**Board of Forestry and Fire Protection**

**Geographically Overlapping Harvesting Permits**

**Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations**

**Division 1.5, Chapter 4,**

**Subchapter 7**

**1038, 1038.1**

**1038 Exemption**

Timber Operations conducted pursuant to this section are exempt from the Plan preparation and submission requirements (PRC § 4581) and from the completion report and Stocking report requirements (PRC §§ 4585 and 4587) of the FPA. Timber Operations conducted under any notice of exemption described herein shall be limited to one (1) year from the date of receipt by the Director or until the submitter notifies the director of the termination of the notice and shall comply with all operational provisions of the FPA and District Forest Practices Rules applicable to “Timber Harvest Plan”, “THP”, and “Plan” definitions per 14 CCR § 895.1.Exemption Notices authorized by this section shall not have a harvest area that geographically overlaps with the harvest area of another non-expired Notice or Plan with the exception of an approved NTMP or WFMP or as per 1038 (a) & (b). In-lieu practices within WLPZs as specified under Article 6 of these Rules, exceptions to the Rules, and alternative practices are not allowed. The following types of Timber Operations are exempt:

(a) Harvesting Christmas trees.

(b) Harvesting dead trees, Dying Trees, or Diseased Trees of any size, fuelwood or split products in amounts less than ten (10) percent of the average volume per acre, or the removal of Slash and Woody Debris that is not located within a WLPZ.

(1) In instances where tree mortality is occurring within the harvest area of an approved Timber Harvest Plan (THP) and a work completion report has not been submitted the plan submitter may submit a notice per 14 § CCR 1038(b) to harvest trees that are dead, dying or diseased. The removal of these trees will not impact the silvicultural prescription of the approved plan. The Notice shall be signed by the RPF listed as being responsible for providing professional advice or services for the plan.

(c)The cutting or removal of trees in compliance with PRC §§ 4290 and 4291, which eliminates the vertical continuity of vegetative fuels and the horizontal continuity of tree crowns for the purpose of reducing flammable materials and maintaining a fuelbreak to reduce fire spread, duration and intensity. The requirements of this subsection shall not supersede the requirements of PRC § 4291.

(1) Only trees within one-hundred-fifty (150) feet from any point of an Approved and Legally Permitted Structure that complies with the California Building Standards Code may be harvested, except as specified in 14 CCR § 1038(c)(6).

(2)The following Silvicultural Methods may not be used: clearcutting, Seed Tree removal step, shelterwood removal step.

(3) All surface fuels created by Timber Operations, within one-hundred-fifty (150) feet of an Approved and Legally Permitted Structure, that could promote the spread of wildfire, including Slash or Woody Debris, exceeding one (1) inch in diameter, and brush, shall be chipped, burned, or removed within forty-five (45) days from the start of Timber Operations.

(4) In addition to the surface fuel treatment described in 14 CCR § 1038(c)(3), the Harvest Area must meet the vegetation treatment standards in PRC § 4584(i)(1) to (2)(A) illustrated in Board Technical Rule Addendum No.4 within one (1) year from the receipt of issuance of notice of acceptance. This paragraph does not apply to 14 CCR § 1038 (c)(6).

(5) Timber Operations conducted under this subsection shall conform to the applicable city or county general plans, city or county implementing ordinances, and city or county zoning ordinances within which the notice of exemption is located. The LTO, timberland owner, or if applicable the RPF, shall certify that the city or county has been contacted and the notice of exemption conforms with all city or county regulatory requirements.

(6) Trees that are located from one-hundred-fifty (150) feet up to three-hundred (300) feet from any point of an Approved and Legally Permitted Habitable Structure that complies with the California Building Standards Code may also be cut and removed for the purpose of reducing flammable materials and maintaining a fuelbreak provided the following conditions are met:

(A)The post-harvest stand shall be primarily comprised of healthy and vigorous Dominant and Codominant trees well-distributed throughout the treated area and meet the Stocking Standards consistent with 14 CCR § 913.2 [933.2, 953.2].

