

Management Committee (Committee)

The mission of the Management Committee is to evaluate and promote long-term, landscape level planning approaches to support natural resource management on California's non-federal forest and rangelands.

Completed or Substantially Complete in 2021

Research Plan (PRC § 4789.6):

Objective: The Board, assisted by the Director, shall biennially determine state needs for forest management research and recommend the conduct of needed projects to the Governor and the Legislature.

Additionally, the Forest Management Task Force's "California's Wildfire and Forest Resilience Action Plan" identifies that, in coordination with the Science Advisory Panel of the Task Force and other leading scientists, the Board and CAL FIRE's Forest and Resource Assessment Program (FRAP) will develop and issue an applied research plan by June 2021.

Status: The Board approved the Report on Forest Management Research on June 9, 2021.

PRIORITY 1 FOR 2022:

Issues Pertaining to Conversion of Timberland:

Regulatory amendments to 14 CCR § 1100(g)(2) - Definition of Timberland Conversion - Existing Board regulations are currently inconsistent with PRC § 4621 as it applies to conversion of timberland. Current Board regulations address proposed conversions in the Timber Production Zone (TPZ) where an immediate re-zone out of TPZ has been approved. State law does not recognize zoning as a controlling factor in the conversion of timberland. CAL FIRE has requested that the Board bring the current definition of conversion into conformance with State law to recognize all timberland conversions regardless of zoning status.

Additionally, timberland conversion on non-TPZ land in 14 CCR § 1101(g)(1) is identified as transforming timberland to a non-timber use where "(A) Future timber harvests will be prevented or infeasible because of land occupancy and activities thereon", among other conditions. However, on TPZ lands, timberland conversion is identified as "...the immediate rezoning of TPZ lands," but conversion exemptions pursuant to 14 CCR § 1104.1 are excepted from this requirement of immediate rezoning. This presents a potential issue with the regulations where the filing of a conversion exemption on TPZ land simply becomes a de jure conversion even when there is no "conversion" of the land, as defined by plain English or other Board regulations or statute.

Regulatory amendments to 14 CCR § 895.1 - "Crop of Trees, Available for, and Capable of..." - Several Parties have made the request to address the definition of "crop of trees" to aid in identification of timberland. The Committee has

received briefings from Board staff and CAL FIRE on potential options to address this issue.

Currently, an individual who obtains a less than 3-acre conversion exemption pursuant to 14 CCR § 1104.1(a) is prohibited from future conversion on that property, even within the same footprint of the initial conversion, presenting a potential hardship for those who may have been unable to fully effectuate a conversion. Allowing future conversion exemptions to occur within the footprint of a previously accepted exemption may provide relief for these individuals without providing for “additional”, or serialized, conversion of timberland acres.

Status: The Board has plans to schedule a workshop in January 2022 to address this issue and continues to evaluate potential solutions.

“Cutover Land”, “Meadows and Wet Areas” and “Wet Meadows and Other Wet Areas”

Objective: The term “Cutover Land” has no basis in statute or regulation and its continued use in the rules is unclear. Additionally, due to various amendments the Board maintains separate but identical definitions for “Meadows and Wet Areas” for the Northern and Southern Forest Districts, as well as a separate definition for “Wet Meadows and Other Wet Areas”, which is reliant upon the unclear “Cutover Land”. These terms should be made consistent across forest districts and use of the term “Cutover Land” eliminated from the rules.

Status: The Committee has developed regulatory text on this issue and would like to have a completed rule package which becomes effective January 1, 2023.

Jackson Demonstration State Forest Management Plan Review

Objective: The Department and other stakeholders, have requested that the Board participate in discussions surrounding the Management of JDSF to ensure that the forest remains a functional and valuable public resource into the future.

Status: Board staff and Board members have participated in Jackson Advisory Group meetings in September 2021 and intend to continue to work with the JAG on the development of future management issues.

LaTour Demonstration State Forest Management Plan Review

Objective: The Board reviews management plans for both existing and new Demonstration State Forests.

Status: The Committee will review this management plan for the LaTour Demonstration State Forests when it becomes available.

Review of Required Post-Harvest Stocking Standards (14 § CCR 913; 14 CCR § 1071),

Objective: Pursuant to Assembly Bills (AB) 2082 (2014) and 417 (2015), Affecting Public Resource Code (PRC) 4561: Objective: The request has been made to investigate the current stocking standards as they relate to various regeneration methods and forest health, including fuel hazard reduction, within certain forest

types.

In addition, several questions have been raised regarding the suitability of the existing forest practice rules addressing current empirical understanding of various elements, including the relationship between forest spatial arrangement, or temporal variables and various aspects of forest health and other ecological systems. Regarding Variable Retention: (1) Should the Variable Retention regulation specify a minimum re-entry period for designated retention areas?; (2) Should the current regulation require a minimum stand age necessary for harvest to occur in order to demonstrate maximum sustained production (MSP) as is required for even-age silviculture under 14 CCR § 913.11(c)?; and (3) Are the minimum stocking requirements of CCR § 913.4 (d)(3)(H) relative to aggregate versus dispersed retention clear enough for consistent application and enforcement? Additionally, it has been reported that CAL FIRE does not allow use of the Transition silviculture method in timber stands which were most previously harvested utilizing the Selection method. This 'policy' is not consistent with 14 CCR § 913.2(b) or (b) (2).

Status: Recent legislative mandates (AB 2082, 2014 and AB 417, 2015) were chaptered by the Brown Administration and grant the Board the authority to review required minimum stocking standards pursuant to PRC § 4561. The FPC discussed this topic periodically throughout 2018, but due to a large workload this issue was moved to the Committee for further action. The Stocking and Silvicultural Amendments were adopted by the Board in September of 2019, which took effect on January 1, 2020. Since that time, an "uneven-aged working group" has been formed to address this issue related to those basal area stocking requirements within the rules. The group met periodically through 2020 and 2021 and is anticipated to continue its efforts into 2022.

