

MINUTE ITEM

This Calendar Item No. C17
was approved as Minute Item
No. 12 by the State Lands
Commission by a vote of 2
to 0 at its 2/25/82
meeting.

CALENDAR ITEM

C 17

2/25/82
RW 22779
Childress

CERTIFICATION OF NEGATIVE DECLARATION

APPLICANT: State Lands Commission

At the May 1980 Commission meeting, the Commission endorsed a Timber Management program for State school lands and authorized the Executive Officer to solicit bids for the sale of timber.

The negative declaration being certified was prepared in conjunction with a Timber Harvest Plan on 80 acres of State school land in Section 16, T20N, R9W, MDM, about 35 air miles west of Willows in Glenn County, totaling approximately 305,000 board feet of mature, overmature, and younger merchantable trees which are suppressed or infested with insects, disease, or dwarf mistletoe.

Subsequent to the certification of the negative declaration, a Timber Harvest Plan will be submitted to the Department of Forestry for approval. The sale will be advertised, sealed bids received, and submitted to the Commission for award of a Timber Sale Contract in May 1982.

AB 884: N/A.

OTHER PERTINENT INFORMATION:

1. A Negative Declaration was prepared by the Commission, pursuant to CEQA and the State EIR Guidelines. The Commission's staff has found that the project will not have a significant effect on the environment.

EXHIBIT: A. Negative Declaration.
B. Site Map.

IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT THE COMMISSION:

1. DETERMINE THAT A NEGATIVE DECLARATION HAS BEEN PREPARED FOR THIS PROJECT BY THE COMMISSION AFTER CONSULTATION WITH RESPONSIBLE AND TRUSTEE AGENCIES.

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CALENDAR ITEM NO. C 17 (CONTD)

2. CERTIFY THAT NEGATIVE DECLARATION NO. 297 HAS BEEN COMPLETED IN ACCORDANCE WITH CEQA, THE STATE EIR GUIDELINES AND THE COMMISSION'S ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATIONS, AND THAT THE COMMISSION HAS REVIEWED AND CONSIDERED THE INFORMATION CONTAINED THEREIN TOGETHER WITH COMMENTS RECEIVED DURING THE REVIEW PROCESS.
3. DETERMINE THAT THE PROJECT WILL NOT HAVE A SIGNIFICANT EFFECT UPON THE ENVIRONMENT.

STATE LANDS COMMISSION

1907 1300 12000

SACRAMENTO CALIFORNIA 95834

 Draft FinalNEGATIVE DECLARATION

EIR NO 297

File Ref.: RW 11

SCH#:

Project Title: Tar Flat Timber Sale on State-owned Lands.

Project Location: W $\frac{1}{2}$ of SW $\frac{1}{4}$ of Section 16, T.20 N., R.9 W., M.D.M., in Glenn County.

Project Description: Harvest and sale of approximately 305,000 board feet of mature, overmature, and younger merchantable trees which are suppressed or infested with insects, disease, or dwarf mistletoe.

This NEGATIVE DECLARATION is prepared pursuant to the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (Section 21000 et seq of the Public Resources Code), the State EIR Guidelines (Section 15000 et seq, Title 14, of the California Administrative Code), and the State Lands Commission regulations (Section 2901 et seq, Title 2, of the California Administrative Code).

Based upon the attached Initial Studies, it has been found that:

the project will not have a significant effect on the environment.

the attached mitigation measures will avoid potentially significant effects.

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*Mendocino National Forest responded to the attached Initial Study with concerns of archeological sensitivity in the project area. The Chico Regional California Archeology Site Survey Office has subsequently recommended a site survey of the State-owned parcel. Therefore, prior to any timber harvest activity in this area, an on-site survey will be performed by a qualified archeologist and appropriate mitigation measures, if necessary, will be imposed.

