**Staff Report**

**Silvicultural Limitations for the Coastal Commission Special Treatment Areas within the Forest Practice Rules**

**Management Committee**

**August 16, 2022**

The Forest Practice Rules[[1]](#footnote-1) defines Coastal Commission Special Treatment Areas[[2]](#footnote-2) (CCSTA) as geographically distinct forest areas that were designated by the Coastal Commission for the role they play in certain ecological processes or in providing certain values or benefits. The regulation of Timber Operations[[3]](#footnote-3) within these areas has certain unique requirements[[4]](#footnote-4) which exist in addition to the “standard” regulations of individual forest districts.

Included within the specific rules for CCSTAs are limitations on the silvicultural methods that may be prescribed within these areas[[5]](#footnote-5). These limitations were initially adopted by the Board, along with the rest of the CCSTA rules, in 1979 in order to achieve the goal of “retaining the general appearance of the forested area at all times”[[6]](#footnote-6). Though these regulations have received minor amendments since their initial adoption, they remain largely unchanged in prescribing the silvicultural methods allowed within the CCSTA, which are as follows:

* Commercial Thinning
* Selection Methods
* Sanitation-Salvage
* Clearcutting
* Rehabilitation

Additionally included with the initial adoption of the CCSTA silvicultural limitations were CCSTA specific stocking requirements which, much like the other CCSTA regulations, remain unchanged from the prescriptive standards which were established in 1979.

Given that the Board has taken numerous to develop and refine tools and standards to provide for more resilient, healthy, and productive forests since 1979, such as the development of certain special prescriptions, alternative prescriptions, variable retention methods, and recent work in addressing outdated minimum resource conservation standards, which are still reflected within the CCSTA rules, it may be appropriate to examine the silvicultural requirements and limitations of the CCSTA in order to determine how well those provisions are achieving the purposes and goals of the Forest Practice Act[[7]](#footnote-7).

1. Chapter 4, Division 1.5, Title 14, California Code of Regulations [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. 14 CCR § 895.1 [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. PRC 4527 [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Article 11, Subchapters 4 and 6, Forest Practice Rules [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. 14 CCCR § 921.3 and 961.3 [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Board of Forestry Rulemaking File 001 [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Z’Berg-Nejedly Forest Practice Act of 1973, beginning with Section 4511, Chapter 8, Part 2, Division 4, Public Resources Code [↑](#footnote-ref-7)