



Director's Report to the Board of Forestry

Resources Building, Auditorium
1416 Ninth Street
Sacramento, California 95814



July 2015 Board of Forestry Report

Resource Management

Forest Climate Action Team (FCAT)

- FCAT has developed a Work Plan and data analysis outline. Subcommittees have been assigned as leads for each of the tasks. Subcommittee Leads will provide start and end dates for their assigned tasks to align with the Carbon Plan development schedule.
- FCAT members have developed an attributes list of what constitutes a healthy forest intended to help shape the discussion around possible future investment goals and strategies.
- FCAT public outreach will probably be delivered in the future via three public workshops. The cycle of workshops would coincide with the preparation of the initial, midterm, and final draft Forest Carbon Plan document. Tentatively, the first workshop is being considered for August or September 2015; Midterm outreach in March 2016 and the Forest Carbon Plan draft document outreach in September 2016.

Pest Control

- Bark beetle activity continues to spread around the state due to the ongoing drought conditions. The southern Sierra Nevada region shows the worst outbreak, but beetle activity is picking up along the southern coast, in the central Sierra Nevada region, and around Clear Lake in Lake County. Lower levels of activity can be found in many other regions of the state.
- The Pest Management staff continues to work with the US Forest Service on the designation of Insect and Disease impacted watersheds on federal lands. The designations under the Farm Bill will allow for expedited management options on the federal land to manage for pest activity. Staff hopes to tie the activity on federal land with activity on state and private lands to get landscape scale management for forest insect and disease issues. Presently all the designated areas are in the southern Sierra Nevada and south coastal areas of the state where the majority of bark beetle activity is occurring.
- The summer Insect and Disease Committee Field Trip for the California Forest Pest Council will happen on July 22nd near Happy Camp in the Klamath National Forest in northern California. The field trip is open to everyone. We will be looking at 50 years of breeding efforts for White Pine Blister Rust resistance, black stain root disease on Douglas fir and insect and disease issues on high elevation Foxtail Pine.

State Forests

- A Colorado State University Giant Sequoia Specialist visited Mountain Home State Forest on June 18th to examine the unique albino giant sequoia specimen on the Forest. He explained that the specimen is what they refer to as a chimera having two distinct genes that are responsible for the manifestation of the two different foliage and branching patterns of the tree.
- Mountain Home State Forest received two copies of a German documentary movie, filmed on the Forest last year. The episode originally aired on the European equivalent of our National Geographic.
- There are currently 77 students registered for the Sequoia Forestry Challenge event to be held at Mountain Home State Forest in October.
- The Wild Wood Enduro Bike Event was held at Jackson State Forest on June 13-14. More than 400 bikers participated and came from all over California for the event. There are another six known planned events/special uses on the Forest in 2015. A draft State Forest Special Use Permit guideline document has been created and will be available for comment soon.
- The Bike Monkey mountain bike event was held on Boggs Mountain State Forest in May and generated \$69,000 for the for-profit organization. There were 800 paid participants. The Forest charged \$750.00 for a special use permit. The event organizers have expressed interest in donating some of the proceeds to the Forest to support new trail construction.
- Illegal marijuana plants and toxic chemicals were removed by Santa Cruz County Sheriffs and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife on property adjacent to Soquel State Forest. Additional plants and trash that were likely associated with the first site were found and removed from the State Forest by Forest staff.
- Latour State Forest is conducting their five-year re-measurement of the 221 permanent Continuous Forest Inventory (CFI) plots, that have been monitored every 5 years since 1965. Two additional Forestry Aides were hired this season to accomplish the task.

Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund

- The Department has allocated \$4 million for *Forest Legacy Program*, conservation easement grants from the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund:
- Pacific Union College in Napa County- \$2,850,000
Rainbow Ridge Project, Wherrit Tract in Siskiyou Co. - \$225,000
Jacoby Creek in Humboldt Co.-\$800,000 (Marc Andre)
Jolly Giant Creek in Humboldt Co.- \$150,000 (Marc Andre)
- Allocations will be deposited into escrow following the completion of appraisal, appraisal review and other requirements.

