



NorCal SAF Media Action Alert

State Attorney General Bill Lockyer filed a lawsuit March 3, 2005 against the USDA Forest Service Giant Sequoia National Monument Plan. This lawsuit attempts to eliminate timber harvest as a method to reduce fuel hazards. This is contrary to two positions adopted by the Society of American Foresters, 1) Timber Harvesting on Federal Lands: An Essential Tool for Sustainable Forest Management and 2) Policy on Wildfire Management. Therefore, this lawsuit does not ensure the continued health and use of forest ecosystems and the present and future availability of forest resources to benefit society.

Your input is critical: During the next month, use this issue as an opportunity to write your local newspapers and elected state officials and let them know you support timber harvest on federal lands as a valid tool to reduce fuels.

Monument Plan Facts

- The plan will treat about 64,000 acres in the first 10 years out of the monument's 327,769 acres. 86% of the monument is categorized as high-moderate fire susceptibility.
- The plan describes prescribed fire as the preferred method for reducing fuel, although mechanical treatment can be used allowing trees up to 30 inches in diameter to be removed. Mechanical treatments are used to minimize adverse air quality impacts.

Talking Points

SAF Policy on Timber Harvesting on Federal Lands: An Essential Tool for Sustainable Forest Management

- Timber harvesting is a reliable method of reducing these hazards and improving forest health by treating overly dense forests as part of comprehensive silvicultural prescription.
- Wood products to meet consumer needs, employment opportunities in many rural counties, and the reduce cost of fuel reduction treatments are benefits.

SAF Policy on Wildfire Management

- The SAF advocates the use of prescribed fire where it can be effectively and safely used to restore and maintain desired forest conditions and reduce unacceptably high risks to human life, property damage and resource values. Highly successful suppression practices implemented throughout much of the last century and some land-use practices has resulted in fuel accumulations that limit prescribed fire use and tree removal will be necessary.

Forest Health

- Overly dense stands away from communities are at risk to fire and forest health problems and they need to be treated. These dense stands contribute to about 5.5 million acres of forest land in California identified as at risk of 25% or more mortality in the next 15 years from insect and diseases. Drought, air pollution and overly dense stands set the stage for the catastrophic insect mortality outbreaks as seen on the San Bernardino National Forest.

About the Society

The Society is the national organization representing all aspects of the forestry profession in the United States, including public and private practitioners, researchers, administrators, educators, and forestry students. The Northern California Society of American Foresters, with about 768 members, is a unit of the Society of American Foresters with about 15,871 members. The mission of the Society is to advance the science, technology, teaching, and practice of professional forestry in America; to enhance the competency of its members; to establish professional excellence; and to use the knowledge, skills, and conservation ethic of the profession to ensure the continued health and use of forest ecosystems and the present and future availability of forest resources to benefit society.