

**BOARD OF FORESTRY AND FIRE PROTECTION
PROFESSIONAL FORESTERS REGISTRATION**

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**Professional Foresters Examining Committee Meeting Minutes**

Held: August 23, 2022

OPEN SESSION MINUTES**Members Present:**

- Frank Mulhair, Chair
- Dan Sendek
- James Hawkins
- Christian Eggleton
- Larry Forero
- Jason Poburko
- Danielle Lindler

Staff Participating:

- Dan Stapleton, Assistant Executive Officer, Licensing
- Deniele Cade, Staff Services Analyst, Licensing
- Len Lindstrand, Contracted Expert Examiner
- Robert Heald, Contracted Expert Examiner

Call to Order
Adjourn to Close Session
Reconvene from Closed Session

Announcement of Actions Taken in Close Session

During close session, the Board approved the October RPF exam, as well as the candidates to take the exam.

Discussion of RPF Examination Performance and Possible Improvements

E.O. Stapleton presented on the correlation between exam performance and the demographics of exam takers pertaining to different colleges and work experience from the past 5 years. He revealed a trend of questions that examinees tend to avoid, including forest mensuration, economics, silviculture, and engineering. He explained that the goal of finding possible correlations is to discover ways to help examinees prepare for the exam.

Erin Kelly from Humboldt State participated as a representative from the universities. She provided insight on how classes are structured along with the perspective of students when it comes to the exam questions. She explained that for some of the subjects, the three years of experience students receive after university does not always help to develop these skills. She also explained that the questions on the exams are not necessarily good representations of the skill sets. Additionally, many students who pass the exam were good book learning students to begin with. She feels that reducing the emphasis on long, complex questions while increasing the emphasis on their understanding of forestry would be a good way to increase the overall pass rate.

Y.G. explained that demographics does affect overall test scores. He revealed that a high percentage of students focus on ecology and protection, which reflects their background and overall comfort level. He added however, that scores increased in economics on the last exam due to key words being clear indicators on what the question could potentially be about.

E.O. Stapleton explained that he has had some suggestions to complete outreach to students to discuss the exam.

Erin feels that discussing forestry job opportunities with students along with information on the importance of the RPF exam would be beneficial.

The Apprentice Forestry Program was also discussed. Erin stated that she likes the idea of splitting up the exam to allow students who are already in study mode to take part of the exam prior to going into field work.

Y.G. explained that he doesn't think that the length of the exam dissuades people, but that there is a cohort of people that never thought they would ever sit for the RPF exam to begin with.

Erin thinks that the PFEC could start targeting students from non-forestry backgrounds to educate them on the RPF exam and the professional opportunities that come with it.

Member Sendek commented that it would be helpful if more forestry professors became RPFs so that they could lead by example.

Erin revealed that she can help connect PFEC to different clubs so that someone from PFEC can come and talk about being an RPF, along with the utility of having an RPF license.

Update on APF Proposal

E.O. Stapleton introduced the idea of an alternate pathway which would split up the RPF exam. He added that it would provide a structured program for learning the

professional requirements and would create a pathway for people with non-traditional forestry backgrounds. E.O. Stapleton revealed that the regulations allow for specialty programs, and the current proposal on the APF program is determining whether it's worth going through the pathway to establish the APF program as a specialty program.

Y.G. prefaces that he intends to pursue the APF program with CLFA regardless of what path PFEC takes with the program. He has given it a lot of thought with regards to whether the APF program would qualify as a specialty. He determined that since the primary focus of PFEC is to create a healthy pool of qualified people to practice forestry, the specialty in this case would be developing forester trainees. He explained that these would be highly specialized individuals that are generalists in forestry, who would eventually be capable of pulling together information for complex environmental assessments.

Member Sendek raises some questions which include what will entice individuals to obtain the certificate, who defines the exam, a fee schedule, and whether there is an ability to put a time limitation on the specialty?

In response to the fee, Y.G. explained that membership in CLFA would be required in order to be part of the APF program. As far as the Board's involvement, he feels it would be something comparable to the CRM program. Y.G. explained that the exam could be a sample of questions generated from the pool of 500 short answer questions that are already established, requiring a passing score of 75%. Regarding the time limit, Y.G. thinks that the time should only be constrained to whether a person has stood for the examination and how often. Y.G. also explains that the benefit to the program allows for a title, which he pointed out can make them more desirable for employment.

Member Hawkins commented that the program is going to require a lot of work for CLFA to manage, and that this is something that needs to be investigated under the current statutes and regulations.

Meeting Adjourned