

Agreement between Mendocino Redwood Company (MRC) and the Albion Community Regarding the Railroad Gulch THP #1-14-080 MEN

January 29, 2015

Following submittal of the above referenced Timber Harvest Plan (THP) in July of 2014, a number of residents in the Albion community expressed interest in the THP. Several community meetings were held to discuss the THP and to tour the harvest area. During the course of these meetings, MRC agreed to changes in the THP. These changes were included in the plan prior to the Second Review Team Meeting. In an effort to address community concerns that are unrelated to agency monitoring of the THP's implementation, MRC agreed to supply, in writing, an agreement summarizing commitments discussed during the various meetings.

Herbicide Use

The THP, as submitted to Cal Fire, did not include the use of herbicides for any purpose. Community members expressed their concern that the THP could be amended to use herbicides at a later date. MRC agrees to a restriction from herbicide use in the THP area for a period of seven years, starting from the approval date of the THP.

Timing of Timber Harvest

The community expressed a concern regarding harvesting the THP in one year. Due to this concern, MRC agreed to harvest the THP area over a period of two years. The fish-bearing watercourse named Railroad Gulch will be used as a boundary between the two years as it splits the THP into two areas roughly equal in size and limits use of each appurtenant road system to one year only. One exception will be areas where a cable yarder is used to span Railroad Gulch. The tailhold for the yarder may be placed in areas where logs may be harvested near the tailhold and yarded across Railroad Gulch (known as "backside yarding"). A review of the plan with MRC foresters indicates the potential for this type of yarding is very minimal.

Road Work

The THP includes many upgrades to watercourse crossings on existing truck roads, such as increasing culvert sizes to withstand 100 year flood events and replacing aging culverts. The community would like to see this work completed in the first year of operations. Therefore, MRC agrees to conduct all the road work for the THP in the first year harvesting occurs. One exception applies to temporary crossings. These crossings need to be installed, used, then removed in the same year.

The THP had originally proposed to remove crossings associated with a seasonal road in THP Unit 5, thereby making the road a temporary road. The community expressed a desire to keep this road open in the event of a fire. MRC agreed to install culverts on this road to ensure access is maintained if needed. This applies to the segment of road from Road Point 10 to the end of the road past Road Point 19.

Working Cooperatively with the Albion Little River Fire Department

The Fire Chief of the Albion Little River Fire Department, Ted Williams, discussed difficulties the fire department experienced during the 2008 fire season. When they responded to two fires on MRC land, they were unfamiliar with the road networks and experienced issues with turning vehicles around. MRC has agreed to supply the fire

department with maps of MRC's roads in the Albion River watershed. Hard copies were delivered to a recent fire department board meeting and a PDF file was emailed to Chief Williams. To further familiarize the fire department with access roads, MRC agreed to a field tour of roads on MRC lands in the Albion River watershed. This will be conducted in the spring of 2015 when road conditions are conducive to vehicular traffic. To address narrow roads, MRC agrees to remove brush at pull-out locations and other wide areas on roads to be used by the harvest operation.

MRC also agreed to work with the fire department on measures to reduce potential fire hazards in key areas of the plan, such as adjacent to structures. On January 26, 2015, MRC viewed some of these areas with Chief Williams and Cal Fire Inspector Charlie Martin. These discussions are ongoing, as it was agreed specific measures would be discussed following completion of the harvest operation.

Chief Williams also expressed a concern regarding the limited access residents have on Albion Ridge. Albion Ridge Road does not have an outlet (it is a dead-end road), which could become an issue in a fire emergency. MRC agreed to work with the fire department to explore opportunities that might result in a route out of the Albion Ridge area in the event direct access to Highway 1 is blocked by a fire.

Additional Site Visits to the THP Area

The Albion community expressed an interest in visiting the THP area after operations are complete to view hardwood treatment areas as well as the THP as a whole. Since MRC's inception, a policy was established to allow access to any part of the property when accompanied by an MRC employee. Such a field meeting will be scheduled at completion of the harvest operation.

MRC agrees to accommodate Linda Perkins request to look at areas where the Group Selection silvicultural method will be used prior to operations. Others are welcome as well.

John Andersen
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