OFFICIAL RESPONSE TO SIGNIFICANT ENVIRONMENTAL POINTS RAISED DURING THE TIMBER HARVESTING PLAN EVALUATION PROCESS

FROM THE DIRECTOR OF THE CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FORESTRY AND FIRE PROTECTION (CAL FIRE)

TIMBER HARVESTING PLAN (THP) No:	1-21-00149-HUM
SUBMITTER:	Humboldt Redwood Company LLC
COUNTY:	Humboldt
END OF PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD:	November 22, 2021
DATE OF RESPONSE AND APPROVAL:	December 15, 2021

The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) serves as the lead agency in the review of Timber Harvesting Plans. These plans are submitted to CAL FIRE, which directs a multidisciplinary review team of specialists from other governmental agencies to ensure compliance with environmental laws and regulations. As a part of this review process, CAL FIRE accepted and responded to comments, which addressed significant environmental points raised during the evaluation of the plan referenced above. This document is the Director's official response to those significant environmental points, which specifically address this Timber Harvesting Plan. Comments, which were made on like topics, have been grouped together and addressed in a single response. Remarks concerning the validity of the review process for timber operations, questions of law, or topics and concerns so remote or speculative that they could not be reasonably assessed or related to the outcome of a timber harvesting operation, have not been addressed.

Sincerely,

Shawn Headley
Forester II, Forest Practice
RPF #2970

cc: RPF, Unit, File; Timber Owner, Timberland Owner and/or Submitter
CP, CDFW, DPR, & RWB

https://caltreesplans.resources.ca.gov/caltrees/caltrees.aspx

PUBLIC NOTIFICATION

To inform the public of this proposed Timber Harvesting Plan (THP) and determine if there were any concerns with the plan the following actions were taken:

- Notice of the receipt of the plan was submitted to the county clerk for posting with other environmental notices.
- Notice of the plan was posted at the Department's local office and also at the regional office in Santa Rosa.
- Notice of the receipt of the THP was sent to those organizations and individuals on the Department's list for notification of plans in the county.

THP REVIEW PROCESS

The laws and regulations that govern the Timber Harvesting Plan review process are found in Statute law in the form of the Forest Practice Act which is contained in the Public Resources Code (PRC) and Administrative law in the rules of the Board of Forestry and Fire Protection (the Forest Practice Rules) which are contained in the California Code of Regulations (CCR).

The Forest Practice Rules are lengthy in scope and detail and provide explicit instructions for permissible and prohibited actions that govern the conduct of timber operations in the field. The major categories covered by the rules include:

- Timber Harvesting Plan contents and the Timber Harvesting Plan review process
- Silvicultural methods
- Harvesting practices and erosion control
- Site preparation
- Watercourse and lake protection
- Hazard reduction
- Fire protection
- Forest insect and disease protection practices
- Coastal Commission Special Treatment Areas
- Use, construction and maintenance of logging roads and landings
- County-specific rules

When a THP is submitted to the Department, it undergoes a multidisciplinary review consisting of several steps. In addition to CAL FIRE, the Review Team members include representatives of the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW); the appropriate Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB or RWB); California Geological Survey (CGS); the Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR); the appropriate County Planning office; and if within their jurisdiction, the Coastal Commission (CC) (14 CCR §1037.5(a)). Once submitted the Director determines if the plan is accurate, complete, and in proper order, and if so, files the plan (14CCR §1037). In addition, the Review Team determines whether a Pre Harvest Inspection (PHI) is necessary, and what areas of concern are to be examined during the inspection (14 CCR §1037.5(g)(1)).

If the Plan is accepted for filing, and a PHI is determined to be needed, a field review is conducted to evaluate the adequacy of the THP. All agency personnel who comprise the multidisciplinary

Review Team are invited to attend the PHI as well as other experts and agency personnel whom the Department may request. During this field review, additional mitigation and/or recommendations may be formulated to provide greater environmental protection. These recommendations are forwarded to the RPF along with the Review Team member's PHI Report. The RPF will respond to the recommendations made and forward these to the Region office and Second Review Team Chair.

A Second Review Team meeting is held where members of the multidisciplinary Review Team meet to review all the information in the plan, and develop a recommendation for the Director (14 CCR §1037.5(g)(2)). Prior to and/or during this meeting they examine all field inspection reports, consider comments raised by the public, and discuss any additional recommendations or changes needed relative to the proposed THP. These recommendations are forwarded to the RPF. If there are additional recommendations, the RPF will respond to each recommendation, and forward the responses to the regional office in Santa Rosa.

The representative of the Director of the Department reviews all documents associated with the proposed THP, including all mitigation measures and plan provisions, written correspondence from the public and other reviewing agencies, recommendations of the multidisciplinary Review Team, and the RPF's responses to questions and recommendations made during the review period. Following consideration of this material, a decision is made to approve or deny a THP.

If a THP is approved, logging may commence. The THP is valid for up to five years, and may be extended under special circumstances for a maximum of two more years, for a total of seven years.

Prior to commencing logging operations, the Registered Professional Forester must meet with the licensed timber operator (LTO) to discuss the THP (CCR §1035.2); a CAL FIRE representative may attend this meeting. The Department makes periodic field inspections to check for THP and rule compliance. The number of inspections depends upon the plan size, duration, complexity, and the potential for adverse impacts. Inspections include but are not limited to inspections during operations pursuant to Public Resources Code (PRC) section 4604, inspections of completed work pursuant to PRC section 4586, erosion control monitoring as per PRC section 4585(a), and stocking inspection as per PRC section 4588.

The contents of the THP, the Forest Practice Act, and Rules, provide the criteria which CAL FIRE inspectors use to determine compliance. While the Department cannot guarantee that there will be no violations, it is the Department's policy to vigorously pursue the prompt and positive enforcement of the Forest Practice Act, the Forest Practice Rules, related laws and regulations, and environmental protection measures that apply to timber operations on non-federal land in California. This enforcement is directed primarily at preventing forest practice violations, and secondarily at prompt and adequate correction of violations when they occur.

The general means of enforcement of the Forest Practice Act, the Rules, and other related regulations range from the use of violation notices, which require corrective action, to criminal proceedings through the court system. Timber operator and Registered Professional Forester licensing action may also be pursued. Most forest practice violations are correctable and the Department's enforcement program assures correction. Where non-correctable violations occur, criminal action is usually taken. Depending on the outcome of the case and the court in which the

case is heard, some sort of environmental corrective work is usually done. This is intended to offset non-correctable adverse impacts.

Once harvesting operations are finished, a completion report must be submitted certifying that the area meets the requirements of the rules. CAL FIRE inspects the area to verify that all aspects of the applicable rules and regulations have been followed, including erosion control work. Depending on the silvicultural system used, the stocking standards of the rules must be met immediately or in certain cases within five years. A stocking report must be filed to certify that the requirements have been met.

