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PUBLIC HEARING
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
November 29, 2005, 7:00 p.m.
VEGETATION TREATMENTS PROGRAMMATIC EIS AND ER FOR THE
WESTERN U.S. AND ALASKA

ORIGINAL

Taken before JENNIFER SCHUMACHER
Certified Shorthand Reporter
State of California
CSR License #9763

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APPEARANCES :

STUART LINDSEY PAULUS, Ph.D.

BRIAN AMME

GINA RAMOS

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT:

CAROL SPURRIER

BUD CRIBLEY

DIANA BRINK

CARL GOSSARD

TONY DANNA

JOHN DEARING

1 BE IT REMEMBERED that on Tuesday, November 29,
2 2005, commencing at the hour of 7:00 p.m., at the
3 CLARION HOTEL, Sacramento, California, before me,
4 JENNIFER SCHUMACHER, a Certified Shorthand Reporter,
5 the Public Hearing is as follows:

6 --o0o--

7 MR. AMME: Well, welcome. We didn't have a lot
8 of people show up here tonight, but we'll be kind of
9 informal. I'm Brian Amme, the project manager for this
10 project that we've been working on for about four years
11 now on hazardous fuels reduction and herbicides and
12 weed invasions and things like that. Just released the
13 draft EIS, and I welcome you Bill and Bill here. So we
14 got the two Bills here. We know you by first names.
15 That's great. We talked to you on the phone.

16 The housekeeping information is the bathrooms
17 are right out the door down there, and the lounge is
18 right over there. Maybe that's where we ought to hold
19 this meeting.

20 A few introductions I'll make today. Gina Ramos
21 is the co-team lead on this project. She's the senior
22 weed specialist back in Washington, D.C. for the BLM.
23 So anything weed-wise for the nation she's in charge of
24 that. Stuart Paulus is our project manager from ENSR
25 International, a third party contractor who has also

1 helped us put this EIS project together. He's done a
2 great job. Bud Cribley is the division chief for Range
3 Resources back in Washington, D.C. And we have a few
4 distinguished guests from the California office and
5 other places. I think you met Carl Gossard from Oregon
6 Washington Resource Division. What was your --

7 MR. GOSSARD: Assistant director of fire
8 operations.

9 MR. AMME: Assistant director of fire
10 operations. Sounds pretty impressive actually. Tony
11 Danna, I believe, deputy state director for resources
12 here in California state office. Great guy. Who else
13 do we have? Tom Pogoshik, well horse program. Another
14 great guy. Used to live in Carson City, Reno. Diana
15 Brink, who is your California state office weed
16 specialist here. Carol Spurrier, endangered species
17 biologist from the Washington office. And introduce
18 yourself, please.

19 MR. DEARING: John Dearing, external affairs.

20 MR. AMME: And another person?

21 MS. COSONA: Kris Ann Cosana (ph). I'm a fuel
22 management specialist for Folsom.

23 MR. CAVE: Okay, Bill, we're way in over our
24 heads.

25 MR. AMME: We have a brief Power Point

1 presentation that Stuart will put on and then Gina
2 Ramos will take it over as the hearing officer if
3 there's any oral comments you want to make on the
4 project, we truly welcome it. And we have our
5 distinguished court reporter to take down any
6 information that you provide for us, which I don't know
7 your name.

8 Sir, take it away.

9 MR. PAULUS: Thank you. I want to thank you for
10 coming tonight to the public hearing on the BLM
11 Vegetation Treatments Programmatic EIS and also
12 Environmental Report for the Western U.S. and Alaska.
13 As we go along you will see a different situation we
14 might have in some cases where we not only have EIS but
15 Environmental Report was prepared.

16 The purpose of the hearing tonight is
17 three-fold. One, to help you understand the BLM
18 proposal to treat up to 6 million acres annually in the
19 Western U.S., including Alaska. We also want to
20 explain to you the role of the Programmatic EIS and the
21 Programmatic Environmental Report. And finally, and
22 most importantly, we're here to solicit comments from
23 the public, from you, on the issues of concern that you
24 feel should have been addressed in the EIS and the ER.
25 So again, that's probably the most important reason for

1 this hearing.

