

Memorandum

To: Matt Dias, Acting Executive Officer,
Board of Forestry and Fire Protection

Gabriel Schultz, Northern Region Staff Chief
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Date: February 6, 2017

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From: Dave Loveless, State Forests Program Manager
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Subject: Boggs Mountain Demonstration State Forest, Initial Study and Management Plan Update

Board of Forestry and Fire Protection (Board) Policy, Section 0351.10, regarding Demonstration State Forest management plans states:

“Management plans for Boggs Mountain, Jackson, Latour, Mountain Home and Soquel Demonstration State Forests shall be prepared by the Department, with appropriate public review, for approval by the Board. The Department shall present to the Board a thorough review of each existing plan at least every five years. After each review, the Board may direct the Department either to continue management under the existing plan, to prepare amendments to the plan, or to prepare a new plan for public review and Board approval. The Department shall submit the requested amendments or plan to the Board within one year after each request. The Department shall continue management under existing plans with appropriate consideration for changes in law or regulation, until amendments or new plans are approved by the Board.”

CAL FIRE has primary authority for carrying out the proposed Boggs Mountain Demonstration State Forest (BMDSF) Management Plan project and the Board is the lead agency under CEQA. The purpose of the Initial Study is to present to the public the environmental consequences of implementing the proposed project and describe the adjustments made to the project to avoid significant environmental effects or reduce them to a less-than-significant level.

On December 8, 2015, the CAL FIRE State Forests Program Manager met with the Board of Forestry and Fire Protection Management Committee to provide them with an update on the current conditions on BMDSF and to inform them of the activities and projects completed, underway and planned on the forest. CAL FIRE also requested an extension of the timeline for submission of a new draft Management Plan due to the devastation from the Valley Fire and the need to redirect personnel onto the post-fire rehabilitation efforts. At that time, the Management Committee recommended a March 1, 2017 submission date for Board review of the new draft plan.

Since that meeting BMDSF has experienced many changes, not only physically in terms of restoration work and projects completed, but personnel transitions as well. To recap the

personnel changes, the previous BMDSF manager departed CAL FIRE in March, 2016, just as significant salvage operations were getting underway after the winter season. The new and current manager, Peter Leuzinger, was hired to fill that position on June 1, 2016, and a newly established permanent Forestry Assistant II position on Boggs was filled on September 1, 2016. In addition, a permanent Forester I position is currently being advertised for BMDSF to support the preparation and administration of restoration contracts, projects and other duties on the forest. With these relatively recent personnel changes, we are just beginning to catch up with the demands on the forest, important particularly as some critical restoration projects are about to get underway.

In terms of projects, while numerous projects have been completed or are underway, additional sizeable projects are scheduled in the immediate future as part of the rehabilitation effort. The following is a list of the major projects completed, underway or planned on BMDSF:

- Multiple salvage operations and other site preparation projects were in full production simultaneously throughout most of 2016, and salvage operations continue today.
- A rock crushing contract, completed in the spring of 2016, produced over 14,000 yards of rock for road surfacing, culvert work and other erosion control projects.
- A second rock crushing contract is currently under development to supply rock for additional maintenance and storm damage repair.
- A major road contract, initiated in the winter of 2015-16, is ongoing with additional road and watercourse crossing maintenance and repairs recently identified.
- An initial foliar vegetation control project covering approximately 1,200 acres was completed in the fall of 2016.
- Started this winter, CAL FIRE crews continue burning the hundreds of slash piles created by the salvage and clean-up operations, in preparation for the initial planting of approximately 1,200 acres this spring.
- A site prep excavator piling contract is nearing execution that will allow for additional piling of logging slash and burn piles that were not completely consumed during pile burning operations.
- Over 300,000 tree seedlings destined for BMDSF are being delivered from Cal-Forests Nursery located in Etna to Kelseyville for cold storage this week, to be planted under contract beginning in mid-March, 2017.
- The Spring 2017 planting project will be preceded by a March pre-emergent vegetation control treatment to reduce competition and improve seedling survival.
- Contract preparation is underway for a July, 2017 foliar vegetation control project covering the balance of the forest.
- A contract has been approved for an additional 323,000 tree seedlings to be grown by Cal-Forests for a spring, 2018 planting on the balance of the forest.
- The spring, 2018 planting will also be preceded by a pre-emergent vegetation control treatment.
- Hand crews from the Northern California Indian Development Council will be performing volunteer work on the forest beginning in early March. The crews will cut and pile additional logging slash and dead brush on the forest for burning.

Some of the other issues that BMDSF personnel are also attending to include public outreach, field trips and site visits for on-going research and demonstration projects, fire and other incident assignments, training requirements, FEMA and CAL OES reimbursement grants, trail and

campground restoration, restroom and water storage tank reconstruction, and working with a local non-profit organization on a timber sale in support of their efforts to provide funding and materials to uninsured families who lost their homes in the Valley Fire. In addition, the Sonoma-Lake-Napa Unit and BMDSF staff also manages Las Posadas Demonstration State Forest. Current projects and issues at Las Posadas include exemption development and administration for a new Fire Station construction project, recreational access issues, and public outreach to the community about the effects of bark beetles on native tree species.

Due to the constantly evolving conditions currently occurring on BMDSF resulting from the Valley Fire and the ongoing restoration efforts, in addition to the other responsibilities described above, CAL FIRE is requesting additional time to prepare a new Management Plan, and to focus in the near-term on the planned restoration work as outlined. These unusual and unique circumstances on BMDSF have created a significant additional workload, yet the sequence and timing of each project listed above is critically important to the success of the overall restoration project. The additional time will allow the Management Plan to reflect the most current conditions on the forest. It will also allow for a more precise evaluation of future management options based on a more stable environment with most of the restoration projects having been completed. The following table provides a proposed timeline for key tasks and delivery items with target dates for their completion:

Boggs Mountain Demonstration State Forest Initial Study/Management Plan Timeline	
Task	Date
CAL FIRE Prepare New DRAFT Management Plan	Nov, 2017 - Jan, 2018
CAL FIRE Prepare Initial Study for the DRAFT Management Plan	Jan-Feb, 2018
Submit Initial Study and DRAFT Management Plan to BOF for Review	March, 2018
BOF DRAFT Mgt. Plan Review and Revision Recommendations to CAL FIRE	April, 2018
CAL FIRE Submit Final Draft Management Plan to BOF	June, 2018
BOF Review and Approval of Management Plan	July-Aug, 2018