FOREST PRACTICE TERMS

ADA	American Disabilities Act	HVCF	High Value Conservation Forest
ASP	Anadromous Salmonid Protection	HUM	Humboldt
BMP	Best Management Practice	IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
BOF	California Board of Forestry and Fire Protection	LOD	Large Organic Debris
CAL FIRE	California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection	LTO	Licensed Timber Operator
CalTREES	California Timber Regulation Environmental Evaluation System	NCRWQCB	North Coast Water Quality Control Board
CCR	California Code of Regulations	NSO	Northern Spotted Owl
CDFW	California Department of Fish and Wildlife	OR	Official Response
CEQA	California Environmental Quality Act	PALCO	Pacific Lumber Company
CESA	California Endangered Species Act	PC	Public Comment
CIA	Cumulative Impacts Assessment	PHI	Pre-Harvest Inspection
CGS	California Geological Survey	PRC	Public Resources Code
CLFA	California Licensed Foresters Association	RMZ	Riparian Management Zone
DBH	Diameter at Breast Height	RWB	Regional Water Quality Control Board
DDD	Directors Determination Date	RPF	Registered Professional Forester
DPR	Department of Parks and Recreation	STZ	Special Treatment Zone
ECP	Erosion Control Plan	THP	Timber Harvesting Plan
EEZ	Equipment Exclusion Zone	TPZ	Timber Production Zone
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency	USFWS	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
FPA	(California) Forest Practice Act	USGS	United States Geological Survey
FPR	(California) Forest Practice Rules	WAA	Watershed Assessment Area
GHG	Greenhouse Gases	WLPZ	Watercourse & Lake Protection Zone
HCP	Habitat Conservation Plan	§	Section

[sic] Word used verbatim as originally printed in another document. May indicate a misspelling or incorrect word usage

BACKGROUND

Timeline

Timber Harvesting Plan (THP) # 1-21-000149-HUM "Miller Time THP" proposes to harvest timber on 192.9 acres of Humboldt Redwood Company LLC (HRC) timberland using the selection, group selection, and variable retention silvicultural methods. The THP was initially received by CAL FIRE on September 23, 2021 and returned for issues with the Notice of Intent. The Plan was resubmitted on October 7, 2021 and accepted for filing on October 14, 2021. A Preharvest Inspection (PHI) was conducted on October 19, 2021. Attendees on the PHI included Louis Schipper the RPF, Shane Beach HRC staff Geologist, Joelle Geppert from NCRWQCB, Shara Gallagher from CGS and Tim Meyrs the CAL FIRE Inspector. The Final Interagency Review (aka Second Review) occurred on November 4, 2021 and the Second Review Chair recommended the Plan for approval on November 12, 2021. The public comment period then ended on November 22, 2021. The date for the Director's Determination Deadline (DDD) was set for December 15, 2021 per 14 CCR § 1037.4.

Humboldt County is considered an agriculture county, which includes timber.

Humboldt County Zoning regulations (Title III Land Use and Development) support the fact that landowners in the county may have to interact with the presence of agriculture activities. From Section INL#316.2-4(A); Added by Ord. 1662, Sec. 1, 11/27/84; Amended by Ord. 2075, 5/30/95; Amended by Ord. 2138b, Sec. 1, 1/14/97):

> *"Section 313 43.2.4.1- Humboldt County is an agricultural county with many areas planned and zoned for agricultural operations. The presence of farms, ranches and timberland yields significant aesthetic and economic benefits to the health and welfare of the residents of the County. In accordance with the findings in subsection 43.2.2, this County's agriculture must be protected, including in areas where it is near residential development. This is accomplished in part by the adoption of subsection 43.2.3, which provides that properly conducted agricultural operations will not be deemed a nuisance.*
> *Section 313 43.2.4.2 - This section further requires sellers of real property to give notice of this ordinance and its provisions to buyers of real property located in Humboldt County. The notice shall be in substantially the following form:*
>
> *"You are hereby notified that if the property you are purchasing is located close to agricultural lands or operations, you may be subject to inconvenience or discomfort from the following agricultural operations: cultivation and tillage of the soil; burning of agricultural waste products; lawful and proper use of agricultural chemicals including, but not limited to, the application of pesticides and fertilizers; and production, irrigation, pruning, growing, harvesting and processing of any agricultural commodity, including horticulture, timber, apiculture, the raising of livestock, fish, poultry, and commercial practices performed as incident to or in conjunction with such agricultural operations, including preparation for market, delivery to storage or market, or to carriers or transportation to market. These operations may generate, among other things, dust, smoke, noise and odor. If you live near an agricultural area, you should be prepared to accept such inconveniences or discomfort as a normal and necessary aspect of living in a*

county with a strong rural character and a healthy agricultural sector. For information concerning where agricultural operations are in relation to your property, you may contact the Planning Division of Humboldt County Community Development Services. For questions concerning specific kinds of agricultural operations in your area, including their use of fertilizers and pesticides, you should contact the Humboldt County Agricultural Commissioner. This Notice is given for informational purposes only and nothing in the Ordinance or this Notice should be deemed to prevent you from complaining to any appropriate agency or taking any other available action to remedy any unlawful or improper agricultural practice."

PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY

During the public comment period for this THP as described above, there were eight public comment letter received at the CAL FIRE Region Headquarters in Santa Rosa. One letter was considered having confidential archeology information and was addressed in a separate Official Response. Another one of the letters was a template letter submitted by several different individuals but was considered the same letter in these responses. This OR will respond to concerns associated with the proposed THP that were brought up in the public comment letters. General concerns are grouped by subject matter and followed by the Department's response. Unique individual concerns from a public comment letter are addressed after the general concerns immediately following that comment along with referencing any general comment responses that may be associated with that response. The public comments are identified with the CAL FIRE "PC" code. A copy of the original letters sent to the Department are viewable through the Department's online Forest Practice Database CalTREES.

CalTREES instructions: navigate to https://caltreesplans.resources.ca.gov/caltrees/caltrees.aspx Click the search icon at the top of the page, then type the Plan # in the Record Number box (county identifier not needed). Under the Document Number column, select the Plan Number for the "Timber Harvest Plan" Type. Below the "Record Details" should be a list of attachments for the Plan. (Note: if there are a substantial number attachments, or attachments with large file sizes, it may take some time to load) The Public Comments are labeled under "Record Type" and are in pdf format, usually with a "PC" label.

SIGNIFICANT ENVIRONMENTAL GENERAL CONCERNS WITH RESPONSES

1. GENERAL CONCERN: Unlogged Forests

There are concerns that the proposed harvest is on lands that have never been harvested.

