

**Board of Forestry and Fire Protection
Range Management Advisory Committee (RMAC)**

Rangelands Focus Group

**Minutes
May 28, 2008**

Attending:

RMAC:

Ken Zimmerman
Mike Connor
Clancy Dutra
Edward Anchordoguy
Leonard Hale
Mel Thompson
Jeff Stephens

Representing

California Cattlemen's Association
Public Member
California Farm Bureau Federation
California Wool Growers Association
Watershed Fire Council of Southern California
California Wool Growers Association
CAL FIRE / RMAC Executive Secretary

Members of the Public:

Tracy Schohr California Cattlemen's Association

Items 1 & 2 Call to Order and Introductions:

Mike Connor called the meeting to order at 1:00 PM. Introductions of all present were made.

Item 3, Draft Board Policy Number 12: Guidance on the Certified Rangeland Manager Program and recent action taken by the CalPac Society of Range Management Certification Panel.

Mike Connor asked that the RMAC review the changes proposed by the Certification Panel in preparation for the meeting tomorrow with Larry Ford at the full RMAC. His hopes are that RMAC may agree on whether these changes are acceptable prior to the meeting with Mr. Ford.

Mike Connor stated that the changes were intended to clarify where a CRM (Certified Rangeland Manager) is desirable and/or legally required. RMAC members Clancy Dutra, Leonard Hale, and Mel Thompson in reference to the first paragraph and the third paragraph that speaks to forested landscapes, found language requiring the use of a CRM to be contrary to the Foresters Licensing Law.

Recommendations were made to modify language that implies the requirement of a CRM to language which describes when a CRM is advisable and/or authorized under the Foresters Licensing Law.

Changes recommended: Delete the first paragraph page 1; Delete "or not easily distinguishable" first sentence third paragraph page 1; Delete "requirements apply" and

substitute “applies” second sentence third paragraph page 1; Delete last sentence, second paragraph from the bottom, page 3 (“And conversely,.....”). Ken Zimmerman motioned that RMAC accept the revisions as noted to Draft Policy 12 (Certification Panel Edits) as discussed at the current meeting. Mel Thompson seconded the motion. Motion passed by a vote of 5 to 1.

Item 6, promoting cattle grazing as a means to control vegetation including previous public outreach involving CAL FIRE.

Tracy Schohr asked that RMAC take under consideration a formal poster campaign with CAL FIRE that promoted livestock for vegetation control. This poster was first discussed at the last RMAC meeting. This poster campaign never developed with the Department largely due to anti-grazing sentiment at the time.

In addition Tracy Schohr has been speaking with Audubon Society searching for a method to outreach with CAL FIRE fire station personnel urging them to meet with local landowners to learn where local ranch infrastructure is located and to discourage the mentality that “if it burns we(Cal FIRE) do not have to come back for the next fire.” They also do not have an appreciation for the value of dry grass. Tracy Schohr stated that it has been done in some areas such as Alameda County where all stock ponds have been mapped and sensitive areas identified. Tracy Schohr recommended that the Fire Fighter 1B course be used to teach a module on ranch values.

Mike Connor supports revitalizing the poster. Clancy Dutra stated it is within RMAC’s purview to promote livestock for fuel reduction. Ed Anchordoguy supported included other herbivores (sheep & goats) in such a revitalized poster campaign. The target audience would be Fire Safe Councils, CAL FIRE, etc. Tracy Schohr is in favor of working with the Fire Safe Councils and hopes that funding may be available through their organization. Ken Zimmerman suggested PG&E as a potential source of funding.

Jeff Stephens recommended that RMAC consider the methods of delivering the service in addition to promoting the use of livestock.

Mel Thompson stated that the GLCI has funding for targeted grazing, and they have experience in other areas of the country. Tracy Schohr agreed to contact Bruce Turbeville with the Fire Safe Council.

Ed Anchordoguy and Mel Thompson agreed to take this discussion back to Wool Growers and seek support for a targeted grazing campaign. Ken Zimmerman agreed to contact Frank Stewart.

