

MINUTE ITEM

This Calendar Item No. C18  
was approved as Minute Item  
No. 18 by the State Lands  
Commission by a vote of 2  
to 0 at its 2/25/82  
meeting.

CALENDAR ITEM

C 18

2/25/82  
RW 22519  
Childress

CERTIFICATION OF NEGATIVE DECLARATION

APPLICANT: State Lands Commission

At the May 1980 Commission meeting, the Commission endorsed a Timber Management Program for the 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 for two 40-acre parcels of State school land, located 25 miles due west of Corning in Tehama County, within Section 4, T25N, R8W, MDM. The proposed sale involves approximately 1,000,000 board feet of mature, overmature, and smaller suppressed trees which are infested with insects and disease.

Subsequent to the certification of the negative declaration a Timber Harvest Plan will be transmitted 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.

EXHIBITS: 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.
2. CERTIFY THAT NEGATIVE DECLARATION NO. 298 HAS BEEN COMPLETED IN ACCORDANCE WITH CEQA, THE STATE EIR GUIDELINES AND THE COMMISSION'S ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATIONS, AND

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CALENDAR ITEM NO. C 18 (CONTD)

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 ON THE ENVIRONMENT.

## STATE LANDS COMMISSION

1807 13th Street  
SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA 95814 DraftNEGATIVE DECLARATION

EIR ND 298

 Final

File Ref.: RW 22519

SCH#:

Project Title: Valentine Ridge Timber Sale on State-owned Lands.

Project Location: SW $\frac{1}{4}$  of NW $\frac{1}{4}$  and the SW $\frac{1}{4}$  of NE $\frac{1}{4}$  of Section 4, T.25 N., R.8 W.,  
M.D.M. in Tehama County, California.Project Description: Harvest and sale of approximately 1,000,000 board feet of  
mature, overmature, and smaller suppressed trees infested  
with insects and disease.

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.Contact Person: Ted T. Fukushima  
1807-13th Street  
Sacramento, CA 95814  
(916) 322-7813

\*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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Form 13.17 (9/81)

INITIAL STUDY  
FOR  
CALIFORNIA STATE LANDS COMMISSION

VALENTINE RIDGE TIMBER SALE ON STATE-OWNED LANDS IN THE  
SW $\frac{1}{4}$  OF THE NW $\frac{1}{4}$  AND SW $\frac{1}{4}$  OF THE NE $\frac{1}{4}$  OF SECTION 4,  
T25N, R8W, MDB&M  
TEHAMA COUNTY

PREPARED UNDER WORK ORDER RW 22519

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

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## I. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Valentine Ridge Timber Sale is a proposal by the State Lands Commission to harvest approximately 1,000,000 board feet of mature and overmature merchantable ponderosa pine, sugar pine, incense-cedar, white fir and Douglas-fir, and to construct two new access roads, each being one quarter mile in length (total of  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile of new construction). Smaller, suppressed trees infested with insects and disease have been included as a sanitation measure to improve the health and vigor of the residual stand. This proposed timber sale has been designed and prepared on the ground to conform with the current Rules and Regulations of Northern Forest District and the Forest Practice Act of the State of California. This sale will be harvested under an approved Timber Harvest Plan.

This proposed timber sale is located on two 40 acre parcels located 58 road miles (25 miles due west) of Corning, California. The parcels are described as the SW $\frac{1}{4}$  NW $\frac{1}{4}$  and the SW $\frac{1}{4}$  NE $\frac{1}{4}$  of Section 4, T25N, R8W, MDB&M. Crane Mills, Paskenta, California, owns the remainder of Section 4 and is the nearest mill which is 37 miles (20 miles of dirt and 17 miles of paved road) from the two State parcels. U.S. Forest Service Road 25N01 passes through the westerly parcel and passes about 100 yards north of the easterly parcel.

A mutual road right-of-way has been discussed on the ground and will be developed between the State and Crane Mills for joint access to their respective landlocked ownerships for timber management purposes.

1. Allow Crane Mills access across the State's westerly parcel on an existing quarter mile segment of road south of 25N01.
2. Allow the State to construct one quarter mile of road access to the westerly parcel crossing one eighth mile of Crane Mills property north of 25N01 for mutual access to a landing on the north side of Road 25N01 and Valentine Ridge.
3. Allow the State to construct one quarter mile of road crossing one eighth mile of Crane Mills property for access to the State's easterly parcel. The final location of this road across Crane Mills property will be dependent on the operator's preferred haul route - north to Red Bluff or south to Paskenta.