2 The BLM was founded in 1946 with a goal of
3 serving current and future publics and restoring and
4 maintaining the health of land. Pretty simple goal,
5 but pretty important. The BLM administers nearly 262
6 million acres of surface land and about 700 million
7 acres of subsurface mineral lands. Nearly all the
8 surface lands are in the Western U.S., including
9 Alaska. Shown on this slide you can see the bulk of
10 the acres right here in the central portion of the
11 Western U.S., and although it doesn't look like a lot
12 in Alaska, in fact, about 81 million acres are in
13 Alaska. So almost a third of the acres are found in
14 Alaska, although it doesn't look like it from this map.

15 What is the BLM proposing to do and why? As I
16 mentioned before, the primary objective is to treat up
17 to 6 million acres annually in the Western U.S.,
18 including Alaska, using five primary treatment methods:
19 Manual methods, mechanical methods, biological control
20 methods, prescribed fire and the use of herbicides.
21 Right now the BLM is treating about two million acres
22 annually, so we're looking at about three-fold increase
23 in the number of acres treated annually.

24 The reason the BLM feels they need to do this
25 is, one, to reduce the hazardous fuel loads to reduce

1 the risk of wild fires. Due to fire exclusion
2 practices over the last several decades, since the
3 early 1900s, maybe late 1800s, fire excluding has lead
4 to the increase of hazardous fuels and forest and range
5 lands and has lead to some of the incredible and severe
6 wild fires we've had in the last decade or so.

7 Another major objective is to remove and control
8 the weed population. It's estimated the weed
9 population has grown about four-folds in the last 15
10 years. So anything that can be done to try and get on
11 top of this problem would be much welcomed. Right now
12 the current level of treatment is not obviously keeping
13 the weeds under control.

14 Two other major goals: One, to restore and
15 rehabilitating damaged lands, especially those damaged
16 in the last several decades by wild fires, and also
17 probably the overarching goal, to improve eco system
18 health, improve the water and improve the land for fish
19 and wildlife.

20 This is just a quick overview of the different
21 methods. Mechanical, use of large equipment such as
22 tractor, bush hogs, mowers, and generally larger
23 equipment. Prescribed fire, using fire to reduce
24 hazardous fuels, in some cases maybe control, mainly
25 hazardous fuel reduction. In some cases also in this

1 prescribed burn plan in place allowing nature and
2 natural fire to burn an area. That's especially common
3 up in Alaska. Chemical or the use of herbicides. Here
4 we're using a helicopter in one picture and also an ATV
5 to treat weeds. As we'll discuss later chemical
6 treatments are going to be actually rather uncommon in
7 this state. Biological control is the use of domestic
8 animals to contain vegetation or maybe use of insects
9 or pathogens to also control vegetation. Here we have
10 some goats along this creek that are containing
11 vegetation. And finally, manual control methods.
12 Here's a person using a chain saw, can also be using a
13 hoe, shovel, axe, basically manual tools. So those are
14 the five primary methods of treatment.

15 In addition to treating 6 million acres there
16 are also other important objectives of the EIS and the
17 BLM's proposal. The first one is the BLM is also
18 evaluating in this EIS the need or evaluating four new
19 herbicides they would like to use; diflufenzopyr,
20 diquat, fluridone and imazapic. Diquat and fluridone
21 are primarily aquatic herbicides. While imazapic and
22 diflufenzopyr are used in terrestrial situations. In
23 addition, the BLM wanted to develop a protocol to
24 evaluate the risks of using herbicides that may be
25 developed in the future.

1 Right now we spent time to evaluate these four
2 that are listed up here. As we went through that
3 process, and in fact, you might say this whole process
4 started four or five years ago, what's taking so long.
5 Well, a lot of the time was spent coming up with a
6 protocol that a number of agencies can live with and
7 agree to and felt that it was best of sciences to
8 evaluate the risk of using these different herbicides,
9 the risk to humans, plants and animals, and also then
10 to develop a protocol that BLM can use in the future.
11 So this protocol would not only have to be
12 scientifically credible, they would also have to follow
13 NEPA, National Environmental Policy Act requirements in
14 assessing the risks of these chemicals, and they would
15 also have to make sure these chemicals were registered
16 with the EPA and also in the State of California before
17 they could use them.

