

## CARCD/FSCC FORESTRY COMMITTEE REPORT – FEBRUARY 12, 2019

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**Participants:** Laurie Tippin, Steve Jones, Jerry Reioux, Phil Noia, Stewart McMorrow, Paul Mason, Sheryl Landrum, Jenn Shepard, Matt Brown, Dale Meese, Brook Darley, Steve Haze, John Henshaw, Jon Barrett, Elizabeth Betancourt, Sandra Lupien, Mark Andre, Tim Robbins, Kate Campbell, Chris Zimny, Karen Buhr and others I may not have captured.

### **CARCD Forestry Committee**

*CARCD News and Views:* Karen Buhr, CARCD Executive Director, updated the committee on the various resolutions passed in Nov that changed the structure of the CARCD board of directors. CARCD made a presentation at the recent NACD conference on the capacity building program that has helped many CA RCDs. About 7 RCD personnel attended the conference.

She also provided info on developing legislation of interest to RCDs & the forestry committee: landowner assistance for creating/maintaining defensible space around irrigated lands, formation of a Coordinating Committee that may have some level of enforcement responsibility (AB 38). CARCD is introducing legislation to create a Farm Bill for CA to provide, among other things, technical assistance to farmers that would augment NRCS' EQIP program. For RCD members, the CARCD member website will soon be tracking introduced bills of interest. Feb 22, 2019 is the deadline for new bill submission. Paul Mason, PFT, added that the Assembly Budget Subcommittee will be holding a hearing on 2/13 regarding the impacts of climate change on water & wildfire, among other items, & how to administer the various state grant programs more efficiently.

*CARCD RCPP Grant Update:* A steering committee for grant implementation has been convened with members coming from the numerous partners associated with this \$10 million grant (most of which is going to landowner EQIP contracts). Committee meetings are occurring. Several contracts will be awarded soon.

### **Forest Stewardship Coordinating Committee**

*Forest Legacy Program Update:* Brook Darley provided an update on the Forest Legacy program, which conserves privately owned forest lands through conservation easements or land purchases. FY19 projects haven't been announced yet. PUC phase 1 CE closed in Dec. 2018. Three FY20 proposals have been submitted to the USFS-WO, totaling \$8.3 million dollars. At the western states review, positive feedback was provided for these proposed projects. Proposals are currently being ranked by the national team.

*FSCC Charter Update:* The Charter will be shared in Google Docs and sent to committee members for suggested comments for a final 2 week review period.

*California Forest Improvement Program (CFIP) Update:* Waiting for about \$1.5 million in funding to be deposited into the CFIP account. Landowners are already identified to receive funding, most of which is concentrated in fire areas. From Prop 68, about \$8.8 million is earmarked for CAL FIRE for ecological restoration & much, if not all, of this funding is expected to be deposited into the CFIP program. Future CFIP applications will be

submitted electronically through the new Webgrant Program. Rollout of this new web-based program will occur prior to June 30. The upcoming *Forestland Steward* newsletter will feature the CFIP program.

### **Both Committees**

The planned Feb. 26<sup>th</sup> in-person meeting has been postponed until March or April. Stay tuned.

*Reforestation Issues:* Work continues at the CAL FIRE LA Moran Nursery in Davis. Several personnel vacancies exist of which a couple will be advertised as Environmental Scientist. The 2018 cone collection was a success though it wasn't a large cone crop this year. A priority on 2019 is to collect cones for their seeds through normal methods and citizen science opportunities that may incentivize collection. Based upon a session at January's Forest Veg Management conference & recognition that improvement in communications with nursery users would be beneficial, Stewart is organizing a committee to reduce misunderstandings, receive input & discuss issues.

*Timber Management Task Force (TMTF):* The FM Restoration working group created a membership survey to identify statewide issues & solutions. Responses identified funding, cooperative support to landowners, public education & technical assistance were identified as priority areas in which to focus. Each regional working group has also used a survey for its members to identify local issues & solutions that will be prioritized & channeled up to the statewide working group.

*SB 901:* This bill, which was signed by the Governor in Sept 2018, provides for a number of ways to increase the pace & scale of forest restoration. Paul Mason identified the following: a wildfire commission has been formed, funding for forest health/Rx fire has been identified, CEQA/NEPA clarified for federal land, conservation easement language improved & moved to the PRC from the civil code, several THP exemptions were consolidated, ability to write a Forest Mgt Plan for multiple landowners. The new wording/process/etc for many of this legislation's actions is currently under review at the State Office of Administrative Law.

### **Agency Reports**

NRCS: An update to the Cooperative Forest Management Plan has occurred & is currently being reviewed. Chris would like the joint committees' input (is this a potential topic at the TBD in-person meeting?). Input was also requested to identify best management practices for providing tree removal services w/in the 100' defensible space requirement (another potential topic for in-person mtg). NRCS in CA continues to expand forestry assistance to private landowners through agreements with individual RCDs, CARCD, American Forest Foundation. He continues to look for ways to increase the availability of technical assistance to landowners through increased NRCS personnel, agreements & Technical Service Providers (TSP).

**The next Joint Forestry Committee Call will take place March 12<sup>th</sup> at 8:00am.**