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New road construction is on side slopes of less than 50%. The new roads will be constructed in a portion approach 15% to 20% slopes. The maximum slope will be 30% and the road grades on this will be 15% and 20%. There will be no significant impact created by either route to the eastern parcel across Crane Mills property to Road 25N01. The access roads will be blocked upon completion of use.

There are no blue-line streams on this timber sale area, and all roads will be water barred pursuant to CAC 935.4 Water bars. The new road construction does not cross any draws and no culverts will be needed. Foresters from both the State and Crane Mills have mutually agreed upon the flagged road locations which are in compliance with the Northern Forest Practice Rules and Regulations as stated in 14 CAC 935.1 Logging Roads.

This timber sale will be a typical summer operation, and will conform to 14 CAC 935.5 Winter Period Erosion Control.

Timber harvesting will be accomplished by tractor on both parcels. Cable yarding is not economically feasible on the western parcel because of the low density of merchantable trees. The majority of the eastern parcel is too flat for efficient cable yarding.

This timber sale was marked under the selection method to remove mature and overmature timber (over 140 years old) and younger timber mechanically damaged, severely suppressed, or infested with disease, insects, or dwarf mistletoe. The western parcel is understocked and 362 trees, 90% of the merchantable timber, were designated for removal. The majority of this parcel is Dunning Sites IV and V (poor growing sites) and will be treated pursuant to 14 CAC 1081, b Understocked Timberland. Except for the ridge top, the slopes range from 40% to 70%.

The eastern parcel ranges from a Dunning Site II to IV with the majority of the site a Site III. Scattered mature trees were selected to leave as seed trees which will be removed after the area has met stocking requirements pursuant to 14 CAC 932.7 Resource Standards for Minimum Stocking and 14 CAC 933.4 Seed Tree Method. A few small stands of younger merchantable timber will be commercially thinned to reduce competition resulting in a thriftier, healthier residual stand of young timber. Additional younger trees infested with disease or insects or mechanically damaged were designated for removal on a sanitation basis. Approximately 85% of the merchantable timber on the eastern parcel will be removed.

The operator will conduct mechanical site preparation after logging to pile the logging slash to be burned by the State on areas not suitable for tractors. Hand crews will perform hand site preparation on areas difficult for tractor operations prior to planting. It is anticipated that hand planting will be accomplished in the spring following logging and site preparation operations.

## II. ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

The Valentine Ridge Timber Sale is located on the eastern fringe of the Coast Range, 25 airline miles west between Corning and Red Bluff, California, in Western Tehama County. This portion of Tehama County consists of large ownership blocks of land being managed by the U.S. Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, Louisiana Pacific and Crane Mills. Timber is the major economic base for this portion of the County. Minor uses would include hunting and recreation.

The average annual precipitation for the area is about 30 inches, which is relatively low because the area is on the east side of the coast range. The elevation of the sale ranges from 5000 to 5800 feet.

The soils on the two parcels are "700(ck)" colluvial land with sedimentary rock and "820 sheetiron" (medium timber suitability). The soil depth is from one to two feet on slopes of 30 to 50 percent. Actual slopes range from 0 to 70 percent on the western parcel and 0 to 50 percent on the eastern parcel. Observations made on adjacent properties logged within the last two years to areas logged during the 1940's indicated minimal erosion. One ephemeral draw near the eastern parcel has no culvert at the crossing on Road 25N01 and no washing or sediment deposits were observed at the road. There appear to be no problems anticipated with the proposed road construction. No areas of soil instability or slides were observed on either parcel.

The timber stand consists primarily of old-growth ponderosa pine, sugar pine, white fir, Douglas-fir, and incense-cedar. Scrub canyon live oak is the only hardwood on the parcels. Other ground cover includes hoary and green leaf manzanita, mountain white thorn, currants, gooseberries, and blackberries. Considerable old growth wind throws are on the ground and old snags are still standing indicating the overmature trees are dying out.



This timber sale is located on a high dry ridge and no archeological evidence of past cultural activity was observed. The Chico Regional Office of the California Archeological and Survey report search did not indicate this as a sensitive area, and as on the ground survey was not recommended.

If any archeological artifacts of potential significance are uncovered on the sale area, operations will be stopped and an archeologist consulted.

