

BOARD OF FORESTRY AND FIRE PROTECTION

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**MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING REPORT**

-Meeting Held February 3, 2009-

MEETING ATTENDANCE

Committee Members Doug Piirto (Chair), Pam Giacomini, Tom Walz; Bill Snyder, Helge Eng, Russ Henly (*CAL FIRE*); Rhianna Lee (CA Department of Fish & Game); John Helms (Chair, Jackson Advisory Group); Addie Jacobson, Susan Robinson (Ebbets Pass Forest Watch); Arne Hultgren (Roseburg Resources); Richard Gienger (Humboldt Watershed Council); Jay Francis (Collins Pine); Bob Rynearson (Wm. Beaty & Associates).

Note: agenda items appear below in the order in which they were discussed by the assembly.

AGENDA ITEM 1: CONTINUING REVIEW OF DRAFT REGULATORY PROPOSAL FOR RENEWAL OF SUSTAINED YIELD PLANS (SYPS).

Staff introduced the topic and provided a summary of the SYP discussion that took place by conference call on January 23, 2009. It was noted that conference call participants supported the idea of two distinct rule proposals: one to focus solely on a renewal process, and the other to focus on more comprehensive revision of the existing rules for SYPs. Staff explained that the proposal currently before the Committee was accordingly revised to address the process for SYP renewal only. Changes to the draft ISOR and rule language resulting from the conference call were then reviewed.

In the course of Committee discussion, edits to both the ISOR and rule language were proposed for inclusion in a subsequent rewrite of the draft documents. The Committee Members unanimously concurred in their direction to staff that the proposal must remain focused exclusively on the renewal process. Staff was further directed to convene another conference call before the March Board meeting for the purpose of reviewing the revised draft SYP Renewal proposal as well as continuing the discussion of possible comprehensive revisions to the existing SYP regulations. Staff was asked to work on a list of these possible comprehensive revisions.

It is anticipated that following review of the latest draft of the proposal at the March Committee meeting, the Committee will ask for full Board review and consideration of a 45-day Notice of Rulemaking. The SYP Renewal proposal is therefore to be included in the full Board's agenda for March as a possible action item.

AGENDA ITEM 5: PRESENTATION BY DEPARTMENT ON COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH AND MANAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE PACIFIC FOREST AND WATERSHED LANDS ADMINISTERED BY THE PACIFIC STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL.

Demonstration State Forest Program Manager, Dr. Helge Eng provided the Committee with a briefing on the Department's collaboration with the University of California and United States Forest Service Pacific Southwest Research Station to express their collective interest in research opportunities and management of the *Pacific Forest and Watershed Lands*. Dr. Eng summarized the history behind the *Lands* and explained the elements of the collaborative proposal. He went on to identify the specific parcels of interest to the collaboration and describe the parcels' respective characteristics. Following further discussion, the Members thanked Dr. Eng for his report and asked that he continue to update the Committee as the Pacific Stewardship Council moves forward with evaluation of the various proposals before them.

AGENDA ITEM 4: REVIEW OF JACKSON ADVISORY GROUP PROGRESS REPORT AND POSSIBLE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION FOR FULL BOARD APPROVAL OF THE GROUP'S PROPOSED WORK PLAN.

Dr. John Helms, Professor Emeritus, and Chair of the Jackson Advisory Group (JAG) began his presentation of the proposed Work Plan by recognizing the Department's conspicuous and dedicated efforts. He noted that both Headquarters and JDSF Staff had worked tirelessly in support of the JAG since its initial meeting. Dr. Helms likewise acknowledged the membership of the JAG as an exceptional group of people with diverse perspectives that are collectively dedicated to making JDSF a world class research forest.

Following these introductory remarks, Dr. Helms provided the Committee with an extensive update on the JAG's work to date. He highlighted the JAG's various responsibilities and reviewed the sub-committee structure proposed in the Work Plan. **In particular, he discussed the Research and Monitoring Committee chaired by Mike Liquori and requested that the Board consider appointing a liaison to this group from the Board's own Research and Science Committee (RSC). The purpose of this liaison would be to ensure that the research proposed on JDSF is consistent with the Board's overarching research priorities.**

Dr. Helms noted the absolute necessity of getting harvesting operations on line as soon as possible for critically necessary revenue generation to support the Forest. Member Walz asked about the status of much needed road work at JDSF. Dr. Helms responded with the assistance of Assistant Deputy Director, Dr. Russ Henly that the JAG had not focused on such operational aspects. However, Dr. Henly noted that timber harvesting proposals currently in review do contain provisions for road maintenance and rehabilitation work within and appurtenant to the various proposed harvest units.

