

## Charter of the Interagency Forest Working Group

Comments/Suggestions  
Paul Eichenberger, P.E.  
Principal  
Western States Power, llc  
[eichenbergerp@gmail.com](mailto:eichenbergerp@gmail.com)  
916 201 7651

It is with great pleasure that I learned of the establishment of the Interagency Forest Working Group. I strongly support the purpose of this group as we begin to address the issue of emissions that many believe are a result of human activities. It is my position that if we accept that human activities are changing our world's environment then we can not continue to assert that because this is the way things use to be that they must continue. If we believe that seven billion people and counting are having a negative effect on our "fish bowl" then we need to approach our treatment of that "fish bowl" as a system. Our actions must consider the effect on the system. We can no longer ignore the unintended consequences.

With this system approach in mind I then suggest that our goals should be expanded to not just maintain or exceed the five mmBTU target assigned to the forest sector but examine the possibility (probability) that through a system approach the forest sector's ability to reduce Green House Gas (GHG) production and absorb more can be determined. I am not advocating mitigation or an absorption approach but a systematic approach that maintains species diversity, treats insects and disease, avoids species destruction, provides for wild fire prevention including the use of controlled fires and selective harvesting, fire protection and restoration. I include all of these activities as "Forest Management" which I believe is more encompassing than "working forests.

My suggested language changes are shown below:

### **Meeting Logistics:**

The meetings will be conducted in person, with provision for telephonic attendance ~~as may be necessary and appropriate.~~

### **Board of Forestry and Fire Protection Climate Change Work Plan:**

**A. Goals** The plan has ~~three~~ ~~we~~ goals: 1) to maintain and exceed an annual net carbon sink of 5 MMTCO<sub>2</sub> in the forest sector, ~~and~~ 2) to reduce the forest sectors vulnerability to climate change impacts and 3) investigate the potential of the forest to act as a carbon sink and minimize its release of carbon using a system approach of forest management.-

### **B. Principles:**

Protection and Conservation – The over-arching consideration for the forest sector is to protect and conserve forest land by keeping forests as working forests and reserves. The three major agents of change in a California's forest are wildfire, insects and disease, and human development/use. For wildfire, protection takes the form of active fire prevention and suppression and related programs by Cal FIRE, federal and local agencies to protect life, property, and natural resources.

Restoration – Restoration means returning lands to a condition that maintains healthy productive forests. This includes removal of wildfire debris, reforestation of lands burned by wildfire, addressing invasive species and other vegetation management actions that restore degraded forest lands. For example, the United States Forest Service estimates a minimum backlog of 80,000 acres of areas burned that have not been treated with reforestation.

Utilization – Use of forests and forest products can be made more carbon sensitive. Harvesting results in an initial decrease in the amount of standing carbon in a forest stand. Appropriate harvesting coupled with strategic fire breaks and fuel reduction can reduce the potential for catastrophic GHG releases while preserving wild life, reducing damaged to fresh water sources and the cost of wild fire suppression.

**C. Actions:** The IFWG will meet and form special sub-groups to meet the two goals mentioned above and will establish a clear workplan by March 31<sup>st</sup> to provide more direction. The IFWG will assign responsibility to task groups to develop a plan for each subject area. These task groups will include experts from federal and state agencies, academia, and those with expertise/or interests from the stakeholder community.