There are no blue-line streams on this timber sale area. There is one ephemeral draw in the southwestern corner of the eastern parcel. This draw was dry in June and covered with organic litter, and no washing was observed.

Wildlife has been observed on the parcels, specifically small numbers of deer and rodents. Hawks and buzzards were observed soaring overhead, but the sites do not support the variety of plant species needed to provide a suitable habitat for a wide variety of wildlife.

Access to the sale area is from Forest Service Road 25N01 which may be reached from either Red Bluff or Corning. Additional access to the parcels will be by constructing one quarter mile access roads to each parcel, partially through Crane Mills property. There is one existing road on the western parcel which will afford access to the south half of the western parcel.

### III. REGIONAL SETTING

The State's two parcels are in Western Tehama County on the eastern fringe of the Coast Range. This regional setting is and has always been one of logging and mining. The private lands associated with this area are usually in large blocks devoted to mining or timber and watershed management. Private timber lands are zoned as timber preserve zones in Tehama County. The unzoned parcels belong to the Federal Government, specifically the U.S.F.S. and B.L.M., who are currently administering their lands under approved Timber and Watershed Management plans.

The harvesting of timber from the State's two parcels is compatible with the current management plans of both private industry and the U.S.F.S. and the B.L.M. Private industry includes holdings by Louisiana Pacific, Diamond International, Crane Mills, Commander Industries, and Security 1st National Bank has large mineral holdings in the area.



#### IV. SIGNIFICANT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

1. Road Building. The new road construction will have some effect on the soil and vegetation in the area. The roads will be constructed with a bulldozer by the cut and fill method. The vegetation affected will be scattered brush and a few small conifers. The majority of the larger conifers are marked for removal. No culverts are needed on either road since no draws are crossed and U.S.F.S. Road 25N01 has no culverts above or below the intended new construction.

Mitigation. The new road construction to the eastern parcel will be on a 15% grade to minimize road construction length, to reduce soil movement, and reduce impact upon Road 25N01 by separating the two roads faster by using a steeper gradient. New road construction will be single lane roads to minimize soil and vegetation disturbance. Upon completion of use, all access roads from 25N01 will be water barred and grass seeded for slope stabilization.

2. Logging. Logging will be done by crawler tractor which will result in surface soil disturbance and removal of the scattered overstory on the western parcel and the majority of the overstory on the eastern parcel. Since the soils are porous, the moisture from snow melt will penetrate rapidly, but there will not be additional ground runoff within the parcels. There will be additional ground water accumulation below State ownership created by increased ground water surfacing further downhill on other ownerships. This effect will be minimal due to the location of the parcels on top of the ridge and lack of well defined drainages on State land. As the reproduction becomes established and starts to grow, transpiration will increase and the moisture regime will again approach stabilization.

There will be a temporary animal habitat disruption created by logging which will force wildlife to relocate off of 30 acres of the eastern parcel and 20 acres of the western parcel. This will last for approximately five years.

The overstory in the western parcel is heavily infested with dwarf mistletoe. By removing the infested overstory, it is anticipated that the intensity of dwarf mistletoe on the parcel will be greatly reduced.

A heavy selective cut on the eastern parcel will result in leaving about four seed trees per acre where there is presently no regeneration. The only snags marked for removal are within 300 feet of the ridge top, 200 feet from Road 25N01, and 100 feet from access roads on State-owned lands to conform with 14 CAC 937.1 Snag Disposal and Retention.

After logging, mechanical and hand site preparation will be performed to establish ground suitable to plant conifers to reforest the logged areas to conform with 14 CAC 932.7 Resource Standards for Minimum Stocking.

Mitigation. Understocked openings created by logging will be artificially regenerated upon completion of logging and site preparation and burning operations. The planting stock used will be from the same elevational seed zone. It is anticipated that natural regeneration will also become established from the seed trees after site preparation work has been accomplished.

Bud Pyshora (Department of Fish and Game, Redding, California) stated that no rare or endangered species have been observed on either parcel and that these parcels are too high in elevation for significant importance as wildlife habitat. Snag disposal along ridge tops and roads will conform to 14 CAC 937.1 Snag Disposal and Retention. All other snags will be left for wildlife purposes.

The use of natural resources by the project (fuel, displacement, etc.) are minimal, but irretrievable.

The project will not result in measurable increase in demand for public services.