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Exhibit A

INITIAL STUDY
FOR
CALIFORNIA STATE LANDS COMMISSION

TAR FLAT TIMBER SALE ON STATE-OWNED LANDS IN THE
W $\frac{1}{2}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$ SECTION 16
T20N, R9W, MDB&M
GLENN COUNTY

PREPARED UNDER WORK ORDER RW 22779

BY THE
SCHOOL LANDS MANAGEMENT UNIT
LAND MANAGEMENT SECTION
OF THE
DIVISION OF LAND MANAGEMENT AND CONSERVATION
STATE LANDS COMMISSION

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TAR FLAT

1. Description of the Project

The Tar Flat Timber Sale is a proposal by the California State Land Commission to harvest approximately 305,000 board feet of mature and overmature timber. Associated activity will include construction of temporary skid trails and four small landings on the 50 acre harvest area. The project is being planned to meet the current requirements of the California Forest Practice Act and the Northern Forest District Rules and Regulations. All timber operations will be conducted under an approved Timber Harvest Plan.

The project site is located in the W $\frac{1}{2}$ of the SW $\frac{1}{4}$ of Section 16, T20N, R9W, M03&M - an 80 acre State-owned parcel 35 air miles west of Willows, Glenn County. Permanent access to the parcel is provided by Mendocino National Forest Roads 20N02.5 and 20N18, and by a substandard county road. Additionally, 1/4 mile of an abandoned Forest Service road passes through the northwestern portion of the timber sale area. This road will be temporarily reopened for access.

The timber has been marked under the selection method to remove older mature, overmature, and younger merchantable trees which are suppressed or infested with insects, disease or dwarf mistletoe. Snags were marked for felling only where required by the Northern Forest Practice Rules (14 CAC 937.1, Snag Disposal and Retention). All yarding of logs will be done by crawler tractor.

Logging will be limited, under the contract, to the dry season unless conditions indicate that certain phases of the operation can be performed at other times in accordance with Northern Forest Practice Rules for winter operation (14 CAC 935.5, Erosion Control - Winter Period).

Harvesting operations are expected to begin in late spring or summer 1982 and be completed before November, 1982. Areas not meeting stocking standards immediately after completion of harvesting operations will be planted the following spring.

The project will require one skid crossing of an ephemeral draw in the extreme southwest portion of the sale area. At the crossing point this ephemeral draw is a gentle swale with no visible washing or channeling and is covered with forest litter. This crossing will be used to remove approximately 10 thousand board feet of timber. No other stream crossings are needed for the project.

After completion of harvesting activities, all temporary skid trails, roads, and landings will be treated for erosion control as required by the Northern Forest Practice Rules.

II. Description of Environmental Setting

The natural environment of this project has been disturbed by fire, logging and road construction over the last 40 years. Most recently, a timber harvest was conducted in 1981 along the southeastern boundary of the project. Major road construction of Road 20N02.5, passing through the parcel, was done in 1979.

The proposed timber harvest site is located on moderately steep, south-facing slopes (10-50% with a limited area of 70% slopes). Soils (predominantly "Hugo Loams") are metavolcanic in nature and shallow to moderately deep. The southwestern portion of the project (located between Roads 20N02.5 and 20N18) is on slopes of less than 30% with a "Neuns cobbly loam" soil type.

Vegetation is characterized by an open stand of mixed conifers reproduction in the understory, and scattered patches of black oak, scrub oak, manzanita, ceanothus, grasses and barren ground. Big, small and upland game inhabit the area at various times during the year. Native species include black-tailed deer, black bear, bobcat, porcupine, raccoon, gray fox, striped skunk, gray squirrel, golden mantled chipmunk, deer mouse, and brush rabbit. Song birds and raptors are common in the area. No rare or endangered species have been observed. Additionally, the State Department of Fish and Game was consulted regarding possible rare or endangered species of plants or animals, and stated that none had been observed in the area.

The elevation of the site is approximately 5000 feet. The southerly aspect and the soil types combine to cause rapid snow melt and runoff which is normally conducive to short periods of high erosion.

