

**Board of Forestry and Fire Protection  
Range Management Advisory Committee (RMAC)  
Vegetation Management/Fire Focus Group**

**Minutes  
August 16, 2005**

**Attending:**

**RMAC:**

**Representing**

Ken Zimmerman	California Cattlemen's Association
Mike Connor	Public Member
Clancy Dutra	California Farm Bureau Federation
J.R. McCollister	Public Member
Chuck Pritchard	California Assoc. of Resource Conservation Districts
Scott Carnegie	California Forestry Association
Leonard Hale	Watershed Fire Council of Southern California
Mel Thompson	California Wool Growers Association
Jeff Stephens	CDF / RMAC Executive Secretary

**Members of the Public:**

**Items 1 & 2: Call to Order and Review of the Minutes:**

Items 1 and 2 of the agenda: J.R. McCollister called the meeting to order at 8:20 AM. Introductions of all present were made. Mr. McCollister asked Mike Connor to run the meeting. The minutes from the June meeting were distributed and then deferred for approval before the full RMAC on August 17, 2005.

**Item 4: Report to the Board of Forestry; CDF Vegetation Management Program Recommendations:**

Discussion was directed to the RMAC VMP recommendations for Board consideration. Mike Connor summarized instruction from the Resource Protection Committee (RPC) at the July meeting. He stated that RMAC was asked by the RPC to list the recommendations in order by priority.

J.R. McCollister asked Jeff Stephens if there had been any response by CDF to the RMAC report. Mr. Stephens responded stating that was given assignments to collect some information for CDF management review but no official response had been crafted. Mr. Stephens will make these materials available to RMAC.

Chuck Pritchard brought up the meeting with secretary Chrisman that occurred on June 28, 2005 with Ken Zimmerman, Stan Dixon, George Gentry, and Jeff Stephens. He summarized the literature that was presented to the Secretary supporting his position that agencies and agency regulation has reached the point

where agency personnel and the private sector are reluctant to participate in resource restoration projects. The situation with VMP was cited as another example of this problem.

Mike Connor returned the discussion to the issue of placing the recommendations in a list based on priority. He spoke in opposition to this list. Mel Thompson also spoke in opposition stating that a list based on priority was a tactic used by some to eliminate items/issues and that RMAC should resist this recommendation from the RPC. Mike Connor recommended that RMAC stay focused on increased emphasis on resource management and this requires a shift in current CDF direction.

J.R. McCollister asked Jeff Stephens if the new effort to update the State Fire Plan had any increased emphasis on resource management. Mr. Stephens responded that he has reviewed some information prepared by Fire Protection staff that suggests management of fuels as a key component for providing fire protection.

Ken Zimmerman posed the question of what would it take to make this paradigm shift to resource management, and suggested that it must come from the Board in order for it to happen. Mel Thompson stated that the paradigm shift is stated within the RMAC recommendations (referring to the last recommendation). The remaining items may be thought of as a sequence of events that must occur to be successful. Scott Carnegie stated that the goal has been defined, but the components (recommendations) are needed to make it happen.

Ken Zimmerman once again reiterated that the focus should be on the Board since they set policy for the Department. Mike Connor responded stating that the RMAC recommendations are the tools needed to make the change in policy towards resource management.

J.R. McCollister responded to comments by Messrs. Zimmerman and Connor stating that the policy already exists within existing Board policy. It is a case of not following the policy that currently exists. Chuck Pritchard cited an example with USDA. The local FSA (Farm Service Agency) committee has developed a plan of action for the county in question. However, when these plans reach State and Federal levels they fall apart.

Ken Zimmerman stated that we (RMAC) want a new commitment to VMP, and posed the question, is this a change in Board policy. Discussion that involved J.R. McCollister, Mike Connor, Chuck Pritchard, and Mel Thompson in response to Mr. Zimmerman's question indicated that a review of policy is in order regarding VMP, and that if current policy is sufficient then it becomes a matter of asking for implementation on the part of the Board and the Department.

Mel Thompson stated that with increasing changes in the landscape and land ownership CDF must deal with increased difficulty for implementing VMP. RMAC should promote a program that is feasible.

Scott Carnegie proposed a structure for the recommendations rather than a prioritization that is designed to meet the objectives of RMAC. He proposed:

A philosophy – Paradigm shift.  
Infrastructure  
Implementation  
Enforcement

Later in discussion Enforcement was replaced with “Performance Review.” RMAC then grouped the recommendations under each of these major categories. Scott Carnegie recommended that the results become the basis for a power point presentation which he volunteered to write with assistance from Mike Connor. At the close of discussion Mike Connor made a motion that a presentation to RPC be made on the RMAC recommendations per the structure that had been developed at the August 16 RMAC meeting, and that it be presented as an “Executive Summary” in the RMAC VMP Recommendation Report as well. Motion seconded by Ken Zimmerman. Motioned carried unanimously.

**Item 5: Focus Group Objectives:**

J.R. McCollister opened discussion for objectives of the Vegetation Management/Fire Focus Group and put forth three objectives:

1. Continue to monitor the RMAC report on VMP recommendations to the RPC and ultimately the Board. Also the Focus Group will actively pursue the recommendations with the Board.
2. Stay current and monitor the Department’s review and update of the California Fire Plan.
3. Stay current and monitor the Department’s progress on the rewrite of the VMP EIR.

**Item 6: New and Unfinished Business:**

Ken Zimmerman asked that all RMAC members consider in the near future which committees (Focus Groups) they wish to serve as members. Mike Connor asked if the Focus Group members served in formal capacity. Clancy Dutra clarified that historically all RMAC members were welcome to participate and contribute to the business of a Focus Group. Only the Focus Group Chairman was formally assigned to serve. RMAC elected to not take any action on this arrangement and recruit Focus Group members to serve on specific projects as they are developed.

Meeting Adjourned 11:15 AM.