Dr. Helms inquired of the Committee Members as to their expectation for the timing of JAG work progress reports. The Committee concurred with Helms' suggestion that written reports be provided at least every six months with additional reporting in person by Dr. Henly as necessary. Helms noted that Executive Officer Gentry serves as the Board liaison to the JAG and would also be a source for updates on the JAG's work progress. **Upon conclusion of Dr. Helms' presentation, Member Giacomini moved that the Committee recommend full Board endorsement of the proposed Work Plan without modification. Member Walz seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.**

ACTION ITEM

The Committee recommends:

Board endorsement of the proposed Work Plan of the Jackson Advisory Group (JAG) in concurrence with Director Grijalva's prior endorsement.

AGENDA ITEM 3: PRESENTATION OF DEPARTMENT'S PLAN FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF ELECTRONIC POSTING OF TIMBER HARVESTING DOCUMENTS AT REDDING AND FRESNO OFFICES.

Deputy Director Bill Snyder provided a brief report in which he announced that electronic posting of timber harvesting documents at the Fresno and Redding offices was now under way. Susan Robinson of Ebbetts Pass Forest Watch inquired if postings of public comments would likewise be posted and Mr. Snyder responded that public comments were not posted presently. Mr. Snyder indicated that further discussion of that possibility was necessary before a commitment to posting could be offered.

Mr. Snyder spoke of some of the ongoing practical issues to be dealt with and the importance of full compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) in the posting of documents. The entire assembly offered their thanks and appreciation to Deputy Director Snyder and the Forest Practice Program for moving expeditiously with implementation of the program in Fresno and Redding.

AGENDA ITEM 2: CONTINUING DISCUSSION OF A MODIFIED TIMBER HARVESTING PLAN (MTHP) REGULATORY PROPOSAL FOR STREAMLINED PERMITTING OF FUEL HAZARD REDUCTION PROJECTS.

Staff introduced the topic and reported that the draft ISOR had not been altered in any way since the last meeting, but that the pleading had been edited to reflect the language suggestions provided by Mr. Doug Ferrier of Forest Slopes Management. Staff continued with a brief perspective on the meeting convened by Deputy Director, Bill Snyder and including Dave Sapsis, Chris Keithley, and Dean Cromwell of the *CAL FIRE* Fire and Resource Assessment Program (FRAP), as well as Board staff. During that meeting, it was noted that the diameter limit in the Forest Fire Protection Exemption (FFPE) and the Board's Emergency Notice for Fuel Hazard Reduction (EFHR) had effectively prevented their widespread use.

Jay Francis of Collins Pine spoke of his company's limited ability to operate under the FFPE due to the diameter limit provisions. Arne Hultgren of Roseburg Resources and Member Walz likewise shared their respective company's difficulties with implementation under a FFPE.

Deputy Director, Bill Snyder spoke of the aforementioned meeting he convened. One of the ideas that came out of that meeting was to consider holding a Board workshop to gather the best available science on the subject of fuels treatment. Another was the notion of creating a Technical Rule Addendum to guide fuel hazard reduction proposals. He discussed the idea of a developing a treatment performance standard that is informed by research and could be applied in a relatively easy to understand format.

There was considerable discussion ranging from debate over professional forester discretion to public concern for the potential acreage that could be treated under this proposal. Some members of the assembly expressed their hesitancy to endorse a reduced cumulative effects analysis requirement. It was suggested that the ISOR and pleading incorporate further sources of fuel treatment research. A number of edits were suggested by the Committee for incorporation in a draft for review in March. Discussion concluded with direction for staff to continue working with *CAL FIRE* and other interested parties in an effort to resolve outstanding issues. Meeting participants expressed optimism that the divergent opinions were likely not so far apart.

The meeting was concluded without addressing the remaining agenda items due to time constraints.

POTENTIAL AGENDA ITEMS FOR MARCH 2009 COMMITTEE MEETING:

- 1. Continuing Review of Draft Regulatory Proposal for Renewal of Sustained Yield Plans (SYP). (Committee and Full Board Action Item)**
- 2. Continuing Discussion of a Modified Timber Harvest Plan (MTHP) Regulatory Proposal for Streamlined Permitting of Fuel Hazard Reduction Projects.**
- 3. PTEIR Guidance Document Review.**
- 4. Review of Committee Priorities for 2009.**

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