

BOARD OF FORESTRY AND FIRE PROTECTION

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**DRAFT
MINUTES
Interagency Forest Working Group
May 26, 2009**

IFWG MEMBERS PRESENT:

Margaret Kim - International Climate Advisor, Cal EPA
Stephanie Tom Coupe - Deputy Assistant Director
David Nawi - Member, Board of Forestry and Fire Protection (BOF)
Crawford Tuttle - Chief Deputy, Department of Forestry and Fire Protection
Kelly Birkenshaw - California Energy Commission
Jim Pena - Deputy Regional Forester, Region V U.S. Forest Service
Dale Hoffman-Floerke - Deputy Director, Department of Water Resources
Lynn Terry - Deputy Director, Air Resources Board

Mr. Nawi began the meeting with introductions and reviewed the agenda. Some adjustments were made in the order of the agenda items.

Item 2- Mr. Gentry reported that the IFWG charter had been reviewed and accepted by the Board at their April meeting.

Item 4 - ARB staff provided a presentation to the Workgroup reviewing the AB 32 Scoping Plan contents and as particularly related to the forest sector.

Tony Brunello – How does CEQA fit within the scoping plan discussion?

Jeanne Panek - CEQA is in the Scoping Plan within the land use context and as part of any project approval

David Nawi - Is biomass addressed and how is it to be treated?

Jeanne Panek - Biomass has complicated science issues related to its use. However, it represents large opportunities for greenhouse gas benefits. The forest sector will logically get some ability to identify those benefits.

Linda Murchison - Some sectors other than forestry did not have as good tools as forestry to set their targets.

- The tools for developing the forest sector inventory were not well advanced at the time the GHG inventory was completed and there is room for improvement.

- The group should not get too deeply involved with the inventory numbers, but should direct their focus on the objective of “no – net – loss”.
- There also needs to be a focus placed on the development of monitoring methodology and the metrics for the monitoring.

Jim Pena - A statement of “no-net-loss” denotes knowledge of the system and how it will evolve over time. The forest system will need to be managed to maintain the “no-net-loss” objective. Without management the longer term view of forests could change and not meet the objective. California has over 30 million acres of forestland in the landscape with many influences which will reflect change over time.

David Nawi - The term “stretch target” has been used periodically when discussing the forest sector target. What is meant by that term?

Linda M. – The idea is that there are opportunities available to exceed the “no – net-loss” target.

Jim Pena – As the group gets a better feeling of the forest system inputs and outputs, we will be able to identify those opportunities.

Kelly Birkinshaw – Winrock looked for opportunities when they did an initial review of carbon stock baseline and carbon supply curves for California in 2002 – 2004. Opportunities were also review in the Western Carbon Sequestration Partnership (WestCarb) test area in Shasta County.

Ctr. For Biological Diversity – Asked if CAL FIRE analyses were used in the Scoping Plan and whether the information from these efforts was made available to the public.

Jeanne Panek – Provided the websites where this information is available.

Tony Brunello – Overall this group will rely on the US Forest Service and the Department of Forestry and Fire Protection for data in the group considerations.

Mr. Gentry – The Board of Forestry (BoF) had lengthy discussions at more than one meeting as to whether the target could be met and concluded it could be met.

Tony Brunello – Asked for a description of the goals for the Board Fire Plan.

Mr. Gentry – Described it as a strategic plan, required in statute, for fire protection on a statewide basis. It is intended to assure equal protection for all state responsibility lands.

Tony B. – Asked if the Climate Action Team (CAT) Research Group would meet again.

Kelly B. – Stated it would and that the desire is to use the group as an overarching guide for all state agency research in the area of climate change.

Mr. Gentry – The BoF is looking to IFWG to aid in setting priorities on activities to achieve the target that will the most benefit for the resources invested.

David Nawi - Asked about the role of wood products in carbon sequestration.

Ed Murphy – When wood is used in building construction the 47 per cent of the carbon in the wood is still in use (sequestered in wood products) and 25 per cent in the landfills at 100 years after harvest.

