

MINUTES
SOQUEL DEMONSTRATION STATE FOREST (SDSF)
ADVISORY COMMITTEE
January 14, 2014

ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT

Patty Ciesla	Stewards of Soquel Forest
Tim Hyland	California Department of Parks and Recreation
Patricia Marland	Neighborhood Representative
Matt Johnston	Santa Cruz County
Geoffrey Holmes	Registered Professional Forester
Steven M. Butler	Resource Conservation District
Matt Dias	State Board of Forestry and Fire Protection

ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERS EXCUSED ABSENT

Terris Kasteen	California Department of Fish and Game
Larry Serpa	The Nature Conservancy

GUESTS

Thomas Sutfin	Retired SDSF Forest Manager
Jodi Frediani	Sierra Club Central Coast Forest Watch

STAFF

Angela Bernheisel	Forest Manager of SDSF
Jill Butler	CAL FIRE
Julie Dufresne	CAL FIRE

Agenda Items 1, 2 and 3-Call to Order. Review Agenda. and Review and Approve Minutes of the Last Meeting held September 17, 2013

The meeting was called to order at 9:02 a.m. by Patty Ciesla, Chairperson of the SDSF Advisory Committee. The minutes of the SDSF Advisory Committee meeting held on September 17, 2013 were approved.

Agenda Items 4 and 6-Receive Updated General Forest Management Plan (GFMP).Next steps: Board of Forestry review and CEQA.

Angela Bernheisel provided the final update of the General Forest Management Plan (GFMP) to the Committee, and gave a summary of changes to the GFMP using a comparison between 1998 GFMP and the 2014 GFMP. While the majority of the content of the plan remained the same, highlighted changes included: classification system for the vegetation types in the Biota and Timber Chapters using the California Wildlife Habitat Relationship System; new categories were added to the Biota Chapter; the Fisheries Chapter was updated with help from Jim Robins; new

information in the Recreation Chapter included information about regional trails in relation to SDSF; throughout the Plan there is emphasis on concerns about better access to forest; a fire history map and many other updated maps were included. Angela pointed out the summary of the Advisory Committee Comments, many of which were incorporated into the GFMP.

The Board of Forestry meets on the 28th and the 29th of January, 2014.

Patricia Marland said the Plan is readable by a layperson and is interesting to read. It addresses public parties and illegal activities in the parking lot. The Archaeology Chapter was easier to read with sites categorized by type instead of a list by site number.

Discussion about Old Growth Map-The new map compared to the map in the older GFMP that showed smaller clusters of trees that were not large enough to be considered a stand. All old growth trees are inventoried and protected. Most old growth trees are scattered throughout the forest, and individuals are not shown on the map.

The Noren Property is shown on the map page 24 with property lines determined by CAL FIRE surveyors. The most accurate information is shown on the map with the surveyors corrected boundaries. County maps are incorrect.

Discussion regarding the term exotic vs. invasive for plants: Invasive is the more accurate term for plants of concern. Many exotic plants in the forest are not of concern. Those that are a concern are invasive and spreading on their own and impacting the native flora.

Steve Butler: Committee members have all had their chance to give input to the Plan. Ultimately it will be up to the Board to decide on the GFMP. Do you anticipate the Board making any changes to the Plan?

Matt Dias speculated that there may be a couple of changes made by the Board of Forestry. Board member and biologist, Stu Farber, reviewed Latour DSF's GFMP for biological impacts of the plan, in terms of management-specific activities. There may be some specific similar requests. GFMPs for all State Forests are not specific or technical like Timber Harvesting Plans. The Management plan is easy for the lay person to read and understand. He commended staff for compiling all comments and integrating them into the GFMP.

Thomas Sutfin: The Board is now more active in last 15 years in reviewing management plans. They have more experience compared to the 1998 first SDSF plan. They recognize that the Committee has reviewed it and takes suggestions seriously.

Discussion about moving forward with BOF review: Patty Ciesla: legislation states that the Advisory Committee approve the Plan and she asked if the Board makes changes, that they would send it back to the Committee. Matt Dias: The Board is the lead agency on approving management plans and will guide the CEQA process. Angela Bernheisel: Advisory Committee advises CAL FIRE, approves the Plan and then forwards the Plan to the Board. Jill Butler noted that consistent with the GFMP language the general plan will be approved by the Advisory

Committee prior to the adoption by the Board. Matt Dias: Advisory Committee could write a letter to the Board considering specific language in the Plan and would recognize comment.

Patty Ciesla: Drafted a letter of approval for GFMP and circulated it to Committee for edits, changes, and additions to send to the Board.

Discussion about the CEQA process: Matt Dias: In 1998 an EIR was done because ownership of SDSF went from private to public. Since 1998 there have not been significant changes to the Plan and either a Mitigated Negative Declaration or a Negative Declaration will likely be used at this time. Each project underneath the Plan will have to go through the CEQA process. Since we now have a different lead agency, the Board of Forestry, they will choose the CEQA process based on the GFMP and an Initial Study rather than an amendment to the original EIR.