Most of the precipitation (45 inches Mean Annual Precipitation) falls in winter as mixed rain and snow. While erosion potential on the site is high, timber harvesting operations on neighboring sites, and on the subject parcel (due to timber harvesting trespass) have not resulted in additional erosion.

One area of past soil instability is located in the meadow above the intersection of Roads 20N02.5 and 20N18. This slump was located and stabilized during the reconstruction project on Road 20N02.5 in 1979. No other areas of soil instability were observed within the proposed harvest area.

No perennial or intermittent stream courses are in the project area. However, one ephemeral draw is within the southwest section of the harvest site.

Salvage harvests and heavy selection harvests have been conducted on the north, west and east sides of the proposed project area. Additionally, limited logging (timber trespass) has occurred on the subject parcel itself within the past 30 years.

The area surrounding the proposed harvest project is best suited for, and has been devoted to, grazing and timber production. The nearest year-round residential or commercial development is located at Lake Pillsbury, approximately ten miles to the southwest and is restricted to a few isolated houses and resorts. There are no anticipated changes in either local population or land use within the vicinity of this timber sale.

There are no historically significant values known to exist within or adjacent to the proposed operation. A project-specific archaeological reconnaissance conducted by the U.S. Forest Service on those areas directly impacted by the recent road reconstruction found no sites or articles of historical significance. Additionally, the California Archaeological Site Survey, Chico Office, conducted a record search and offsite evaluation in 1980 and determined that there was little chance of encountering any significant historical site on the subject parcel. Contractual requirements of the timber sale, however, provide for protection of any significant sites uncovered during harvesting operations.

Public recreation facilities on the site are only temporary, unimproved hunting camps and the view-shed encountered while traveling on the roads through the parcel.

III. Significant Environmental Impacts and Mitigation Measures.

1. Road Building. No new road construction is planned for this project. The reopening of an abandoned road for access will involve only minor work to remove the four existing water bars.

Mitigation. Water bars will be replaced or rebuilt on the short length of access road after termination of logging activities pursuant to Forest Practice Rules and Regulations (14 CAC 935.4, Waterbreaks).

2. Logging. Logging will be done by crawler tractor which will result in some surface soil displacement and compaction and removal of vegetation along skid trails. Because of the establishment of advanced reproduction and other vegetation on most of the harvest area, there will be only minor increases in wind or water erosion on the site. Surface water runoff may increase in rate and amount on disturbed areas (skid trails, landings). Logging may also produce a change in the diversity and number of plants in the area, particularly noticeable in clearings created by the harvesting operations. This effect will be reduced somewhat because of an established residual understory on much of the site.

Temporary animal habitat disruption in the general area will occur, and longer term changes in species distribution and relative population sizes will occur on the area logged.

Mitigation - All harvesting operations will be conducted to comply with the requirements of the Northern Forest District Rules and Regulations. Skid trails will be waterbarred and landings treated to minimize erosion. Understocked sites created by logging will be planted to supplement natural regeneration. When possible, snags will be left to provide wildlife habitat.

3. Overall Project. The use of natural resources by the project (fuel, displacement, etc.) are minimal but irretrievable. Noise and traffic in the immediate area of the site will temporarily increase but is compatible with similar activities in the vicinity.

IV. References and Persons Contacted.

This study was prepared by foresters and other staff members of the State Lands Commission.