RESPONSE: The idea that the area has never been harvested is simply not true. The stand description is in the THP on page 142 of Section III:

"A multi-tiered canopy of crowns exists within the stands. The timber within the proposed THP is comprised of healthy, young mature (60 to 120 years old) Douglas-fir and scattered decadent (120 to 300 years old) older Douglas-fir, which contain approximately 100%

Douglas-fir by conifer species. The average basal area ranges from 20 to 220 square feet of conifer species per acre in all the stands. The stand component consists of approximately 10 to 160 dominant, codominant, and predominant Douglas-fir trees per acre. The stand component consists of approximately 1 to 100 hardwood trees per acre ranging from 8" to 40" DBH. Hardwoods are scattered throughout all the units.

The areas of the THP were entered with tractors in the 1950s specifically looking for high grade peeler logs. Within this general area there were repeated fire efforts by the ranchers to expand prairies for grazing. Retention of mature hardwood species along the watercourses will provide production for food, cover, roosting and nesting substrates; shade cover for stream temperature control; and potential future recruitment as snags for wildlife use. Retained large organic debris (LOD) provides wildlife habitat and shelter. Existing and recruited green trees are retained for use by cavity dwelling birds, amphibians, and other wildlife. The retention of these features, plus the inclusion of numerous scattered small and large stumps and HCP (6.11.2.2) Habitat Structural Components, will provide a legacy of structural habitat to maintain vegetative and stand habitat diversity, plus promote these areas to achieve status as functional late succession forest."

Additionally, the THP does not propose any harvesting of old growth trees and contains several citations on the preservation and conservation of them:

(Page 159) "High value wildlife trees, large old growth trees, large trees with certain old growth characteristics and green snag replacement trees. All required retention trees will be retained during timber operations and HCVF trees and green snag replacement trees greater than 30" DBH will be marked in the field with a painted white "L" at DBH and at the tree base and retained during future stand entries for the life of the HCP. Trees left in addition to these required retention trees will become part of a future Selection or Group-Selection entry, where the stand will meet the minimum stocking standards of 14 CCR 913.2 (a)(2)(A) & (B)."

(Page 159) "Identified old growth trees meeting the standards outlined in HRC's old growth policy will be retained indefinitely."

(Page 178) "No late succession forest stands (14CCR 895.1) exist within or is proposed for harvest in the THP area."

(Page 179) "Pursuant HRC old growth conservation policy described in item 34 - no old growth trees are being harvested as part of this THP."

The PHI report states that timber stands are correctly described (page 2) and concludes on page 7, Item 62 that the Plan accurately disclosed any components that would be associated with Late Successional Forest Stands (e.g. large living and/or dead trees, large downed woody debris, decadent and/or deformed trees) that require disclosure and analysis in the cumulative impacts discussion. The Department finds that there was sufficient and adequate documentation on the disclosure of the timber stands proposed for harvest.

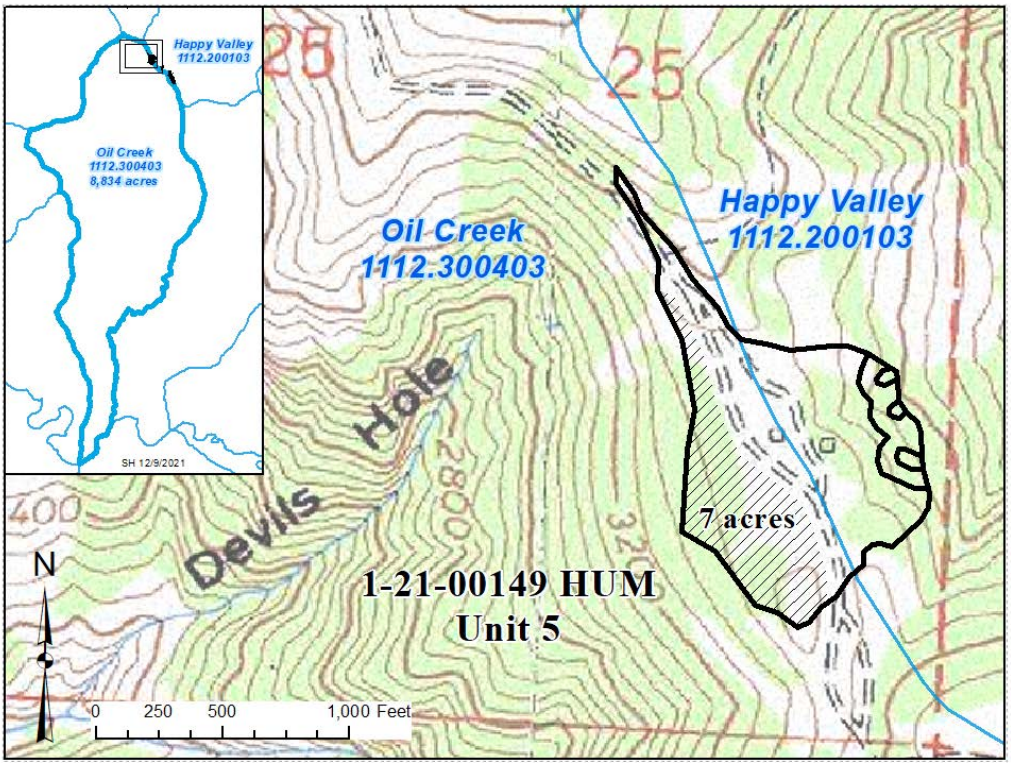
2. GENERAL CONCERN: Watershed cumulative impacts assessment area

There were concerns that the "Devils Creek" watershed was not accounted for in the cumulative impacts assessment for the THP.

RESPONSE: Section IV, page 185 of the THP discusses and describes the Watershed Assessment Area for the cumulative impacts assessment as required by the Board of Forestry Technical Rule Addendum No. 2, and includes State Planning Watersheds; Beer Bottle (1112.200101) and Happy Valley (1112.200103). The "Devils Creek" watershed as referenced in the comments appear to be for the Oil Creek Planning watershed (1112.300403), since there is not a Devils Creek Planning watershed in the area. This was addressed in the Plan on page 185 as having a small amount of flat, ridgeline acres, that are proposed for group selection harvest:

> "*Note: Unit 5 of the project is located along the ridge that seperates* [sic] *the Bear River WAA and Mattole WAA, where there is a small area that drains into the Mattole WAA. It is the opinion of the RPF that no adverse impacts are anticipated from this portion of the project and will not be addressed in the Cumulative impacts assessment. A few justifications being that the area draining into Mattole WAA is located along a ridge on slopes less than 30%. does not have any watercourses, the proposed Silviculture is Group Selection, and the Harvest will help to thin the ridgeline thus providing a fuel break and defensible space in case of a wildland fire*."

The small area in question was mapped at approximately 7 acres outside the road areas within the unit. This equated to 0.08 % of the total watershed (8,834 acres), and not seen as having a significant impact to the watershed, triggering an entire analysis of the planning watershed.



