

FOREST UPDATE, July 2013

1. SDSF Advisory Committee continues review of Management Plan
2. Flow Trail coming to SDSF
3. Board of Forestry Joins Facebook
4. AB904 Brief Update
5. THP 1-13-045 SCR Returned
6. Redwood Meadows Ranch THP 1-12-071 SCR still 'open'
7. Bringing back good old days of logging difficult
8. Boy Scouts illegally fell Old Growth trees and damage endangered plants!

1. SDSF Advisory Committee continues review of Management Plan

2013 Soquel State Forest Draft Management Plan with Revisions can be found at the link below, along with the agenda for the June 18, 2013 Advisory Committee Meeting, the first meeting of the committee in a year. According to CalFire, the review of the management plan was put on hold during the 2012 operating season.

There is also a link on the right side of the page to a Clean Copy of the draft General Forest Management Plan through Chapter 7. The committee will be reviewing Chapters 8 – Demonstration and Education, 9 – Timber Management, and 10 – Research of the plan and submitting comments to Angela Bernheisel, Forest Manager by July 9. Anyone can comment. The document can be found online at:

http://calfire.ca.gov/resource_mgt/resource_mgt_stateforests_soquel.php

The next Advisory Committee meeting will be held 9:00am, July 23 at the Scott's Valley City Council Chambers.

At the June 18 meeting, the committee was apprised of the new 228 acre THP submitted for Amaya Creek on SDSF. It will include a fuel break along the western boundary and an upgrade of Amaya Creek Road. Cal Fire is in the process of scheduling the PHI.

here was a report on the LWD work in Soquel Creek and additional work to be done.

A good portion of the June 18 meeting was taken up with a report and discussion on the Flow Trail that will be built by the Mountain Bikers of Santa Cruz (MBOSC) in the Soquel Demo Forest within the area of the recently completed Rim THP.

MBOSC has hired Drew Perkins who will oversee construction of this completely new trail. The trail will use 3 existing Class III crossings which will be upgraded as rock ford crossings so they can be used during the winter.

One committee member noted that this trail was a good idea as it would keep mountain bikers off skid trails. Another committee member hopes to create a similar trail along Amaya Creek. A third member, previously a CalFire employee, stated that he did not think trails needed to be multi-use in response to comments from the public that it is pretty hard for equestrians and hikers to safely utilize trails taken over by the mountain bike community.

2. Flow Trail Coming to SDSF

From the MBOSC website:

"The last timber harvest in the [Soquel Demonstation State Forest \(SDSF\)](#) a.k.a "Demo" converted the existing Tractor Trail into an access road. There are no plans to restore it to a single track trail but as a concession, the forest managers have allowed for the construction of a new purposely built mountain bike trail in this general area." MBOSC

"The flow trail will have a length of 3.5-4 miles and will have an average 6-7 percent grade, 38 switchbacks and a net elevation loss of 1280'. The expected trail width will be 3 feet on straight-aways, and somewhat wider on banked turns. It will intersect the Tractor Trail (now a road) in 5 places so there are ample opportunities to session sections of the trial."

<http://www.mbosc.org/own-the-flow/>

Interesting perspective, since the enabling legislation for this forest never mentioned recreation at all. Hoping to see CalFire increase the research/demonstration outreach that was considered key by the folks who established the Soquel Demonstration State Forest through AB1965.

Those goals were:

- a) Provide watershed protection for local communities and base-line monitoring and studies of the hazards, risks, and benefits of forest operations and watersheds to urban areas.
- b) Provide public education and examples illustrating compatible rural land uses, including sustained yield timber production, as well as the historic development of timbering and forestry machinery within the context of the local community protection and nearby pressures.
- c) Provide a resource for the public, environmental groups, elected officials, environmental planners, the education community and the media as an open environment for the inspection and study of environmental education, forestry practices, and effects thereof.
- d) Protect old growth redwood trees.

3. Board of Forestry Joins Facebook

Subject: foresters licensing has joined Facebook

“Professional Forester’s Licensing and The Board of Forestry has official joined **Facebook!** We are still working on getting it started so please be patient. This is one of our many efforts to go “digital” and we will be utilizing the Facebook page to put up any upcoming information, examinations, new updates regarding forestry, meeting minutes, pictures from fieldtrips and etc.”

