

BOARD OF FORESTRY AND FIRE PROTECTION

P.O. Box 944246
SACRAMENTO, CA 94244-2460
Website: www.bof.fire.ca.gov
(916) 653-8007



October 17, 2008

Ms. Mary D. Nichols, Chair
California Air Resources Board
1001 I Street
Sacramento, California 95814

Dear Chair Nichols:

On behalf of the State Board of Forestry and Fire Protection (Board), I am pleased to present to you the Board's Strategic Plan. Pursuant to your request, this plan intends to provide assurances that the forestry sector target proposed in the Air Resources Board's AB 32 Scoping Plan will be met. As outlined in the Scoping Plan, the Forestry Sector is to: *"Preserve forest sequestration and encourage the use of forest biomass for sustainable energy generation"*.

The Board is mandated to maintain a vigorous, resilient and healthy forest land base in California, which supports the ecological needs of the forest ecosystem and its human dependencies. The Board recognizes the importance of the sequestration potential for forests and their benefits in achieving GHG emission reduction targets. At the same time the Board acknowledges that these needs must be considered in conjunction with the many other ecological and human benefits that forests provide and for which the Board has responsibility in this State.

While the California Air Resources Board (ARB) is ultimately responsible for achieving the reductions, the Board has the unique authority – and expertise – to develop, revise and implement regulations and programs to assure that the forestry sector target is met. The Board believes that the 5 MMT target can be met, and surpassed, through a combination of regulatory, statutory and incentive-based actions. These actions include:

- Improvement of forest inventory and monitoring to ensure changes will be detected.
- Consideration of additional statutory and regulatory needs, including a review of the effects of existing regulations on carbon sequestration.
- Working with Federal agencies to maintain and increase sequestration levels by: 1) preventing losses of inventory and growth rates; 2) continuing reforestation efforts; and 3) fuels management treatments on federal lands to reduce the risk of catastrophic wildfire.
- Reducing barriers and providing additional incentives to encourage voluntary action by private landowners to increase inventory and growth rates while decreasing risk of losses.
- Developing sound policies and regulations for CALFIRE that will contribute to reduction of the risk of catastrophic wildfire.
- Encouraging research related to climate change impacts for the Forestry Sector.

- Working with other agencies and legislative authorities to ensure development of policies, infrastructure and funding to support fuels reduction and biomass utilization.

This Strategic Plan establishes a framework for action to maintain the 5MMT target within the context of the Board's California forest policy. Further analysis is saved for a more detailed implementation plan, which is expected to emerge as a result of one or more task groups planned to address the work plan outlined in this guidance document.

A planned set of steps to achieve this objective are presented in an attached report that includes an outline of the capabilities of the Board. It is most imperative to improve the state's forest inventory and monitoring system by 2016. A parallel critical factor to assure maintenance of this target past 2020 is development of a forest climate adaptation plan along with strategies for implementation.

The Board recognizes that none of these critical factors for assurance in meeting the 5MMT target can be achieved by the Board alone. It will therefore be absolutely necessary for the Board to consistently collaborate with a wide range of stakeholders.

To carry out this work plan, the Board has established a Special Committee of the Board on Climate Change that will form task groups to address each of these priority items. The Committee will hold meetings at least quarterly to track progress and will report to the Board on any adjustments needed for the work plan. The Board will in turn report to the ARB on the Committee's progress.

The approach outlined in this report, will enhance ongoing actions that the Board is now taking on forest and rangelands in California. The Board believes that existing actions and programs that promote sustainable forest management are consistent with meeting the target set by the ARB. The uncertainties in managing forest carbon outlined in the report and in the AB 32 Scoping Plan have existed for some time and yet the state's forested lands remain an increasing net carbon sink. However, it is clear from the current increase in wildland fire events that improved forest health, fuels management and provision of markets for the material generated in fuels treatments demands immediate attention. Maintaining strong fire protection and prevention, fostering programs that improve forest resiliency and health, and promoting cooperation with stakeholders will be the key to success in the forestry sector.

We wish to thank for offering us this opportunity, and we look forward to working with you and the Air Resources Board in this exciting and challenging endeavor.



Stan Dixon, Chair
California Board of Forestry and Fire Protection