(B) The (QMD) of trees greater than eight (8) inches dbh in the pre-harvest Harvest Area shall be increased in the post-harvest stand.

(C)All Slash shall be lopped, removed, chipped, piled and burned, or otherwise treated to achieve a maximum post-harvest depth of eighteen (18) inches above the ground within forty-five (45) days from the start of Timber Operations except for the burning of piles, which shall be accomplished not later than April 1 of the year following their creation, or for piles created on or after September 1, not later than April 1 of the second year following creation. Treatment of surface fuels by burning shall be exempt from the one-year time limitations on Timber Operations described under 14 CCR § 1038.1.

(D) The notice of exemption shall include site class, an estimate of pre- and post-harvest QMD and certification by the RPF that, in their professional judgment, post-harvest Slash treatment and stand conditions will lead to more moderate fire behavior.

(E)14 CCR § 1038(c)(6) shall expire pursuant to PRC 4584(m)(3).

(d) Harvesting dead trees, Dying Trees or Diseased Trees, fuelwood, or split products in response to drought related stress or dead trees which are unmerchantable as sawlog-size timber from that are located upon Substantially Damaged Timberland when the following conditions are met:

(1) The RPF certifies that the notice of exemption is submitted upon Substantially Damaged Timberland when necessary.

(2) Trees eligible for removal when harvesting in response to drought related stress shall meet one (1) or more of the following conditions:

(A) Trees that are dead, or,

(B) Trees with fifty (50) percent or more of the foliage-bearing crown that is dead or fading in color from a normal green to yellow, sorrel, or brown, excluding normal autumn coloration changes, or with evidence of successful bark beetle attacks, through indications of dead cambium and brood development distributed around the circumference of the bole, or;

(C) The RPF, in writing, within the submitted notice of exemption, certifies that trees are designated, by an RPF or Supervised Designee, with a stump mark, as likely to die due to drought related stress within one (1) year.

(e) The cutting or removal of trees to restore and conserve California black (Quercus kelloggii) or Oregon white (Quercus garryana) oak woodlands and associated grasslands, if all the following requirements are met:

(1) The Harvest Area does not cumulatively exceed, during any five (5) year period, three-hundred (300) acres per ownership in a Planning Watershed (CALWATER 2.2), for the timberland owner(s) identified pursuant to 14 CCR § 1038.1(a)(2).

(2) Upon submission, the notice of exemption shall include:

(A) Total acreage of the exemption Harvest Area per Planning Watershed (CALWATER 2.2).

(B) A description of the pre-harvest and post-harvest stand structure including an estimate, by species, of diameter distribution, and basal area.

(C) A certification that states:

1. That a minimum of thirty-five (35) square feet of basal area per acre of California black or Oregon white oak, or both, occupy the Harvest Area prior to Timber Operations; and

2. That the proposed Timber Operations are designed to restore and conserve California black oak and Oregon white oak and associated grasslands.

(3) No trees larger than twenty-six (26) inches stump diameter, measured eight (8) inches above ground level may be removed for commercial purposes.

(4) The post-harvest stand shall meet, at a minimum, the following criteria:

(A) A minimum of eighty (80) percent of the pre-treatment basal area of California black oak or Oregon white oak, or both, shall be retained; and

(B) A minimum of thirty-five (35) square feet of basal area of California black oak or Oregon white oak, or both, shall be retained; and

(C) Conifer Stocking, measured in basal area, shall represent less than twenty-five (25) percent of the total onsite Stocking of all trees within the Harvest Area. Decadent and Deformed Trees of Value to Wildlife (excluding hardwoods) shall not count towards this required Stocking Standard.

(D) All harvested conifers shall be within three-hundred (300) feet of a California black oak or Oregon white oak that is a minimum of four (4) inches dbh.