The decision to not include the Oil Creek Planning watershed in the analysis is appropriate and was properly documented and supported by the Department. The PHI report concluded on page 8 under Item 72 that the defined resource assessment areas were appropriate and the RPF correctly assessed the potential for significant cumulative impacts upon resource values within the defined assessment areas.

3. GENERAL CONCERN: Land Title

Comment letters suggested that the property the proposed THP is located on was not rightfully that of Humboldt Redwood Company.

RESPONSE: This is a civil matter. If there is a question of ownership and substantial evidence exists to challenge this, it is more appropriate to pursue the concern through the courts and with the Humboldt County Assessor's Office. As far as CAL FIRE is concerned the Plan Submitter is the rightful owner of the property of the proposed THP.

4. GENERAL CONCERN: Northern Spotted Owl Impacts

Letters expressed concern that NSOs were not being protected.

RESPONSE: Section II Item 32 starting on page 72 of the THP contains detailed enforcement language for the protection of NSO, followed by many pages in Sections III and Section V providing the appropriate supporting surveys, analysis and documentation to avoid take of NSO. The Department of Fish and Wildlife was a part of the Plan review and had no unmitigated concerns for the protection of NSO.

This is further supported on page 8 of the PHI report, with the CAL FIRE inspector concluding the flowing in regards to NSO:

a. NSO habitat definitions used in the Plan accurately reflect vegetation conditions.
b. The retained habitat quantities depicted on the Plan maps were accurate.
c. Protection measures for the NSO activity center(s) appear adequate and in conformance with the rules.
d. NSO survey call points distribution and location were adequate.

The Department has determined that the proposed timber operations are in compliance with HRCs HCP and should not result in a "take" of NSO.

5. GENERAL CONCERN: Greenhouse gases and climate change

RESPONSE: Section IV of the THP, starting on page 245, addresses the cumulative impacts analysis including effects on climate change and greenhouse gases:

"The proposed project will result directly and indirectly in carbon sequestration and temporary, insignificant C02 emissions. Carbon sequestration is achieved through a repeating cycle of planting and growing of trees that remove C02 from the atmosphere and store carbon in tree fiber. When a tree is harvested, most of the carbon-filled tree fibers become lumber that is sequestered in buildings while a new rotation of trees is planted and grown. Some of the tree fibers such as branches and tops are left in the forest where they are sometimes burned to reduce fire hazard. However, the vast majority of this material is left to decay and will emit C02 overtime; but, it also supplements the forest soils and forest duff layer where carbon is stored that serves as a substrate for more tree growth. In addition, redwood is a dominant species on Humboldt Redwood Company timberlands and redwood slash decays more slowly than slash from hardwood and whitewood species. Further, when C02 is released by decaying slash, it is offset by rapid regeneration of tree stands (including sprouts from redwood and hardwood species) and other vegetation that sequesters carbon. Some of this carbon-filled tree fiber, such as bark, shavings, and chips are used in other engineered building products or as fuel used to generate electricity. When this wood fiber is burned to generate electricity the stored carbon is released into the atmosphere, but it is being done in a controlled setting, which also fills a huge demand by our society. Another factor to consider is that when wood biomass is used to generate electricity it directly reduces the amount of fossil fuels required which are non renewable energy sources and generate C02 in more substantial quantities. Another point worth mentioning is that if this wood fiber were left to decompose naturally its stored carbon emissions would still nonetheless occur.

Using the CALFIRE GHG calculator, it is estimated that GHG sequestration for this project will be 36890 metric tons of C02 per acre over the 100 year planning horizon. This sequestration total includes emissions from site preparation, non biological emissions associated with harvesting and non biological emissions associated with milling. GHG emissions associated with this project are insignificant relative to global C02 emissions that are thought to affect climate. There is virtually no opportunity to reduce these emissions in a manner that would meaningfully benefit the climate because they are already miniscule. (U.S.E.P.A. 2005). An acre of managed forest is entered with equipment once every 15-20 years with emissions measured in hours of equipment operation over that time period. Few if any other land uses can match the low intensity of C02 emissions over space and time that are associated with commercial forestry. In urban areas of California, a typical California household will operate one or more vehicles every day and the demands of that household will induce a variety of additional C02 emissions for other forms of commerce, power production, and consumption. In rural areas, even a typical farm acre in California will be subject to equipment operation for several hours or days every year over 20 years - not once every 20 years.

The insignificant GHG effects of the proposed project are further diminished by the mitigating effects of carbon sequestered in wood products produced from harvest and by the forest stewardship principals used by Humboldt Redwood Company, which will increase forest stocking over time.

At the project scale, the beneficial impacts on carbon sequestration and the project-related C02 emissions related to global warming are negligible and undetectable at the global

scale. The C02 emissions from vehicles used to implement the project over several weeks or months are dwarfed by the C02 emissions from other routine daily activities engaged in by all Californians such as a single morning commute for even one city. Also, impacts from transportation will be further mitigated by the implementation of new standards for diesel engines recently adopted by the CARS (CARS 2008). When considering the impacts of this project on climate it is doubtful that a measurable change could be detected, even at the micro climate level."

The climate change assessment discussion continues on page 247 with several references and citations for studies on the subject providing adequate and proper documentation for the resource subject.

The PHI report concluded on page 8 under Item 72 that the defined resource assessment areas were appropriate and the RPF correctly assessed the potential for significant cumulative impacts upon resource values within the defined assessment areas.

The Department agrees with the conclusions presented on page 250 of the Plan in regards to climate change and greenhouse gases:

"It is the RPF's opinion that after having performed the Cumulative Impacts Assessment for climate change, it has been determined that the proposed project as presented and mitigated, in combination with past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects will not cause, or add to significant cumulative impacts within the assessment area."

6. GENERAL CONCERN: Herbicides

There was concern that the THP did not discuss the chemical "glyphosate", which is a common ingredient in forestry herbicides.

RESPONSE: The THP contains a very detailed discussion and cumulative impact analysis for chemical contamination on page 206 – 215 of the Plan. The potential use of "glyphosate" was addressed on page 212:

*"**Glyphosate**, the active ingredient in the over the counter herbicide Roundup, is used to control grasses, herbaceous plants including deep rooted perennial weeds, brush, and some broadleaf trees and shrubs. It is applied to foliage, is absorbed by leaves, and rapidly moves through the plant. It acts by preventing the plant from producing an essential amino acid. Aminomethy-lphosphonic acid is the main break-down product. It is generally not active in soil and is not usually absorbed from the soil by plants. It remains unchanged in the soil for varying lengths of time, depending on soil texture and organic- matter content. The half-life of Glyphosate can range from 3 to 130 days. The surfactant in roundup has a soil half-life of less than one week. The main breakdown product of the surfactant is carbon dioxide. Glyphosate dissolves easily in water. The potential for leaching into groundwater is low as it is strongly adsorbed by soil particles. It does not*

evaporate easily. Glyphosate has no known effect on soil microorganisms. It is practically non-toxic to birds and mammals and bees. It is no more than slightly toxic to fish and practically non-toxic to aquatic invertebrate animals. It does not build up in fish. According to label restrictions, Glyphosate is not to be applied directly to water or wetlands. Typically in forestland uses, Glyphosate is applied to individual weed species that are in competition with growing conifers. We have reviewed DPR and EPA's research and testing for impacts pertaining to Glyphosate. Given the scientific and toxicological information in conjunction with the DPR and EPA testing and label restrictions, HRC finds that Glyphosate use would not pose a significant human health hazard nor produce any significant adverse environmental impacts when used in accordance to label or other regulatory restrictions and when used in the typical manner during reforestation."

