



## Director's Report to the Board of Forestry

Resources Building, Auditorium  
1416 Ninth Street  
Sacramento, California 95814



March 2015 Board of Forestry Report

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### Resource Management

#### Forest Climate Action Team (FCAT)

The first of three Public Workshops was delivered on Friday, February 20<sup>th</sup>. The purpose of the workshops is to describe FCAT vision, and continued work on a statewide forest carbon plan by the end of 2016. The last two planned public workshops are scheduled in Redding, March 2, 2015, and in Arcadia on March 11, 2015. Information regarding public workshops can be obtained at: <http://www.fire.ca.gov/fcat>

#### Resource Protection Program

##### Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund Grants:

- CAL FIRE has completed its Concept Proposals review for GGRF forest management projects, the first phase of a two-phase application process.

For all programs combined, CAL FIRE received 550 Concept Proposals for a total request of \$242 million. Total available funding for all GGRF projects is \$38 million.

- On February 20, 2015, CAL FIRE sent invitations to applicants to submit Project Applications (the second Project Application stage).

A total of 300 applicants were invited to submit a project application, for a total request of \$130 million. The top counties with Project Application invitations were Sonoma, Placer, Humboldt, Mendocino, Eldorado, and Siskiyou. The Project Application deadline is April 30, 2015.

- Invitations and receipt of Project Applications for the Forest Legacy Program (9 invitations) were completed in October 2014.
- We continue to work with the Air Resources Board on mandatory pre-funding expenditure reports and a greenhouse gas accounting methodology. These two documents are necessary to fully execute the GGRF grant programs. We anticipate posting our GHG accounting methodology guidance document in early March after completing our discussions with ARB.

## **Pest Management Program:**

- A Forest Insect and Disease class is being offered this spring at the CAL FIRE Academy in Lone, May 26-28th. It includes 8 hours of classroom instruction and 12 hours of field instruction. A variety of topics will be presented including bark beetles, root diseases, drought impacts, invasive pests, and tree survival following wildfire.
- Gold-spotted oak borer infestation detections in Orange County has increased to include 60 more trees.
- The southern Sierra Nevada Region is entering an epidemic of pine bark beetles and fir engraver beetles. Estimates in some areas are that 20 to 25% of the pine trees are already dead or dying. **Staff is working with the USDA Forest Service on collaborative aerial reconnaissance efforts.**
- San Luis Obispo County is experiencing high levels of mortality caused by the drought from pine bark beetles. Estimates in some areas are 75 – 80% dead and dying pines. Upcoming surveys and the formation of a local "Drought Impacts on Native Trees Task Force" are developing actions to reduce the impacts on the landscape from tree mortality in the county.
- A new disease has been identified in native plant nurseries in several counties in northern California. *Phytophthora tentaculata* is a Class A regulated pest according to the USDA APHIS and is of great concern if it becomes established in North America. The disease has been found killing out-plantings of toyon, California sage, and other understory plants in the Bay area.
- The Goldspotted Oak Borer Task Force will be holding its first meeting on March 25<sup>th</sup> at the University of Redlands in San Bernardino, CA. Agencies from Orange, Los Angeles, Riverside, San Bernardino and San Diego County will be in attendance.

## **California Forest Improvement Program (CFIP):**

- In accordance with CCR Title 14 §1530.1, staff have evaluated the CFIP practices cap rates and found that most rates need to be raised. The rates for reforestation practices have not been adjusted in 15 years. The new rates being proposed to the Board of Forestry are based on input from RPFs, CFIP invoice data base, and equivalent rates paid by the Natural Resource Conservation Services, Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP).

## **State Forests:**

- Continued dry weather raises concerns at Mountain Home Demonstration State Forest, with a visible increase in tree mortality (see also Pest Management report below). Latour Demonstration State Forest experienced significant blowdown from an early February storm event. There are only trace amounts of snow currently at LaTour Headquarters, which is located at 6,200 feet elevation. The weather has been mixed at Mountain Home State Forest, with nearly 4 inches of rain falling on February 21st, but only 9 inches of snow accumulation at the Forest Headquarters, at 5,900 feet elevation.

