

Hardwood Protection Needs to Come from Leadership, Not Regulation¹

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What is the Department of Forestry and Fire Protection's position on hardwoods? We do not want to regulate hardwoods. We have been working and regulating coniferous timberlands for 23 years, and we would like to find a better way, because regulation upon regulation upon regulation brings a lot of unhappiness and unequitable situations to both the public sector and the private landowner. What I hope will happen, and certainly what the Department wants to support, is that the leadership for the areas in California will become organized, as you are around here, with a focal point at California Polytechnic State University at San Luis Obispo. Certainly, areas and regions in this state are very diverse. If you look at a bio-diversity map that states the bioregions, you will see that the Central Coast is different from those upper California areas. You have the University of California Cooperative Extension and you have Chico State University of northern California. With the help of the landowners and leadership through science and research these state university systems can bring, along with government in departments like Forestry and Fire Protection, Fish and Game, and the other cooperating agencies, collectively we can put together a program that is acceptable to landowners, as well as the public, and keep this whole landscape in place and intact and productive. So, from the Department's point of view, from Chairman Kersteins' point of view at the Board of Forestry, regulation is not the answer. Leadership is the answer. This symposium is a source of the leadership needed to accomplish these goals.

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