

Wildfire Safety Working Group Meeting

Wildfire Risk Model Deep Dive #1

Thursday, September 26, 2024

9:00am – 11:00am

MS Teams

Attendees

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Craig Clouet, Office of Gov.	Sherilyn Hayashida, DCCA
Matthew Wall, HIEMA	Madeline Krueger
Matt Lee, FEP	Riley Ceria, HE
Henry Curtis, LOL	Colton Ching, HE
Amir Angha, FEP	Marc Asano, HE
Marcey Chang, DCCA	Ken Aramaki, HE
Francis Kau	Christine Wang, FEP
Sean Mastin, Alta Fiber	Sarah Harris
Rick Pinkerton, HE	Camryn Shigaya, HDR
Scott Boone, DCCA	Vanita Chhabra, Quanta
Randall Shiro, HE	Jack Lee
Kyra Howe, PUC	Janet Yocum, FEMA
Nadja Turek, Alta Fiber	Shari Ishikawa, HE

Agenda

Intro to Wildfire (WF) Risk Modeling

- Utility model being used is focused on helping Hawaiian Electric make determinations for WF safety
- Model may look different than other models (CA) to tailor to Hawaii-specific circumstances and environment

Requirements/Capabilities

- Stakeholder: How are you thinking about time, how it relates to changes in risk? With climate change, a current low risk area could be high risk in the future, so does the model account for that? How does climate change over time affect modeling?
 - HE: When we look at risk maps (high risk tier, med risk tier, etc.) we'll try to update them on a regular basis (every 3 years or so), as the environment changes relative to the infrastructure. There are climate models, but we're planning to refresh our models on a periodic basis to update risk.
 - HE: Current risk modeling is for the next 2-3 years, but longer term we're going to update things based on actual changing conditions. This particular risk model isn't being built for the longer term (20-30 years).
- Stakeholder: Are you looking at critical habitats that could be at risk in addition to at risk communities?
 - HE: Primarily looked at urban interface. Focused on likelihood of consequences based on infrastructure, buildings, loss of life, etc. Are there data sources that we could use?

- Stakeholder: Hardening docket shows that some lines go through critical habitat and should be considered. Suggest checking with The Nature Conservancy for maps of critical habitats.
- Stakeholder: How does RSE equation work if we're only considering the next 2-3 years?
 - HE: Starting point could be lower in future RSE calculations because mitigation has been applied. Constantly rereviewing system risk and evaluating updated mitigation and environment. The model takes into account the cost and risk over the life of a project (e.g., 30 years for a distribution asset).
- Stakeholder: If annual risk reduction value moves over time then there may be more financial benefits over time
 - HE: Since this is the first model, there are assumptions in place until we get more data. The model will definitely change in the future based on weather, grasses, environment, existing/recently implemented mitigation, efficacy of mitigation, etc.

Informing Mitigation Decisions

- HE: Impacts to critical habitats could be added here.
 - HE Consultant: We did look at critical bird habitats, but more information and data can be added as we continue.
- Stakeholder: I was thinking more plants and other things that cannot move if there's a fire.
 - HE: Thanks, we can look at that. Want to look at things downstream of lines.

Discussion

- Stakeholder: Are there any fire watchers on Molokai?
 - HE: Are you referring to fire spotters? Yes, they're roving spotters, so they move around. Also, cameras detected the most recent fire there.
- Stakeholder: Where are you in the develop model flow chart?
 - HE: We have a framework and we're doing model testing. There are a lot of decisions that need to be made that we hadn't anticipated, so we're working internally on those decisions. We want to provide more info but will need to do more work before sharing out. We're currently in model development and testing.
 - Stakeholder: Is there a modeling consultant or is this happening just in-house?
 - HE: HE Consultant is our modeling consultant and has experience working on California wildfire modeling. There are 700 separate circuits/feeders and are working to prioritize, so we're considering a lot of data.
- Stakeholder: Appreciate insights into modeling, both qualitative and quantitative data. Would like to see which circuits have the most common occurrence of causing ignitions/outages.
- Stakeholder: How are the 700 circuits/feeders being organized in the model? How many of those factors should be counted for and are they all worth it?
 - HE: In the next meeting we can talk about the more influential/sensitive circuits/feeders in the model. Important to ask ourselves if we're weighing smaller, frequent fires the same as less frequent, catastrophic fires. Preparing for large fires even if they're not happening regularly.
- Stakeholder: Interested in how quantitative criteria is being weighted with quantitative material. Also, mitigation actions, execution capacity, and other matters can be affected by others. How do we capture/account for this?
- Stakeholder: I know this is HECO's plan but are there ways you are working with other utilities so ratepayers aren't paying for all improvements. Can utilities or telecoms look at each other's plans?

- HE: We can think about it.
- Stakeholder: A lot of times, DOT, utility and telecom infrastructure share space. Can we all come together as agencies and debrief projects in a trusted, safe, non-governmental environment? Hawaii is a relation-based place, so I think this could be helpful.
 - Stakeholder: Also include water utility in conversations
 - HE: These working group meetings have been so helpful and we're thinking about keeping these meetings going for other entities to provide updates and information