



Trinity County Board of Supervisors
11 Court Street, Room 230
P.O. Box 1613
Weaverville, CA 96093

Trinity County Collaborative Group
1 Horseshoe Lane
P.O. Box 1450
Weaverville, CA 96093

RE: Trinity County Collaborative Proposed Project Roadside and Plantation Shaded Fuel-break
May 1, 2014

Dear Trinity County Board of Supervisors,

Building on the directive from the Trinity County Board of Supervisors given in October 2012, the Trinity County Collaborative Group (TCCG) has developed a project proposal that capitalizes on the opportunities for community collaboration and public land management in Trinity County. This project meets the goals of our initial concept paper, *Co-Management of Public Lands for a bright Economic, Social and Ecologic Future*. This project will provide opportunities for ecologically sound, economically sustainable, and socially accepted management of forest lands in Trinity County.

The proposed project represents an opportunity for federal land management agencies and members of the Trinity County Collaborative to identify and implement fuels reduction along most state highways, county roads and federal maintenance level III and higher roads in Trinity County.

The Trinity County Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) recognizes that plantation maintenance and shaded fuel breaks are extremely productive and agreed upon strategies for creating more fire-safe communities. Both of these activities were the most frequently recommended method of pre-fire treatment during the 2010 update.

The intent of this project is to provide rural communities and residents travel zones that allow for safer evacuations during wildfires, allow greater, faster wild land firefighter response and suppression, and reduce the risk of roadside fire starts traveling into high value landscape level forest resources. The project proposes a shaded fuel break up to 300' along designated roads and around plantations located adjacent to those roads. The plantations would also be treated to thin



the number of trees either commercially or pre-commercially to allow the retained trees to reach a healthy vigorous condition.

Working closely with the appropriate regulatory agencies, the project proposal will give consideration to environmental concerns by identifying those road segments that may significantly affect public trust resources. The shaded fuel break prescription may be modified along those road segments which intersect with public trust resource concerns and will vary dependent upon which resource is being considered.

The support from the US Department of Agriculture has been strongly felt during our collaborative process, for which we are thankful. The TCCG has developed improved relationships between agencies and the communities and continues to work on a variety of land management, economic development, and recreation and agricultural issues. The group is excited to see results from these improved relationships, and this project will be one that everyone can be proud of.

The TCCG recognizes the planning capacity at the local level of the USFS will be impacted if this project is added to the program of work, as was highlighted in the initial white paper referenced above, in January 2013. To increase efficiencies during the planning process, the TCCG has initiated discussions with partner agencies such as the Bureau of Land Management, National Marine Fisheries, and US Fish and Wildlife to gain their perspective early in the planning process. Locally, our Resource Advisory Committee has approved \$50,000 to partially pay for the environmental analysis for this project, and the Watershed Research and Training Center will refocus some of their funding to complement that effort.

We would like to ask the Trinity County Board of Supervisors to support the Roadside and Plantation Shaded Fuel-break project concept, and forward their support to the Shasta-Trinity National Forest, Forest Supervisor. The request for support should also include a request that federal agencies partner with local organizations to complete the planning and environmental compliance for this project.

Sincerely,

Alex Cousins

On behalf of the Trinity County Collaborative Group