

Addressing Botanical Resources in the Forest Practice Rules

May 7, 2019

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On behalf of the CDFW Timber Botany
Working Group



Presentation Goals

- Why Are Updates Needed?
- Current Process
- Solutions
- Benefits
- Previous Board Questions
- Summary



Why Are Updates Needed?

- Transparency, efficiency, and effectiveness mandates of AB 1492:
 - Improved management and monitoring of special status plant populations
 - Reduce THP length and review timelines
- 20 years of botanical data available – use for programmatic evaluation
- Address botanical protections and monitoring for ministerial projects



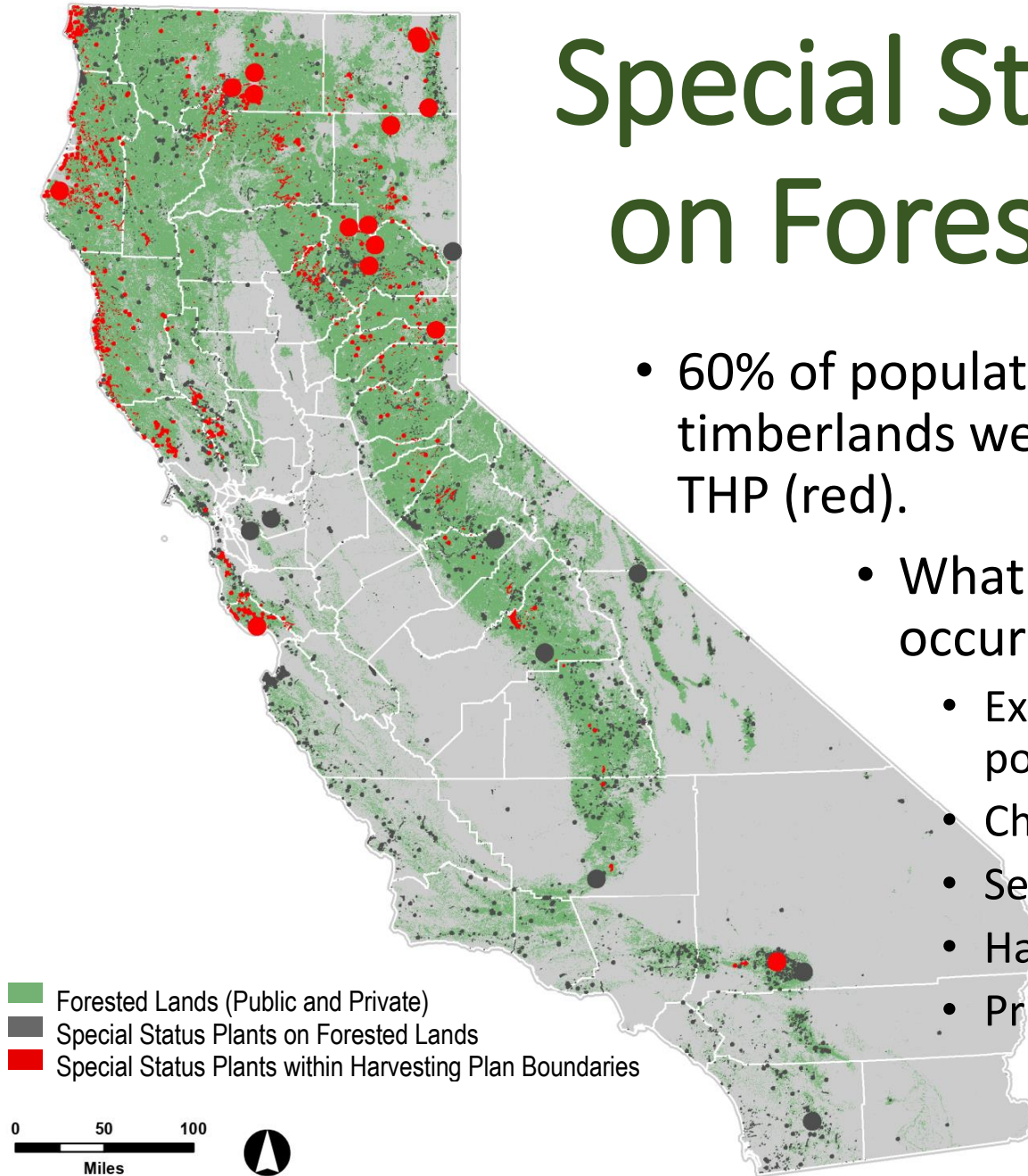
Current Process

- No specific language for botany in FPRs
- Guidance documents from CDFW