(E) As well as compliance with applicable Slash requirements pursuant to Table 1 of 14 CCR § 1038.1, all Slash shall be configured in a manner that minimizes risk of fire related mortality to all retained California black oak and Oregon white oak.

(5) A notice of exemption pursuant to this subsection is not applicable within the Southern Sub-District of the Coast Forest District, or the Southern Forest District.

(f) The cutting or removal of trees that eliminates the vertical continuity of vegetative fuels and the horizontal continuity of tree crowns for the purpose of reducing flammable materials and maintaining a Fuelbreak. An exemption pursuant to this subdivision shall be known as the Small Timberland Owner Exemption. The cutting or removal of trees in compliance with this subdivision shall be subject to all of the following conditions:

(1) A notice of exemption pursuant to this subsection is limited to small forest landowners who own:

(A) Sixty (60) acres or less of timberland within a single Planning Watershed (CALWATER 2.2) within the Coast Forest District, or;

(B) One-hundred (100) acres or less of Timberland within a single Planning Watershed (CALWATER 2.2) within the Northern or Southern Forest Districts.

(2) The RPF shall, upon submission of the notice of exemption, include a description of the pre-harvest stand structure and a statement of the minimum expected post-harvest stand Stocking levels. The residual stand shall consist primarily of healthy and vigorous dominant and codominant trees from the pre-harvest stand, well distributed throughout the Harvest Area. Minimum post-harvest stocking standards shall be achieved through Unevenaged Management, excluding group selection, and shall be as follows:

(A) On Site I lands, a minimum of one-hundred-fifty (150) square feet of basal area shall be retained within the Coast Forest District, while a minimum of one-hundred (100) square feet of basal area shall be retained within the Northern and Southern Forest Districts.

(B) On Site II lands, a minimum of one-hundred (100) square feet of basal area shall be retained within the Coast Forest District, while a minimum of seventy-five (75) square feet of basal area shall be retained within the Northern and Southern Forest Districts.

(C) On Site III lands, a minimum of seventy-five (75) square feet of basal area shall be retained.

(D) On Site IV and V lands, a minimum of fifty (50) square feet of basal area shall be retained.

(3) The QMD of trees greater than eight (8) inches dbh in the pre-harvest Harvest Area shall be increased in the post-harvest stand. The submitted notice of exemption shall report the expected post-harvest increase in QMD.

(4) Only trees less than thirty-two (32) inches stump diameter, measured at eight (8) inches above ground level, may be removed, with the following exception:

(A) No trees of the genus *Quercus sp.* that are greater than twenty-six (26) inches stump diameter, measured at eight (8) inches above ground level, may be removed.

(5) The six (6) largest trees per acre within the boundaries of the notice of exemption shall be retained.

(6) The post-harvest tree species composition shall be representative of the pre-harvest stand condition and demonstrate progression towards climax forest conditions, unless the RPF provides a justification, submitted with the notice of exemption, explaining how modification of the tree species diversity will benefit forest health and resiliency.

(7) Vertical spacing in the Harvest Area shall be achieved by treating dead fuels, excluding dead branches on the trees retained for stocking, to a minimum clearance distance of eight (8) feet measured from the base of the live crown of the post-harvest Dominants and Codominants to the top of the dead surface or ladder fuels, whichever is taller.

(8) The post-harvest canopy closure for trees which are Dominants and Codominants shall comply with the standards of 14 CCR § 1052.4(d)(3)(A).

(9) All trees to be harvested, or all trees to be retained, shall be marked by a RPF, or their Supervised Designee, prior to commencing timber felling.

(10) Timber Operations conducted under a notice of exemption pursuant this subdivision shall only occur once over a ten (10) year period on any given acre. During this ten (10) year period, the Director shall not approve a Plan that allows for an even-aged silvicultural prescription(s), or an RPF shall not submit a notice of exemption pursuant to 14 CCR § 1038.3, for acres where Timber Operations occurred under a notice of exemption pursuant to this subsection.