18 The role of the Programmatic EIS. Federal
19 agencies are required to prepare an EIS, an action or
20 proposed action has the potential for significant
21 environmental impact. When you think of the use of
22 herbicides in particular, you think of the potential
23 for significant environmental impact. Thus, the use of
24 herbicides was really the primary issue of controversy
25 and was identified through scoping and is the primary

1 driving factor for this EIS and also earlier EISs done
2 by the BLM in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Thus,
3 the PIS or the Programmatic is analyzing the effects on
4 the national and social resources of using herbicides
5 the BLM is currently available to use and also the four
6 new herbicides that they would like to use.

7 Five alternatives were considered in EIS, or
8 four in addition to the one that the BLM would like to
9 use. The first alternative that was considered, the
10 Programmatic EIS is basically just to continue present
11 herbicide use or the no action alternative. Western
12 wide right now the BLM through earlier EISs is allowed
13 to use herbicides in 14 states. They are also allowed
14 to use 20 different herbicides under Alternative A.
15 Under Alternative B things change a little bit. This
16 is a preferred alternative. Under the preferred
17 alternative, you can see there, the BLM would now be
18 able to use herbicides in 17 western states. We picked
19 up Alaska, Texas, and Nebraska that weren't covered
20 earlier; however, they wouldn't be able to use all 20
21 herbicides. About six of the 20 herbicides the BLM
22 currently has available to them to use they really
23 haven't used at all or very sparingly in the last seven
24 or eight years. And thus, the intent under Alternative
25 B is not even use these herbicides in the near term

1 unless they do a risk assessment to determine if those
2 herbicides are worth using in the future. But under
3 the current Alternative B they would not use those six
4 herbicides. They would be able to use the four new
5 herbicides. So we went from 20, lost six, down to 14,
6 now we have four more, so now we're up to 18
7 herbicides. Alternative C, no use of herbicides. We
8 also looked at an alternative where the BLM would not
9 use herbicides, what were the pros and cons of that
10 alternative. Alternative D does not allow aerial
11 spraying of herbicides. The idea here was that if
12 herbicides are applied near the boundary of public
13 lands, of BLM administered lands, there's a potential
14 for the herbicides to drift off the land. We if don't
15 have aerial spraying, you don't have the potential of
16 drifting off public lands or even to other areas even
17 on public land where you don't want the spray to occur.

18 And finally, the last alternative is an
19 alternative that was submitted by a group, a number of
20 conservation groups, a coalition of conservation
21 groups, and it has a number of components, and I would
22 suggest that you look at that alternative. That's
23 actually an appendix in the EIS. It's about 30 pages
24 or so. And it will tell you a little more in detail.
25 But as it relates to herbicides, in particular one of

1 their main objectives was to restrict or eliminate the
2 use of ecydolactic inhibiting herbicides. These are
3 herbicides that are very potent and when they drift off
4 of the area where you're treating, they can cause
5 substantial damage to vegetation. So they are
6 concerned about that especially drifting into crop
7 lands and other agricultural lands where you don't want
8 the herbicides. The ones that would not be allowed
9 would be chlorsulfuron, imazapyr, metsulfuron methyl,
10 and sulfometuron methyl. Those are the four that BLM
11 currently has available to them. And if we are looking
12 at the new ones that the BLM is interesting in using,
13 imazapic would also not be allowed under Alternative E.
14 However, under Alternative E the BLM would be able to
15 use the other three herbicides.