 - 2005 botanical survey guidelines
- Memorandum from CAL FIRE
 - 2009 memorandum addressing “special-status plants” for THPs, did not include ministerial approvals.



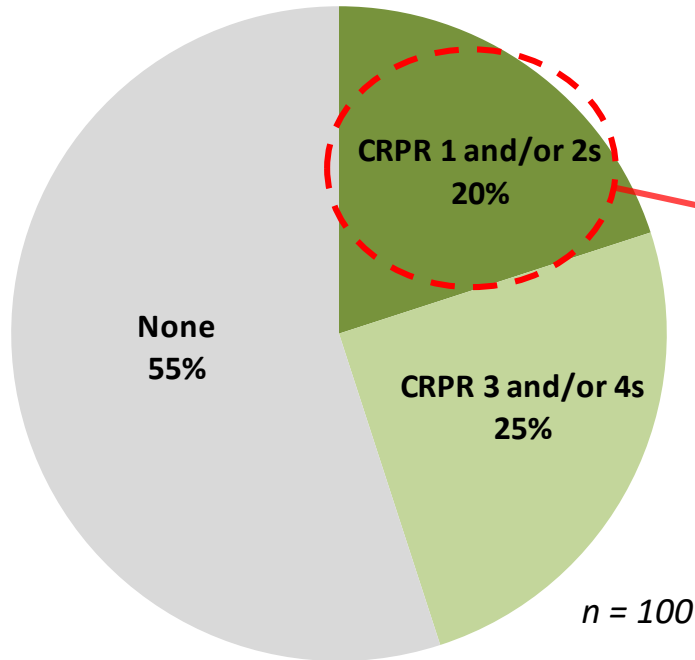
Special Status Plants on Forested Lands

- 60% of populations found on private timberlands were found within a THP (red).
- What can we learn from these occurrences?
 - Extent and connectedness of populations, rarity of species
 - Change in populations over time
 - Sensitivity to disturbance
 - Habitat needs/communities
 - Priorities for management

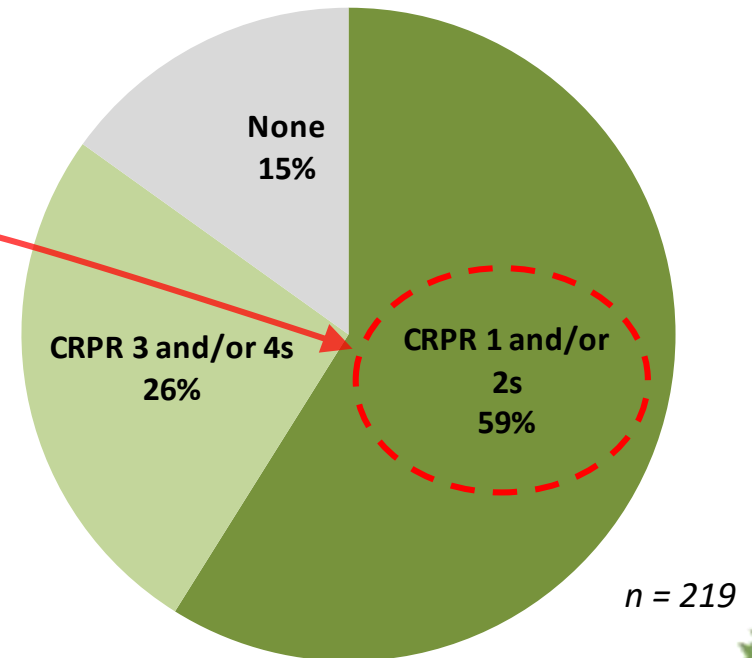


Quality Affects Findings

Non-Protocol-Level Survey Plants Found:



Protocol-Level Survey Plants Found:



Taking a planned approach to assess data will better inform future management.