Check it out at this link:

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/California-Board-of-Forestry-and-Fire-Protection/135757789960054>

“share” and “like” us. Thank you.

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Now you can mix pleasure and business!

And there are Facebook pages for Sierra Pacific Industries:

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Sierra-Pacific-Industries/295910403780823>

And Cal Poly’s Natural Resources Management and Environmental Resources:

<https://www.facebook.com/NRESCalPoly>

4. AB904 Brief Update

AB904, the bill to create Working Forest Management Plans for ownerships up to 15,000 acres, is currently in 'suspense'. It is not listed on the agenda for the next Senate Appropriations Committee meeting scheduled for August 12. The author, Assemblymember Wes Chesbro, was directed to work with Senate Water and Natural Resources Committee staff on amendments to the bill. Some Senators are also working with Chesbro on additional proposed amendments regarding the southern sub-district.

The California Legislature has now recessed for the month of July.

5. THP 1-13-045 SCR Returned

This is the 166 acre Hendricks and Hogan plan that had not yet been filed at the writing of my June Forest Update. The plan encompasses 11 parcels and Marshall Creek is 300' downstream to the east of the THP boundary. Fall Creek is adjacent to the THP. The plan is also adjacent to Fall Creek State Park. Both creeks are tributaries to the San Lorenzo River. The plan is located 1.1 miles west of the town of Ben Lomond. The RPF is Harlan Tranmer.

Mr. Tranmer neglected to follow a number of the very basic Forest Practice rules during plan preparation. He failed to notice the City of Santa Cruz Water Department as required. The Notice of Intent also neglected to include the required statement that the approximate property lines have been flagged for review where truck roads, tractor roads or harvest areas are within 100 feet of the property line. There are also acreage inconsistencies in the plan. Is it 134 or 166 acres?

While the plan notes that a portion of the plan area drains to Alba Creek, Alba Creek is not listed in the published domestic water notification ad as required. The Alternatives Analysis failed to include a description of the basic objectives of the project.

CalFire also noted additional problems with the Erosion Hazard Rating map, the winter operating plan, proposed operations within the channel zone, information on channel crossings, identification of which methods will be utilized to address California red-legged frogs and other issues.

Mr. Tranmer is a staff forester for Big Creek Lumber.

Now that the public will be paying for the cost of agency review of timber harvest plans through the recently imposed Lumber Tax (AB1492), we suggest that Big Creek Lumber ensure that their foresters are all up to speed on the California Forest Practice Rules prior to preparing timber harvest plans. I am certain the public will not be interested in having their hard earned dollars squandered on unnecessary agency hours spent attempting to bring THPs into basic compliance with the rules and regulations of the state of California.

6. Redwood Meadows Ranch THP 1-12-071 SCR still 'open'

Even though Sempervirens Fund recently purchased timber rights on the lion's share (151 acres) of the acreage included in this plan, the THP is still on the books on the CalFire ftp site. Word has it that the original plan submitter, owner of the remaining timber in the plan, may still intend to log the trees on the remaining acreage. Be that as it may, we find it hard to believe that the existing THP can be used as a vehicle for such a significantly revised logging proposal. At best, a Major Amendment would have to be submitted and reviewed as a new THP. So why not withdraw this one and start from scratch? Hey CalFire?

7. Bringing back good old days of logging difficult

“GRANTS PASS, Ore. (AP) — Nothing came to symbolize the difficulty of bringing back the good old days of logging in Oregon like the Bush administration's plan to boost timber production on 3,750 square miles of federal land in 18 counties, an area about three times the size of Rhode Island.

Big promises of logs and revenue for timber counties won the Western Oregon Plan Revision the nickname of "The Whopper," spoken affectionately by timber interests and contemptuously by conservationists. But after five years of planning, it all came crashing down. Unable to pass muster under the Endangered Species Act, it was withdrawn by the Obama administration in 2009.....

