



County of El Dorado

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Legislation Text

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Agriculture Commission recommending the Board authorize the Agriculture Commissioner to sign a letter of support for the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) to develop an environmental impact report (EIR) for its statewide pest prevention and management program.

Background: Currently every time an invasive pest is found and CDFA decides to eradicate that pest there are three options for the agency:

- 1) Use an existing EIR that is out of date;
- 2) Create a new EIR every time an invasive pest is found; or
- 3) Invoke emergency powers with little public input or transparency of the process

In most cases CDFA must use option #3 due to the need to act quickly to ensure the eradication of these pests.

Reason for Recommendation: The proposed EIR will be comprehensive and employ integrated pest management (IPM) principles for management of invasive pests. The proposed EIR will be written in such a way, using a decision-tree, that it will not only be easy to use, it will also make the decision making process more transparent and easier for the public to understand. This EIR will provide the scientific and technical foundation for the agency's decision making within the program allowing for more proactive planning.

While CEQA only requires one public scoping meeting at the start of the EIR process and one public hearing after completion of the draft, CDFA will hold five of each in five different geographic regions, including Chico, San Francisco, Fresno, Sacramento and Orange County. The program EIR is scheduled for completion in early 2013. Once completed, CDFA, and the public, will have an environmental document that will inform decision making in the future. As new science and management techniques are developed in the future that are not already included in the Program EIR, CDFA will be able to efficiently determine their usefulness and if appropriate, amend them into the document.

CDFA has created a web page to facilitate public access to the process. The web page contains a listserv for interested parties to receive updates and review documents of public interest and an email link for comments and questions.

Action to be taken following Board approval: Agriculture Commissioner on behalf of Agriculture Commission will sign and send letter of support to Governor Jerry Brown.

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