David Nawi – Should wood products be tracked in the GHG inventory?

Linda M. – Wood products are now in the GHG inventory and there are still questions being addressed in how they should be treated.

Jeanne Panek – Asked how climate change was being addressed in the BoF fire plan?

Mr. Gentry - There is not a lot on climate change included at this time, but the discussion is in progress on how best to address the topic. Previous plans did not address climate change directly but clearly addressed the need to reduce wildfire size, cost, and severity. This effort will produce a draft for public review by January 2010.

Fire and climate change is now a high priority for this work group and a 2nd workshop will be developed and presented following the forest inventory workshop.

Bruce Goines – Asked if there was a role for the Pacific Southwest forest and range experiment station to participate in the CAT research committee, led by Jim Boyd and Kelly Birkenshaw?

Kelly B. - Building partnerships for research is critical to capture what research is ongoing and the linkages between these existing efforts as well as identifying linkages which will make future research efforts more efficient. This committee process also allows us to better identify knowledge gaps.

Mr. Gentry - Indicated there was an opportunity for participating in the BoF Research committee, and identified the primary participants in that committee.

Klaus Scott – noted that there is a need to include the North American Carbon Program in this effort.

Ed Murphy – Stated that there is a need to broaden the participation in this group to better tie research to what is occurring on the ground with regard to activities and policy development.

Kelly B. – There is a key role for state agency experts in assisting in guiding the research direction.

Tony B. – Asked what efforts the Department FRAP program was making the area of Research?

Crawford Tuttle – FRAP is in the process of updating the Fire and Resource Assessment required by statute. It will include a chapter on climate change. A draft will be prepared by the end of this calendar year.

Kelly B. - Commented that many of policy issues being raised now that require research have the overlay of “sustainability”. This includes the question of sustainable biomass both from a fuel supply aspect and from an ecosystem aspect.

Brett Storey – Noted that all biomass to energy plant now have to address a sustainable fuel supply in order to identify project funding. The size of a plant is based on the sustainable level of the fuel supply.

David Nawi – Is there now involvement of forestry in climate research or is there a lack of communication.

Ed Murphy – There may not be a disconnect in the area of research but there is a lack of communication.

Linda M. - The CAT Research Committee is to capture a real picture of the research on climate change that is now under way.

Jim Pena – Does this state committee do the research tasks or is its purpose to frame the research issues and outline for solutions?

Linda M. - This is a long-term effort but there is a need for some immediate outputs.
Stephanie Tom Coup – asked what research questions need to be answered.

Tony B. – Stressed the need to connect all these efforts with common data development needs.

David Nawi - Asked if there was a small task group that could be assigned to review this area of research. The group agreed that should be done. The formation of a small task group on research was agreed to with Kelly Birkinshaw taking the lead. Initial members would be Ed Murphy, Doug Wickizer, and an ARB representative.

Item 3 Group Focus

Objective #1 – Inventory

Tony B. – Introduced a draft list of the desired outcomes for IFWG. Item 1 on a list of 4 was the need for an improved forest carbon inventory. The desired outcome is to set realistic objectives for updating and reducing the uncertainties within the inventory by next year.

Linda M. – Asked if this would encompass the idea of monitoring carbon trends?

Tony B. – Any policy discussion on the inventory would have to include a process that would provide some feedback on progress towards meeting the full Scoping Plan target of 174 million tons.

Linda M. – It may be a mistake to focus only on the inventory. There may be a need for other metrics to determine if the objective of “no-net-loss” is being met, and other entities may be better positioned to track some of these.

Jim Pena – First a starting point has to be established upon which to base other actions or measures. A good share of trend monitoring is already included in forest inventory methodologies.

Tony B. - The objective is to get the best information possible on forest and rangelands. The focus on inventory needs to identify knowledge gaps and how to fill those gaps.

Jeanne Panek – Noted that by identifying areas with the greatest uncertainty can be a tool to key in on policy opportunities.