V. REFERENCES AND PERSONS CONTACTED.

This study was prepared by Registered Professional Foresters on the staff of the State Lands Commission. Also consulted:

D. Keith Crummer, District Ranger  
Corning Ranger District, U.S. Forest Service  
P. O. Box 1019  
22000 Corning Road  
Corning, California 96021

Terry Gibson, Sales Preparation Forester  
Corning Ranger District, U.S. Forest Service  
(Address same as above)

Tom Henry, Silviculturist  
Corning Ranger District, U.S. Forest Service  
(Address same as above)

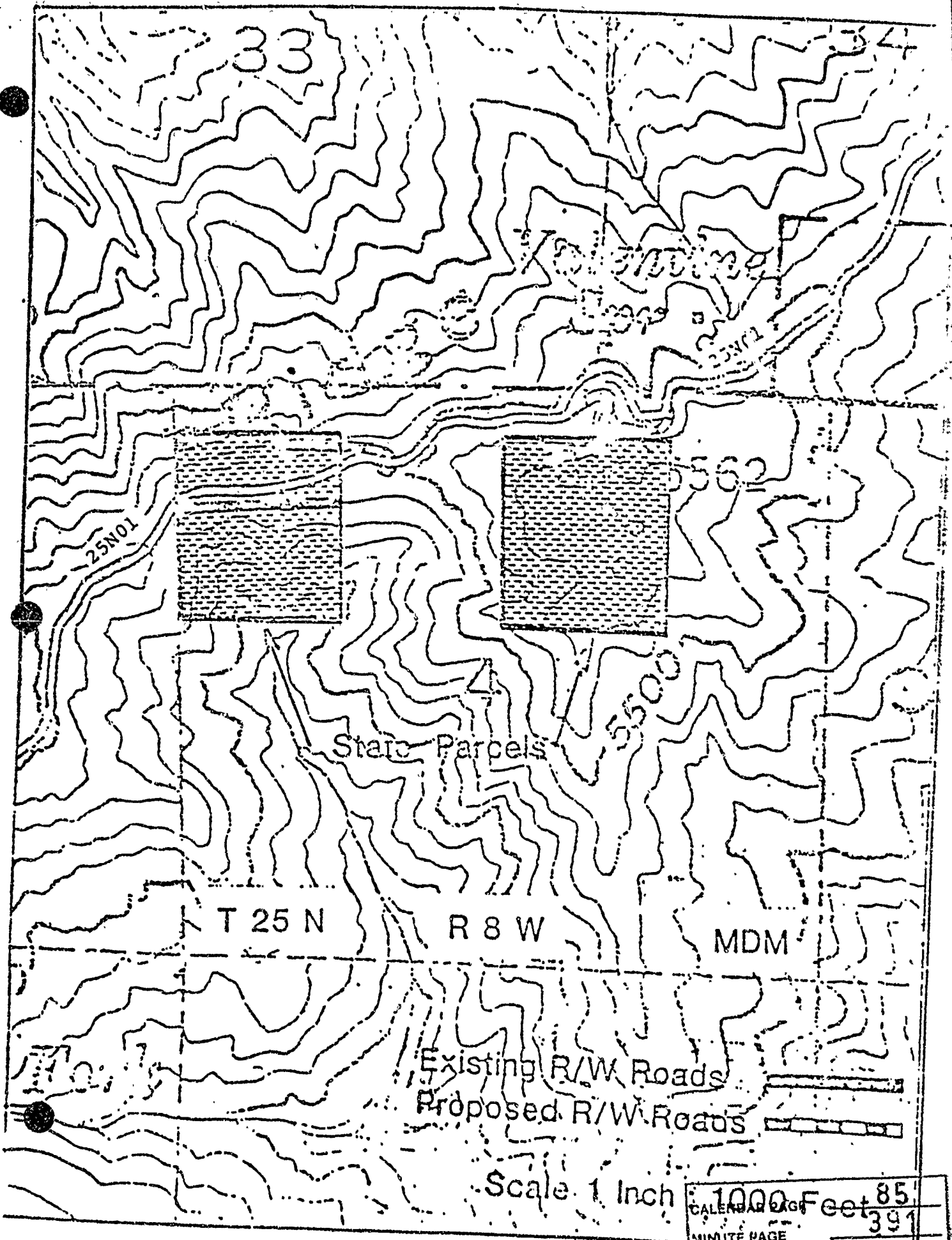
Bob Ramirez, Planning Forester  
Corning Ranger District, U.S. Forest Service  
(Address same as above)