Also consulted:

Ted Wustor
California Department of Fish & Game
Wildlife Management
P.O. Box 47
Yountville, CA 94599

Mendocino National Forest
Upperlake Ranger District
P.O. Box 96
Upperlake, CA 95785

California Archaeological Site Survey
Department of Anthropology
California State University, Chico
Chico, CA 95929

U.S. Department of Agriculture
Soil Conservation Service
Corning, CA

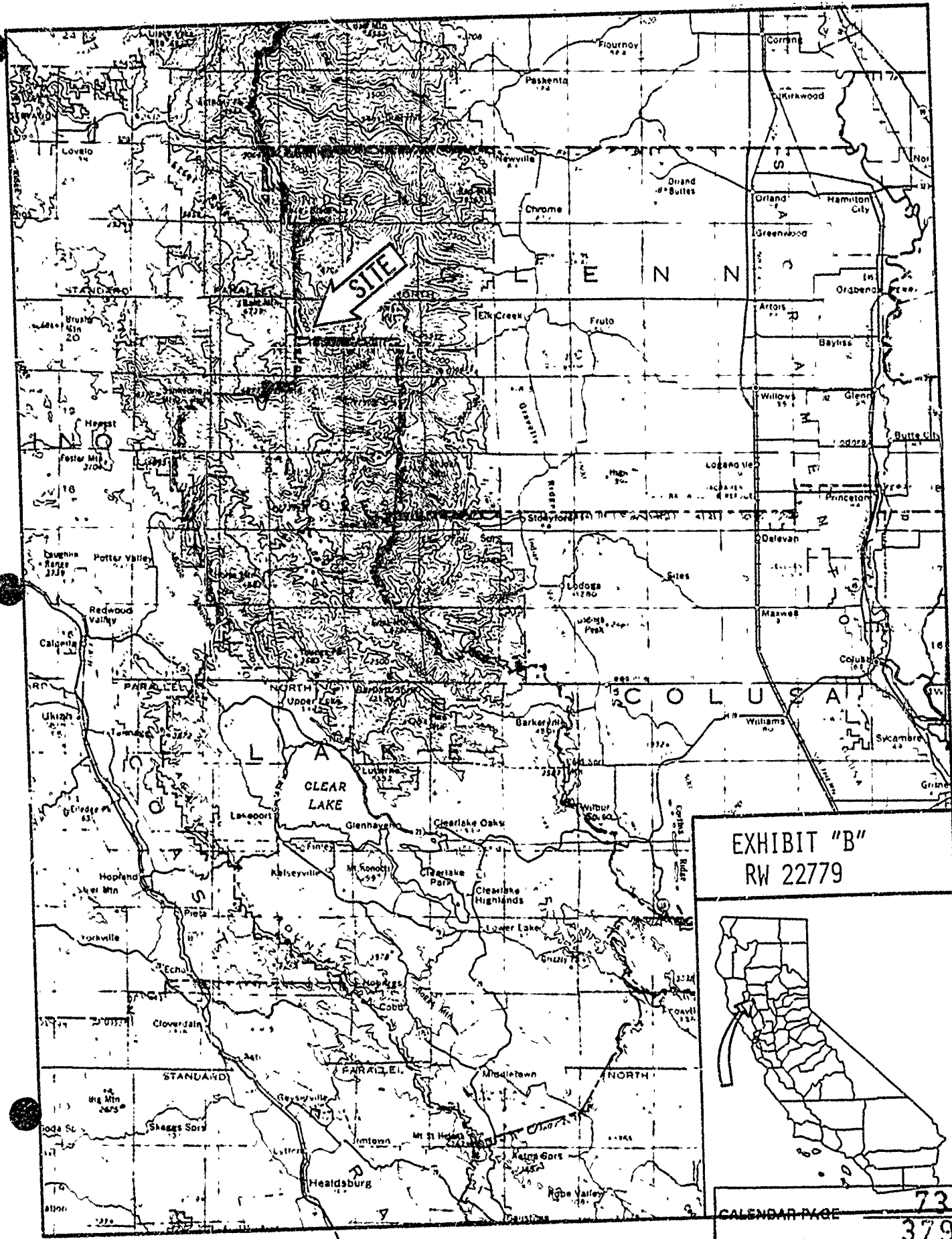


EXHIBIT "B"
RW 22779



To Santa Rosa 15 Miles

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