

# State forestry, county don't want to fight

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SANTA CRUZ — State Board of Forestry officials and county supervisors both agreed Tuesday they don't want to be at "loggerheads" over new timber harvesting rules.

State Board of Forestry Executive Officer Dean Cromwell paid a goodwill visit to supervisors, following last week's complaints by Supervisor Gary Patton that the county had been shortchanged during a state board hearing on the rules.

New legislation shifts the responsibility over logging operations from local government back to the state. It has been the concern of local officials, particularly Patton — who represents supervisors on such matters — that the shift would mean looser restrictions on timber harvesters.

The state board held two-days worth of public hearings last week, which gave Patton a chance to state the county's case.

Due to the scheduling of Friday's portion of the hearing, Patton said, he missed his chance to voice the county's concerns about some of the rules.

Cromwell said, after the hearing, "we were a little upset by Patton's comments."

He said the board "honestly believes the county has been heard fairly and completely."

In fact, said Cromwell, the board held longer hearings than usual in Santa Cruz County.

"Procedures were stretched to give Mr. Patton the most time possible to present his case," said Cromwell.

Cromwell added diplomatically that Patton "had proved to be a very able and convincing spokesman" for the county.

Patton — equally diplomatic — said, "I very much appreciated what I thought was extremely courteous attempts to the county."

Patton said when the county did have input into the rules, the board "responded very well," but when there was no input, the board did not respond to county concerns.

Cromwell said the board adopted 19 of the county's 33 suggested rules.

Of the 13 rules not adopted, said Cromwell, six were dropped by mutual agreement.

The remaining seven suggestions were rejected, said Cromwell, for these reasons:

- No funding available.
- Civil matters between property owners were involved.
- Suggestions were duplicative.
- The county can enforce its own rules relating to restoration of roads.
- Conditions on stopwork orders are established in statutes.

Cromwell assured supervisors that riparian tree species would be "carefully monitored" by the board.

Supervisors seemed to agree with Supervisor Forbus that "I don't want the Board of Supervisors and the state board to be at loggerheads, so to speak."

But Supervisors Chairman Joe Cucchiara said he still feels the county's concerns "are of substance."

"Although I want increased cooperation, the matter remains there are significant differences over these concerns, and you'll hear about them from our community," Cucchiara told Cromwell.