

CHAPTER 0300 - GENERAL SECTIONS

OVERVIEW

0301

The California State Board of Forestry and Fire Protection (Board) is a Governor-appointed body within the Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (Department). The Board is responsible for developing the general forest policy of the State, for determining the guidance policies of the Department, and for representing the State's interest in Federal land in California. Together, the Board and the Department work to carry out the California Legislature's mandate to protect and enhance the State's unique forest and wildland resources.

HISTORY OF THE BOARD OF FORESTRY AND FIRE PROTECTION 0302

The State Board of Forestry and Fire Protection is the oldest body of its kind in the United States. It was first appointed in 1885 as a three-man State Board of Forestry. At that time the Board acted solely in an educational and advisory capacity. By 1905, the Board was supplemented by creation of the post of State Forester.

In 1927, the Division of Forestry was organized as part of the newly created Department of Natural Resources. The function of the Board was to represent the people of the State in all matters pertaining to forestry affairs and to develop guiding principles for the operation of the Division. The forestry program was to be carried out under the direction of the State Forester. Membership of the Board was increased to seven representative members appointed by the Governor.

In 1945, the law pertaining to the Board was modified to establish staggered terms of office and thus assure a reasonable continuity of policy. It was also provided that the Senate should confirm the Governor's appointees to the Board.

In 1947, the original Forest Practice Act was passed by the State Legislature. Although the responsibilities and powers of the Board under the old act were less than they are today, the 1947 Act laid important foundations of experience and procedure which led to further development for the Board.

Throughout the period of the 1950's and 1960's the Board functioned under the mandate of the 1947 Act by formulating forest policy for the State.

In 1961, the Former Department of Natural Resources was abolished and a new Department of Conservation created in which the Division of Forestry was one of four divisions.

The passage of the Z'berg-Nejedly Forest Practice act of 1973 by the Legislature expanded the Board's power, including the power to adopt forest practice rules and regulations for each forest district.

When the Division of Forestry was elevated to Departmental status in 1977, the organizational relationship between the former division and the Board was retained. This reorganization of the Department had no effect upon the Board's mandated duties and responsibilities.

ORGANIZATION AND MEMBERSHIP OF THE BOARD

0303

The Board is a nine-member body. Members are appointed by the Governor on the basis of their professional and educational qualification and their general knowledge or interest in problems that relate to watershed management, forest management, fish and wildlife, range improvement, forest economics, or land use policy.

Five members are chosen from the general public, three are chosen from the forest products industry, and one member is from the range-livestock industry.

A chairman chosen by the Governor presides over the Board and its meetings. The Board annually elects a vice-chairman from their membership, to preside in the absence of the chairman.

As authorized by the Public Resources Code, the Board has appointed an executive officer to assist it in its duties, administer the staff functions surrounding the Board's business, and to act as a liaison to the Attorney General and Legislature.

For the purpose of focusing on particular issues the Board is broken down into four standing committees. Each committee has at least three members. The three committees are: Legislation and Policy Development, Forest Practices, Management, and Resource Protection. Agendas are prepared in advance and meetings are public.

To assist the Board in specific matters, advisory committees are sometimes appointed. Examples are the Range Improvement advisory Committee and the Committee on Research. Members are appointed by the chairman of the Board and are drawn from specializations applicable to the committee's concerns.

Various laws also establish committees to advise the Board in particular areas. Examples are the professional Foresters Licensing Committee, which advises the Board on implementations of the Professional Foresters Licensing Law, and the Range Management Advisory Committee which advises on range and livestock issues.