(11) The Department shall only accept a maximum of three (3) notices of exemption pursuant to this subsection submitted on behalf of a timberland owner.

(12) This subsection will expire five (5) years after the date of its effectiveness.

(g) Harvesting trees which are dead or Dying Trees as a result of wildfire within three-hundred (300) feet from any point of an Approved and Legally Permitted Structure or an Approved and Legally Permitted Structure that was damaged or destroyed by wildfire. The provisions of a notice of exemption submitted pursuant to this subsection supersede the provisions of any other notices of exemption that are submitted in the same Harvest Area. The following conditions apply:

(1) Only trees within three-hundred (300) feet from any point of an Approved and Legally Permitted Structure or an Approved and Legally Permitted Structure that was damaged or destroyed by wildfire may be harvested.

(2) Timber Operations conducted pursuant to this subsection shall be permitted if either:

(A) Timber Operations are consistent with, and within the geographic scope of, an existing valid and effective gubernatorial proclamation of a state of emergency or executive order. If the proposed Timber Operations are consistent with, and within the geographic scope of such a proclamation or order, the timberland owner shall submit a copy of the valid and effective gubernatorial proclamation of a state of emergency or executive order with the notice of exemption described within 14 CCR § 1038.1; or

(B) Timber Operations are necessary to remove trees which are dead or Dying Trees as a result of a wildfire which occurred no more than three (3) years prior to the submission of a notice of exemption as described within 14 CCR § 1038.1, but such Timber Operations are not consistent with, or within the geographic scope of, an existing valid and effective gubernatorial proclamation of a state of emergency or executive order. In such an instance, the timberland owner shall submit, to the Director, certification by an RPF that all trees proposed for harvest are dead or Dying Trees as a result of such a wildfire. This certification shall be included with the submitted notice of exemption as described within 14 CCR § 1038.1.

(3) Timber Operations conducted under this subsection shall conform to applicable city or county general plans, city or county implementing ordinances, and city or county zoning ordinances within which the Harvest Area is located. The Timber Operator or timberland owner shall certify that the city or county has been contacted and the Timber Operations conducted under the notice of exemption conforms with all city or county regulatory requirements.

(4) All Slash and Woody Debris greater than one (1) inch but less than eight (8) inches in diameter within one-hundred-fifty (150) feet of an Approved and Legally Permitted Structure or an Approved and Legally Permitted Structure that was damaged or destroyed by wildfire shall be removed, chipped, or piled and burned.

(5) All Slash created between one-hundred-fifty (150) feet and three-hundred (300) feet of an Approved and Legally Permitted Structure or an Approved and Legally Permitted Structure that was damaged or destroyed by wildfire shall be treated by Lopping For Fire Hazard Reduction, removed, chipped, or piled and burned within forty-five (45) days from the start of Timber Operations; except for the burning of piles, which shall be accomplished not later than April 1 of the year following their creation; or for piles created on or after September 1, not later than April 1 of the second year following creation.

Note: Authority cited: Sections 4551, 4553, 4584 and 4584.1, Public Resources Code. Reference: Sections 4290, 4291, 4516, 4527, 4584, 4584.1 and 4597, Public Resources Code; and EPIC v. California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection and Board of Forestry (1996) 43 Cal. App.4th 1011.

**1038.1 Additional Exceptions or Requirements**

Preparation or submittal of a notice of exemption described in 14 CCR § 1038, or Timber Operation thereunder, shall comply with the additional exceptions or requirements as described.

(a) A notice of exemption, pursuant to 14 CCR § 1038, shall be submitted to the Director, on a form provided by the Department, prior to the commencement of Timber Operations. The form shall contain the following information:

(1) The type of exemption.

(2) Name(s), address, and telephone number(s) of the Timber Owner(s), timberland owner(s), and Timber Operator.

