

COMMUNITY NOTICE

CLEARCUTTING CALAVERAS FORESTS

The timber giant Sierra Pacific Industries (SPI), intends to clearcut 1 million (equivalent to 2/3) of their 1.5 million acres of forestland in the Sierra Nevada. With 74,000 acres of SPI land in Calaveras County (shown in red in Figure 1, below), this means **50,000 acres of forest relevant to our lives and our communities are to be clearcut unless we take action.**

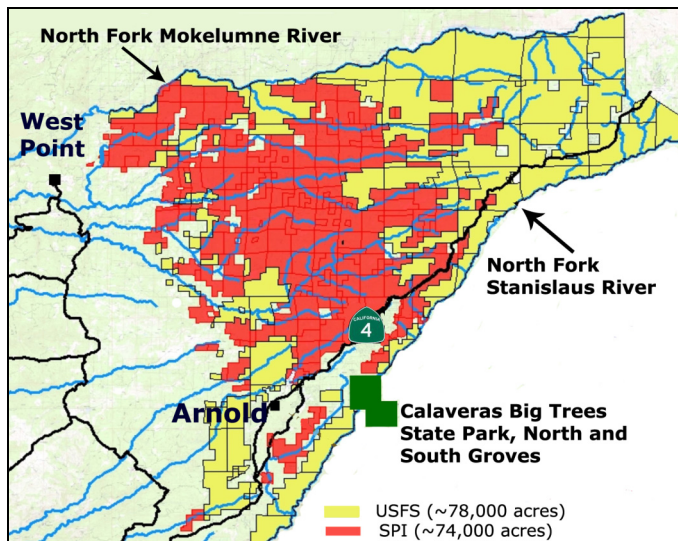


Figure 1. Land Ownership by Sierra Pacific Industries and United States Forest Service, Calaveras County

Clearcutting is already underway. SPI is replacing our existing diverse forest, having many kinds of trees, plants and animals, with commercial tree plantations. To create these tree farms large amounts of pesticides and herbicides, including strychnine, are used on the clearcuts to eliminate competition for SPI's tree seedlings. Soil erodes more rapidly on clearcuts than in selectively harvested areas, where some trees are left to protect the soil and provide for natural forest re-growth. Both erosion and pesticides can damage water supplies.

Clearcutting is underway in Calaveras County, however, much of the destruction is hidden from view by trees left along the roadways. Even so, some cuts are now visible from Boards Crossing, certain Highway 4 vistas and hiking trails, and even from Calaveras Big Trees State Park.

CLEARCUTS AROUND CALAVERAS BIG TREES STATE PARK

The health and beauty of Calaveras Big Trees State Park may be at risk if SPI continues to clearcut around the

park. Recently, clearcuts were approved for three sides of the South Grove of the park.

The threats to Calaveras Big Trees State Park and other areas from SPI's industrial-scale clearcutting were challenged by an Ebbetts Pass Forest Watch lawsuit. In 2006, a California Appeals Court ruled in favor of Ebbetts Pass Forest Watch and against SPI's proposed plan to clearcut lands around the South Grove of the park. The ruling requires the California Department of Forestry (CDF) to evaluate the cumulative effects of clearcutting and the impacts of the large amounts of pesticides proposed for the timber harvest around the park. With SPI's support, CDF has appealed the ruling. At this time, the threat remains that the California Supreme Court could reinstate CDF's approval of SPI's clearcutting plan near the Calaveras Big Trees State Park.



Figure 2. Sierra Pacific Industries' work in Calaveras County. This photo was taken on November 9, 2005 in the South Fork of the Mokelumne River watershed.

Most of the citizens of Calaveras County and California, do not believe that our forests should become the fragmented checkerboard of habitats that clearcutting creates (as shown in Figure 2 above). The use of industrial-scale clearcutting must be stopped in Calaveras County and elsewhere in the Sierra Nevada!

GET INVOLVED

Help to stop the destruction of the Sierra Nevada. Get involved. Visit Ebbetts Pass Forest Watch online, call us or stop by our office in Cedar Center in Arnold to learn how you can help. Consider donating time or money to help us continue to fight for our forest!