The use of herbicides were referenced on page two of the PHI report when describing the requirement to manage Group B species per 14 CCR § 912.7, 932.7, 952.7(d). The Inspector noted the following:

"The plan allows for treatment of hardwoods to maintain relative site occupancy of group A species with both manual and herbicide treatments."

The Department agrees with the conclusions stated in the Plan on page 213 in regards to the potential use of herbicides:

"*Application of herbicides on any one acre of HRC forestlands may occur once or twice every 50- 80 years. HRC has undertaken an analysis of potential impacts and alternatives given the current state of the scientific knowledge of the products registered for use on conifer forestlands. We have further discussed the speculative nature of the amount and timing of use of these products on forestlands. Considering the typical pattern of use of these products, the history of past use, and the label restrictions and regulations on the use of these chemicals, HRC concludes that there will be no significant potential adverse environmental impacts from the application of registered materials if they are used in accordance with existing label precautions, the existing statutory mandates and the Forest Practice Rules.*

HRC further concludes that these products do not eliminate grasses, herbs, weeds, and brush species, but do provide for a temporary reduction in competition for planted conifers, so that young conifers may be able to survive and grow more rapidly. Herbicide use is sometimes necessary as part of HRC's required demonstration of maximum sustained production, which is the Board of Forestry's effort to interpret into rule language the legislative goal of maximum

sustained production of high-quality forest products while giving consideration to the other forest values. A policy of no herbicide use is not a feasible alternative. HRC also concludes that there will be no potential adverse environmental impacts to water quality considering the watercourse and lake protection buffers and label restrictions. After reasonable study, there is no evidence known to this applicant to support the conclusion that application of herbicides in a lawful manner would constitute a significant adverse impact on the environment."

7. GENERAL CONCERN: Wildfire hazard assessment

There were concerns about increased fire danger due to fuel buildup from timber operations.

RESPONSE: During timber harvest operations, equipment and personnel are required by regulation to be available to fight a fire if one should start in the immediate vicinity when harvesting is occurring. PRC § 4428 requires that each logging crew have a fire cache and PRC § 4431 requires that each chainsaw operator have at least one serviceable round point shovel or one serviceable fire extinguisher within 25 feet. These firefighting tools, and equipment such as tractors/skidders allow operators to immediately respond should a fire start as the result of natural causes (i.e., lightning), harvest operations, or other causes in the vicinity of active harvest operations. The Forest Practice Rules require that access for fire equipment be kept in passable condition during timber operations when those operations occur during fire season (14 CCR § 923.6). Periodic inspections by CAL FIRE include the verification of the required firefighting requirements are in place or a violation may be issued.

The THP provides a detailed discussion on wildfire risks and hazard including the benefits for timber stands post-harvest, starting on page 250:

> *"In many cases the overly dense, poor health and poor form trees are harvested to release the dominant and codominant conifers and promote conifer regeneration in the understory. The retention of healthy conifers will improve the overall stand health and provide for a more fire-resistant stand. Similarly, the selection of individual trees from the stand matrix will reduce vertical and horizontal continuity within the stand as trees with intermingling crowns are thinned to provide additional resources for the retained trees.*
>
> *Additionally, the practice of logging creates and maintains fuel breaks in the form of skid trails, cable corridors and truck roads whose presence contributes to a reduction of vertical and horizontal continuity. Also during the course of logging operations, a generous volume of limbs, tops and other miscellaneous woody debris are brought from the woods to the landing which results in a reduction of fuel materials in the woods. Once on the landing the generated fuels can be managed in a controlled setting by piling and burning the material. Alternatively, the material may be spread and compacted which reduces the vertical continuity of the material.*
>
> *Although the project is not specifically labeled as a fuel hazard reduction project, operations associated with this THP will result in fuel treatments that will lower the risk of catastrophic wildfires by managing vegetation to modify/reduce hazardous fuels. Reducing fire intensity through vegetation management can substantially aid in wildland fire containment and control, while creating safety zones for fire fighter and citizen safety. This THP will modify the fuel composition which will modify fire behavior to reduce environmental damage and aid in suppressing wildfires.*
>
> *Benefits from fuel treatments include; prevent loss of lives, reduce fire suppression cost, reduce private property losses and protect natural resources (control of unwanted vegetation, including invasive species, improvement of rangeland for livestock grazing,*

improvement of fish and wildlife habitat, enhancement and protection of riparian areas and wetlands, and improvement of water quality) from devastating wildfire.

The removal of various levels of tree and brush is a management tool commonly used in fire-prone forests to reduce fuel quantity, fuel continuity, and the associated risk of high-severity forest fire. Collectively referred to as fuel reduction treatments, such practices are increasingly employed across California forests, where a century of fire suppression has allowed fuels to accumulate to levels deemed unacceptably hazardous. The efficacy of fuel reduction treatments in temporarily reducing fire hazard on a given site is generally accepted and, depending on the prescription, may serve additional management objectives including the protection from insect and pathogen outbreak, and providing wood products and associated employment opportunities. However, the long-term capacity of any particular fuel-reduction system in altering landscape fire patterns and the impact of such practices on forest biomass remains difficult to predict."

On page 6, item 50, of the PHI report, the CAL FIRE inspector considered the areas fire hazard severity rating, fire history, expected fire behavior, and resources at risk. It was agreed that proposed treatments will be sufficient to reduce fire hazard and provide defensible space around buildings and along roads. In addition, the proposed THP is situated in an area that has minimal public access, so accidental fire starts are less likely than the probability of fire starting in the urban interface. Furthermore, THP roads will be upgraded and maintained for fire response access. Existing forest roads are utilized as man-made fire breaks which firefighters use for access in the event of a wildfire.

The Department agrees with the conclusions stated on page 251 of the THP for the assessment of wildfire risk and hazard:

"The Proposed THP operations and mitigations minimize wildfire risks and hazards. The timber operations will reduce ladder and aerial fuels. The brushing and upgrading of the roads for access will help with fire suppression efforts and strategic fire line placement. It is the RPF's opinion that the proposed project as presented and mitigated will not cause, or add to significant wildfire risks and hazards."

