

**SUFC Policy Workgroup Call
May 28, 2015, 2.00 pm EST**

In attendance: Becky, Deanne, Sarah, Rebecca, Brent, Lindsey, Chuck, Paul, Faith, Leighton, Jen, Gerry, Alice, Nick

1. Briefing on California's Urban Forest Budget

- AB 32 and carbon market has led to an influx in urban forest funds
 - The cap and trade program has survived numerous legal challenges and should remain intact through 2020.
- Success came from getting the variety of natural resources and environmental justice stakeholders on the same page through extensive outreach and collaboration among the parties.
- Allocation amount in FY15 and FY16
 - Senate, Assembly and Governor all agree on \$37.8 mil for FY15-16 for urban forests. It is the largest state allocation in U.S. history
 - \$10 mil will be available for a state-wide competitive grant

2. Is there a way SUFC can leverage this for our national strategy?

- While this is a unique funding source to CA – is there a way to take the lessons learned and the successes here to the national arena – or to share with other states?
- The strategy should be to build partnerships and find common ground and values with other interests such as public health. The challenge is to find where the funding is and then build the right partnerships
- Advocate for urban forests to be included in other coalition agendas that may have more leverage than SUFC as well as advocating with decision makers
 - Clean Power Plan, Forest Climate Working Group is putting together a tool kit of how forests can help states reach the goals in their plans – SUFC might want to try to make sure that benefits of urban forests are included in the tool kit
 - Building coalition relationships with groups that have better access, get urban forests included – maybe particular states that have some opportunities to use similar solutions – some of the players in CA coalition are national players (TNC), make decisions based on what all the states want - worth more dialogue with them on how bringing in more urban forests might change their legislative strategy
- Branding is important – choice of words helps sell ideas to those who may be reluctant at first - use “disaster resiliency” instead of “climate change” - use strategic messaging on the Hill, use a language that they will react to – not all legislative offices will react well to environmental justice.
- We need a more structured approach; which types of groups will we approach? Working with environmental justice groups in the future; put together target list and a plan for beginning to approach them, ask them what they are doing – look

to water groups that have been successful – need to figure out if our message has a chance and how it might be framed

- Going forward there is a great opportunity with the strategic planning process, and the strategic outreach working group. We need to participate in the survey in order to influence the direction of SUFC.

More lessons-learned after the call from Gordon Mann – who was unable to attend the call:

- While it is exciting for the funding for UF projects, there hasn't been an increase in staffing at CalFire. The regional outreach urban foresters have become grant administrators.
- At the advisory committee level, we have asked if it was reasonable for each regional technical outreach person to visit one community a month that doesn't have a professional UF staff person. That would be 60 per year.
- As simple as this sounds, their workload with the increased grant funding has them stressed from a time and assignment perspective. While CalFire increased the amount of grant projects to reduce the sheer numbers while spending the 17 million this year, there has to be some increase in staffing based on the cap and trade dollars.