- \$15.6 million were allocated to *Urban and Community Forestry* projects. The majority of projects were located within disadvantaged communities, or benefitted disadvantaged communities. All project applicants have been notified. Grant agreements will now be constructed.
- Grant applications for the remaining programs (reforestation, pest control, fuel reduction and research), are ongoing, with a plan to award grants early next month.

Vegetation Management Program (VMP)

There are currently 39 approved active VMP projects on file in Sacramento from 15 Units and one Contract County. The current drought and increase in grant funding for fuel treatment projects are impacting VMP accomplishments. Although grant funding is increasing, the total amount of acres treated for fuels reduction by hand or mechanical means has been more common than traditional VMP-prescribed burns.

Urban and Community Forestry

The California Urban Forestry Advisory Committee (CUFAC) makes recommendations to CAL FIRE relating to urban forestry matters. At their February meeting, they decided to form an ad hoc subcommittee to assist the program with developing messaging related to urban trees and drought. The primary target audience was the water agencies throughout the state. Two CAL FIRE publications have been developed from the CUFAC recommendations in conjunction with CAL FIRE Communications staff. They are available on CAL FIRE's Urban Forestry web page. The publications are also available at the DWR sponsored *Save Our Water* website under a new page: Save Our Water and our Trees (www.saveourwater.org/trees).

Environmental Protection

CAL FIRE's Environmental Protection Program is in the process of hiring three Senior State Archaeologists. One will act as the Southern Region Archaeology Program Manager, one will provide archeological expertise to the Fire Prevention Fund Grants Program, and one will provide archeological expertise to the Timber Regulation and Forest Restoration Fund Program.

Forest Practice Program

Plan Submissions:

- **THP Submissions:** Santa Rosa has 77 new THP submittals, Redding 45, and Fresno had 8; totaling 130, which is the same as last year to date.
- **NTMP Submissions:** There have been three NTMPs, and 60 NTOs submitted in Santa Rosa. There has been two NTMP and 5 NTOs submitted in Redding. No NTMPs and 1 NTO have been submitted this year in Fresno. NTMP submissions through June are down from last year (i.e., 5 compared to 9).
- **Exemption Notice Submissions:** Exemption submissions are up compared to last year. Santa Rosa had 203 exemptions submitted, Redding had 743 (compared to 580 last year at this time) and Fresno had 185.

- **Emergency Notice Submissions:** Emergency submissions are significantly up compared to last year. Three Emergency Notices were submitted in Santa Rosa; Redding had 71 (compared to 15 at this time last year) and Fresno had 38 submitted.

General Review Team

Redding/Fresno

- CAL FIRE Review in Fresno has been receiving inquiries concerning the drought mortality amendments from landowners and RPFs planning on utilizing the 1038(k) Exemption. Half of the emergency notices in Region 4 (Sierra) have been insect related due to the ongoing drought.
- John Ramaley has recently accepted the Forester III, Forest Practice Manager position for the Sierra, Southern and Cascade Regions. John's promotion has created a vacancy; the Forester II Review Team Chair position will be advertised. The position is located in Fresno, and will service the Sierra and Southern Regions.
- The Forester II-TRFRF position in the Redding Review office has been filled by Dan Craig. Dan is transferring from a SAC HQ Forester II position.
- Kevin Kinery, Forester I review in Fresno, graduated at the top of the Chief Officer Academy (COA) #57. Kevin has now successfully completed all of his probationary mandatory fire training.

Santa Rosa

One of the Forester I's, currently working in the Santa Rosa Review Team office, is taking a position with CAL FIRE's Nevada-Yuba-Placer Unit beginning August 3. The position is currently being flown as a Forester I, however, Forestry Assistant II applicants will be considered.

Watershed Protection Program Update

- Work continues on the revised watercourse crossing design guidance document (updating the 2004 document). The draft document was sent out for agency review on July 10th. CGS's Don Lindsay has developed new sections on rock-armored crossing design (including a sizing procedure for riprap), permanent bridge design, and high risk crossings with large fills. Drew Coe has added a section of post wildfire considerations for crossings and considerations for watercourse crossings in areas with spring-dominated hydrology. The crossing guidance document will be used for the interagency training sessions on watercourse crossings planned for this fall. The current plan is to initially present four sessions to agency personnel, with one session videotaped and offered as a webinar (similar to what was done for the Road Rules, 2013 training sessions last fall). Training for RPFs and LTOs will follow.