(3) Name, address, and telephone number and license number of the RPF, if applicable.

(4) Legal description of the location of the Timber Operation.

(5) The tentative date of commencement of Timber Operations.

(6) A signature of the landowner certifying that they are the landowner and have read and understand the information contained within the notice of exemption.

(b) For notices of exemption pursuant to 14 CCR § 1038, the additional requirements apply:

(1) All Timber Operations conducted in the Lake Tahoe Region must have a valid Tahoe Basin Tree Removal Permit, as defined by TRPA, or shall be conducted under a valid TRPA Memorandum of Understanding, when such a permit is required by TRPA. (2) The Department shall provide the appropriate RWQCB, CDFW, and CGS with copies of the submitted notice of exemption prior to the tentative date of commencement of Timber Operations.

(3) No helicopter yarding shall be allowed.

(c) The following additional exceptions or requirements apply to exemptions pursuant to 14 CCR § 1038 as provided in Table 1 below:

**Table 1: Additional Exceptions or Requirements**

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| Applicable Exceptions or Requirements Notice of Exemption Type(s) |
| 14 CCR § 1038.1(c)(1) | 14 CCR § 1038(c)(6), (d), (e), and (f) |
| 14 CCR § 1038.1(c)(2) | 14 CCR § 1038 (e) and (f) |
| 14 CCR § 1038.1(c)(3) & (c)(16) | Applies to all notices of exemption pursuant to 14 CCR § 1038 |
| 14 CCR § 1038.1(c)(4)(A) | 14 CCR § 1038 (d) |
| 14 CCR § 1038.1 (c)(4)(B) | 14 CCR § 1038 (e) and (f) |
| 14 CCR § 1038.1(c)(5) through (14) | 14 CCR § 1038 (b), (c), (d), (e), (f), and (g) |
| 14 CCR § 1038.1(c)(15) | 14 CR § 1038 (a), (b), (c), (d), (e), and (g) |

(1) The notice of exemption shall be prepared, signed, and submitted to the Department by a RPF.

(2) Upon submission of the notice of exemption, a Confidential Archaeological Letter pursuant to 14 CCR § 929.1 [949.1; 969.1] must be provided to the Director and the RPF shall send a copy of the notice of exemption to Native Americans as defined in 14 CCR § 895.1.

(3) No Timber Operations on any site that satisfies the criteria listed in 14 CCR § 895.1 for a Significant Archaeological or Historical Site, except under the following conditions:

(A) If a Significant Archaeological or Historical Site is identified by the RPF preparing the notice of exemption within the project boundary, the site may be preserved in place by capping or covering with a layer of soil prior to submission.

(B) If a site has been preserved in place, the RPF preparing the notice of exemption shall obtain written concurrence from a Department archeologist prior to submission indicating operations will not cause damage to a Significant Archaeological or Historical Site.

(C) The written concurrence from a Department archeologist shall be submitted with the notice of exemption.

(4) Fuel treatments as follows:

(A) Slash within the Harvest Area shall be treated to achieve a maximum post-harvest depth of thirty (30) inches above the ground. All Slash shall be lopped, removed, chipped, piled for burning, or otherwise treated, within one (1) year from the date of the Director receiving the notice except for burning. Burning shall be completed within two (2) years from the date of the Director receiving the notice.

(B) Slash shall be treated to achieve a maximum post-harvest depth of eighteen (18) inches above the ground on at least eighty (80) percent of the Harvest Area. All Slash shall be lopped, removed, chipped, piled for burning, or otherwise treated, within one (1) year from the date of the Director receiving the notice except for burning. Burning shall be completed within two (2) years from the date of the Director receiving the notice.

(5) No tractor or heavy equipment operations on slopes greater than fifty (50) percent. No construction of new tractor roads on slopes greater than forty (40) percent.

(6) Timber Operations within any Special Treatment Area shall comply with the rules associated with that Special Treatment Area.

