



1967 Market St.
Concord, CA 94520
866-820-9394

BMWCONCORD

Quick Search

- [SFGate Home](#)
- [Today's Chronicle](#)

- [Sports](#)
- [Entertainment](#)

News & Features

- [Business](#)
- [Opinion](#)
- [Politics](#)
- [Technology](#)
- [Crime](#)
- [Science](#)
- [Weird News](#)
- [Polls](#)
- [Photo Gallery](#)
- [Columnists](#)
- [Lottery](#)
- [Obituaries](#)

Personal Shopper

Classifieds

- [Jobs](#)
- [Personals](#)
- [Real Estate](#)
- [Rentals](#)
- [Vehicles](#)
- [WebAds](#)

Regional

- [Traffic](#)
- [Weather](#)
- [Live Views](#)
- [Maps](#)
- [Bay Area Traveler](#)
- [Wine Country](#)
- [Reno & Tahoe](#)
- [Ski & Snow](#)
- [Outdoors](#)

Entertainment

- [Food & Dining](#)
- [Wine](#)
- [Movies](#)
- [Music & Nightlife](#)
- [Events](#)
- [Performance](#)
- [Art](#)
- [Books](#)
- [Comics](#)
- [TV & Radio](#)
- [Search Listings](#)

Forestry plan could double Sierra logging Decision covers federal woodlands

Wednesday, March 19, 2003

San Francisco Chronicle

[CHRONICLE SECTIONS](#)

[Glen Martin, Chronicle Environment Writer](#)

California's top U.S. Forest Service official has accepted a set of recommendations for managing the Sierra Nevada's 11 national forests, a move that sets the stage for doubling the amount of timber cut on the region's federal lands.

- [Printer-friendly version](#)
- [Email this article to a friend](#)

The decision by Jack Blackwell, the service's regional forester for California, would modify the Sierra Nevada Framework, the current management plan for the mountain range's federal woodlands.

As it stands, the framework emphasizes the preservation of wildlife habitat over commercial logging and favors prescription burning over "mechanical thinning" -- or selective logging -- to remove excessive woodland fuels.

The recommendations for revising the framework were made by a research team Blackwell drafted to review it.

In basic terms, the revisions would allow more timber cutting as a means of reducing wildfire hazard, particularly in the wooded "interface" areas around rural communities.

The changes would also bolster support for the Quincy Library Group Plan, an initiative drafted by residents of the mountain community of Quincy that promotes vigorous tree thinning as a means of reducing fire hazard and providing logs for local mills.

Blackwell's move generally angered environmentalists and pleased timber industry representatives.

Environmentalists say the decision to accept the review team's recommendations runs roughshod over the framework, a document that took more than 10 years and \$20 million to complete.

"You're going to go from current logging levels of about 190 million board feet to 450 million board feet," said Jay Watson, the western regional director for the Wilderness Society. "They're saying it's just a minor revision, but what we're basically looking at here is a completely new plan."

Forest industry representatives, however, were gratified by the changes.

"The forest service really identified some problems with

ChronicleJobs TOP JOBS

▸ **NURSING**

Many Positions!!! See Job Fair Info

[Santa Rosa Mem. Hosp](#)

▸ **ENGINEER**

Consulting Firm seeks Trans. Engr. B

▸ **MEDICAL**

SURGICAL TECH** Growing, established

▸ **BIOTECH**

POSITIONS OPEN
[DOW PHARMACEUTICAL](#)

▸ **PROPERTY MGMT.**

COMMUNITY MGR.
MID-PENIN. HOUSING

▸ **BIOTECH**

Research Opptys
[DNAX](#)

▸ **BIOTECH**

Sr. Dev. Assoc. Clinical Research
[Salmedix, Inc.](#)

▸ **DRAFTER**

TECHNICIAN Min 2yrs exp. using AutoC

▸ **MARKETING MGR.**

MAKING A DIFFERENCE!
[MedicAlert](#)

▸ **SALES**

PROFESSIONALS
[MORGAN STANLEY](#)

▸ **CUSTOMER SERVICE**

Living

- ▀ Health
- ▀ Home & Garden
- ▀ Gay & Lesbian
- ▀ Horoscope

Resources

- ▀ Search & Archives
- ▀ Feedback/Contacts
- ▀ Corrections
- ▀ Newsletters
- ▀ Promotions
- ▀ Site Index

Chronicle Services

- ▀ Missed Delivery
- ▀ Vacation Hold
- ▀ Subscribe
- ▀ Contact

Advertising

- ▀ Advertise Online
- ▀ Place Print Ad
- ▀ Media Kit

the framework," said David Bischel, the president of the California Forestry Association.

