



California Urban Forests Council – 7.11.17 – Executive Director’s Report

Federal Policy Update – Update from Sustainable Urban Forest Coalition -

Last month, the Administration released its proposed FY18 budget. At SUFC, we were deeply concerned about the devastating impact that the proposed budget would have on America's urban and community forests. The SUFC Policy Working Group, spearheaded by Rebecca Turner of American Forests and Danielle Watson of the Society of American Foresters, submitted written testimony to the [Senate](#) and [House](#) Appropriations Subcommittees on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies, in which SUFC urged Congress to take a stand for programs that support urban and community forests and have proven track records of generating economic growth, reducing energy use, improving air and water quality, enhancing human health, and saving millions of taxpayer dollars.

Of profound concern is the zeroing out of the Urban and Community Forestry (U&CF) Program, the SUFC's top priority among USDA Forest Service State and Private Forestry programs. Defunding the U&CF Program would halt and reverse decades of progress in urban and community forestry.

The U&CF provides technical, financial, research, and educational support to help communities across the nation plant and care for trees. Working with state foresters and a variety of other partners, U&CF is a high-impact program, with federal funding often leveraged by matching funds from states and partner organizations for collaborative projects, including preparing for storms, containing pest threats, and improving forest cover. SUFC has recommended that U&CF be funded at \$31.3 million in the FY18 budget, consistent with our requests in recent years. Our recommendation coincides with the minimum funding needs identified in the National Ten-Year Urban Forestry Action Plan developed by the National Urban and Community Forestry Advisory Council.

In addition to defunding this core program for urban and community forests, the Administration's budget also proposes to eliminate or reduce several other Forest Service programs important to SUFC. The proposed budget recommends defunding the Community Forest and Open Space Conservation Program, which helps communities establish and protect community forests. It also proposes substantial funding cuts for Forest Health Management, particularly on non-federal lands, and a 16 percent cut for Research and Development. SUFC's testimony also expressed support for programs falling under other agencies, such as the EPA's Clean Water State Revolving Funds (for which we proposed funding consistent with FY17), and the National Park Service's Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership Program, the primary federal investment tool promoting access to urban forests in parks and open space.

As the budget process moves forward, SUFC will continue to strongly advocate for a budget that recognizes the collective environmental, social, and economic value of our nation's 138 million acres of urban and community forestry lands. We will continue to urge Congress to restore funding that will ensure future generations enjoy the benefits of urban forestry programs that foster healthy, vibrant communities.

Forest Service Regional Update – no update



Forest Service Funding Still waiting to hear if we will get the grant for local funding for one year.

Forest Service Research –no update

CalFire –We have not heard back yet on the proposal submitted for the High Speed Rail grant for \$500k. I have been informed the decisions will be made soon.

We are still waiting for our final version of our new TreeMap and Greenhouse Gas Calculator to come from our vendors but it should be up and running on our website very soon. I spoke with Kelaine Ravdin about the status and it is essentially ready to go. She needs to work with Deb to get it up on our website. Kelaine has also reached out to CARB to see if they will bless the tool so it can be used for all tree planting for the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Funding work in CA. It is looking promising.

State Policy Update –

AB1530 continues to move forward – efforts are underway to find another elected to carry the bill on the floor in the Senate for Assemblymember Gonzalez-Fletcher, the bill's author.

Park Bond/Initiative – the language has been written for a bond measure in the event that the Park Bond does not move forward in the legislature or with the Governor's support. Urban forestry is in all versions except the Senate version currently.

Greenhouse Gas Reduction Funds -

Program Updates –

- **CIRCLE Project (Cap & Trade Funding)** – beginning planning on 2.0 – working to partner with 10 cities – the plantings will be planned for Spring 2018.
- **Conferences** – Please go to the website to see our amazing agenda! And please register! <https://caufc.org/programs/conference-2017/>
- **Our 2018 conference will be held in Irvine, CA** – in partnership on some level with the Arbor Day Foundation and their national conference. It will be in November, wrapping up our birthday year.
- **Communications** – see Deb's report
- **Workshops** - no updates
- **Regional Councils** – no updates

Other Issues/Opportunities:

- **Audit** – I spend about 8 days preparing the additional information the auditors requested. I then sent everything to the Forest Service for their review last Friday. They will then send everything to the auditor. I will have two – two hour phone interviews with them sometime in August. I'm comfortable with the quality of our materials and numbers, but as with all audits, it is the auditor's responsibility to find things and suggest changes and corrections for improvement. I'm expecting some of this will occur. Always room for improvement.



In terms of our own audit – it will be moved to the Fall, after the conference sometime.

- Office relocation update – I personally funded the installation of air conditioning and heat in the new office for staff's comfort. It is very nice actually and we all appreciate it! Next getting the sink plumbed.
- Finding funding for the conference and the pest issues is vitally important – please share your ideas.
- **Registrations for the conference are very low.** Hovering around 35 including speakers and staff. Please support this endeavor yourselves! You can also reach out to Dorothy Abeyta with your Silent Auction donations – much appreciated! dorothy.abeyta@davey.com.

Respectfully submitted,
Nancy Hughes