal matters and budgetary issues before the Council.

### **Battalion Chief Christie Neill (MCFD)**

Christie started her career in 1984 as a wildland firefighter for the US Forest Service. She worked her way up through the ranks working on engines, helitack, and hotshot and fuels crews, including Fuels Battalion, Forest Division Chief positions until moving to the USFS Regional Office as Regional Fuels and Fire Use Specialist. Christie has an A.S. in Forestry and Technical Fire Management Certification from Colorado State University. She promoted to the National Park Service Pacific West Regional Office 2004 - 2014 where she held both the Deputy Regional Fire Management Officer Fuels and Operations positions.

### **Tony Walls, Senior Vegetation Program Manager (PG&E)**

Anthony Walls is the Vegetation Program Manager for Pacific Gas and Electric in Marin and Napa Counties. He received his bachelor degree from Sonoma State University. He is a Certified Arborist, a Utility Specialist and a member of the International Society of Arboriculture (ISA) and Utility Arborist Association (UAA). He joined FIRESafe MARIN as a Board Member in 2016.

### **Rich Shortall, FireSafe Marin Board President (FireSafe Marin)**

Richard Shortall is a retired San Francisco Fire Department Assistant Deputy Chief. He has also served as the SFFD EMS Chief, Deputy Director of the San Francisco Office of Emergency Services and General Manager of the Bay Area SUASI Homeland Security Program. Rich is currently a member of the Board of the Ross Valley Fire Department and is an elected Director of the Sleepy Hollow Fire Protection District. He joined FIRESafe MARIN as a Director in 2015.

### **Sarah Minnick, Vegetation and Fire Ecologist (Marin County Parks)**

Sarah has over ten years of experience in land conservation and vegetation management, including six years working for the National Park Service. In her current position at Marin County Parks, she focuses on vegetation and biodiversity management, including habitat restoration and monitoring, fire protection, invasive weed control, rare species mapping, monitoring and preservation, and community engagement. She holds an undergraduate degree in Mathematics/Biology and a graduate degree in Conservation Ecology

### **Natural Resource Program Manager Cyndy Chafer (California State Parks – Bay Area District)**

Cyndy Shafer manages the Natural Resource Program for the Bay Area District of California State Parks. Cyndy has been with State Parks for nearly 20 years, and currently oversees vegetation and wildlife management, habitat restoration, and other natural resource projects in State Parks around the Bay Area. She and her staff are part of State Parks wildfire response, working as Resource Advisors with fire agencies when there is a wildfire incident in a State Park.

### **Deputy Chief Mark Brown (MCFD)**

Chief Brown is the Deputy Fire Chief for the Marin County Fire Department. He is a 32 year veteran of the fire service and has been with the Marin County Fire Department for 27 years. Mark is a Type I Operations Section Chief on Cal Fire Incident Management Team 4. He is also one of the Incident Commanders of the North Bay Incident Management Team, a Type III All-Hazards Incident Management Team. Mark has been deployed to numerous large scale fires, including the Nuns Fire as the Incident Commander during the first 24 hours, the Operations Section Chief for the Thomas, Soberanes and Valley Fires.

### **Emergency Services Manager Chris Reilly (OES)**

Chris Reilly is an Emergency Services Manager with the Marin County Sheriff's Office. Chris is a Certified Emergency Manager (CEM©) through the International Association of Emergency Managers (IAEM) and holds a certificate from California State Office of Emergency Services as an Emergency Management Specialist. Prior to entering the field of emergency management, He worked in the fire service for 30 years and retired as a Deputy Fire Chief. Chris achieved recognition as an Executive Fire Officer (EFO) through the National Fire Academy in Emmitsburg, Maryland. He holds a BA in political science and public administration from California State University – East Bay and a JD from Golden Gate University, San Francisco.



**San Rafael Fire Department**

**-ISO Class 1-**

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