

Transcription: rg Comments at 4.8.19 Forest Management Task Force (FMTF) Meeting

rg: Thank you. I'm with the partner "public" agency. My name is Richard Gienger. I represent Forests Forever, and we've been involved with this, all this forest thing, for many years. Congratulations to you two for your appointment [Jennifer Montgomery, new Director of the FMTF, and Jessica Morse, new Deputy Secretary for Forest Management in the Natural Resources Agency]. This [FMTF & the hundreds of moving parts] is a big deal. And the work people are doing here is very, very important. It's just – it's a big change to bring this much energy into forest action – so-called forest health. And I spoke here once before, a few months ago. It's really important to bear in mind -- we don't have a standard of what a healthy forest is yet – all this work. We need to have foresters, scientists – too bad scientists didn't do a scientific evaluation [of forest decline] since the ad valorem tax in 1946 [yearly tax on standing timber until you cut 70% of it – replaced with yield tax in 1976]. These are really serious problems to deal with. We need to get foresters to agree [about] the different standards of health in different forest types in California, because [in] the drawings about a healthy forest there's large trees [See the April 2018 report on Managing California's Forests & Watersheds by the Legislative Analysts Office (LAO)] – and there's no standards or incentives for landowners to come up with a portion of their forest that actually reaches [culmination] of mean annual increment [Over 100 years for most commercial species]. It's like very important to have that faith – that the public to have faith -- to set those kind of standards.

And a couple other quick comments: About the archaeology, about non-secret archaeology – increasing [the number of] archaeologists is not necessarily the answer. I don't think there's a representative here of the [California] Native American Heritage Commission. There needs to be some kind of bridge because that's important. I was on the EPIC versus Johnson case. One part of it was cumulative effects need to be considered. The other two [CA Appeal Court rulings 1985] were adequate consultation with Indian People and adequate assurances that heritage would be protected. So I think you need to keep that in mind as you go forward

Also, tie with the communities: We're having a big thing like he [Bob Kingman of the Sierra Nevada Conservancy] just described -- it won't be as productive, perhaps, with that many contractors there – but on May 11th in Southern Humboldt-Northern Mendocino County, Redway, we are going to have a similar kind of get-together to cover the whole spectrum of what private landowners can do along with a contract. We need people from here that can help at places like that, to describe what the different procedures are for the different available funds.

And so – there's a lot of science that needs to be followed up on, whether you consider the Little Hoover Commission Report [#126] in June of 1994 to be science, or the Dunne Report – the cumulative impacts ["A Scientific Basis for the Prediction of Cumulative Watershed Effects" UC June 2001]. All these things need to be rolled in and acted upon to make the kind of changes that will benefit the people. And the forestry needs to have forestry experts. You've got the communities at risk with a different . . . There's two different aspects there, with the emergency affecting communities-at-risk and the long-term standards of forestry moving forward. Thank you.