

At this time, I would like to give the members an update on our forest, some problems, and our plans for the future. Most of this report resulted from a meeting held on January 3, 1998 with our forester, Craig Tolmie.

1. The plan for 1998 is to cut in compartment number two which is between the Boy Scout Camp and the water tank up to the gravel road which is on U.S. Forest Service land. The rough estimate at this time, based on the current market price of timber, is a net of roughly \$70000 to \$75000. It must be remembered that this is only an estimate. Five acres in this area will be clear cut since it supports only a few marketable trees. This area will undergo a controlled burn and then seedlings planted. The cost to regenerate this area will come out of the projected net for compartment two. This is the same procedure started in the compartment logged in 1997. The weather did not allow us to complete the burn and planting in that clear cut area. Hopefully, both areas can be burned and replanted in 1998. After seven or eight years these areas will have to be thinned to allow the remaining trees to mature.

2. The logs will be transported out to Highway 108 on the Forest Service road system in order to protect the roads in the park. The cost for using these roads is approximately \$1500 plus the cost of brush removal and road repair. The work is required before the logging trucks can use the gravel road.

3. Craig and I took a ride on the road by the water tank in order to access the gravel road and determine what work is required before logging begins. At that time, Craig pointed out that some of our local park four wheelers have destroyed much of the work done to our dirt roads during the 1997 logging operation. This was an expense paid out of the timber fund and will have to be repaired out of the 1998 income. Craig's recommendation, and one that I agree with, is to gate the dirt roads into our forest. He is currently preparing a plan which will be presented to the board indicating where these gates should go. This area is a tree farm and provides us with revenue to do things such as the paving in 1997. It is also an area of beauty that needs our care and protection. The gates would not be closed on a permanent basis but only in times when major damage can occur as was the case this year with the wet muddy conditions. Another time might be when extreme fire danger requires us to keep vehicles out of that area. We would like to keep the road by the water tank to the gravel road open as long as possible since that is a beautiful area and should be enjoyed by all. It is also a much more durable road than the dirt roads in the park.

4. Craig said that if we cut compartment six in 1999 there will be nothing to cut for several years. This is the

compartment around Wheeler Road and 108. Craig seems to have a great understanding of what is needed in the park concerning our forest. He is not suggesting that we cut all of the trees but only those necessary in order to properly manage our forest. Some harvesting and thinning is required. There will be times when mature trees will have to be harvested since they are at the end of their life cycle. To simply let them die would not only cause us to lose the income but would also create a potential fire danger in the forest. In order to manage our forest properly selective cutting is required. I think the logging operation in 1997 behind Abraham is a perfect example of that.

5. Craig's recommendation is that since we harvested in 1995, 1997, and have scheduled a harvest for 1998 and another for 1999 that we may need to slow down. This rate can not continue without significant impact to future harvests. They need to be spaced further apart. We are approaching a period where the timberlands may need a ten year plus rest without any logging. There is also a need to initiate regeneration in compartment one. That was the area harvested in 1995 (up from West Jordan). This regeneration is necessary in order to ensure a long term timber resource and to bring back proper growth to our forest. This is the proper way to manage our land.

6. The area behind the houses on Abraham will be marked in order to give those interested a chance to see what Craig and both the state and national forest service are recommending. The recommendation is to thin for 100 feet behind the homes to provide a degree of fire safety. It would provide some protection for the homes from a fire in the forest. The thinning would also provide the forest some protection from a fire starting at a home in the park and moving into the forest. This would not be a clear cut and no action will be taken until our members understand what is proposed. If the decision is to move ahead with this plan, Craig would like to coordinate it with the logging operation in 1998.

7. Craig is in the process of contacting people from the U.S. Forest Service and the California Department of Forestry for a presentation on Sunday, May 24, 1998 at our general meeting. The presentation will take about forty-five minutes. It will cover the thirty foot state clearing requirement around homes, general fire prevention, and information on the forest management program for the Park. It will also be a good time for concerned members to ask questions about our forest.

8. I discussed a problem with Craig that I became aware of during the 1997 holiday season. Some of the members in the park were guilty of stealing either park trees or trees from the forest service. Craig said that these "Christmas Trees"

would be worth from \$250 to \$300 at maturity. By next year, we will have a plan in place to work with the U.S. Forest Service to stop this. Civil action will be taken to obtain the value of the mature tree from the guilty party and charges of theft will be filed with the proper authorities. The U.S. Forest Service usually gets \$1000 for one tree and also files criminal charges. Next year it would be much cheaper to stop in Sonora and pay \$20 for your tree - be sure to hang on to your receipt.

All of us in the park need to remember that the forest is beautiful but very fragile. What nature has taken centuries to create a few foolish people with machines can destroy in a short period of time. With the help of our forester, Craig Tolmie, and the understanding and cooperation of all of you in the park we can manage our forest properly. This will allow us <sup>to</sup> maintain the beauty of the forest for ourselves and future generations of park residents.

Fred Coleman  
Timber Director