- December's warm, long-duration rainstorm has apparently intensified the nascent sudden oak death infestation in Jackson Demonstration State Forest. This infestation, located on a relatively remote section of a hiking trail along the North Fork of the South Fork Noyo River, displayed fresh symptoms when visited in late January, and the symptoms extended over a larger area than when last examined. Pest Management staff, JDSF staff, and University of California personnel are collaborating to delineate the expanded infestation boundaries and will discuss whether management actions beyond the current closure of the hiking trail are warranted.
- Forester Manager Pam Linstedt and Forester II Lynn Webb presented the Jackson Demonstration State Forest research plan to the Board of Forestry on January 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup>. The research plan was approved by the Board as an addendum to the Management Plan.
- The THP including the Jackson Demonstration State Forest long-term sustained yield plan (Option A) was approved on February 12<sup>th</sup>.
- The first large scale tree planting project in at least a decade on JDSF was completed in the Water Gulch timber harvest plan. Approximately 23,000 redwood seedlings from Green Diamond's nursery were planted in group selection units covering 100 acres.
- We are in the process of filling the Boggs Mountain Demonstration State Forest Manager position, which was vacated when Geri Finn retired after 6 years of valued service. We expect to fill the position within the next two to three weeks.
- The Forestry Aide hiring process for twenty positions was completed on February 25<sup>th</sup>. Appointments range from 3 to 9 months.
- Forest staff and two crews from Mountain Home Conservation Camp planted 8,700 seedlings (mixed species), and giant sequoia seedlings on Mountain Home Demonstration State Forest.
- Latour Demonstration State Forest will be beta testing CAL FIRE's revised Forest Practice THP form as part of the Cave Rock THP, which will also incorporate a VTAC project as described under the Anadromous Salmonid Protection Rules (Section "V" Technical Advisory Committee, section 936.9(v) of the Forest Practice Rules).
- Soquel Demonstration State Forest (SDSF) Manager Angela Bernheisel presented information at a workshop for the National Marine Fisheries Service and their cooperators on February 10, regarding coho salmon recovery efforts at SDSF. She also presented information about CAL FIRE's Resource Management Programs.

#### **Forest Legacy Program:**

- The President's proposed Forest Legacy Program (FLP) budget for 2016 was released in early February. California had one project that ranked high enough to make it into the discretionary funding list: the 600-acres Rainbow Ridge Tract, located in Siskiyou County. If the President's proposed budget is not reduced too drastically, California can expect to receive a \$650,000 grant toward purchasing a conservation easement on this property.

## LA Moran Reforestation Center (LAMRC):

- After Teri Griffis' retirement, Resource Management has requested replacing the existing Forester I position at LAMRC with an existing, but vacant Forester II position. The Forester II will serve as the Reforestation Center Manager supervising the seven employees at the facility as well as managing seed-processing and storage technology, fiscal management and providing state-wide reforestation technical assistance for CAL FIRE.

## Forest Practice Program (through 1/31/2015)

### Plan Submissions:

- **THP submissions in January 2015:** Santa Rosa had eleven new THP submittals, Redding six, and Fresno had zero. THP submissions for January are equal to last year with 17 new plans being submitted.
- **NTMP submissions in January 2015:** There was one NTMP, and two NTO's submitted in Santa Rosa, there were no NTMPs submitted in Redding or Fresno, and one NTO submitted in Redding. NTMP submissions for January are down 50% from last year (1 to 2).
- **Exemption Notice submissions in January 2015:** Santa Rosa had 26 exemptions submitted, Redding had 102 and Fresno had 18. Exemption submissions for January are up 19% from last year.
- **Emergency Notice submissions in January 2015:** No new Emergency Notices were submitted in Santa Rosa, Redding had 5 submitted and Fresno had one submitted. There are 167 active Emergency Notices for the various fires that occurred over the past few years. **Note:** a significant windstorm swept through the Burney Basin and Fall River Valley in early February and an increase in Emergency Submissions is expected in Redding over the next couple of months to facilitate the cleanup of wind damaged trees.
- **Wildland Fire Emergency Notices:** The table below represents the number of Emergency Notices submitted (167) for the various fires between January 1, 2014 and January 31, 2015. As of January 31, 2015 there were 49,710 acres under Emergency Notice. **Note:** several of the large fires had Emergency Notices submitted and completed in 2012 and 2013.