Bud Pyshora  
Department of Fish and Game  
Wildlife Management Section  
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Bob Hughes, Forester  
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25N01

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State Parcels

T 25 N

R 8 W

MDM

Existing R/W Roads

Proposed R/W Roads

Scale 1 Inch

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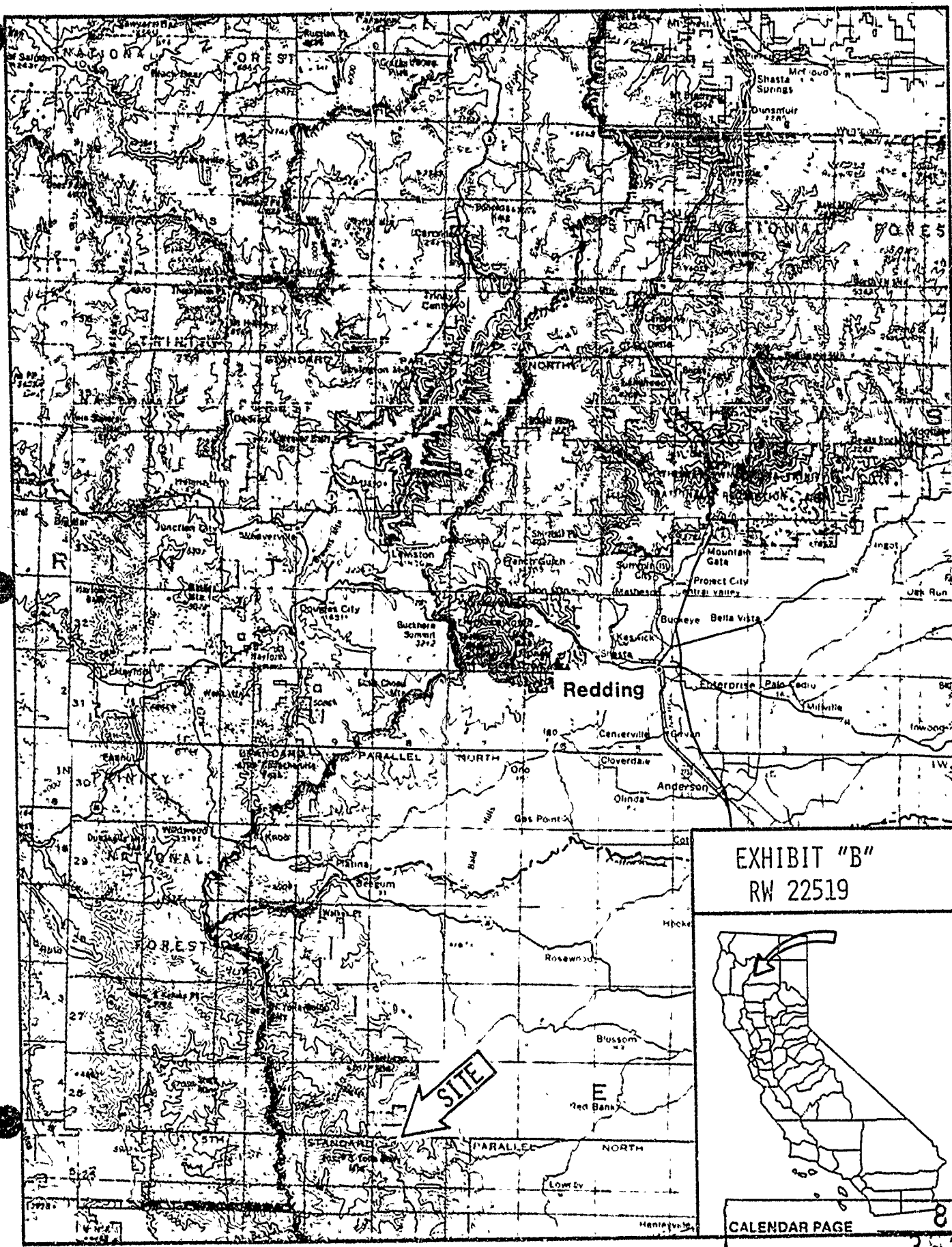


EXHIBIT "B"  
RW 22519



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