16 Some of you may be asking the question to
17 yourself, well, the BLM has been treating vegetation
18 for years, and didn't we kind of go through this
19 process about 15 years ago or so. In fact, that is the
20 case. The BLM has been treating vegetation since its
21 inception in the '40s. And in fact, the BLM also
22 prepared a number of EISs, four to be exact, back in
23 the late 1980's and early 1990's. However, those EISs
24 were more region specific. One EIS, the 13 state EIS
25 actually covered 13 states, so it covered a fairly good

1 chunk of the Western U.S. The northwest EIS, there was
2 a western Washington EIS, and also a California EIS.
3 Again, specific to regions. And as you will note up
4 there, no Alaska, no Nebraska, no Texas. They were not
5 covered in the earlier EISs, so they are being covered
6 in this one. Also, under those EISs only about 500,000
7 acres were allowed to be treated. Since then there
8 have been number of rules and regulations that have
9 allowed a lot of restoration and fire rehabilitation
10 which added about another 1.5 million acres. In total
11 the BLM is really only allowed to treat about 2 million
12 acres annually. So right now we're looking at going to
13 6 million acres. So those EISs just don't give us the
14 number of acres we need to treat based on current
15 projections. And as I mentioned before, these earlier
16 EISs did not cover Alaska, Nebraska, and Texas. And
17 they also didn't evaluate the new herbicides. They
18 evaluated about 22 herbicides during those preparations
19 of EIS, which we can use 20 today.

20 In addition to an EIS we also prepared a
21 Programmatic ER. And you either received the hard
22 copies or looked at them out front. There's actually
23 two volumes of the EIS, the main body of the EIS and
24 then all the appendices. There's a Programmatic ER,
25 and it's a volume by itself, which they also include

1 the appendices. And I've actually put a copy of the
2 biological assessment that was also done in support of
3 these documents. It's one volume by itself. And if
4 you've gotten a copy of the CD or gone on the web site,
5 you'll also see there's probably I'm going to just
6 guesstimate maybe another 20 other documents that were
7 prepared in support of the EIS and the ER, all the risk
8 assessments that were done to evaluate the risks for
9 the plants and animals are on the web site or on the
10 CD. So the hard copies that you see out front are only
11 a small chunk of what was actually developed in sort of
12 this project.

13 The Programmatic ER was basically developed to
14 look at what the impacts are for the other treatment
15 methods, manual, mechanical, biological, and prescribed
16 fire. So you see more discussion let's say of air
17 quality impacts from fire that you're not going to see
18 as much of in the herbicides. Although, obviously we
19 looked at the impacts of herbicides drift on air
20 quality. The BLM in consultation with the CEQ, the
21 Council of Environmental Quality, came to the decision
22 or the conclusion that the BLM really wasn't making any
23 decisions as they relate to the other treatment
24 methods, and thus, they did not need to do an EIS for
25 the other treatment methods. However, we did feel to

1 adequately do a cumulative effect analysis for the
2 Environmental Impact Statement, we needed to look at
3 the effects of the other treatment methods. Also,
4 during our work with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
5 and the National Marine Fishery Service to evaluate
6 risks to threatening endangered species, we also felt
7 that this same information was needed. They especially
8 wanted to see what are the effects not only of the
9 herbicide treatments or some of the other things you're
10 doing, threatening endangered species, kind of how they
11 all work together and how might the impact of species
12 be concerned. So that was the other major reason for
13 doing the environmental report, the cumulative effect
14 analysis and also for the Fish and Wildlife Service and
15 the National Marine Fishery Service.

16 What is the importance of each treatment method
17 under the preferred alternative? I'll give you numbers
18 for California that we're going to show -- this doesn't
19 even reflect what might go on in California. You might
20 say where does the 6 million acres come from, and
21 obviously the numbers I'm going to discuss here in just
22 a minute. When we first started this project back in
23 early -- we actually started it in late 2001 when we
24 had the notice of the EIS. We had public scoping
25 meetings in early 2002. We spent about the next two

1 years or so actually working with the Environmental
2 Protection Agency, the National Marine Fishery Service
3 and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to prepare the
4 risk assessments, so we weren't goofing off those past
5 two to three years, at least not all the time. There
6 was some work getting done during that period.

