



FACT SHEET

AB 442 – Streamlining Working Forest Management Plans

IN BRIEF

Poorly managed forests create catastrophic wildfire risk, threatening communities, wildlife, and critical infrastructure.

Assembly Bill 442 streamlines Working Forest Management Plans (WFMPs) and improves sustainable forestry practices for non-industrial landowners.

Specifically, this bill removes a requirement that a harvest area under a WFMP cannot include more than one watershed.

BACKGROUND & ISSUE

Wildfires have been growing in size, duration, and destructiveness over the past 20 years. They have been especially devastating for rural communities. Responsible forest management reduces this risk while protecting the environment.

WFMPs are a long term management plan for landowners with less than 10,000 acres of timberland, not primarily engaged in the manufacture of forest products. These plans are approved by the California Department of Forestry & Fire Protection. The plans do not expire, but are living documents that serve as a roadmap for evolving management goals. Objectives for WFMPs include maintaining, restoring, or creating uneven aged managed timber stand conditions, achieving sustained yield, and promoting forestland stewardship that protects watersheds, fisheries and wildlife habitats, and other important values on non-federal lands in California. Under existing law, the harvest area in a WFMP cannot include more than one watershed.

This restriction poses significant burdens on landowners by forcing them to develop a patchwork of WFPMs, Nonindustrial Timber Management Plans and Timber Harvest Permits

to accommodate watershed boundaries instead of using a single WFPM for a harvest area. For example, cutting a tree down pursuant to a WFPM on the top of a ridgeline separating two watersheds would violate existing law. The creation of multiple plans for each watershed instead of a single plan for multiple watersheds appears to have no environmental benefit. Further, developing multiple management plans costs several hundred thousand dollars that could be better be spent on additional fuel management.

SOLUTION

Removing the requirement that a WFMP cannot include more than one watershed will make it easier for more landowners to develop comprehensive WFMPs.

AB 442 will promote long-term, sustainable forestry practices for non-industrial landowners while protecting California's natural resources.

SUPPORT

California Forestry Association (Sponsor)
American Council of Engineering Companies of California
Humboldt Redwood Company
Pacific Forst Trust

CONTACT

Andrew Nickens
Andrew.Nickens@asm.ca.gov
(916) 319-2011