Michelle Passero – Is the premise that the state structure for inventory will include the ability to incorporate policy questions so that the state can track progress?

David Nawi – An accurate inventory goes hand in hand with monitoring.

Tony B. – Asked how carbon is tied to a regulatory review? Can an assessment of regulations be done to establish linkages with carbon stocks?

Kelly B. – This is a key area of interest to the CEC. An investment plan was just approved by the commission for AB 118 funds. Approximately \$4million is set aside to address sustainability questions. In the next few months staff will develop Requests for Proposals to answer some of the questions. The research subgroup can play a role in this effort.

Tony B. – Can this group work with you on the scope of work for this effort?

Kelly B. - The subgroup established here will look into the needs and return to the group with a report.

Jim Pena – Noted this is an opportunity to identify trade offs necessary to allow society to move forward.

Objective #2 – Regulation Review

Tony B. – As for the biomass aspect of this item, forestry can be a major source of feedstock. However, there is research need to establish how a sustainable supply can be maintained. There is a need to assess the current regulations to see if they provide that level of sustainability, or if other guarantees are needed. Here is the opportunity to work with the CEC and I will draft a plan to move forward.

Michelle – Should the group develop a common set of lenses to view what this framework may look like? There needs to be assurance that the basic premises for examination are agreed upon.

Richard Bode – A review of regulations that apply to private, state, and federal lands is needed.

Jim Pena. Existing forest laws and regulations are about more than carbon. Need to identify other values and tradeoffs among values, using this information to inform policy discussions.

Linda M. – There is a need to first identify what rules are being examined. Then move to the question of the effect of the rules on sustainability.

Objective # 3 – Sustainable Woody Biomass

Tony B. – There is a need to establish what is meant by sustainable biomass.

Linda M. – The answer to this will have to be developed by October to be of assistance to questions poised in the Low Carbon Fuel Standard debates.

Kelly B. – This and the previous item are closely linked. In order to move forward with implementation of projects the answers to questions surrounding sustainability must be developed.

Objective #4 – Landowner Incentives

Tony B. – Indicated there are no specifics to discuss on this item at this time.

Jim Pena - This topic needs to remain a group focus as it contains some of the best opportunities to encourage public and private investment in development of climate beneficial activities.

Tim Robards – The FRAP Assessment will identify priority landscapes for federal assistance to landowners.

Ed Murphy – Incentives are important to forest landowners with smaller acreages who cannot afford to develop forest inventories.

David Nawi – Encourage committee members to submit comments on these four objectives by next week.

Tony B. - Asked the group if there were suggestions for the addition of any other group objectives at this point?

Jim Pena – Raised the need to add an item on public education and outreach. Some of the focus should be on the integration of climate change mitigation and adaptation.

Tony B. – Review the group member leads for each of the objectives –

- Forest Inventory – Lynn Terry/Linda Murchison
- Regulatory Review – Tony Brunello, Stephanie Tom Coup/Kelly Birkinshaw
- Biomass – Kelly Birkinshaw
- Landowner Incentives – Jim Pena

Each lead is to develop a draft scope of work by the next meeting.

Forest Inventory Power Point was presented by Webster Tassat/ARB – Key point was the scheduling of a workshop on inventory for July 24th.

Linda M. – Experts in the field are being contacted for participation.

Tony B. – This will be broader than just a GHG inventory review for ARB.

Richard Bode – We have met with a multi – agency group on forest inventory and will continue this effort.

Linda M. – This will be a joint agency and organization effort.

Michelle Passero – Is any consideration being given on how to address forest inventory and surrounding policy questions with the same effort? Inventory needs to be done in a way and at a scale that allows state to evaluate effectiveness of mitigation activities.

Tony B. – The group members need to have comments to ARB by next week on what topics, etc. need to be addressed in the July workshop.

Mr. Gentry - Provided a revised list of upcoming meeting dates:

- June 12th 8am to 12pm
- July 24th All day workshop
- August 14th 1pm to 4pm

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