

North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board

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REGIONAL WATER BOARD LIMITS SEDIMENT AND RUNOFF FROM PALCO'S TIMBER OPERATIONS IN ELK AND FRESHWATER

SANTA ROSA – After three days of testimony, the North Coast Regional Water Board adopted permits designed to improve water quality in Elk River and Freshwater Creek.

The North Coast Regional Water Board heard residents' reports that their drinking water supplies have been ruined, their houses and fields flooded as a result of increased timber harvesting by PALCO in these watersheds. The Board also heard concerns about the economic impact of reducing PALCO's harvest from its employees and the communities they directly support

The Board's action should address all these problems.

The Regional Board's newly adopted permits have two goals:

- To reduce the amount of sediment discharged from landslides that are caused by timber harvesting.
- To reduce the number of flood events caused by increased runoff from newly cut land.

"The permits will begin the process of recovery in these watersheds" said John Corbett, North Coast Regional Board Vice Chair. "These permits will lessen these problems, but still allow PALCO to harvest in these damaged watersheds until a complete analysis can be finished. That analysis is called a Total Maximum Daily Load, and will be completed in the next two to three years. At that point a long-term solution will be reached," Corbett added.

PALCO has been harvesting timber along California's north coast for decades. The Board also committed to completing permits for other timber operations in the watersheds.

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