Utility ROW Operations

Objective: Existing regulations related to the exemptions from portions of the Forest Practice Act for construction and maintenance of rights-of-way within 14 CCR § 1104.1(b) and (c) lack significant clarity related to the submission of notices, general application, mapping, and other requirements.

Status: The Committee began a regulatory effort to address this issue in June of 2020, but rulemaking efforts are delayed per a request from CNRA and the Governor's Office to review Statewide utility related policies.

PRIORITY 2 FOR 2022:

Maximum Sustained Production (MSP) 14 CCR § 913.11(a) [933.11(a), 953.11(a)]:

Objective:

Review performance of existing MSP rules since Board adoption. The Committee may consider the following actions for MSP review:

Consider forming a technical working group to consider changes to existing MSP rules to provide more concrete standards for the MSP demonstration per 14 CCR

§ 913.11(a) [933.11(a), 953.11(a)].

Consider implications for carbon forest health, including resiliency and changing climatic conditions.

Status: The Committee reviewed the MSP rules in February of 2011 and found no further action necessary. CAL FIRE has resubmitted the issue in 2015, and industry stakeholders expressed concern over the effective period of the SYP in 2017. The Board may address this issue in 2022.

Board Policy Review:

Objective: The Board currently has many policies in place, some dating back decades. The Board aspires to review and contemporize all policies and make them available to the public via the Board's website. Board policies cover a myriad of topics; committee assignment will be based upon the subject matter of the individual policy under review. Particular focus will be paid by the Management Committee in 2022 to the Board's Policy 0356, Vegetation Management Program.

Status: It is anticipated that the Committee will be presented with, and may vote to approve and refer to the full Board, an updated version of Policy 0356 that reflects modern environmental priorities, updated understandings of ecology and management, and recent and current fire prevention programs.

14 CCR § 913.6 [933.6, 953.6] Alternative Prescriptions [All Districts]

Objective: Use of the Alternative Prescription silviculture in Timber Harvesting Plans (THPs) may be inadvertently resulting in "high-grading" of timber stands. As per 14 CCR § 913.6 [933.6, 953.6], an Alternative Prescription (AP) may be proposed by an RPF if it is determined that it is a more effective way or feasible way of achieving Maximum Sustained Production (MSP) of high-quality timber products. However, recent practices have shown that minimizing logging costs or eliminating a need to plant the post-harvest stand is the driving factor for proposing an Alternative Prescription. This may result in a post-harvest stand that is in direct contradiction of the 14 CCR § 953 objectives. Examples of trees retained within a post-harvest AP stand include trees of poor form, trees previously in a suppressed or intermediate crown position, and trees of poor future growth potential. Evaluation of the AP regulations should be conducted to ensure that the purposes of the Act are achieved.

Status: The Committee has not begun deliberation on this item

Pacific Forest and Watershed Lands Stewardship Council:

Objective: The Board approved CAL FIRE's effort to acquire lands in the Stewardship Council planning units of "Pit River," "Battle Creek," "Cow Creek," "Burney Gardens," "Lake Spaulding," "Bear River," "North Fork Mokelumne River," and "Lyons Reservoir" that would be suitable for inclusion in CAL FIRE's

Demonstration State Forest Program. Substantial work is required of CAL FIRE for the acquisition of these lands and the Board must approve management plans for each parcel.

Status: The Committee and Board look forward to reviewing any management plans which are developed for any future land acquisition.

PRIORITY 3 FOR 2022:

Site Index for Major Young-Growth Forest Woodland Species in Northern California Discussion of Update to 14 CCR § 1060 Site Classification:

Objective: FPC completed initial review of this topic in April-June of 2010 and deferred additional review until completion of the Road Rules. The Committee will continue review of the issue when sufficient Committee time is available.

Status: No reportable actions were made on this topic in 2021.

Review Commercial Species Group B Designation for Monterey Pine, Eucalyptus, and Other Species

Objective: The Board had an opportunity during its meeting in San Luis Obispo in the summer of 2019 to visit various fuel hazard reduction projects in the Coastal Zone.

Among these projects was a Monterey pine thinning implemented by the CAL FIRE San Luis Obispo Administrative Unit to create a shaded fuel break in proximity to the community of Cambria. Permitting of the fuel break was achieved through completion of a Mitigated Negative Declaration and Minor Use Permit approved by the Coastal Commission because Monterey pine is no longer a Group A Commercial Species and therefore cannot be managed by itself under permitting authority of the Forest Practice Act and Rules.

It is understood that prior to its placement on the Group B Commercial Species list for each of the Forest Districts, Monterey pine was seldom harvested for commercial purpose in California. However, it is in fact a dominant commercial species internationally and does have a history of commercialization in the state. It is a particularly important tree species in the context of fuel hazard reduction on the central coast of California and certainly factors into the protection of coastal communities.

Limited opportunities exist for communities attempting to reduce heavy fuel loading in Monterey pine forests within the Coastal Zone because it is on the Group B species list in an area without Group A species. A possible minor fix for this management problem would be to place Monterey pine back on the Group A Commercial Species list for all or a portion of the Forest Districts in the state. CAL FIRE has requested the above change. Various stakeholders have also requested that the designation of other Group B species, including but not limited to eucalyptus and giant sequoia, be reevaluated.

Status: The Committee may take this item up again in 2022.

Oak Retention Considerations

Objective:

- Consider clarification of the term “Forested Landscapes” as used within the professional forester’s law.
- Consider the need for hardwood retention guidelines.

Status: The Committee has not begun deliberation on this issue.