8. GENERAL CONCERN: Stand Regeneration

The public comment letters had concern about potential forest conversion and questioned the regeneration process of the THP.

RESPONSE: Section II, Item 14 of the THP outlines the stand regeneration requirements and the post-harvest stocking standards as required by 14 CCR § 913.2 and 14 CCR § 913.4 of the proposed silvicultures. Additionally, Section III, starting on page 142 of the THP, contains a detailed description of each unit proposed for harvest. There are no prescriptions in this Plan that would be considered a *conversion* of timberlands based on the FPRs. The regeneration portion of the plan is in Item 14 starting on page 16 of the THP and states the following:

"The planting of appropriate conifer seedlings will occur to meet CFPR stocking standards and improve group A species stocking levels within Variable Retention harvest areas. Natural seeding of group A species is also expected to occur from conifers retained within and adjacent the Variable Retention management units."

"…trees will be planted as needed to meet the stocking requirements of 912.7 (b)(1). Douglas-fir seedlings will be the primary planting stock used. Site preparation including the options and methods described above may be used to facilitate successful regeneration."

"Regeneration following timber operations will use both natural and artificial regeneration to meet the FPR stocking requirements. Tree seedlings will be planted to either meet a minimum of 300 point count or such that it contains at least 10 planted countable trees for each tree harvested within 5 years of completion of operations.'

"Conifer species to be planted shall be redwood,Douglas-fir and/or other appropriate Group A species as determined by the landowner."

Starting on page 2, of the PHI report, the CAL FIRE inspector concluded that proposed silviculture methods were appropriate for the existing stand conditions and the prescriptions would ensure maintenance of a balanced stand structure, and establishment of new reproduction. Additionally, it was agreed that post-harvest stands would satisfy minimum stocking requirements per PRC 4528(b), contain seed trees of full crown, capable of seed production and represent the best phenotypes available in the preharvest stand per 14 CCR § 913.1. Furthermore, the THP should leave trees that are uniformly distributed across the treatment areas and contain a species mixture similar to the pre-harvest stand along with having average stand diameters that are larger than the pre-harvest stand or improve stand health.

The Department has no issues with the regeneration portion of the proposed Plan. THPs are required to submit a completion and stocking report per PCR § 4785, PRC § 4587, and 14 CCR § 1070-1075. Harvest areas are then inspected by CAL FIRE ensuring compliance with the FPA stocking and completion requirements prior to the closure of a Plan.

9. GENERAL CONCERN: Erosion from operations on unstable areas

There is concern that there will be logging and road building on unstable slopes thus threatening salmonids.

RESPONSE: This THP does not propose any road building as suggested in the comment letters. On page 6, of the PHI report, the CAL FIRE inspector stated unstable areas have been correctly identified and proposed operations are appropriate and properly mitigated. This is further supported by the CGS PHI inspection report that concluded the following:

"*The THP consists of 7 harvest units along Rainbow Ridge. A focused geologic report for Units 2, 3, and 4 is included in Section V of the THP (HRC, 2021). The report characterizes geologic materials, slope stability conditions, and hazards in the. plan area and is*

consistent with guidelines for geologic reports provided in CGS Note 45 (CGS, 2013). The proposed operations are submitted under prescriptions for the Humboldt Redwood Company [HRC) HCP prescriptions for the Bear River watershed [HRC, 2008; PALCO, 1999). The THP proposes minimal roadwork comprised mainly of minor grading and drainage improvements. No new road construction is proposed. Unstable areas are mapped within Units 2, 3, and 4. Landslides with delivery potential that are not already within a no-cut RMZ or aggregate block are placed within Geo STZ-100, which retains: l) l 00 square feet basal area of conifer per acre, 2) prohibits treatment of group B species, and 3) is an Equipment Exclusion Zone [EEZ). One landslide determined to not have delivery potential is not placed within a STZ [MT05, Figure 2, Unit 2 Site Map). The proposed harvest on unstable areas with delivery potential is mitigated with tree retention intended to preserve root strength and canopy, and ground disturbance is reduced by limiting ground-based operations.

CGS attended the PHI for the above referenced THP. The RPF, working with the licensed geologist. appears to have been aware of the geologic framework of the region and appears to have reasonably used the recommendations of the geologist and the unstable area definitions put forth in HRC HCP, California Forest Practice Rules and California Licensed Forester Association Guidelines (PALCO, 1999; HRC, 2011; SHN, 2006; CALFIRE, 2021; CLFA. 1999). Overall, the plan's mitigation measures appear to be reasonable based on our field reconnaissance conducted as a part of the PHI and we have no additional recommendations."

In regards to salmonid protection, Section II, Item 26, describes and discusses detailed mitigation measures for timber operations near or on the watercourse lake protection zone per 14 CCR § 916. There are no Class I watercourses (fish bearing streams) adjacent to the THP. The CAL FIRE inspector concluded the following in the PHI report:

- watercourses have been correctly described and classified.
- proposed protection measures for watercourses, lakes and wet areas are adequate to protect the beneficial uses of water, native aquatic and riparian species, and the beneficial functions of the riparian zone.
- proposed protection measures are adequate for areas near and areas with the potential to directly impact watercourses and lakes for sensitive conditions.

The Department, nor any other government agency from the Review Team did not have any issue of unmitigated operations that would have a significant negative impact contributing to erosion or take of salmonids.

SIGNIFICANT ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS AND RESPONSES

21PC-000000603 - from J. Hemlock on November 14, 2021

Im concerned about the logging proposal. Can you explain to me why is it good for fighting climate change? Mostly in regards why are you taking a native forest and transitioning it to an unsustainable tree farm.

These big old growth trees store more carbon living. If we cut them and turn them into lumber then build houses, those houses we build are only projected to last 50-75 years. So we cut down a tree 80-200+ years old and then it all ends up in a landfill in 75 years. Sounds like a race to the bottom.

I want as much info on this as possible. Can you send me all the proposal info.

RESPONSE: Please see responses to General Concerns 1 and 8 above.

21PC-000000604_ARCH - from J. Hemlock on November 16, 2021

RESPONSE: This comment was addressed in a separate confidential OR because of sensitive and protected archeological issues.

21PC-000000606 – A template letter from the following on November 21, 2021: Aashutosha Lele, Evan L, Winsor Kinkade, KrisOsunaB, Brendan Hutchinson, Jasconius Riverside, “FL FL”, Heidi Diaz, Jody Brassfield, and Ace Artemisia. Then on November 22, 2021 from: Derek Knowles, and “B A”.

I am a concerned member of the community writing to ask that the following concerns be taken into consideration and the new Timber Harvest Plan be stopped based on these concerns of Indigenous rights and environmental assessments.

Concerns:

Unlogged Forest- Logging of Douglas fir and hardwood forest that has never been logged and the non-disclosure by Humboldt Redwood Company of such stands inside the plan area.