7 But as part of that we went out to all the field
8 offices for the BLM. We asked them what do you plan to
9 treat for the next zero to three years, and what do you
10 plan to treat three to ten years out. Each office gave
11 us varying levels of data. But we asked them for
12 vegetation type, location, eco region, treatment
13 method, types of equipment use. And the offices sent
14 all that back. And we looked at that, and basically
15 looking at that information we were able to decide
16 where over the Western U.S., what different methods,
17 and how important that would be, and through that came
18 up with an estimate of 6 million acres annually what
19 they would like to treat.

20 Now, these graphs here show treatment
21 percentages for the Western U.S. for the whole, then
22 I'll discuss California. It's actually pretty
23 interesting how California differs from this. The old
24 EIS is kind of really what the acres are and how the
25 BLM is treating land right now in terms of the

1 percentage of treatment method. As you can see,
2 mechanical and prescribed fire are two dominant methods
3 used. Herbicides are around 16 percent. Keep in mind
4 we're talking about 2 million acres in this first set
5 of graphs.

6 The second one, kind of the new EIS would be if
7 the BLM was able to implement the preferred
8 alternative. Again, fairly different increase in
9 mechanical, also a little bit of an increase in
10 prescribed fire. Use of herbicides on a percentage
11 basis stays about the same. Biological control and
12 manual actually drop western wide.

13 Now let me tell you what's going on in
14 California because this is pretty interesting.
15 California under the preferred alternative 75 percent
16 of acres will be treated using biological control, so
17 very high number in this state. I would say a good
18 chunk between Montana and California, California has a
19 lot of biological control. In terms of herbicides
20 used, it's going to stay steady from what it is right
21 now. About 5,000 acres annually will be treated in
22 California at least under the preferred alternative
23 they are estimating about 235,000 acres treated in the
24 state. Of those about 235,000 about 5,000 would be
25 with herbicides, which I calculated as about three

1 percent. So very small amount there. Prescribed
2 fire -- yeah, prescribed fire is probably about seven
3 or eight percent, and mechanical is about 10 percent of
4 acres under the preferred alternative. So again,
5 biological control you can see not terribly important
6 in the west, very important in California.

7 So where do we go from here? As I mentioned, we
8 had the scoping meetings way back in 2002. We worked
9 on the risk assessments, prepared the draft EIS that
10 came out, was released to the public on November 10th,
11 2005. We're having public comments meetings right now
12 over the next three weeks. This is the second meeting.
13 We had one last night in Portland. Tomorrow night will
14 be in Salt Lake City, basically covering the Western
15 U.S. with these meetings. And from that we will gather
16 comments from the public and use those to prepare the
17 final EIS, which we hope to have available sometime in
18 spring of 2006. Public review of the final EIS will be
19 at least 30 days, and you can provide comments in the
20 final EIS. And that should be occurring sometime in
21 early summer of 2006. Right now the intent is to have
22 the Record of Decision sometime in July of 2006. So
23 we're kind of looking at May, June, July period as
24 being final EIS review period, and then the Record of
25 Decision.

1 Which gets us to, well, how can you help us?
2 First thing we ask because we learned from the people
3 that came to Portland that most of them read the
4 executive summary and hadn't gotten much farther than
5 that. Maybe the way it was written they fell asleep
6 after that, I don't know. But you have plenty of time
7 to review the documents. Either -- if you want a hard
8 copy, ask Brian. He has some that he's trying to get
9 out of his office and make some space on his floor.
10 Those people that ask for it we sent out a request for
11 mailings. Those people that asked for it got one.
12 There are CDs out front. Keep in mind it's a two CD
13 set. So one has the EIS and also has the Environment
14 Report, and the other one has a lot of appendices and
15 supporting information, biological assessment. If you
16 grab a CD, make sure you get two different CDs. You
17 can also go to the web site, www.blm.gov. That will
18 take you to the web site. At least as of a few days
19 ago there was an icon on the web site there, vegetation
20 treatment, click on that. It's pretty easy to
21 understand the web site. The only thing some people
22 don't realize there was an EIS and ER, so make sure you
23 follow the directions and get you in the right
24 document.