Fire	# of Emergency Notices submitted since 1/1/2014	# of completion reports submitted	# of Acres under EM
American	3	3	556
Applegate	6	0	60
Bagley	5	2	858
Bald	2	0	372
Beaver	21	0	4,023
Boles	4	0	111
Bully	10	0	3,487
Cold 2013	1	0	70

Day	14	2	10,404
Eilar	45	9	14,526
Golf 2012	1	0	80
Happy Camp Complex	4	0	164
Hugh Complex	1	1	80
King	39	1	11,337
Little Deer	3	0	948
Log 2014	1	0	1,875
Lodge lightning complex	1	0	71
Oregon 2014	1	0	2
Oregon Gulch	1	0	284
Red	1	0	34
Sand	1	0	33
Structure Fire	1	1	3
Web 2014	1	0	332
<b>Total</b>	<b>167</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>49,710</b>

#### General Review Team:

- **Redding/Fresno:** The Department has advertised for a new Forest Practice Manager with the retirement of Mike Bacca. Forester I Meese had completed his Basic Fire Control Training and has returned to the Review Team in Redding. The Review Team Chair from Fresno started the Firefighter Academy (FFA) on 2/16/15 and will be committed until 3/20/15.
- **Santa Rosa:** The office is currently advertising to fill a forester II vacancy and recently conducted interviews for an forestry assistant II position.
- Santa Rosa has uploaded NTMPs dating between 1991 – 2000, with the goal of uploading all NTMPs back through 1991. This will support cumulative impact analysis by RPFs and agencies and provide public access to these records.
- A revised THP form (initiated after the rule changes that occurred relative to the new "road rules") is currently under final review. The Department hopes to have the form finalized for use in March. This will expedite plan preparation and review.

#### Watershed Protection Program:

- CAL FIRE's Forest Practice Rules Implementation and Effectiveness Monitoring (FORPRIEM) Program final report finished will be printed and bound for delivery to the Board in March.
- New contracts have been secured with: (1) Humboldt State University Foundation and Dr. Andy Stubblefield for the Railroad Gulch BMP Evaluation Project, and (2) Colorado State University and Dr. Lee MacDonald for the "Historic and Recent (post-2000) Forest Management Effects on Ground Disturbance, Erosion, Water Quality and Fish: A Case Study from Northwestern California" project are under development.

- Watershed staff continue to provide input and support to the Board's Effectiveness Monitoring Committee, Monitoring Study Group, and AB 1492 Ecological Performance Measures Working Group. Forest Practice Biologists Stacy Stanish and Dr. Michael Baker met in the field with Campbell Global staff, and will be meeting shortly with Green Diamond and Humboldt Redwood Company staff, to discuss aquatic and terrestrial wildlife issues. CAL FIRE staff continue to work on NSO reviews and take avoidance guidance documents for sensitive species. Drew Coe continues to work on the VTP-EIR revisions.

#### **Forest Practice Civil Prosecution Update:**

- There are a total of 40 active cases. No new cases have been submitted for 2015. After discussion with our legal department, 11 cases were removed from our active list due to the exceedance of judgment processing deadlines. In 2014, 13 cases were submitted, 6 have been signed and served, 2 are in settlement discussions and 5 are still under review. The remaining 27 cases are in different stages of the process. Four are in court waiting for a determination or the decision is being appealed. Nine cases are determined with penalty payments being made and/or probation. Two cases are settled with mitigation in process. Judgments are being sought for 3 cases that are in default. Five cases are still being reviewed. One case the respondent has requested a hearing and 3 complaints were served or attempted to be served.

#### **Timber Operators Licensing Program Update:**

- LTO renewals and new applications are being processed in the order they are received. Late renewal applications are continuing to trickle in; 12 new applications have been submitted following a recent LTO training class; 7 applications need additional information prior to issuing (majority are waiting on proper insurance). 25 renewal applications have been received; 13 of these renewal applications are incomplete and need further information before they can be processed. Applicants have been contacted and the additional information requested; most applications have had to be returned with letters of explanation due to the lack of critical information. 17 additional renewal applications have been received and are not due to renew until December 2015.
- We have received 3 incorrect insurance certificates that are lacking the appropriate coverage. We have contacted insurance agents and/or LTO's and are waiting for submittal of the correct insurance certification.