Watersheds - HRC has failed to disclose that part of this THP will extend into Devils Creek, a critical tributary to the upper north fork of the Mattole River. A Cumulative Impacts Analysis for the Mattole River is necessary for this proposed THP.

Land title - What is the chain of custody for the land title and how was it acquired? Is logging on stolen land legal within the State of California? This land was stolen from the Mattole people. Have descendants of the Mattole people been consulted in the development of this Timber Harvest Plan?

Northern Spotted Owl habitat - Logging is proposed near multiple NSO nest sites. Logging near nests is likely to displace owls. NSO population continues to decline throughout the Pacific Northwest.

Climate Change- Effect of ongoing climate change on the future growth and survival rates of natural forest and re-planted areas is not being considered. HRC is citing outdated climate science. CALFIRE has consistently sided with HRC, agreeing with the company that there are many decades left to sequester the greenhouse gases this kind of logging will release.

Greenhouse Gas- The release of greenhouse gases and contribution to catastrophic climate change by herbiciding large numbers of hardwood trees which are left to rot has not been quantified or addressed.

Toxic Herbicides- The proposed use of herbicides in the plan area, including glyphosate (active ingredient in Roundup, a Monsanto corp. herbicide). The toxicity of glyphosate is not addressed, even though recent jury verdicts have awarded millions of dollars to victims of Roundup exposure who developed cancer.

Fire Danger- Increase in fire danger due to a buildup of dead shrubs and trees due to herbicide use. This is a threat to community safety as well as ecological health.

Fire Resistance- The replacement of large, fire resistant trees with more flammable, crowded tree plantations.

Fire Risk Assessment- Lack of assessment of flammability and fire danger to nearby residents. This project is near Humboldt Redwood State Park and the increased fire danger that will result from this logging threatens the habitat within the park as well as park visitors.

Forest Conversion- Replacing mixed hardwood/conifer forest with planted Douglas fir saplings constitutes conversion of natural forest to tree plantations.

Regeneration - HRC cites anecdotal evidence about the regeneration of faster growing redwood stands to defend their logging of slower growing Douglas fir and hardwoods. This THP is largely hardwoods and Douglas fir. Forest regeneration speed and success is uncertain as climate change progresses.

Erosion- Intensive logging and road building is proposed on unstable slopes in an area with very high seismic activity and numerous landslides. The fact that this is being proposed upslope from watercourses threatens the survival of juvenile salmon and rainbow trout/steelhead in streams below this logging operation.

RESPONSE: Please see responses to General Concerns 1-9 above.

21PC-000000607 - from Clara Dykstra on November 21, 2021

I am a lifelong Californian and a very concerned citizen. I urge you to NOT allow Humboldt Redwood Company, or any other company, to do a new Timber Harvest Plan on Rainbow Ridge.

- These trees are hundreds of years old and have supported a healthy ecosystem for just as long. They have survived many many fires.
- The replacement of large, fire resistant trees with more flammable crowded tree plantations will INCREASE FIRE RISK.
- This is a hardwood forest that has never been logged and should remain that way to preserve the functioning of the ecosystem and to keep the watershed healthy.

• HRC has failed to disclose that part of this THP will extend into Devils Creek, a critical tributary to the upper north fork of the Mattole River. A Cumulative Impacts Analysis for the Mattole River is necessary!
• This is Northern Spotted Owl Habitat. This will displace these populations which are declining due to habitat destruction
• The use of Herbicides in the plan area would be devastating to this ecosystem.
• Deforestation contributes heavily to climate change. I urge you to NOT allow any stands within Rainbow Ridge to be harvested by HRC or any other company.

RESPONSE: Please see responses to General Concerns 1-9 above.

21PC-000000608 - from Calvin Howes on November 22, 2021

I am a resident of California and a climate scientist at UCLA, and I am writing to voice concerns and oppose the Humboldt Redwood Company THP on Rainbow Ridge.

1. This is an unlogged region and the Humboldt Redwood Company has not disclosed the existence of such stands in the plan area.
2. HRC hasn't generated an impact analysis on the Mattole River, which is fed by Devils Creek.
3. As this land was stolen from the indigenous Mattole people, have their descendants been consulted on in the development of this THP?
4. Logging near Northern Spotted Owl habitats is likely to threaten and displace owls. This is a Threatened species, and their population is in decline through the Pacific Northwest.
5. Climate change - Natural forests, especially unlogged old-growth stands, are absolutely critical in efforts to mitigate climate change impacts on humans and wildlife, both plants and animals. There is very little time to prioritize sequestration of CO2, and the CO2 emissions timelines of this project will NOT meet the targets outlined in the most recent IPCC report for mitigating global warming. This project will involve both removal of forests that sequester CO2, and herbiciding large numbers of trees which release more CO2 and methane as they decompose.
6. The biodiversity and ecological benefits of these mixed hardwood and confier stands can not be effectively replicated by replanting douglas fir saplings. This is effectively converting the area to a tree plantation.
7. This THP proposes logging and road building on unstable slopes in a highly sesmically-active area, prone to landslides. This threatens the downslope watercourses, which in turn threatens the survival of rainbow trout and juvenile salmon in streams below this operation

RESPONSE: Please see responses to General Concerns 1-9 above.

21PC-000000609 - from Calvin Howes on November 22, 2021

I urge you halt the plans for timber harvest on Rainbow Ridge, which is located on Mattole land.
I am a biologist who has studied extensively in northern CA. There are so many alarming concerns regarding logging in this proposed area. First of all, there has been so much habitat loss for the

Northern Spotted Owl, and CalFire has been responsible for this many times. Fire breaks have been preemptively constructed right through nesting sites, only to have the entire area burn later in wildfires, where the firebreak was not effective. If only we had protected the nesting sites from the fire break in the first place, the owls may have had a better fighting chance before the fire came along. Logging and clear-cutting does not reduce wildfire risk or fire severity.

There are much better ways of managing land to reduce wildfire risk than logging. Protecting the biodiversity of habitats creates a variety of niches in the forest, which actually creates mixed-severity fires that are much easier for wildland firefighters to manage than clearcut forests or homogenously replanted forests. Logging also increases the chance for invasive grasses and brush to take over the area, which dries up during the summer season and becomes highly flammable, only to burn with high intensity once it ignites. Having the mixed-coniferous forests with a diversity of understory, properly managed and tended by indigenous leaders, would be far more effective at wildland fire mitigation.

If CalFire invested in habitat management and devoted their work to increasing forest biodiversity (maintaining the diversity of plant and tree life would also increase the diversity of birds, insects, and other animals, which form a more resilient community when disasters strike such as fires), then wildfire severity risk can also be minimized, which means that CalFire would also be protecting the lives of the many firefighters who risk their lives when fires strike. Why would you increase the risk for CalFire firefighers and volunteer firefighters by logging and increasing the potential for a high severity fire?

