

PASSED

IN THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF LANE COUNTY, OREGON

RESOLUTION NO.

11-6-15-6

IN THE MATTER PROPOSING A POLICY RESOLUTION TO THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES FOR CONSIDERATION AT THEIR REGULARLY SCHEDULED SUMMER CONFERENCE TO BE HELD JULY 15-19, 2011 IN PORTLAND, OREGON.

WHEREAS, Lane County is a member in good standing of the National Association of Counties; and

WHEREAS, the National Association of Counties provides essential services to the nation's 3068 counties and advances issues with a unified voice before the federal government; and

WHEREAS, the National Association of Counties has a specific resolutions review procedure whereby it determines policy positions on a wide variety of county issues; and

WHEREAS, Lane County has successfully developed National Association of Counties resolutions on a variety of issues in the past; and

WHEREAS, Staff have created one draft resolution regarding a domestic assistance related concept that would, after a declaration of emergency, increase the flow of federal timber to the affected area for the purpose of domestic reconstruction; and

WHEREAS, Staff have created a second draft resolution regarding an international assistance related concept that would increase the flow of manufactured wood products from federal timber to Japan for the purpose or reconstruction; and

WHEREAS, Oregon's abundant forest lands can produce timber resources that affected areas will need in order to rebuild; and

WHEREAS, there is one billion board feet of lumber legally allotted to be harvested in the Pacific Northwest under the Northwest Forest Plan; and

WHEREAS, at the harvest levels envisioned by the Northwest Forest Plan, it is estimated that 30,000 new jobs would be created in the Pacific Northwest; and

WHEREAS, federal dollars allocated for disaster relief would benefit schools, roads, and law enforcement in counties with federal forest lands; and

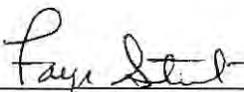
WHEREAS, the draft resolutions are attached to this resolution as Attachments A and B.

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved that the Lane County Board of Commissioners agrees to the resolution proposing amendments to the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act such that it includes provisions to require domestic reconstruction materials to originate from federal forest lands currently managed under the Northwest Forest Plan as outlined in Attachment A; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Lane County Board of Commissioners agrees to the resolution proposing to include manufactured wood products in any aid package to the nation of Japan as outlined in Attachment B; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this resolution be forwarded to the National Association of Counties as a draft resolution for consideration by the National Association of Counties at their regularly scheduled summer conference in Portland, Oregon.

DATED this 15th day of June, 2011



Faye Stewart, Chair
Lane County Board of Commissioners

APPROVED AS TO FORM

Date 6-13-2011 Approved by



OFFICE OF LEGAL COUNSEL

Attachment A

Resolution on Utilization of Federal Timber after Domestic Declaration of Disaster

Issue

Supporting federal law changes to increase the flow of federal timber for domestic reconstruction purposes (after the declaration of emergency) improves economies and community sustainability.

Proposed Policy

The Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act should be amended to include provisions to require that reconstruction materials originate from federal forest lands, specifically sections 307, 315, 316, 323, 421, and 683.

When federal dollars are allocated for disaster relief, changes to these sections would benefit schools and roads in counties with federal forest lands.

Background

Natural and human caused disasters are unavoidable occurrences that bring with them inordinate amounts of human suffering and the United States Government has established a framework of laws and assistance designed to assist those most affected. Rebounding from disasters typically involves new construction activities to house residents and rebuild businesses. Current law stipulates that efforts should be made to bolster local economies through the unique market demands that are created around this kind of reconstruction.

In that counties benefit from the harvest of federal timber from National Forests that exist within or sometimes adjacent to their landbase, and in that demand for housing is currently at historic lows, a triggering requirement that value added timber products necessary for reconstruction of a particular area come from the National Forest system would provide additional benefit to a great many people.

The Stafford Act already provides for an expedited sale of timber from National Forests through the authority of the Secretary of Agriculture (42 USC 5188), but points to a repealed statute regarding sale procedures.

Fiscal/Urban/Rural Impact

In 1908 when the National Forest system replaced the Forest Reserve system, it was stipulated that counties would receive 25% of the revenue from harvested timbers, with each state having the authority to distribute those dollars to schools and roads as they deem appropriate. In Oregon, 75% goes to county roads and 25% goes to county schools. Thus any improvement in timber harvest from this change would benefit county revenue.

It may be important to note that as counties work on the reauthorization of Secure Rural Schools, timber harvest dollars are considered new dollars, and may be used to offset expenses related to the reauthorization of SRS.

Attachment B

Resolution on Japan Reconstruction Aid to Include Manufactured Wood Products Generated from Federal Forests in Accordance with the Northwest Forest Plan

Issue

Including manufactured wood products from the federal forests of the Northwest in any aid package offered to the Japanese government, or as a result of action taken by the United Nations, will assist in rebuilding domestic communities while assisting a key ally of the United States.

Proposed Policy

As the United States and Japan determine what the course of re-construction activities will look like in order to rebuild those areas of Japan most affected by the March, 2011 tōhoku tsunami and subsequent nuclear disaster, it is well understood that wood products will be a key building material.

Rather than simply sending aid in the form of cash, the government of the United States could instead purchase timber from federal forests in accordance with sales already scheduled under the NW Forest Plan. That timber could be milled in the NW to Japanese specifications, and delivered to Japan as a finished product. In effect, the government would purchase timber from itself instead of the alternative of sending cash to the government of Japan, which may or may not turn around and purchase timber from the United States. In doing so, they would ensure a benefit to private firms in the Northwest, along with communities that benefit whenever federal timber is sold.

NāCo should ensure that this policy discussion is initiated within the Office U.S Foreign Disaster Assistance or within the auspices of its membership in the United Nations.

Background

Under today's law, the NW Forest Plan is the guiding document for bringing timber to the marketplace. The Plan calls for 1.2 billion board feet to be made available annually, and due to the time and budget it takes to attempt a litigation-proof timber sale, the annual volume produced is just 300 million board feet. So-called "consult and confer" rules are especially time consuming and targeted by those wishing to derail the sale of federal timber.

Elimination of these rules could be part of a one time emergency aid package to assist in the reconstruction of Japan.

The Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) is the office within USAID responsible for facilitating and coordinating U.S. Government emergency assistance overseas. As part of USAID's Bureau for Democracy, Conflict, and Humanitarian Assistance (DCHA), OFDA provides humanitarian assistance to save lives, alleviate human suffering, and reduce the social and economic impact of humanitarian emergencies worldwide.

Japan has a wood-first policy for government-funded or sponsored buildings, with wood considered an environmentally friendly product, more capable of withstanding earthquakes than other building materials. About 70,000 buildings were damaged (the equivalent of 8.6% of Japanese housing starts, totaling 813,000 units in 2010). Canada is already reporting that Japanese orders for J-grade lumber and OSB are picking up for West Coast mills.

Immediately after the Indian Ocean tsunami, United Nations Environment Programme established a Task Force to respond to urgent requests for technical assistance from affected countries, including from Indonesia. Ministry of Environment and UNEP initiated environmental assessments in the tsunami-affected areas and mobilized assistance to strengthen environmental planning and guidance to the response and reconstruction process, including the development of procurement strategies for wood products from around the globe. It is uncertain at this point if a similar effort will be the approach for Japan, or if the United Nations will even intervene.

Fiscal/Urban/Rural Impact

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It may be important to note that as counties work on the reauthorization of Secure Rural Schools, timber harvest dollars are considered new dollars, and may be used to offset expenses related to the reauthorization of SRS.