25 Once you've kind of gone over the document, we'd

1 like you to provide your comments on issues of concern
2 that you felt could have been better addressed in the
3 EIS and ER. And also, if you have any alternatives and
4 ways that the BLM can treat land better using
5 herbicides or the other treatment methods. We provided
6 out front a form here that you can write your comments
7 on or you can also send them, and I'll give you the
8 information where you can send your comments. But if
9 you want to, if you send in this form, also if you'd
10 like to be on the mailing list, leave this with us.
11 And if you'd like to receive a copy of the final EIS,
12 fill this out and send it to us or send an E Mail to
13 Brian. And also, again, you can also give your
14 comments after I'm done. We'll have a court reporter
15 here to record your comments. Again, as I mentioned,
16 the last bullet item if you'd like to be on the mailing
17 list let us know that.

18 Where can you send your comments? If you picked
19 up the frequently asked questions little handout, go
20 down to about the last page, page 9 to be exact --
21 well, 9 and 10 has the same information. It will tell
22 you where to mail it. You can mail it to Brian Amme.
23 There's the information for mailing it to him. Or you
24 can fax your comments to Brian. I have his fax number
25 up there. Or if you want to E Mail it to him send it

1 to vegeis@nv.blm.gov. If you're like me sometimes when
2 I send things to BLM, if I put the state initials in
3 front of it, it doesn't work. So if it's bouncing
4 back, try this, and it should get to you.

5 MR. AMME: It seems to be working.

6 MR. PAULUS: Okay. Especially to Alaska if I
7 send something up there it bounces right back. So
8 that's all I have. Thank you for your time. I'll go
9 ahead and leave this up for a few minutes so you can
10 write it down. And again, it's also in the little
11 handout there. And you have until January 9th to send
12 comments, so you have plenty of time over the holidays.
13 If you get tired of Christmas shopping, sit down,
14 snuggle up with the EIS and read to your heart's
15 content. Thank you very much.

16 MS. RAMOS: Well, Stuart has already provided
17 the presentation of what we are doing with the proposed
18 EIS and the Environmental Report. Now this is the time
19 when we go into the formal hearing and the time that we
20 invite the public to provide comments, just as Stuart
21 suggested. Unlike the open house, this is a formal
22 hearing, and we are here to take oral comments. We
23 won't be answering any questions, but we will be
24 sticking around after we are done in case you do have
25 some questions.

1 So I'd like to take this time to invite Bill and
2 Bill to provide any comments either orally, or if you'd
3 like to provide comments, written comments, you're
4 welcome to do so.

5 MR. PAULUS: And if you do speak, if you could
6 come up to the microphone, I'll turn it on, give our
7 court reporter your name and affiliation. I don't know
8 if you need their address or anything like that.

9 MS. RAMOS: So if you are interested, please
10 come forward.

11 MR. BRANDT: We'll probably do ours in writing.

12 MS. RAMOS: That's fine. As Stuart said, we are
13 accepting comments through January 9th, 2006, and you
14 can either submit them by mail, fax, or electronically.

15 MR. CAVE: We'd kind of like to go up to Reno
16 and visit Brian, actually, and spend the night and go
17 to the casinos and have a good time.

18 MR. AMME: More than happy to entertain you
19 there.

20 MR. CAVE: On BLM, of course.

21 MS. RAMOS: Well, this is the second of ten
22 hearings that we will be holding throughout the west.
23 If you know of anyone that is not able to attend
24 tonight, please suggest that they provide some comments
25 to us. We look forward to receiving any comments.

4

1 MR. CAVE: We would like to make some comment.
2 We're in a situation where we need connectors to things
3 of these type, where we can actually take the
4 information we receive from this report and from this
5 meeting and any other meeting that we attend, and then
6 apply them to our situation where we live. And we have
7 a vehicle with which to apply almost any direction that
8 you can think of, including species, and we have plenty
9 of species in evidence. We have a regular, almost a
10 small rural government with 3,600 acres and about 3,000
11 people and about 1,000 homes. So there's almost no
12 situation that we're not involved in that we can't
13 perform some information, apply it and benefit from it.
14 So that's our main reason for being here is to get what
15 we can from this meeting, take it back with us, read
16 the manual, and Brian was kind enough to send me one
17 last night, which I stayed awake all night reading it.
18 I got through a few pages I think it was and fell sound
19 asleep.

