



Legislation Text

File #: 17-0791, **Version:** 1

Supervisor Ranalli recommending Board:

- 1) Receive presentation provided by Eldorado National Forest Supervisor Laurence Crabtree on the history of the El Dorado County Resource Advisory Committee; and,
- 2) Receive presentation provided by Eldorado National Forest Supervisor Laurence Crabtree recognizing the accomplishments of the first El Dorado County Resource Advisory Committee, representing diverse interest groups, for their six years of service; and,
- 3) Authorize chair to sign Proclamation on behalf of Board of Supervisors recognizing the accomplishments of the El Dorado County Resource Advisory Committee. (Est. Time: 20 Min.)

With the passage of the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of 2000, per HR 2389, Congress called for the creation of Resource Advisory Committees, fifteen (15) member federal advisory committees, that may be organized on a single county, multiple county, national forest or Bureau of Land Management district basis as deemed locally appropriate. Each committee is then approved by the United States Secretary of Agriculture. The USFS facilitates the application process to recruit and recommend potential committee members for appointment by the United States Secretary of Agriculture. The appointed members of each Resource Advisory Committees ("RAC") then carry out the requirements of the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of 2000 ("Act") to review and recommend projects that benefit the federal lands within determined boundaries as defined by the agencies within those boundaries.

On March 6, 2001, the El Dorado County Board of Supervisors approved Resolution 044-2001 to recommend that the boundaries of the El Dorado County Resource Advisory Committee be coterminous with El Dorado County lines. A copy of this Resolution was then transmitted to the Secretary of Agriculture, the Regional Forester, the U.S. Forest Service, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and to the local school districts that receive Forest Reserve payments. Title II funds were first allocated to the El Dorado County RAC in 2008, prompting the recruitment and appointment of the first El Dorado County RAC in 2010.

The El Dorado County RAC has met approximately four (4) times a year to review project proposals and make funding recommendations to the Forest Supervisor on conservation projects that benefit federal lands in the County of El Dorado. When the El Dorado County RAC was initiated, it was allocated approximately \$300,000. In recent years, the funding for the El Dorado County RAC has been approximately \$150,000 per year when Title II of the Secure Rural Schools Act is authorized.

The El Dorado County RAC has worked through four funding cycles. In 2011 they selected eighteen (18) projects for the 2008 to 2010 funding years. In 2012 they selected eight (8) projects for the 2011 to 2012 funding years. In 2014 they selected six (6) projects for the 2013 funding year. In 2016 they selected thirteen (13) projects for the 2014 to 2015 funding years. Although the term of service for this first El Dorado County RAC was originally for four (4) years, their term was extended to six (6) years. The El Dorado County RAC expired in the fall of 2016. The Eldorado National Forest initiated the outreach process for new committee members in early 2017.

The Secure Rural Schools Act expands upon the Agricultural Reapportionment Act of 1908 which provides payments for roads and schools to the states that have National Forest System lands. For the purposes of the RAC, the Act authorizes funding through Title II funds for projects that make additional investments in, and create employment opportunities to support projects that improve the maintenance of existing infrastructure; implement stewardship objectives that enhance forest ecosystems; and restore and improve land health and water quality. The Act authorizes additional funding through Title III funds for local fire safe councils and search and rescue services.

The Title II funds may be used for projects that meet the conditions as set forth in the Act and have objectives that may include: road, trail, and infrastructure maintenance or obliteration; soil productivity improvement; improvements in forest ecosystem health; watershed restoration and maintenance; the restoration, maintenance, and protection of wildlife and fish habitat; the control of noxious and exotic weeds; the re-establishment of native species; and other resource objectives consistent with the Act on federal and non-federal lands where projects would benefit the resources on federal land.

Composition of the Committee:

Resource Advisory Committees shall have 15 members with balanced and broad representation of interests in 3 categories, specified in Section 205 (d)(2) of the Act:

Group A - 5 persons that:

- (i) represent organized labor or non-timber forest product harvester groups;
- (ii) represent developed outdoor recreation, off highway vehicle users, or commercial recreation activities;
- (iii) represent energy and mineral development interests; or commercial or recreational fishing interests;
- (iv) represent the commercial timber industry; or
- (v) hold Federal grazing or other land use permits, or represent nonindustrial private forest land owners, within the area for which the committee is organized.

Group B - 5 persons that represent:

- (i) nationally recognized environmental organizations;
- (ii) regionally or locally recognized environmental organizations;
- (iii) dispersed recreational activities;
- (iv) archaeological and historical interests; or
- (v) nationally or regionally recognized wild horse and burro interest groups, wildlife or hunting organizations, or watershed associations.

Group C - 5 persons that:

- (i) hold State elected office (or a designee);
- (ii) hold county or local elected office;
- (iii) represent American Indian tribes within or adjacent to the area for which the committee is organized;
- (iv) are school officials or teachers; or
- (v) represent the affected public at large.

Members shall reside within the State(s) in which the committee has jurisdiction and, to the extent practicable, provide local representation in each category.

Duties of the Committee:

Generally, the role of the committee is to review and recommend projects and funding to the Forest

Supervisor. The Forest Supervisor is responsible for considering the committee's recommendations in the context of the forest land management plan and the laws and regulations that govern Forest Service activities, and to approve the project if appropriate.

The duties of the committee are to:

- Review projects proposed under Title II by participating counties, tribal governments, organizations and individuals;
- Make recommendations to the Forest Supervisor acting for the Secretary of Agriculture about projects and funding in accordance with section 203 of the Act;
- Provide early and continuous coordination with appropriate land management agency officials in recommending projects consistent with purposes of this Act under Title II;
- Provide frequent opportunities for citizens, organizations, tribes, land management agencies, and other interested parties to participate openly and meaningfully, beginning at the early stages of the project development process under Title II;
- Monitor projects that have been approved by the Forest Supervisor; and advise the designated Federal official on the progress of the monitoring; and,
- Make recommendations to the Forest Supervisor for any appropriate changes or adjustments to the projects being monitored by the resource advisory committee.

Eldorado National Forest Supervisor Crabtree will also provide the Board and the members of the public with an update on the recruitment effort to form a new Resource Advisory Committee.