In a preliminary planning document released this month, the BLM's state director, Jerome E. Perez, *said the new approach will be based on what the public wants, science, the law and on the goals of healthy forests, not board feet of timber.*” (emphasis added)

For the rest of the story:

http://www.necn.com/06/30/13/Bringing-back-good-old-days-of-logging-/landing_nation.html?&apID=899bf0fad89f4916ad7f5b459fe90d8f

8. Boy Scouts illegally fell Old Growth trees and damage endangered plants!

From Nature News from Jake Sigg (jakesigg@earthlink.net):

Dear Friends,

In early June I sent out an emailing about my dear friend Kim Kuska and his struggle to save an endangered plant, the Dudley's Lousewort. (I included in that email a poem that I wrote for him & the plant.) Recently someone put together an online petition supporting him and I am including a link to that below. If you could please support him in this small way by signing onto the petition, I'd very much appreciate it. I've known Kim as long as I can remember and I do not know a more honest person. He is an exceptionally knowledgeable naturalist. The only fault I can find with him in this situation is that for too long he trusted that scouting professionals would eventually do the right thing and live up to their stated values.

http://forcechange.com/66842/reinstate-environmental-activist-into-boy-scouts/#gf_1

(JS: I posted the following in my newsletter of 30 May 2013; it is reposted here for explanation of the request for petition signing.)

Dear Jake,

I thought that your readers might be interested in this recent SF Chronicle article since the California-listed rare plant Dudley's lousewort (***Pedicularis dudleyi***) is also found in San Mateo County at Portola State Park:

<http://cironline.org/reports/boy-scouts-put-rare-plant-danger-4557>

Between 2009-2011, the leadership of Monterey Bay Area Council (now called the Silicon Valley Monterey Bay Council) actually operated a covert illegal selective logging and milling operation of old-growth Douglas-firs and redwoods at Camp Pico Blanco in Big Sur to acquire funds to try to erase a million dollar debt so they would not lose their BSA charter. This Little Sur watershed contains the southernmost stand of old-growth Douglas-fir and redwood habitat, a designated environmentally sensitive habitat, home to spotted owls, ringtails, the federally threatened steehead, and the California-listed rare plant, Dudley's lousewort.

William Randolph Hearst purchased this land in November 1921 to preserve its abundant growth of virgin trees, and he donated it to the MBAC in July 1948 with the implied understanding that it remain primitive; because of this, MBAC's first Scout Executive Alfred Young wrote in his 1963 book Men in the Making- "**Today, Pico Blanco Scout Reservation stands on this land, set aside to the sole end that it be preserved as a primitive area where the American boy can have the inestimable experience of untouched wilderness and unspoiled natural beauty.**"

Although Scout Council obtained a County Rebuild Permit to remove 41 "hazardous" trees damaged in the 2008 Basin-complex Fire, the Council leadership also used this permit as a cover to illegally remove dozens of additional healthy old-growth landmark trees (most of which had not even been touched by the 2008 fire) that were not marked for removal or listed on this permit. Several of these trees were cut at the most-important Dudley's lousewort site, found behind the Camp's kitchen (in 2011, this site contained 46% of these California-listed rare plants, which only totals 2,233 individuals); the slash and logs from these illegally cut trees were piled on top of 13 of these rare plants, burying them for 8-months; nine of these rare louseworts eventually died.

Nearly 500 recent environmental violations have been carefully documented. These acts were so egregious and unscout-like, that the Council leadership decided to cover-up these misdeeds at all cost, sacrificing the Scouting ideals as well the possible continued existence of a rare species in the process. Similar to the Catholic Church sex scandal, this cover-up has now reached the National BSA office and the Chief; the Council Scout Executive largely responsible for these illegal activities was just transferred to Sacramento, where he is now the Director of Field Services for the Golden Empire Council, overseeing several scout camps.

Interestingly, this \$1 million debt occurred because of another illegal act committed at Camp Pico Blanco in June 2002 which resulted in killing 30 Federally threatened Steelheads; to avoid a \$396,000 fine and prevent this act from going public, the MBAC agreed to install a fish ladder and modify the dam's spillway; this project was reported to cost more than a \$1 million:

<http://www.sfgate.com/green/article/Political-pull-helped-fix-Scouts-dam-problem-3174459.php#page-4>

In summary, this Scout Council recently committed 500 environmental violations to acquire funds to repair the debt caused by breaking an earlier environmental violation, just so they could retain their charter in an organization that once stood for integrity and being good environmental stewards.

I am also enclosing a wonderful poem about Dudley's lousewort, written by the well-known Berkeley poet, Kirk Lumpkin. He has given permission for you to publish this in your newsletter. Thanks Jake.
Warm regards, Kim Kuska

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