#### **Timber Regulation and Forest Restoration Fund (TRFRF) updated from TRFRF database 1/1/2015 through 1/31/2015:**

- **Specific TRFRF Forest Practice Effort :** The Forest Practice Program has utilized 10,372 hours in conducting forest practice activities in the following breakdown: conducting forest practice inspections (28.5%); review and processing of THPs (27.6%); participating in mandated training (13.4%); supervising and managing the forest practice program (12.4%); processing and managing the data related to THPs (11.4%); forest practice law enforcement (3.4%); responding to letters of concern (1.5%); Board of Forestry and Fire Protection related activities (1.1%). Other activities comprising an insignificant portion of the time include program/project monitoring, ecological performance, and litigation. *(This represents TRFRF funded forest practice effort only.)*

- **Total Departmental Forest Practice Efforts:** The Forest Practice Program has utilized a total of 12,635 hours in conducting forest practice activities and non-forest practice activities in the following breakdown: conducting forest practice inspections (23.4%); review and processing of THPs (22.6%); other duties in support of unit programs (11.3%); participating in mandated training (11.0%); supervising and managing the forest practice program (10.2%); processing and managing the data related to THPs (9.4%); other forestry related activities (6.3%); forest practice law enforcement (2.8%); and responding to letters of concern (1.2%). Other activities comprising an insignificant portion of time (less than 1%) include Board of Forestry and Fire Protection related activities, project/program monitoring, emergency incident support, ecological performance, and litigation. *(This represents all forest practice efforts both TRFRF and Non-TRFRF funded.)*
- **AB 1492 Update:** The AB 1492 Leadership Team met on February 12<sup>th</sup> to discuss public comments on the draft charters, to further develop work plans for the various working groups and for a presentation on CAL FIRE's GIS program currently used to track harvest activities. The Team is exploring the option of developing a stakeholder advisory group to interact with the various working groups and Leadership Team. Development of the advisory group will allow greater public involvement and participation. The Chairs of the various working groups were requested to revise their specific charters to reflect public comment received during the public workshop on December 19<sup>th</sup>. The charters will be revised prior to the next Leadership Team meeting scheduled for March 5<sup>th</sup>.

## Communications

### California Arbor Week:

- The winners of the 2015 California Arbor Week will be announced on Friday, March 6<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 a.m. at a press conference at the Capitol in conjunction with California ReLeaf. The annual contest is for 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade students throughout the State and a winner is selected from each grade.
- An "Imagination Award" is also given for the entry displaying the most creativity and this year's theme is "We Need Trees and Trees Need Us".
- Each winner's poster will be displayed in the Capitol.

## Public Education

- The Public Education office is establishing a bi-weekly "Forestry Fact Friday" (in rotation with "Fire Fact Friday" on the Department's official social media accounts. If you have anything you'd like to see highlighted, please let us know.

## **Fire Protection**

### **Aviation/Tactical Air Ops:**

- CAL FIRE will be using a contracted large air tanker behind Tanker 81. The aviation shop located S2T airframes that may be available for purchase, but they are in Korea and Australia, so the feasibility and cost will need to be analyzed further. We will be holding our annual joint training for fire readiness with the California National Guard on April 10, 11, and 12<sup>th</sup> at the CAL FIRE Academy.

### **Operations:**

- CAL FIRE's annual Incident Management Team training is being held the week of April 27<sup>th</sup>. There will also be a joint State and Federal Incident Commander's meeting at the end of the workshop on Friday, May 1<sup>st</sup>.
- Conservation Camp Program – The Conservation Camps Program has remained extremely busy with SRA Fee funded fuel reduction projects and preparing for the Fire Crew Preparedness Exercises that are scheduled for March and April. The statewide Fire Crew Preparedness Exercises will test and certify that the fire crews will be ready for what is shaping up to be another demanding fire season. Board members are encouraged to attend local exercises and may coordinate through the Executive Office.

### **Local Government Program:**

- The Local Government Advisory Committee (LGAC) is developing a training program for chief officers, primarily Unit Chiefs, designed to increase awareness of the issues and needs facing our cooperative partners as they relate to Local Government Agreements. It is anticipated this will be a one day workshop.

### **Training, Safety, and EMS:**

- The CAL FIRE Academy is pleased to announce its Academy Administrator as Deputy Chief, Brent Stangeland. Chief Stangeland's background and experience in the field and programs has prepared him well for the position. The CAL FIRE Academy resumed its instruction of the Fire Fighter Academy that began on Monday, February 16, 2015. We are excited to have this training running again with a well-trained and qualified interim instructional staff. Some of the adverse actions taken against employees at the academy are still in process due to the employees exercising their right to a State Personnel Board appeal hearing. To date, there are six appeals pending thus far out of 16 actions.
- Law Enforcement/Civil Cost Recovery
  - January 2015 arrests = 12
  - Fiscal Year-to-date arrests = 82
  - January 2015 citations (non-4291) = 12
  - Fiscal Year-to-date citations (non-4291) = 247
  - Fiscal Year-to-date Civil Cost Recovery = \$1,140,575.67