

**INTERAGENCY WATERSHED ANALYSIS TEAM PILOT PROJECT**  
**28 November 2001**

**Background:** The Forest Stewardship Committee, in January 2001, voted on a list of 12 concerns which were perceived as key factors in hindering or preventing relief or incentives to the small forest landowner. The four factors with the highest number of votes were Cumulative Impacts, Divergent Agency Criteria, Lack of Agency Services, and THP Documentation. Proposed Alternative #4, here described in the context of a pilot project, addresses each of these four factors.

**Goal:** The goal of this pilot project is to develop, test, and refine a simple and credible interagency method, in cooperation with landowners and stakeholders, for analyzing watershed conditions, trend of resources of concern, and to identify protection and recovery needs, opportunities, and priorities on a planning watershed or sub-basin scale – consistent with both private and public trust values.

**Objectives:**

1. To test the ability to economically generate State-agency-led watershed analyses and watershed protection and recovery findings and recommendations that:
  - a. Are sufficient in quality and scope to garner wide support among responsible regulatory and funding agencies, landowners, watershed residents, industries, professions, land managers, and other stakeholders;
  - b. Will facilitate better stewardship and management at the watershed scale of both economic and public trust resources by these interest groups.
  - c. Will facilitate more consistent agency regulatory requirements by providing a more uniformly and widely used set of data and information regarding watershed conditions and recommendations for prioritizing watershed-scale protection/recovery priorities and needs.
  - d. Will lift much of the burden of project-specific cumulative watershed effects assessment from individual landowners by allowing them to tier such assessments to a broader project-independent watershed analysis.
  - e. Will expedite decisions regarding planning, funding and actions for improved resource production, protection, recovery, and monitoring.
2. To develop practical application of the results of the North Coast Watershed Assessment Program (NCWAP), and evaluate cost and timesavings where NCWAP data are available.
3. To provide landowners and stakeholders with an acceptable and viable approach, on a planning watershed scale, to address Clean Water Act requirements, and to recover beneficial uses identified as impaired under the 303(d) list.
4. To provide landowners and stakeholders with an acceptable and viable approach to conserving state and federally listed aquatic species on a planning watershed scale.
5. To report the knowledge gained and make recommendations for applying a planning watershed analysis approach over a broader area, including:
  - a. The basic technical needs (e.g., information/data collection and management) for an effective, efficient watershed analysis approach; and

- b. The basic social-process needs for ensuring widespread participation in the analysis process and acceptance and implementation of the findings and recommendations set forth in an analysis.

### **Short Project Summary:**

The Director's Forestry Stewardship Committee proposes an Interagency Watershed Analysis Team (IWAT) pilot project, addressing actual planning watershed conditions, that will:

1. Last about two years;
2. Be conducted on at least two 3500 acre to 10,000 acre sub-basin or planning watersheds\*;
3. Be conducted by a team having one technical specialist, highly qualified and experienced in the appropriate fields, from each of the following agencies and departments: Department of Forestry & Fire Protection, one or more Regional Water Quality Control Boards, Department of Fish & Game, and Department of Conservation, Division of Mines & Geology. The team will also include a team leader representing the Resources Agency and CalEPA who is especially qualified in the sciences and art of cumulative impacts and in working with local stakeholders.

The IWAT pilot project will be implemented through a memorandum of understanding (MOU) between the Resources Agency and Cal EPA/State Water Resources Control Board and the rest of the involved departments.

Landowners and stakeholders will be an essential and integral part of the process.

For each subject planning watershed, the IWAT will prepare a written watershed analysis, including findings regarding watershed conditions and the factors that contribute to those conditions, and recommendations for watershed protection/recovery priorities and needs. Hopefully, even these trial analyses will be of a scope and quality to achieve the objectives set forth above.

The IWAT will also prepare a well-documented report, evaluating the experiences of the pilot project and making recommendations regarding future implementation on a wider basis. All aspects of the pilot project will be shared with, and evaluated by, a wide range of entities.

\* Depending upon adequate personnel and commitment, the pilot project could include a key watershed outside the North Coast area that is in a 303(d) impaired waterbody and/or with listed anadromous fish species. The IWAT pilot project could also be implemented in a watershed where one or more of the other Forest Stewardship Committee proposals are implemented.