- Watershed staff continue to serve on and help staff the BOF's Effectiveness Monitoring Committee. Staff attended the EMC meeting held on July 8th in Redding and have continued to help write the draft EMC Strategic Plan, with the goal of having a draft available for BOF review in August. The EMC's goal is to avoid duplication of ongoing studies and focus priorities for critical monitoring questions regarding the effectiveness of the FPRs and other forestry-related regulations on maintaining or enhancing water quality, aquatic habitat, and wildlife habitats. Drew Coe is working with CGS staff to put together a concept proposal for a post-storm mass wasting effectiveness monitoring study that will be part of the EMC's efforts.
- CAL FIRE Environmental Scientist, Stacy Stanish has received edits to the draft guidance document she wrote titled "Take Avoidance and CEQA Considerations for Timber Harvesting Plan Submitters within the Current and Historic Range of Sierra Nevada Yellow-Legged Frog and Mountain Yellow-Legged Frog." A final document will be produced shortly.
- Stacy Stanish continues to lead an agency working group that will revise Bob Doty's 1983 "Guidebook to Board of Forestry Watercourse and Lake Protection Rules." The 1983 book was developed as a working guide to aid RPFs in classifying watercourses using the newly passed rules based on the beneficial uses of water (effective October 1, 1983). The plan is to have a final draft of the revised document available by next spring so that there is time to collect updated watercourse photos across the landscape, as well as at selected streams during various flows. Photo point monitoring guidelines and a data collection worksheet have been finalized and sent out to be used in the field for data collection.
- Drew Coe is working on a concept proposal to look at the effectiveness of road treatments in reducing sediment production and delivery for the Little River and Elk River Watersheds, Humboldt County. Data used for this project will be provided by Pacific Watershed Associates, Green Diamond Resources, and Humboldt Redwood Company, and is part of a broader study that will look at contemporary and legacy cumulative impacts in these watersheds

Forest Practice Civil Prosecution Update

The Administrative Civil Penalty Program has a total of 42 active cases. There are 4 new cases for 2015. Three of the 2015 cases are in the review process. The fourth case has been served. All of the 2015 cases are related to illegal timberland conversions. Seven of the 42 cases have been served waiting for response. Fourteen of the 42 cases have settled with mitigation, probation or payments being made. Four cases are in default or in need of judgments. Tentative settlement has been reached on 3 cases from 2014. The settlement agreements have been drafted and mailed for signature. A hearing is being scheduled for one case and one case is seeking an appeal. The remaining 15 cases are in some stage of the process, either waiting for a response from the respondent or having documents updated and reviewed.

Timber Operators Licensing Program Update

LTO renewals and new applications are being processed in the order they are received. We continue to receive applications that are lacking critical information. Proof of proper insurance is a common item that is not included with applications. Applicants are contacted and the additional information requested. Applications are returned with letters of explanation regarding the lack of information if LTO Licensing does not hear back from the applicants.

Timber Regulation and Forest Restoration Fund (TRFRF) Updated

AB 1492 Leadership Team: The Team met on July 13th and continued discussion on the steps for the Center for Collaborative Policy advisory committee work plan and the need to identify stakeholders for the stakeholder assessment process. The Team discussed the next steps in launching a Planning Watershed Pilot Project. The Team reviewed the status of the Annual Report to Legislature and discussed the drought related emergency water drafting regulation back before the Board of Forestry and Fire Protection. The team also discussed the draft Unified PHI Report.

FRAP – Briefing

Forests and Rangelands Assessment – Indicator Development.

Fire and Resource Assessment staff developed candidate draft indicators to report on in the Forests and Rangelands Assessment, 2016. Public input has been solicited and supported through a UC Davis website (www.indicators.ucdavis.edu/forest). FRAP presented the indicator list at the June Board of Forestry meeting and asked for Board review. Chairman Gilless stated that the Board would provide review and make a single set of comments for FRAP. With the transition to a new Board Executive Officer, FRAP will work closely with the Board to assist in the review.

