



CALIFORNIA FARM BUREAU FEDERATION

GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS DIVISION

1127-11TH STREET, SUITE 626, SACRAMENTO, CA 95814 • PHONE (916) 446-4647

June 8, 2015

Dr. J. Keith Gilliss, Chair
Board of Forestry
1416 Ninth Street, Room 1506-14
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Small Landowner Timber Harvest Plan

Dear Dr. Gilliss:

The California Farm Bureau Federation (Farm Bureau) is writing to provide input on the proposed small landowner Timber Harvest Plan currently under consideration by the Board of Forestry's (Board) Management Committee. Farm Bureau represents more than 57,000 members as it strives to protect and improve the ability of farmers, ranchers, and timber producers engaged in production agriculture to provide a reliable supply of food, fiber, and lumber through responsible stewardship of California's resources. Forest landowners throughout California face a significant regulatory burden to harvest timber and Farm Bureau supports the Board's recognition of this fact and efforts to address the issue for small landowners by crafting a specific program for them. It is with this support that Farm Bureau is writing to offer specific recommendations to ensure the proposed system will provide real benefits to California's small forest landowners.

Farm Bureau's first recommendation regards the size of the proposed acreage allowed for inclusion in the program. The proposal recognizes the economic challenges forest landowners face when they own less than 160 acres. However the proposal limits the applicability to landowners with less than 40 acres. California is a diverse state and it is important to recognize this diversity in the proposal. The economic viability of forestland varies significantly between coastal redwood properties and inland forests. Farm Bureau would recommend increasing the size of the parcel allowed in the proposal broadly, or specifying larger sizes for interior forests.

The proposal also raises questions surrounding how the acreage limitation would be determined. If a landowner had a 200 acre parcel, but only 30 acres were forested, would he/she be eligible to use the small landowner THP? If that landowner would be eligible, how would the determination be made regarding what acreage is forested and what is not?

Finally, it is important that the final program developed by the board have flexibility incorporated to ensure it is useful to California's diverse regions and the numerous small forest landowners spread across the state. Farm Bureau recognizes the difficult balancing act the Board must undertake to ensure conservation objectives are met while creating a program that truly benefits small forest landowners and the resources they manage. It is Farm Bureau's recommendation that the Board lean towards greater flexibility for RPFs developing the small landowner THPs.

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Farm Bureau looks forward to working with the Board as it develops this important program. I would like to reiterate our support to the Board developing a small landowner THP and express Farm Bureau's appreciation for this effort.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Noelle Cremers". The signature is written in a dark ink on a white background.

Noelle G. Cremers

Director, Natural Resources and Commodities

CC: George Gentry, Executive Officer, Board of Forestry and Fire Protection
Matt Dias, Board of Forestry and Fire Protection