

BOARD OF FORESTRY AND FIRE PROTECTION

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RANGE MANAGEMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Tuesday, November 18, 2014
Sacramento, CA

RMAC Members Present	RMAC Members Absent
Co-chair, Lesa Osterholm Ed Anchordoguy Bill Burrows John Van Duyn Cole Bush Bart Cremers Mary Rickert Via Conference: Co-chair, Marc Horney Chuck Pritchard Sheryl Landrum Aaron Lazanoff	Chris Marengo
RMAC Staff	Department Staff
Kevin Conway Edith Hannigan	

Items appear in the order they were presented on the agenda.

Public Land Leases Focus Group Update

John Currey, from the Dixon Resource Conservation District, spoke about how they managed to maintain a lease agreement with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife when other leases around the state were frozen. As part of an audit of the leasing program, the department froze all the leases but the structure of the Dixon RCD lease was adequate to remain in effect. The agreement structure allowed them to develop a new round of proposals and allowed them to have minimal impact from the lease freeze.

Karen Buhr, Executive Director of the California Resource Conservation Districts, provided further background on the leasing program freeze and gave an update on the launch of the new leasing program. The leases will be directly between California Fish and Wildlife, with the option for leasees to contract with the RCDs to manage the leases or they leasees can do management in-house.

Potential follow up items include a letter to Fish and Wildlife promoting and supporting the use of the RCDs in lease management and inviting Fish and Wildlife representatives and Certified Range Managers to a meeting to build relationships between the entities.

Approve September Minutes

John Van Duyn made a motion to approve the September minutes as presented. Ed Anchordoguy seconded and motion passed unanimously via voice vote.

Administrative

- a. **Reimbursement Procedures**
Ms. Hannigan went over required reimbursement paperwork and followed up on outstanding reimbursement requests.
- b. **Next Meeting Dates – Propose dates for 2015 meeting scheduled**
Mr. Conway presented for the group's discussion a proposed meeting schedule for 2015. RMAC will be meeting on the third Tuesday of every odd month, except the July meeting will be on the second Tuesday because of conflicts with the Board of Forestry and Fire Protection meeting.

Committee Membership

- a. **Watershed Fire Council of Southern California update**
The Board approved RMAC's action at the September meeting to change the statute governing the membership make up of RMAC and staff will continue to keep RMAC updated on the statute's progress.
- b. **Committee Term Matrix**
Mr. Conway presented RMAC members with a matrix of term expirations. This January there are five member terms expiring and Mr. Conway asked if any of those members would consider moving their term expiration into another "group" so that in the future there isn't such high turnover in one year. Members were asked to consider their "expiration" dates, as well as Committee leadership changes, and formal changes will be discussed at the January meeting.

Focus Groups Update

- a. **Land Management Tools**
Cole and Bill presented a draft white paper on using herbivory as a land management tool for vegetation management as well as a draft Power Point presentation. They will incorporate member suggestions and bring new drafts back to the January meeting.
- b. **Rangeland Conversion/Forest & Resource Management**
Dick Cameron from The Nature Conservancy discussed his paper "Whither the Rangeland: Protection and Conversion in California's Rangeland Ecosystems" and his research findings, as well as ongoing and planned related research topics. There were no action items for this focus group.
- c. **Rangeland Water Quality (GRAP Update)**
Cindy Wise from the Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board updated RMAC on the ongoing scoping and outreach for the development of the Grazing Regulatory Action Program (GRAP). There were three formal invite-only outreach sessions held or being held in November and December. 2015 will see larger regional meetings in San Luis Obispo (January 9), Redding nv(January 15) and Bishop (January 28). RMAC encouraged the Water Board to schedule a session in the north coast region

and also encouraged Water Board attendance at the upcoming Society for Range Management conference in Sacramento in early February.

RMAC members discussed several action items, including personally spreading the word about the listening sessions and encouraging attendance by land conservancy, outdoor sporting, and wildlife preservation groups, a review and potential revision to the 1995 document that the Water Boards are using as a source document, and further conversations with the Water Board to help shape this program.

d. VTP PEIR

Ms. Hannigan updated RMAC on the progress of the VTP PEIR rewrite.

e. Drought

California Cattlemen's Association is encouraging ranchers to update the weekly drought monitor.

The importance of localized data on the effects of the drought – is there data from local cooperative extensions or other groups that could be made available?

Tehama County RCD has a volunteer weather logging project – grants to get weather stations and volunteer ranchers and others submit information and data.

Rancher's Sustainability Self-Assessment Workshop discussion – Salinas, October 20

Member Pritchard brought back a report about the workshops promoting the Rancher's Sustainability Self-Assessment. The 16 page document helps ranchers evaluate their sustainability and resiliency. Mr. Pritchard has forwarded the website and document to RMAC staff, who will post it on the web and distribute it to members and stakeholders.

2015 Priorities

Some direction was provided to RMAC staff to edit the priorities including

-adding land trusts, conservation, and environmental groups under Collaboration and Coordination

-promote the Certified Range Manager program and advocate inclusion of CRMs in land management processes by state agencies

RMAC members also supported a companion document outlining the projects they were undertaking to support those priorities, as well as a more thorough report to the Board of Forestry about their activities. The priorities will continue to be an agenda item in January.

New and Unfinished Business

a. CRM Rule Plead Update

The Board anticipates noticing this update in early 2015; should the noticing period not coincide with RMAC meetings, staff will update members on the availability of the plead for public comment.

b. Yellow Legged Frog

Staff presented to RMAC a letter from the Board to the US Fish and Wildlife Service requesting expediency in developing guidance for CAL FIRE to ensure there is no “taking” of the species during timber harvesting and other operations. Chair Osterholm requested staff bring to the attention of the Board that this issue affects ranching on forested lands as well as timber operations.

Member Activity Updates

Cole Bush presented a flyer for the Grazing for Change event in late February at Chico State; Chair Osterholm will hand out some at the California Rangeland Coalition event in early February.

Member Pritchard let RMAC know that they will be presenting a Sustainability Self-Assessment workshop at the Society for Range Management conference in February.