I urge you to consider the science and fire ecology to prioritize the lives of firefighters rather than siding with money and the Humboldt Redwood Company.

RESPONSE: Please see responses to General Concerns 1, 4, 7, and 8 above.

21PC-000000610 - from Jeremy Jensen on November 22, 2021

My concerns on the Miller Time THP include but are not limited to:

Unlogged Forest- Logging of Douglas fir and hardwood forest that has never been logged and the non-disclosure by Humboldt Redwood Company of such stands inside the plan area.

Watersheds - HRC has failed to disclose that part of this THP will extend into Devils Creek, a critical tributary to the upper north fork of the Mattole River. A Cumulative Impacts Analysis for the Mattole River is necessary for this proposed THP.

Land title - What is the chain of custody for the land title and how was it acquired? Is logging on stolen land legal within the State of California? This land was stolen from the Mattole people. Have descendants of the Mattole people been consulted in the development of this Timber Harvest Plan?

Northern Spotted Owl habitat - Logging is proposed near multiple NSO nest sites. Logging near nests is likely to displace owls. NSO population continues to decline throughout the Pacific Northwest.

Climate Change- Effect of ongoing climate change on the future growth and survival rates of natural forest and re-planted areas is not being considered. HRC is citing outdated climate science. CALFIRE has consistently sided with HRC, agreeing with the company that there are many decades left to sequester the greenhouse gases this kind of logging will release.

Greenhouse Gas- The release of greenhouse gases and contribution to catastrophic climate change by herbiciding large numbers of hardwood trees which are left to rot has not been quantified or addressed.

Are the lignotubers of species like tanoak, madrone and California bay factored in to the carbon sequestration figures?

Toxic Herbicides- The proposed use of herbicides in the plan area, including glyphosate (active ingredient in Roundup, a Monsanto corp. herbicide). The toxicity of glyphosate is not addressed, even though recent jury verdicts have awarded millions of dollars to victims of Roundup exposure who developed cancer.

Fire Danger- Increase in fire danger due to a buildup of dead shrubs and trees due to herbicide use. This is a threat to community safety as well as ecological health. Fire Resistance- The replacement of large, fire resistant trees with more flammable, crowded tree plantations.

Fire Risk Assessment- Lack of assessment of flammability and fire danger to nearby residents. This project is near Humboldt Redwood State Park and the increased fire danger that will result from this logging threatens the habitat within the park as well as park visitors.

Forest Conversion- Replacing mixed hardwood/conifer forest with planted Douglas fir saplings constitutes conversion of natural forest to tree plantations.

Regeneration - HRC cites anecdotal evidence about the regeneration of faster growing redwood stands to defend their logging of slower growing Douglas fir and hardwoods. This THP is largely hardwoods and Douglas fir. Forest regeneration speed and success is uncertain as climate change progresses.

Has climate changed effected tree growth to date? If so, what was the effect? What is the future effect of climate change on tree growth expected to be according to the state of California?

Erosion- Intensive logging and road building is proposed on unstable slopes in an area with very high seismic activity and numerous landslides. The fact that this is being proposed upslope from watercourses threatens the survival of juvenile salmon and rainbow trout/steelhead in streams below this logging operation.

Accessibility of documents - Myself and others were unable to download readable files from Caltrees website which has interfered with my ability to review the plan. Also, to my knowledge there is no opportunity provided by Cal Fire for people with visual impairment to be able to review the plan. Is this true? If this is true, this plan and all THP review should be put on hold until that is corrected. An additional obstruction to review by members of the public with disabilities us the fact that the

documents provided by the state are PDFs which are more difficult to use with text-to-speech computer programs.

RESPONSE: Please see responses to General Concerns 1-9 above. Additionally, the following are unique concerns and responses brought up by this comment letter:

The lignotubers, generally associated with coppice tree species are not usually included in carbon sequestration discussions, analysis, or summaries, nor are they required by the FPRs. The Department did not find any missing information in regards to the carbon sequestration portion of the greenhouse gas or climate change cumulative impacts analysis.

In regards to the availability of online documents and ADA compliance concerns with CalTREES, the Department acknowledges that the online Timber Harvesting Documentation system may not be fully updated for ADA compliance yet. CAL FIRE's goal is to make the forest practice review process more convenient and transparent and is continuously working to improve the accessibility of the online interface to the public. Assistance is always available through the CAL FIRE Forest Practice Region Headquarters in Santa Rosa (707) 576-2959, or through the CalTREES help desk (916) 704-7579. Please contact one of these resources if there is difficulty accessing or viewing uploaded documents. Note: previously, interested parties would have to request, travel to, and pay for paper copies of timber harvest plans from the Review Team office. CAL FIRE continually tries to make this process easier and more accessible for the public.

21PC-000000611 - from "Fox" on November 21, 2021

Whoever is cutting down these trees is, I must assume, beyond the reach of logic and reasoning, so I won't use that method primarily. Let it show that I, a human with a human-amount of importance at least, would trade my life for the guaranteed safety and health of the forests. It would be an honor, though hopelessly insufficient, to all the people who have been dying along with it. Stop killing the forest, stop destroying the planet, stop making excuses. History isn't over.

RESPONSE: This comment does not contain any significant environmental concerns.

REFERENCES

2021 California Environmental Quality Act Statute & Guidelines. Available on 05/04/2021 at https://www.califaep.org/statute_and_guidelines.php

2021 California Forest Practice Rules and Forest Practice Act. Available on 03/23/2021 at https://bof.fire.ca.gov/media/3qebuoma/2021-forest-practice-rules-and-act_final.pdf

SUMMARY

The preharvest inspection held on October 19, 2021, concluded that the Plan was found to be in conformance with the FPRs after the successful completion of the agreed upon recommendations, which were incorporated into the Plan prior to approval.

The Department has reviewed the concerns brought up through the public comment process and has replied to them by this Official Response. This process has not demonstrated any new significant points that would warrant a recirculation of the Plan pursuant to 14 CCR § 1037.3(e), or a recommendation of nonconformance pursuant to 14 CCR § 1054. The THP states in Section I, under Item 13(b) “After considering the rules of the Board of Forestry and Fire Protection and the mitigation measures incorporated in this THP, I (the RPF) have determined that the timber operation will not have a significant adverse impact on the environment”. The Department finds that the RPF has sufficiently documented that there shall be no unmitigated significant impacts to the identified resources under this THP.

It is the Department’s determination that this THP, as proposed, is in compliance with the FPRs and has been through a detailed multi-agency review system. The discussion points and mitigation measures included in the THP have been found to be appropriate to address the concerns brought up by the public comment process. The conclusions reached by the Department and the other state resource agencies are based on decades of professional experience associated with the review of similar harvest plans.