

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 11/7/2021 7:00:00 AM

First name: Steven

Last name: Brink

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Calforests comments attached.

Dear Jennifer:

Following are comments from the California Forestry Association (Calforests) regarding the Region 5 Post Disturbance Hazardous Tree Management Proposed Action. Calforests is a trade association whose membership includes the remaining sawmills in California, the veneer mills, several biomass powerplants, and timber landowners. Roads safe for commercial, administrative, and public travel are vital to the forest industry and use of the National Forests. Calforests incorporates the American Forest Resource Council (AFRC) separate comments from Scott Stawiarski and Jerry Jensen by reference.

Calforests Comments:

First, Calforests supports the Proposed Action. Hazard tree felling and removal is of utmost importance for safe use of roads, trails and around facilities.

Calforests comments are limited to only remarks that not covered by the AFRC comments, or we wish to emphasize, to strengthen the proposal.

Purpose and Need

We believe the Region has it right stating, [ldquo]the primary purpose is to provide for public health and safety.[rdquo] Providing for safe access calls for immediate action to remove hazard trees from affected roads, trails, and facilities.

To provide for public health and safety, the scoping document outlines the process necessary to mitigate the hazards. As AFRC (Jerry Jensen) points out:

[ldquo]Tree felling is an extremely dangerous profession, even in stands of green timber. Those dangers are elevated when felling dead and dying timber. Those dangers are elevated even further when the felling of those dead and dying trees is delayed as the structural integrity of trees is diminished as rot and deterioration progress. Therefore, we urge the Forest Service to strive toward expedient completion of this analysis to permit the safest

work environment possible for those forest workers tasked with the felling of these hazard trees.[ldquo]

Calforests also believes the Guidelines appropriately define the factors that affect the failure zone of a tree [ldquo]including steepness of slope, obstacles, and [the] potential for a [lsquo]domino affect[rsquo] [rdquo].

Calforests points out that the Federal OSHA regulations specifically address worker safety when felling and removing hazard trees. The Federal OSHA regulation states:

\* Federal OSHA 29 CFR 1910 Subpart R: 1910.266 <https://www.osha.gov/laws-regs/regulations/standardnumber/1910/1910.266>

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\* 1910.266(c) "Danger tree." A standing tree that presents a hazard to employees due to conditions such as, but not limited to, deterioration or physical damage to the root system, trunk, stem or limbs, and the direction and lean of the tree.

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1910.266(d)(6)(ii)

Work areas shall be assigned so that trees cannot fall into an adjacent occupied work area. The distance between adjacent occupied work areas shall be at least two tree lengths of the trees being felled [Emphasis Added]. The distance between adjacent occupied work areas shall reflect the degree of slope, the density of the growth, the height of the trees, the soil structure and other hazards reasonably anticipated at that work site. A distance of greater than two tree lengths shall be maintained between adjacent occupied work areas on any slope where rolling or sliding of trees or logs is reasonably foreseeable [Emphasis Added].

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1910.266(h)(1)(vi)

Each danger tree shall be felled, removed, or avoided. Each danger tree, including lodged trees and snags, shall be felled, or removed using mechanical or other techniques that minimize employee exposure before work is commenced in the area of the danger tree. If the danger tree is not felled or removed, it shall be marked, and no work shall be conducted within two tree lengths of the danger tree unless the employer demonstrates that a shorter distance will not create a hazard for an employee [Emphasis Added].

Calforests believes the Federal OSHA Regulations shown above need to be explicitly included in the proposed action to assure worker safety.

Registered Borate Compound

We believe that since the purpose and need is focused on moderate and high severity burn, the probability of infection of Heterobasidion root disease is found to be very low (see Region 5 direction for use of a borate compound in Attachment #1). Therefore, we conclude that it is not necessary and not cost-effective to apply a borate compound to burned stumps.

Closing

Calforests appreciates the opportunity to comment. If you or your staff have any questions, please feel free to contact Steve Brink at [steveb@calforests.org](mailto:steveb@calforests.org); 916-208-2425.

Sincerely,

STEVEN A. BRINK

Vice President [ndash] Public Resources

Enclosure #1 [ndash] Region 5 Direction on use of a Borate Compound