Tracy Schohr has already written a Fire Fighter 1B module that would meet the goal of educating Engineers as to the value of rangelands. Jeff Stephens agreed to make contact with CAL FIRE Headquarters staff and invite a representative to RMAC. Tracy Schohr favors a letter from RMAC in support of training CAL Fire personnel and the poster effort promoting targeted grazing.

Item 5, Follow-up discussion regarding the RMAC letter to CDFA (“Request for assistance in addressing the spread of invasive weeds by equipment”).

Jeff Stephens noted that RMAC has not received a response from CDFA to the letter dealing with equipment cleaning. Ken Zimmerman stated that he has a CD outlining Department of Defense Guidelines for cleaning equipment that is returning from overseas. He proposed that RMAC announce to CDFA that RMAC is intending to develop its own set of recommended equipment cleaning practices. This may garner more participation from CDFA. Ken Zimmerman will send the CD to Mike Connor. RMAC agreed to invite a CDFA, CAL FIRE, a representative from the California Agriculture Commissioners and Sealers Association, Windy West with the El Dorado County Coop Extension Office, and Caltrans to a meeting to address the issue and show the Defense Department CD as an illustration of recommended cleaning practices.

Item 4, "Guide for Oak Woodland Preserves in Placer County," Author Richard Harris, U.C. Cooperative Extension. Potential action items may include developing written comment.

Mike Connor expressed regret that Richard Harris could not attend to be part of this discussion, and expressed a desire to pursue any possible comment that RMAC may have on Richard's work with Placer County.

Ed Anchordoguy commented that the Guidelines may be outside of RMAC's purview unless it is rangeland, and that a readily apparent problem noted is the long-term funding for managing public lands. He also commented that it may be more appropriate for RMAC to comment on/endorse a final document versus a draft, since Richard Harris is better qualified for developing a document such as the Placer County Oak Management Guidelines than a body such as RMAC.

Mike Connor asked for suggestions on how the final document could be made better. Clancy Dutra remarked that his recollection of the Guidelines was that it is a one-size-fits-all type of document. He called for allowing more flexibility for the developer. He cited the city of Pleasanton, CA as a positive example.

Mel Thompson felt that the easement language on page 5 is a point requiring more explanation. For example, an easement on small acres (5 acres) is probably not doable. He recommended consideration of mitigation banks for small parcels as a possible solution. He posed the question of whether mitigation banks are already present in Placer County.

Mike Connor turned discussion to Appendix F of the Guidelines and noted that this document was cited by Richard as one that he desires RMAC comment. Mr. Connor noted that the mitigation/monitoring in particular requires work that specifies such items as how often and by whom will monitoring occur. Clancy Dutra suggested that it is the approving body that has responsibility for monitoring. Ken Zimmerman noted that a basic weakness is the lack of a management plan that defines what is to be monitored. Therefore knowing the funding levels for management is difficult to determine.

Mike Connor volunteered to contact Richard Harris and relay the comments of today. He will also ask Mr. Harris to meet with RMAC at a future meeting. Clancy Dutra specifically asked that Appendix F be defined as to its purpose. If it is blue print for developing a plan then a good deal of expansion is needed that explains how the elements under the major headings are developed.

Mel Thompson made reference to another document provided by Richard Harris, "Guidelines for Managing Impacts from Development on Oak Woodlands." Stapled to the back is Appendix F. This document is far more comprehensive than the material evaluated by RMAC to date. Jeff Stephens stated that the reason this larger document was not provided to RMAC is that it deals with a lot of very specific issues with oaks such as curbside distance for oak individual tree management. Mr. Harris preferred that RMAC focus on the broader issue of public acquisition of oak woodlands and management.

Mel Thompson stated that he would like to ask Richard specifically how he believes the Oak Guidelines relate to the RMAC paper on resource investments.

Ed Anchordoguy restated his experience noted in the previous meeting with Assessment Districts that can be quite successful at accomplishing tasks associated with public land. Success, however, is highly variable over time. Districts develop problems as leadership changes and the incentive for strict monitoring and enforcement begins to deteriorate.

Item 7, New and Unfinished Business

None

Item 8, Public Comment

None

Adjourn