Patty Ciesla reviewed the wording for the letter.

To Board of Forestry and to the Director of the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

"We are writing to confirm our approval of the GFMP. We have approved the Plan and we recommend its adoption by the Board of Forestry and development of the appropriate documents for CEQA compliance." (The Advisory Committee Members names and Titles are included)

Patty will send us a copy of the final letter.

Two members of the Advisory Committee are excused absent. Terris Kasteen sent a letter saying she approves the Plan. Patty Ciesla will contact Larry Serpa.

The Advisory Committee voted to approve the plan and recommended its adoption by the Board of Forestry, with a quorum present.

The Committee took a short break.

Agenda Item 5- Update on Forest activities and projects.

Angela Bernheisel said Ed Orre has left his position as Assistant Forest Manager for a promotion in Santa Clara in the Vegetation Management Program. Angela Bernheisel explained the process for hiring his replacement.

Angela Bernheisel gave forest updates. The Noren House is planned for demolition and may possibly be a training burn some time this year. We have a bid on the demolition. The lab reports have come back and there is a certain amount of asbestos in the interior and lead paint. A neighbor who was illegally cutting firewood on the forest and taking it out on a stolen ATV has been arrested. He may have to pay restitution and be barred from entering the State Forest for a number of years. He was in the Fern Gulch THP area taking both downed wood and cutting

trees. The Forest is being regularly patrolled by law enforcement, closing the gate on full moons. Patricia Marland volunteered to lock the gate. Angela: We have someone locking the gate. Angela said we are coordinating with UC Berkeley, Mateo Garboletto's research on Sudden Oak Death. Janet Foley, a professor from UC Davis, studying blood-borne pathogens, will be doing additional research in Comstock Mill THP area, before and after research in small mammals. She will be studying how wood rats (reservoirs for Anaplasmosis and Lyme Disease) move and respond to logging. Data retrieval from stream monitoring is being put into reports. Julie is finishing up the electro fishing report for the season. Julie and Trever and Ed all took part in the Forestry Challenge in November and offered a field trip for high school students. SDSF held other field trips to view the LWD for the RCD and other agency groups. A little bit of grant money was received to cover the cost of the crews to work on the shaded fuel break for 32 days on a 2 mile stretch on Hihn's Mill Road. Timber marking is being done for about 2 million BF for the Comstock Mill THP that was approved. The Rim THP fuel wood cutting is in process with Locatelli's crew. Anna has developed a new application for Special Use Permits as requests have increased. The flow trail project is in the CEQA process and the Mountain Bikers of Santa Cruz have hired 3 employees to work on the Flow Trail. Patty Ciesla said over 31 people have completed the training for crew leaders plus 15 more are in process to handle the over 100 volunteers with adequate leadership to work on the trail. Angela: we have about 10,000 trees waiting at Green Diamond until more rain comes, to be picked up and to be planted. Last year about 5,000 trees were planted and they are doing very well. Jodi Frediani asked how the water flow in the Soquel Creek is holding up. Angela said that the water flow in the Soquel Creek is very low. Angela got reports of stranded fish below the Quarry. The weather is low humidity so we are not able to burn piles from shaded fuel break.

Agenda Item 7-Future Committee input on the GFMP role in future forest activities and planning.

Patty Ciesla went over the purpose of the Committee and future input on Plan. She suggested we meet once a year or as needed and not disband the Committee and maybe have field trips to keep up to date on how plan is being implemented in the Forest.

Angela Bernheisel said she could inform the Committee of upcoming events. The Coastal Water Shed Council field trip is planned for March.

Thomas Sutfin suggested the Committee could meet as needed from here forward. Board approval and CEQA could take several months.

Matt Dias said the CEQA process may take 6 months, but not as long as 12 months.

Jodi Frediani-Plan will go to the Board then there is opportunity for the public to comment on the Plan. It is advisable for the Committee members to attend Board meetings to respond to comments or to provide information.

Matt Dias-Helge Eng will be present at the Board meeting to introduce the Plan.

Patty Ciesla said she is willing to present the Plan to the Board of Forestry.

The Advisory Committee will meet as needed and Angela will keep us updated as to the progress of the Plan.

Agenda Item 8-Steve Staub

Patty Ciesla said there have been more ideas and she would like to keep moving on this project. There was discussion of possible sites including the upper helipad and Badger Springs. There was also a discussion of where the lumber would come from for the memorial. The Steve Staub Memorial Sub Committee consisting of Steve Butler, Thomas Sutfin, Patricia Marland and Patty Ciesla will meet after the adjournment of this Advisory Committee Meeting to schedule a trip to the forest to visit possible sites for the memorial.

Agenda Item 9-Adjournment.

Patty Ciesla adjourned the meeting at 10:32 am.

Respectfully Submitted,

Patricia Marland
Secretary, SDSF Advisory Committee