

**STATE OF CALIFORNIA
CALIFORNIA REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARD
CENTRAL COAST REGION**

STAFF REPORT FOR REGULAR MEETING OF MARCH 24-25, 2005

Prepared on March 2, 2005

ITEM: 25

**SUBJECT: WAIVER OF WASTE DISCHARGE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE VIITANEN
TIMBER HARVEST, THP NO. 1-04-094, SANTA CRUZ COUNTY, BOARD
RESOLUTION NO. R3-2005-0055**

**SUMMARY: Timber Harvest Type: Selective Harvest - Timber Harvest Plan
Project Area: 44 acres
Harvest Area: 26 acres
Water Courses: 7 Class III Streams
Watershed: Boulder Creek
Forester: Joe Culver
Landowner: V.K. Viitanen
Eligibility Criteria Rank: Tier II**

DISCUSSION

On January 14, 2004, Regional Board staff received a request from Joseph Culver, Registered Professional Forester (RPF), for Water Quality regulation of the proposed Viitanen Timber Harvest (THP). The proposed project involves selective harvest of 26-acres within a 44-acre plan area. The THP covers 0.6 percent of the 7,347-acre watershed (Calwater). In the last 14 years approximately 12% of the watershed has been selectively harvested.

Regional Board staff has inspected the proposed area of harvest. Regional Board staff evaluated the proposed Viitanen Timber Harvest THP harvest using our draft Eligibility Criteria (Attachment 4). The proposed Viitanen Timber Harvest THP falls into Tier II. Operations will be in a 303d listed watershed (listed for impacts from sediment), with a high cumulative effects ratio. The proposed THP has a low drainage density index and the proposed activities will result in a "low soil disturbance factor" if winter operations occur. The Board directed staff to try the draft Eligibility Criteria with this individual timber harvest plan as a practical manner of learning from this individual waiver for purposes of modifying

the criteria for the general conditional waiver requirements (to be considered at the May meeting). The Board indicated that some way of dealing with soil erosivity of the timber harvest areas should be included in the criteria. The soil erosivity in this watershed is moderate. Consideration of this factor does not change the Tier II determination for this THP.

Regional Board staff propose a set of individual conditional waiver requirements (Attachment 1) and a monitoring and reporting program (Attachment 2) for Regional Board consideration. The proposed monitoring and reporting program will include implementation and effectiveness monitoring and forensic monitoring (as necessary). Because the THP does not have any Class I or II streams, water quality compliance monitoring is not proposed.

Implementation and effectiveness monitoring will include visual observation of all roads, watercourse crossings, landings, skid trails, water diversions, all watercourse confluences, known landslides, and all mitigation sites in the timber harvest plan area.

Photo-point monitoring points shall be at locations within the timber harvest plan area where timber harvest activities have the greatest risk of potential discharge.

The proposed THP proposes no newly constructed or reconstructed Class I/Class II watercourse crossings or landings within a Class I or II Watercourse or Lake Protection Zone (WLPZ). The pre-harvest inspection identified mitigation site PM2 as a point for photo monitoring. PM2 shall be visually monitored and photo documented to ensure implementation and management performance.

The Discharger shall submit reports to the Regional Board by November 15 of each year. The Discharger shall submit reports to the Regional Board within forty-eight (48) hours of a significant erosion event, of impact to water quality, or non-compliance with the conditional waiver requirements.

The proposed Timber Harvest Plan and the conditions contained in Resolution No. R3-2005-0055 will be in the public interest. The conditional waiver requirements can be terminated at any time. This waiver expires on March 25, 2010.

CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT (CEQA)

The above-referenced THP was submitted by Joe Culver, a Registered Professional Forester, and was granted discretionary approval by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CDF). The Secretary of the Resources Agency has certified that CDF's timber harvest plan regulatory program can function as a substitute for an Environmental Impact Report or a negative declaration. (CEQA Guidelines § 15251.) CDF considered all the potential significant environmental effects of the Plan and made a finding that the timber operations will not have a significant effect on the environment. Therefore the above-referenced THP serves as a substitute negative declaration for the proposed timber harvest. CDF consulted with Regional Board staff when it developed the THP. The Regional Board staff has considered the THP and recommends the THP proponent or their authorized representative (Discharger), as a condition of this waiver, comply with all requirements of the THP.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends adoption of Resolution No. R3-2005-055, Individual Conditional Waiver Requirements, and Monitoring and Reporting Program No. R3-2005-0055 for proposed Timber Management Plan (1-04-094 SCR).

ATTACHMENTS

1. Proposed Board Resolution No. R3-2005-0055
2. Proposed Monitoring & Reporting Program R3-2005-0055
3. Site Plan
4. Viitanen Eligibility Criteria Chart Illustration.

S:\NPS\Timber Harvest\Board Meetings\2005\March\Viitanen\Viitanen 1-04-094 SCR staff report 3-2-05[1].doc