

July 2009 Monthly Activity Report, JDSF

Administration:

The newly appointed JDSF Recreation Task Force held its initial meeting on July 2. The Task Force, consisting of public representatives of various recreational interests, reports directly to JDSF staff. Several subcommittees of the Jackson Advisory Group (JAG) also met during the month. The JAG Recreation Committee met in Fort Bragg on July 10. The JAG Economics Committee met on July 14. The JAG Landscape Committee met on July 15. The JAG Research Committee will meet on July 28 in Santa Rosa. The Department staffs all JAG and JAG subcommittee meetings.

All non-essential spending has been suspended, pending an agreement on the State's budget.

One seasonal forestry aide remains off duty for medical reasons, while another is due to begin work during the month.

Forester II Craig Pedersen is on a special long-term law enforcement assignment outside of the Unit. This assignment will help him obtain the required level of law enforcement training.

With the retirement of office technician Marianne Benevidez, JDSF continues to utilize a retired annuitant to help staff the office. The Unit is attempting to fill the empty position.

GIS technician Sebastian Roberts is doing most of the modeling required to prepare an Option A analysis for the Mountain Home Demonstration Forest. Sebastian is also helping the staff of LaTour State Forest with the programming and use of their hand-held recording devices.

Timber Harvest Plan and Timber Sale Preparation:

The bid opening for the North Fork Spur timber sale will be held on July 20. A minimum bid has been established. A single bid was received at the prior bid opening for this sale. The Department determined that the bid value was too low, and it was rejected.

JDSF staff are doing THP preparation work in the South Whiskey Springs area, the Camp 6 area, the Upper Parlin Fork Creek area, and in the Dunlap Pass south area. The Hare Creek THP remains in review by the Forest Practice Program. THP approval is expected during July.

The Camp 3, Dunlap North, and 14 Gulch timber sales remain on hold, pending an improvement in log market conditions.

In total, JDSF currently has over 15 million board feet of timber available within approved timber harvest plans, though only 500,000 board feet has been sold to-date.

Mendocino Forest Products has paid for approximately 500,000 board feet of timber from the Brandon Gulch timber sale area. The trees may be felled and yarded later this summer. The stumpage price was negotiated as provided for in a settlement agreement between the parties.

The sale area is within a THP originally approved in 1999. The silvicultural system has been modified from selection to late-seral development. The new system was designed by the Department and a subcommittee of the JAG.

Several individuals have recommended that JDSF alter the timber sale system to one where the State sells delivered logs, rather than stumpage. The Department will begin to evaluate the potential for delivered log sales in the near future. Regional sawmills are becoming increasingly specialized in their log size and species needs. Additionally, the complex THPs and estimates of

species mix represent an increasing risk to log buyers when bidding on timber sales. Very few landowners sell timber as stumpage in today's market.

Research and Demonstration:

Students from U.C. Berkeley are conducting research on fire effects within the area of the 2008 Indian Fire, which was located primarily within Parlin Fork Creek and the West Fork of Chamberlain Creek watersheds.

JDSF staff, in consultation with U.C. Berkeley faculty, are planning for the next phase of the Whiskey Springs Thinning Study, which is located within the planned South Whiskey THP area.

Department staff met with staff from the USFS Redwood Sciences Laboratory to discuss future funding for the Caspar Creek Watershed Study.

Recreation and Forest Security:

The campgrounds were filled to capacity for the July 4 weekend. Campground utilization remains at a moderate level during the week, and high on weekends.

Some bicyclists reported an encounter with a mountain lion on a trail in the vicinity of Caspar Creek. The three cyclists reported holding up their bicycles to create a barrier between themselves and the lion. After proceeding to walk toward them for a short period, the lion reportedly left the trail and wandered into the forest.

Security staff continue to make contact and deal with illegal campers and various other issues of concern within the campgrounds.