(7) No tractor or heavy equipment operations on known Unstable Areas.

(8) No new road construction or reconstruction, as determined pursuant 14 CCR § 895.1.

(9) No heavy equipment operations within the standard width of a WLPZ, as determined pursuant to 14 CCR § 916.4 [936.4, 956.4] (b), except for maintenance of roads and Drainage Facilities or structures.

(10) No known sites of rare, threatened or endangered plants or animals will be disturbed, threatened or damaged.

(11) No Timber Operations within the buffer zone of a Sensitive Species.

(12) No timber harvesting within the standard width of a WLPZ, as determined pursuant to 14 CCR § 916.4 [936.4, 956.4] (b), except sanitation-salvage harvesting, as identified within 14 CCR § 913.3 [933.3, 953.3], where immediately after completion of operations, the area shall meet the Stocking Standards of 14 CCR § 912.7 [932.7, 952.7] (b)(2), or, except the removal of dead or Dying trees where consistent with 14 CCR § 916.4 [936.4, 956.4] (b). Trees to be harvested shall be marked by, or under the supervision of, an RPF prior to Timber Operations.

(13) The Director shall notify the submitter of the date of the Director’s receipt of the notice of exemption. Timber Operations pursuant to the notice of exemption may not commence for five (5) working days from the date of the Director's receipt of the notice of exemption unless this delay is waived by the Director. If the notice of exemption is not complete and accurate, the Director shall notify the submitter within five (5) working days from the date of the Director’s receipt, and the Timber Operations may not commence. The Director shall determine whether the notice of exemption is complete and accurate, and if so, shall send a copy of a notice of acceptance to the submitter; provided, however, if the Director does not act within five (5) working days of receipt of the notice of exemption, Timber Operations may commence.

(A) Timber Operations may not be conducted without a copy of the Director's notice of acceptance of the notice of exemption at the operating site, except where the Director has failed to act within the five (5) working-day review period.

(14) Before beginning Timber Operations, the LTO, RPF, or person responsible for submittal of the notice of exemption shall notify CAL FIRE of the actual commencement date of operations. The notification, by telephone, mail, or email, shall be directed to the appropriate CAL FIRE Unit Headquarters, Forest Practice Inspector or other designated personnel. If the notification is provided by mail, Timber Operations may not commence until three (3) days after the postmark date of notification. The provisions of this paragraph do not supersede the requirements of paragraph (13) above.

(15) No large old trees, defined as a tree that existed before 1800 AD and is greater than sixty (60) inches in diameter at stump height for Sierra or Coast Redwoods, and forty-eight (48) inches in diameter at stump height for all other tree species, or Decadent and Deformed Trees with Value to Wildlife shall be harvested unless the following apply:

(A) The tree is not critical for the maintenance of a Late Successional Stand. (B) A RPF attached to the submitted notice of exemption a written explanation and justification for the harvest of the tree based on the RPF’s finding of any of the following:

1. The tree is a hazard to safety or property.

2. The removal of the tree is necessary for the construction of a building as approved by the appropriate local jurisdiction and shown on the county or city approved site plan, which shall be attached to the submitted notice of exemption.

3. The tree is dead or likely to die within one (1) year of the date of the proposed removal, as determined by a RPF.

(C) An RPF’s written explanation or justification need not be attached to the submitted notice of exemption if an approved Habitat Conservation Plan, Sustained Yield Plan, or Plan addresses large old tree retention for the area in which the large old tree is proposed for removal and the removal is in compliance with the retention standards of that document.

(16) To terminate a notice of exemption, the Timberland owner shall submit a letter to the Director which includes the notice number, a statement requesting termination of the notice prior to expiration, and a signature of the Timberland owner.

Note: Authority cited: Sections 4551, 4553 and 4584, Public Resources Code. Reference: Sections 4527, 4527.5, 4584 and 4584.1, Public Resources Code.