



California Urban Forests Council – 10.13.17 – Executive Director’s Report

Federal Policy Update –No update

Forest Service Regional Update – will be going to LA on November 2-3, 2017 for the LA Center Advisory Committee meeting working on the Strategic Focus for research not only in LA but statewide.

Forest Service Funding – Met with John Melvin last month and all he could say was that most likely we will be funded at the current level we receive now - \$135,000 for July 2018-June 2019. More discussion will be had on this with Miranda Hutten and John in upcoming weeks.

Forest Service Research –I am part of a group meeting scheduled for 10/31/17 with Alex Friend, Director of the Southwest Research Station within which the urban forestry research work is done. Dr. Greg McPherson is retiring and we understand that there are not enough funds to replace him based on changing budgets in Washington. We will be advocating for research projects to be funded through State & Private Forestry – U&CF – where we currently receive our grants each year and where a mechanism is in place now to issue grants so the money that does exist can be easily focused and be run out of the LA Center.

CalFire –We have submitted a revised proposal (upon request from CAL FIRE) for our High Speed Rail application, tripling our request to \$1.5 Million. John Melvin says the paperwork is in process and led me to believe I could begin to start searching for a new program staff person for this project but just don’t hire anyone until the paperwork is signed. ☺

We are still waiting for our final version of our new TreeMap and Greenhouse Gas Calculator to come from our vendors. John Melvin has followed-up with CARB as he will be letting a new round of grants soon with the latest round of Greenhouse Gas Funding and would like to use the tool for carbon calculations.

Cal Fire has hired the new state Urban Forester to replace John Melvin – his name is **Robert Little**. Met him last week for the first time at the CUFAC meetings – he seems like he will be an asset to the program – he is on a steep learning curve.

CUFAC – (CA Urban Forestry Advisory Committee) - I am back on CUFAC after a three-year hiatus. This is the body that makes recommendations to the Chief of CA Department of Forestry & Fire Protection (CALFIRE). We meet on October 4th & 5th in Vallejo. We discuss issues pertinent to the industry from across the State and are about to embark on an update to the Strategic Plan which expires next year.

State Policy Update –

AB1530 was signed by the Governor yesterday!!!!!! Yippee. The updated reauthorization of the Urban Forestry Act has been passed into law with “teeth” this time in terms of CALFIRE shall have a program rather than “may” have a program and it has been updated based on latest science and issues. We and CSG worked hard on this and I am thrilled with this success.



Program Updates -

- **CIRCLE Projects (Cap & Trade Funding)** – working on contracts with sub-contractors and beginning our community-based volunteer training efforts for CIRCLE 2.0. CIRCLE 1.0 is humming along with maintenance as the focus.
- **Conferences** – 2018 in Irvine in partnership with Arbor Day Foundation and CA ReLeaf.
- **Communications** – see Deb’s report
- **Workshops** – one last workshop scheduled for December 7th in San Luis Obispo working with the Central Coast Regional Council.
- **Regional Councils** –reached out to councils to begin plans for next year and what we can chose to do collectively for our 50th birthday. Have a Doodle Poll out to schedule a call soon.

Other Issues/Opportunities:

- **Audits/Taxes** – still waiting for the letter from the Forest Service auditor. I have sent our tax materials into Pam Mainini, our auditor. As of this writing she is now expecting to do an audit for 2017 rather than 2016 based on your pending approval.

Emergency Preparedness – The fires in Northern California have reminded me once again that I need to hold the training for some of the Executive Committee members regarding how to access our office, or back-up data, our bank accounts, etc., in the event that something might happen to staff or a disaster might occur. My comment is relating to confidentiality of our information. Do we need to have board members sign a confidentiality agreement or am I overreaching? I want to make sure that you are all comfortable with accessing this information and a best procedure to do that. I have attached some documents that indicate how this could be done.

Advocacy – I met with Conservation Strategy Group today to discuss our focus for the next legislative session and as of today our main focus will be on legislation and funding for the invasive pests decimating our urban forests and working to make the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Funds allocated for urban forestry permanent, rather than having to make a case for them each year.

3rd Quarter Financials will be distributed at the board meeting on 10/19/17 and I will take you through them.

Partners Conference – Tulsa, OK – November 13-17, 2017 – I’ll be attending the national U&CF conference put on by the Arbor Day Foundation. I will be meeting with them while there regarding next year’s conference.

Respectfully submitted,
Nancy Hughes