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MEETING AGENDA AND MINUTES

Interagency Forest Working Group (IFWG)
February 27, 2009
Time: 9:00 a.m. . noon

Location: Cal/EPA Bldg.
Sierra Room
1001 I Street, Sacramento, California

1. Introductions
2. Review of the Charter, discussion
3. Discussion regarding priorities and schedule
4. Public comment
5. Next steps
6. Adjourn

The Board's Mission:

To lead California in developing policies and programs that serve the public interest in environmentally, economically, and socially sustainable management of forest and rangelands and a fire protection system that protects and serves the people of the state.

After general introductions, the two meeting leaders began with an overview. David Nawi of the Board of Forestry and Fire Protection (Board) reviewed the board's strategic plan for AB 32 and noted that the overall goal is to make real the 5,000,000 metric tons goal for 2020, and if possible to exceed that target. Tony Brunello of the California Natural Resources Agency (CNRA) described the role of the group in providing advice for not only the board's strategic plan (which should be considered a starting point), but other issues such as low carbon fuel standards. He also expressed the desire that the group inform disparate parallel efforts.

Mr. Brunello noted some of the criticisms of the Board's plan:

1. Not ambitious enough.
2. Timeframe not aggressive enough.
3. Need to encourage broader participation, bringing the different programs together to advise and inform the Board.

Lynn Terry suggested the role of the working group is to provide concrete advice. This was not limited to broader AB 32 Scoping Plan, but specific issues such as biomass, biofuel, and the federal role.

There was discussion about the working group bringing together their shared goals and developing relationships that were relevant to all of their respective work.

Jim Boyd discussed the context of larger issues such as fires, forest health, biofuels, biomass, and sustainability issues interact and overlap each other. In addition, he discussed how rules and regulations sometimes preclude or conflict with actions, and he is looking to this group to help sort those out.

The group reviewed the ground rules, which included:

1. Keeping time agreements and respecting time commitments in the process.
2. Listening to others.
3. Respecting others' opinions.
4. Turning off cell phones.

Executive Officer Gentry then went through the charter of the working group and discussed its framework among these were included:

1. Identification of co-chairs from the CNRA and the Board.
2. The ability to add additional committees specific to certain topic items.
3. Logistics of the meeting, including the open meeting act.
4. Potential workshops and their topics,
5. The connection to Board's workplan.

Public comment: among the issues raised concerning the charter were concerns over public access to information. Mr. Gentry committed to improving e-mail service and updating the website.

DFG expressed concern over the inclusion of a biodiversity goal. The general consensus was that the charter is to be a flexible framework. David Nawi expressed concern over the use of "balance" in the value statement. After discussion it was agreed that the term balance should be replaced by something similar to comprehensive evaluation, and reflect the biodiversity goal.

There was general consensus that the purpose of the charter is to form shared goals and provide clear ideas of success. The working group committed to providing those comments prior to the next meeting.

Public comment:

1. Make the stakeholder process clear.
2. There seem to be differences between the AB 32 scoping plan and the Board's strategic plan. Are the priorities the same?
3. There were questions regarding the workshop list in the selection of various workshops and priorities. These did not appear consistent with the AB 32 scoping plan.
4. There is a need to set clear goals.
5. An expression of satisfaction with the list of priorities, including prominence of fire and biomass.

The working group discussed the purpose of the charter. Consensus was generally that it should be an open-ended charter that allowed for consideration of all the potential subject items. Discussion then focused on the concern that meetings should not be single-purpose topics, but instead must take in all the consequences of multiple issues. Group discussed that potentially the highest priority is the inventory or accounting aspect, because this will supply the metrics of success and accountability for achieving 5,000,000 metric tons.

The group reached consensus that integrated approaches to the issue were important. The group committed to linking their ongoing commitments to the work of the working group, so that overlaps in work and time constraints can be identified.

Meeting facilitator then began review of commitments made to this point in meeting.

1. Commitment to the public process. This involves assuring that documents are posted and or distributed well in advance of the meeting.
2. Commitment to integrate ongoing external parallel processes. Agreement to go back and consult with internal agency groups to determine what exists in

- parallel processes or timelines. Agreement to list these and submit to Board's Executive Officer for distribution to the group.
3. Commitment to define shared purpose and goals.
 4. Commitment to develop new topics and timelines. Clear interfaces to allow access the process for agency and public stakeholders.
 5. Designate staffers from each department to assist with logistics.

The group then began a discussion on framing for workshops. Board staff prepared an outline for wildfire/climate workshop. Group was asked to assess this potential outline.

Discussion focused on a potential first workshop on the accounting issue. ARB staff identified that there were several areas that had complicated the accounting issue for them in their initial scoping. Issue one was sustainability. Issue two was land conversion. Issue three was fire and fuel reduction. These issues have many layers of complexity. The AB 32 target is meant to look at the state as a whole. Its overarching theme is to maintain current levels of sequestration in the forestry sector. Inventory and accounting methods are also important, because they provide the ability to monitor and track current progress toward targets and determine success. A key point was raised: success means no net loss.

Continued discussion was then given over ability of the working group to provide solutions to individual agency objectives and questions. The example given was that of the definition of forest biomass for the California Energy Commission. It was expressed that this effort (IFWG) was being looked to answer those questions.

Discussion centered on the design of a workshop. It should have an open process that provided for public interaction. The question posed was: what should workshop of that type look like, and who should be invited, particularly around the subject of inventory and accounting issues for the forestry sector. This charge was given to the workgroup: Provide input as to what such a workshop would entail.

The working group committed to having their staffs work together to come up with a workshop draft for the next meeting. Members the public asked if the workshop draft for wildfire and climate be made available on the website to refer to. Additional comment came from the working group indicated that the wildfire and climate workshop draft seemed to be more of a science presentation rather than a debate. It could be considered more of a science symposium, rather than workshop.

There was a general commitment to the public that the topics and timelines currently offered are flexible, and they are pending further review and input. The working group reiterated a commitment to post comments from the working group as well as the public on the website. This introduced the topic whether or not the timelines as currently composed for realistic.

Public comment:

1. Desire for an explicit connection with the AB 32 scoping plan in the charter.
2. Desire for the forest practice rules and CEQA to be the priorities.

There was consensus amongst working group that March 19 would be the next meeting of the interagency forestry working group.

An additional public comment was that simple solutions shouldn't be overlooked. Don't necessarily go to the most complicated issues first. E.g., assisting nonindustrial owners with forest health issues.

The working group consensus was to review and finalize the charter by the next meeting, and keep a firm deadline. If possible, submit comments by March 15. After March 19 the charter is no longer negotiable. Timelines and workshops are flexible.

The working group discussed the offsets issue and how it relates to the interagency forestry working group. Statutory authority questions are a possible topic as well as leakage and additionality. The general consensus was that offsets must be discussed as they were already becoming issues as part of cap and trade discussions.

Final comments related to clarifying the goals of the committee, emphasizing interagency accountability, and a commitment to improve public notification.