5

20 But we really do want to do that, and that's the
21 only reason we do come to these things is primarily to
22 take something back home with us that can benefit the
23 community we represent, and we do have a fire safe
24 Council, and we are members of the Fire Wise, and we
25 are members of the State Fire Safety Council also. And

1 we have probably 30 or 40 people who have retired from
2 organizations like BLM, CEF and on and on and on. And
3 they are our senior advisors, they are the ones that
4 keep us on our toes. I'm 82, and I'm talking about
5 them being seniors.

6 MS. RAMOS: Bill, would you like to provide
7 formal comments on this point?

8 MR. AMME: I think that's what he's doing.

9 MR. PAULUS: Can you identify yourself, Bill?

10 MR. CAVE: Bill Cave. Would you like an
11 address?

12 MR. PAULUS: Tell them the town you live in.

13 MR. CAVE: Cool, California. And I live on
14 Lovers Leap Court. Does that help? But that's what
15 we're attempting to do because most of us are not
16 experts in this at all. We've seen fires in our life,
17 probably been in small fires ourselves. But when you
18 go and see something like the cedar fire two weeks
19 after it happened down south, you suddenly wake up to
20 the fact that you can't get the message out fast enough
21 for defensible space. In order to have -- we all know
22 to have the fire people come in in a safe condition and
23 for us to attempt to save not only our particular
24 holdings, but we are sitting right in the middle of a
25 famous WUI.

8

1 But we do have a lot of potential for doing
2 things in a model sort of way, and we're learning as
3 fast as we can because it's the things that we've seen
4 and what the danger of a fire is, not only the danger
5 but the things it destroys. And we've talked to people
6 who have been in severe traumatic shock over loss, not
7 only loved one in some cases, but also everything that
8 they own. I think everybody in this room has probably
9 talked to people like that. We just don't want that to
10 happen. So we're all volunteers basically, but we do
11 have a formal authorization to carry out anything that
12 we want to do.

13 MS. RAMOS: Bill, do you have a comment that
14 you'd like to make?

9

15 MR. BRANDT: Can't top that. That's well done.

16 MS. RAMOS: Well, considering everyone else is a
17 Federal employee, unless you all would like to provide
18 some comments. Otherwise -- Tom, we know you're still
19 there.

20 I'd like to thank you all for coming out
21 tonight, and we do have some information available if
22 you do want to take some extra CDs home with you,
23 you're welcome to do that and take them to other people
24 that couldn't attend the hearing tonight. And as I
25 said, we have other locations in case other people are

1 interested in attending a hearing. We will conclude
2 our series of hearings on December 13th in Las Vegas,
3 Nevada and Washington, D.C.

4 If there are no other comments, I'd like to
5 close this hearing. And thank you all and have a good
6 evening.

7 (Hearing concluded at 7:40 p.m.)

8 --oOo--

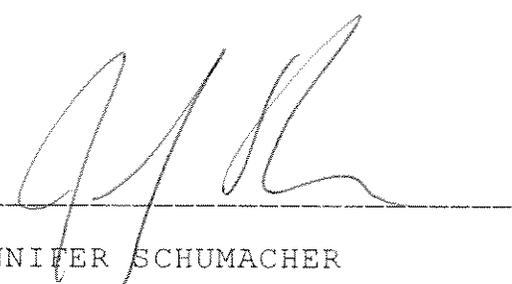
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CERTIFICATE OF CERTIFIED SHORTHAND REPORTER

I, JENNIFER SCHUMACHER, hereby certify that I am a Certified Shorthand Reporter; that I reported in shorthand writing the foregoing matter at the time and place therein stated; that the foregoing pages are a full, true and complete transcript of my said shorthand notes and is a full, true and correct record of the proceedings had in said matter at said time and place.

Dated: December 12, 2005.



JENNIFER SCHUMACHER
Certified Shorthand Reporter
California License #9763