



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Pacific
Southwest
Region

Regional Office, R5
1323 Club Drive
Vallejo, CA 94592
(707) 562-8737 Voice
(707) 562-9130 Text (TDD)

File Code: 2430/5100/6320

Date: April 28, 2006

Route To:

Subject: Project Activity Level (PAL) implementation and monitoring

To: Forest Supervisors, Directors , District Rangers, And Contract Officers

As the Project Activity Level (PAL) industrial fire precaution system for timber sale and service contracts in R5 is fully implemented, refinements and adjustments to PAL are expected. The purpose of this letter is to share with you clarifying direction and recent modifications for PAL implementation so as to ensure consistency in application across the region. Our goal in implementing PAL is to improve our approach to industrial fire precautions and assure we are able to complete necessary vegetation management projects in an efficient manner. Successful implementation requires team work between your fire organization, vegetation managers and contract specialists.

To improve standardization of the implementation of PAL across the region, incorporate the following direction into your use of PAL:

1. The current minimum variance requirement at the Ev level will be adopted as a standard mitigation requirement in contract provisions, allowing specified operations to continue until 1:00 pm unless current fire situation, weather and vegetation conditions warrant additional restriction of activities as determined by the District Ranger.
2. Continue to use the best information available to determine project activity levels, and where strategic gaps exist in the current network of weather stations exist, utilize additional weather stations to improve PAL accuracy (when, where, and as appropriate to do so), including consideration of use of non-agency stations which meet PAL specifications and agency quality assurance standards.
3. Regional programmatic oversight, and accountability, for successful PAL implementation is assigned to the "PAL Oversight Group" consisting of R5 Directors **Brent Handley**, Director NRM, and **Ed Hollenshead**, Deputy Director FFAM.

A "PAL Steering Committee" responsible for the development, integration, and technical aspects of the PAL integrated implementation aspects of communication, coordination, training, monitoring, and modification under the direction of the "PAL Oversight Group" is established. Assigned to the "PAL Steering Committee" are **Doug Lee**, Director AM, **Don Golnick**, NRM, **Russ Gripp**, FFAM, **Beth Little**, FFAM, **Jerry Westfall**, Forest Vegetation Management Officer Tahoe National Forest, and a District Ranger representative.



To ensure consistency in application of PAL across the region, the “PAL Oversight Group” and “PAL Steering Committee” will initially focus on:

- a. Completing development of the PAL Implementation Guide this spring for use as a training and communication aid.
- b. Develop and deliver PAL training for Forest and District personnel, and external interested parties. Include external group perspectives in the development of the training, and external group participation (at the minimum the California Forestry Association (CFA)) in training delivery. Training development completion is targeted for the end of May 2006, and delivery is targeted to begin in June 2006.
- c. Develop a PAL implementation monitoring framework, including analysis of costs associated with PAL in the timber appraisal process. Ensure that the monitoring framework includes a feedback process for measuring success as well as to make appropriate changes as needed. Include external interested party (at the minimum CFA) representatives on the monitoring team.
- d. Assess the need for updating the timber appraisal handbook.

Please review all on-going and upcoming contracts on your unit to ensure the consistency of PAL application with the clarification provided in this letter regarding variance at the Ev level and in addressing issues related to weather station use.

Please respond to Brent Handley or Ed Hollenshead regarding PAL training needs on your unit and with any questions regarding PAL.

Training will be available to all units within the next two months. You will be notified of training options as they become available.

/s/ Beth G. Pendleton (for)
BERNARD WEINGARDT
Regional Forester

cc: Ed Hollenshead
Russell A Gripp
Donald K Golnick
Jerry Westfall
Gary Thompson
Rob Griffith
Tom Tidwell
Beth Pendleton
Brent Handley
Doug Lee

Ray Quintanar
Beth Little