Bischel said that "the potential for catastrophic wildfire is the greatest threat facing our forests, and the framework didn't adequately address that. We've had nothing but gridlock and red tape for years, while the forests have burned. Now, we need to move ahead."

At a Sacramento press conference Tuesday, Blackwell said he was looking for common ground, a way to balance the needs of threatened wildlife species such as the California spotted owl -- which prefers old growth forests -- with the wildfire concerns of small towns.

"We're all in this together," he said. "We all want good wildlife habitat, scenic beauty and (the reduction of the risk) of unnatural fire that threatens all these things and our rural communities."

Blackwell said Californians must not ignore the "wake-up call" of the major wildfires that have ravaged the West during the past decade.

Under the old framework, he said, dense vegetation could not be removed fast enough by prescription burning to reduce wildfire risk. It is essential to have mechanical thinning as an option, he said.

Blackwell also defended his decision to allow trees up to 30 inches in diameter to be harvested, including in designated old-growth reserves. Under the framework, only trees 12 inches or less in diameter may be cut in old growth areas.

By allowing "a few" of the larger trees to be harvested, Blackwell said, the costs to taxpayers of fireproofing the forests can be reduced significantly.

Following Blackwell's decision, a supplement to the framework's original environmental impact statement will be prepared, incorporating recent data and analyzing the likely impact of the changes.

A 90-day public comment period will follow. More changes could be made to the management plan during this time, Blackwell said. He will officially adopt the new plan sometime this fall.

Brad Powell, the service's regional forester for California during the Clinton administration and the current forester for federal forests in Montana and northern Idaho, gave his conditional imprimatur to the plan. It was under Powell's tenure that the original framework was adopted.

"The framework is a complex document, and we recognized that implementation would be the real challenge," Powell said. "The key now lies in how they analyze the new data. The objectives are to both protect the (human) communities and wildlife habitat, so careful analysis is essential."

C/S REPS AND COLLECTORS

RMA

▀ **DENTAL**

Superstar RDA w/A+ personality to jo

▀ **CUSTOMER**

SVC/ADMIN. ASST. & basic acctng a +

▀ **MEDICAL**

RECEPTIONIST P/T Chiropractic office

▀ **REST**

MANAGER, Min. 15-20yrs rest. busines

▀ **RESTAURANT**

FOH Manager Chef / Sous Chef

The Beach Chalet

▀ **LEGAL**

SECTY. Expd Litigation Secty sought

▀ **NURSES**

SINCE 1979 RN/TECH OR PACU ICU CPD Y

▀ **INSURANCE**

Underwriting Dept Opportunities

NORCAL

▀ **TEACHERS**

ESL. Day/Eves. Min exp 2-3yrs teachi

▀ **BIOTECHNOLOGY**

Career opptys in Biotechnology

Exelixis

▀ **MACHINIST**

TOOL & DIE F/T. Southern Oregon. Sen

▀ **ADMINISTRATIVE**

ASST. Gen ofc duties, computer co li

▀ **RESTAURANT**

Chef & Sous Chef High Volume

The Beach Chalet

▀ **SALES**

2,000 SIGNING BONUS YOUR LAST CAREER

Blackwell has rallied a number of groups besides commercial foresters to his side, including the ski industry, cattle ranchers, farmers and off-road vehicle enthusiasts.

"In the original (framework), we were collateral damage," said Bob Roberts, the executive director of the California Ski Industry Association. "The old- growth guidelines covered most of our resorts, and that really made business difficult. We're not out to rape and pillage every north-facing slope, and Jack understood that. He came out into the field, listened to our concerns and addressed them."

But environmentalists remain largely unmollified. The new guidelines, they say, are simply a return to the bad old way of doing business on the national forests -- a management mode that favors "getting out the cut" over preservation.

"It's a missed opportunity," said Warren Alford, the forestry representative for the Sierra Club. "They've been dragging their heels on implementing the framework for two years, when they could have been out in the forests reducing fuels. All this means is more paralysis -- more acrimony, more litigation."

E-mail the writer at glenmartin@sfnchronicle.com.

Page A - 3



[Get 50% off home delivery of the Chronicle for 12 weeks!](#)

©2003 San Francisco Chronicle | [Feedback](#)

[About Top Jobs](#)
[View All Top Jobs](#)

▼ **RELATED ARTICLES**
powered by *Autonomy*

[02/04/2003 - Sierra protection plan under review.](#)

[09/10/2002 - Bush logging plan would suspend review process.](#)

[01/13/2001 - U.S. Shifts Policy on Sierra -- Trees, Wildlife Protected.](#)

[more related articles...](#)

Momix Dance Theater		April 4 & 5 Zellerbach Hall	Cal Performances UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA AT BERKELEY Click to Order Tickets
----------------------------------	---	--------------------------------	---