



County of Santa Cruz

GENERAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT
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BOB WATSON, DIRECTOR

November 6, 2001

Agenda: November 20, 2001

Board of Supervisors
county of santa Cruz
701 Ocean Street
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

Use of Certified Wood in County Contracting

Dear Members of the Board:

On August 28, 2001, your Board received a status report from the General Services Department on the feasibility of requiring the use of environmentally certified wood products in applicable County contracts. At that time, your Board directed the General Services Department to return on or before November 20, 2001 with a final recommendation.

Staff has completed their evaluation of the availability and cost of such certified wood products. Following a survey of lumber suppliers throughout the area, certified wood was determined to be available only in particular types and grades from four vendors in the Monterey Bay to San Francisco Bay region. The type of wood that is available is not of the type or grade typically used in the County's construction products. It is generally 20-30% higher in cost than other lumber and there are significant delivery charges associated with the longer distances to Santa Cruz County. Various lumber vendors concurred that the product is not readily available, even under special order conditions, due to differences in types and grades required in projects; this has resulted in delays for construction projects. Additionally, with energy market uncertainties, lumber vendors stated that they believe that the certified wood market is not developing as quickly as initially projected.

Several local government jurisdictions, both county and city, in California were also contacted regarding their involvement and interest in requiring the use of certified wood products. Similar to our County, the other jurisdictions do not have a need for the types and grades of certified lumber that are most available (e.g. finished redwood) and are consequently not considering adding additional requirements to their respective contracting codes. In view of the present conditions of this newly emerging product, staff is not recommending that the County change its contracting requirements regarding the use of certified wood products at this time. The General Services Department will continue to monitor the development of the market for this type of product. At the time the certified wood market becomes viable and will not compromise

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the County's ability to obtain cost and time effective construction services, we will then return to your Board with appropriate recommendations for revision of contracting requirements.

It is therefore RECOMMENDED that your Board accept and file this report on the use of certified wood in County contracting.

Very truly yours,



Bob Watson
Director

RECOMMENDED:



Susan Mauriello
County Administrative Officer

cc: County Counsel
Public Works