Wildfire Issues – New Hire

FRAP staff has completed hiring process for a new Environmental Scientist/Fire Modeler to help in understanding forest operations effects on carbon storage and greenhouse gas emissions from wildfires. The new FRAP staff person is Tadashi Moody. Tadashi has extensive experience in wildfire models and climate issues through his previous position with Spatial Informatics Group (SIG). The expected start date for Tadashi is July 20th.

Climate Change

FRAP (C. Keithley) assisted FCAT in developing a data analysis framework and a work plan for developing the Forest Carbon Plan. In addition, FRAP worked with Resources Agency (R. Henly) to establish an Interagency Agreement for a Resource Economic Study. Bill Stewart is a part of the UC Team, led by Dr. Matthew Potts. FRAP (C. Keithley) has begun discussions with Bill Stewart on the scope of the project.

FRAP staff (Chris Keithley and Dave Sapsis) participated in a CalEPA Climate Change indicators conference on June 16th and 17th. The session addressed vegetation and wildfire issues under climate change. The session was well attended and received very positive response.

Vegetation Mapping work with USFS

FRAP staff has collaborated with DFW to produce a new vegetation GIS database that includes best available vegetation maps compiled into a single database. This shared data set supports CAL FIRE's Forests and Rangelands Assessment and the Fish and Wildlife's State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP). The statewide vegetation layer is now complete and available for use.

Outstanding Issue: The partnership between CAL FIRE and USFS has declined over the past 12 – 18 months and has impacted FRAP's ability to maintain current vegetation mapping. The Fire and Resource Assessment Program continues working to improve the USFS partnership and develop a contingency plan to support update of vegetation/fuels information. There are ongoing issues regarding shared priorities and USFS capacity to conduct joint mapping projects that have strained the partnership.

Drought Monitoring

FRAP is working with Region Resource Management (RM) staff to map dead, dying and diseased trees affected by the current drought. A Web Map Application was developed to assist Units to prioritize areas with high levels of tree mortality that need to be mapped. These areas will be submitted to the USGS National Disaster Coordinator and they will acquire current, 1 foot satellite imagery that can be provided to Unit staff to map dead trees. Although it is anticipated the imagery is provided at no cost to the State, the large area needing to be mapped makes it unclear if all areas can be acquired or if additional financial resources will be needed to support the large request. FRAP is also working to develop a second web based mapping application to serve imagery and provide tools to Unit personnel to map dead tree areas.

FIA Committee Assignment

Mark Rosenberg (FRAP) participated in the Forest Inventory and Analysis Program (FIA) annual management team meeting in Roanoke VA to discuss current program direction and priorities during the week of June 15-19. Mark serves as CALFIRE's Western States Representative to the FIA management team. The program managers from FIA western regions expressed interest in continuing to build and sustain a coherent national voice for western states based on an objective assessment of changes in forest resources. Through a process of engagement with western states foresters, land managers, policy makers, science organizations and interested public, we hope to understand information needs that address current issues (i.e. carbon, urban forests, land use/cover change, etc.) and communicate opportunities to leverage the FIA program leads. Mark Rosenberg would like an opportunity to introduce himself to Western States Foresters and present updates on FIA program areas of potential interest to the Council of Western States Foresters.

Cal MAPPER – Funding Issue

In January CAL FIRE launched the CAL MAPPER database application to capture fuels reduction projects for CFIP, VMP, Fire Plan and Fire Prevention activities. Ongoing technical support is needed to keep the tool operational. The current technical support contract will expire in September and no additional contract funds have been identified. The previous technical support contract was funded by the SRA program. Funding is needed for software maintenance (fix bugs, etc.), to enhance the product, and support new programs being added to CalMapper (i.e Urban Forestry, Camps, Pipeline).