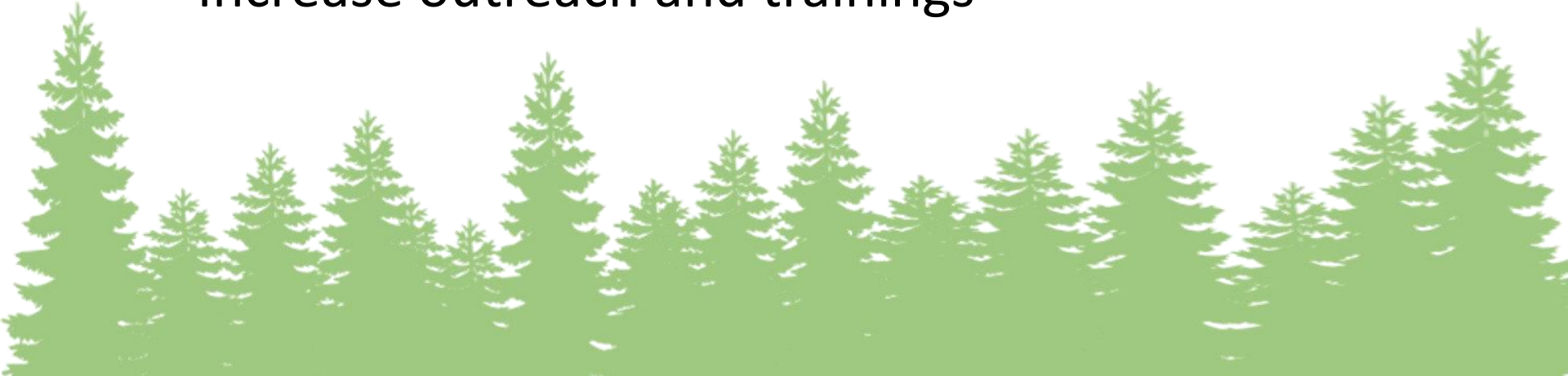
Solutions

- Review THP botanical data, and evaluate patterns and priorities.
- Clarify rules for future botanical assessments, including scoping, surveys, and reporting.
- Shift from “inventory and avoid” approach towards active, landscape-level management.
- Develop monitoring program to increase transparency and demonstrate effectiveness.



CDFW's Role

- Partner with Board and other stakeholders to develop management solutions
- Continue to invite collaboration with stakeholders (industry, public, etc.)
- Continue to encourage property-wide agreements
- Continue consultations/pre-consultations
- Increase outreach and trainings



Benefits

- Better operational certainty
- Increase efficiency for reviewing agencies
- Quality data to inform management decisions
- Assurance that CEQA and CESA requirements have been addressed
 - Benefits the resource
 - Benefits the timber plan proponents



Board Questions

- Are botanists available? **Yes**
 - Many universities in California have Bachelor Degrees in Botany or Plant Science programs (Humboldt, San Francisco, Cal Poly, Davis, etc.)
 - More importantly, students are graduating from those programs and looking for jobs. E.g. HSU had 238 Botany graduates in the last 10 years, 363 in Forestry.
- Are landscape level solutions available? **Yes**
 - Rules could be developed to achieve this and CDFW is available to consult on these now.



Summary

- Reviewing the past is needed to plan for the future.
- Updates are needed to increase efficiency while providing legal protections required under CEQA.
- Can provide landscape level solutions.



Questions?



Participants from CDFW's Timberland Conservation Program and Native Plant Program:

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