



THE PACIFIC FOREST TRUST

Working Forests Work Wonders For Us All.

For Immediate Release:
September 23, 2009

Media Contact:
Chris Harrison, 415-561-0700 ext. 13

California's Forest and Climate Standards Poised to Go National

*Revised Accounting Protocols Allow Forest-Based Emissions Projects
from Around the U.S. to Help Meet State's Greenhouse Gas Reduction Goals*

California's Air Resources Board (ARB) will vote Thursday on the proposed adoption of a revised version of the state's standard used to measure the effectiveness of forest projects that protect the climate.

If adopted, the Climate Action Reserve's Forest Project Accounting Protocols will become the first state-approved forest carbon accounting standard with national applicability. As such, the revised Protocol adoption provides guidance for federal and international climate policy makers who are negotiating terms for safeguarding and expanding the climate benefits of forests in federal climate legislation and the successor to the Kyoto Protocol.

"This revised '3.0' version of the Protocols will allow forest projects around the country to register with California's Climate Action Reserve – if they meet the Protocol's rigorous standards for measuring a project's capacity to absorb and store carbon," says Pacific Forest Trust Managing Director Connie Best, a member of the working group charged with revising the Protocols. "We're already working with forest owners in other parts of the country who are preparing projects to qualify for registration with California's Climate Action Reserve."

The Protocols measure results from three types of forest projects that reduce greenhouse gas emissions: projects that protect forests from conversion or aggressive logging; projects where less timber is harvested for a period so that the trees grow bigger and older; and projects where forests are replanted after natural disturbances or where they were cleared years ago. All of these models take advantage of the fact that, as they grow, trees safely absorb and store more carbon, and can do so for very long periods. Individuals and companies who are trying to "offset" their carbon footprint will pay for the emissions reductions (ERs) created by these projects.

California is counting on these emissions reductions to help meet its ambitious climate goals set by AB 32, the Global Warming Solutions Act.

Demand for emissions reductions from California forest projects is already high, thanks to the reputation in carbon offset markets for the high quality of ERs generated in accordance with the Protocols.

"The CAR Forest Project Accounting Protocols may well become the national standard," said carbon markets expert Josh Margolis, co-CEO with CantorCO2e, a global financial services firm. "We see forest owners and credit buyers favoring these protocols when they are creating, buying, and using credits for voluntary and pre-compliance purposes."

–more–

ARB to Vote on Protocols – page 2 of 2

Originally developed by the Climate Action Reserve (CAR) with direction from a 2001 California bill sponsored by Pacific Forest Trust, the new version 3.0 of the Forest Project Protocols further refines the accounting methods used to establish how much more carbon is being stored in forest sequestration projects above about beyond what would have been achieved otherwise using “business as usual” forest management.

The Pacific Forest Trust was a member of the stakeholder “working group” that recommended revisions to the Protocols, and considers the revision a significant step towards increasing participation around the country, while maintaining rigorous standards for measurement and accounting and reducing expense.

"This year major decisions are being made about how forests around the globe will be conserved and managed to safeguard our atmosphere," Best says. "Incentives for avoided deforestation and conserving carbon-rich forests are being considered for climate legislation moving through Congress. It's exciting to see California take the lead once again by creating an incentive for landowners across the U.S. to meet the state's gold standard for forest conservation and stewardship."

MEDIA: Managing Director Connie Best and California Policy Director Paul Mason are available to comment on the revised Forest Protocols. Call Chris Harrison at 415-561-0700 ext. 13 or e-mail charrison@pacificforest.org to arrange an interview.

—END—