Fire Protection

Aviation Maintenance Unit Unit/Tactical Air Operations

- A contract has been signed with Neptune Aviation Services for a second Exclusive Use Large Air Tanker to fill the gap left behind the tragic loss of CAL FIRE Tanker 81 last year. The assigned aircraft, Tanker 12, is a BAE-146, four-engine jet, capable of carrying 3,000 gallons of fire retardant and will be based out of CAL FIRE's Paso Robles Air Attack Base in San Luis Obispo. The aircraft and crew will also be "red carded" for initial attack meaning it can be assigned to initial attack wildland fires on federally owned/protected lands. The original Exclusive Use Large Air Tanker, Tanker 60, is a DC-7 capable of carrying 2,000 gallons of fire retardant and will move to and be based out of CAL FIRE's Chico Air Attack Base in Butte.
- PG&E's fire detection air patrol program is working smoothly in three regions of the state. Communications and situational awareness have greatly improved over past years due to CAL FIRE's engagement and collaboration in the program.

Operations

- The Sacramento Command Center exercised its Continuation of Operations Plan (COOP) and relocated its entire operation to Amador/El Dorado Unit, Camino ECC on July 8th. The drill was successful, with lessons learned to be generated. This will ensure continuity of Command and Control in the case of a catastrophic event that forces the Command Center's evacuation.
- The Department's Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS), commonly referred to as "drones," Committee continues to address this emerging technology and how it is impacting the Department in a both a positive and negative manner. The Department recently participated in a joint CAL FIRE/USFS press conference aimed at the hobbyist operators of drones and how they can and will interrupt air operations over wildland fires should they intrude in the air space. The messaging campaign will continue to educate the public using slogans such as, "No Drones Over Fire Zones" and "If You Fly, We Can't!"

LE/CCR

- June 2015 arrests = 17
- Fiscal Year-to-date arrests = 115
- June 2015 citations (non-4291) = 41
- Fiscal Year-to-date citations (non-4291) = 403
- June 2015 Civil Cost Recovery = \$417,479
- Fiscal Year-to-date Civil Cost Recovery = \$10,362,348

State-Federal Program

- The Modular Airborne Fire Fighting System (MAFFS) Operating Plan is currently being circulated for final signature. The Operating Plan merges the U.S. Forest Service MAFFS units with California National Guard C-130J aircraft to provide additional air tanker resources in times of heavy drawdown due to fire activity, and when civilian Call-When-Needed tankers are unavailable. The MAFFS units, which are Forest Service property, are self-contained, pressurized tank units capable of dispersing 3,000 gallons of fire retardant when installed in C-130J aircraft. This Operating Plan is also incorporated into the California Military Department (California National Guard) Agreement which also makes available Helicopter and Fire Crew support in times of high drawdown when civilian or other governmental assets are unavailable.

Conservation Camp Program

- Riverside County Supervisor Kevin Jeffries recently sent a letter to State Senator Loni Hancock supporting CAL FIRE's use of the former Orange County Los Pinos Juvenile Offender Conservation/Probation Camp in the event that the current Norco Prison is closed. Norco Conservation Camp is an institution based camp which currently staffs four inmate crews in the Riverside Unit. Los Pinos Camp has been closed for several years and under the terms of the current land use agreement with the USFS, will revert to Forest Service use this September if not activated in some form.
- Overall inmate numbers continue on a gradual upwards trend. As of July 8th, 13 additional crews reached full strength (14+) and the inmate population is currently at 87% of capacity. The number of Proposition 47 inmates released early from the conservation camps statewide (including LA County) is 338 as of July 06, 2015.

Safety

- CAL FIRE's Annual Focus on Safety went out to the field and is required to be reviewed by all employees by July 17, 2015. Topics include Wildland Urban Interface principles, Structure Fire Collapse, Traffic Safety Awareness, Nutritional Guidelines, Reducing Workplace Injuries, and our basic firefighting guiding principles.

Training

- The CAL FIRE Academy continues to train new company officers. Company Officer Academy 59 and 60 will provide the final company officers to assist the department through the 2015 fire season.
- The CAL FIRE Academy staff conducted their own safety stand down on Saturday, July 11, 2015. Because the CAL FIRE Academy is running year-around, it was necessary to bring all staff in on a weekend to accomplish this very important event that outlined items such as the department's mission, vision, and values, expectations, the annual Focus on Safety, and due to many new personnel, the ability for staff to formally meet one another.