

Current logging and clearcutting in Calaveras and Tuolumne 8-2011

Which forests are being clearcut in Calaveras and Tuolumne this year? How much damage has already been done? How much more is planned?

Clearcutting in Calaveras County

- **Sierra Pacific Industries (SPI) has already had timber plans for clearcut-type logging covering about 16,000 acres - equivalent to 25 square miles - of forest approved in Calaveras County.** You can see what has already been clearcut on a satellite map made for EPFW at www.sierraforest.org.ⁱ

- **Sierra Pacific Industries is currently clearcutting even more in Calaveras County.**

Two plans in the Mokelumne River watershed, Swamped and South Rim, include 722 clearcut acres, over 1.1 square miles.ⁱⁱ

Another ongoing logging plan in Calaveras County is the Big Buck THP, located about 8 miles southeast of West Point, and involving a total of 1,375 acres of selection and group selection patch cutting.

CAL FIRE recently approved the **Wilson Lake** logging plan containing 354 acres of clearcut-type logging three miles east of West Point on Winton Road in the Bear Creek watershed.

- **Sierra Pacific Industries continues to submit new plans to clearcut even more**

The Blueberry logging plan, including 318 acres of clearcutting, is now being reviewed for approval by CAL FIRE. This plan is located 16 miles west of West Point on Winton Road and is in the lower Blue Creek watershed, an area already damaged from aggressive clearcutting as shown on the Calaveras map at www.sierraforest.org (Winton Road is marked on this map)

The most clearcut logging plan from Sierra Pacific Industries 4-11-014 CAL (Porkchop) is 500 acres; 73% clearcut, 14% selection, 10% no-harvest, 4% shelterwood logging. Lower Forest Creek (MD: T7N R14E Sec.23, 24, 25, 26, 35, 36; T7N R15E Sec.19, 30, 31). It would allow winter operations, high erosion hazard, steep slopes up to 65%, Seven CA spotted owls are within 1.3mi, goshawk sightings nearby, yellowlip pansy monkeyflower, threebract onion, trees up to 60" dbh. Estimated public comment deadline: 10/16/11.

This THP is generally SE of Sacramento about 6 miles NE of West Point, CA. It is in a mid elevation watershed from 3,800 to 4,980 feet that has been hammered by past SPI clearcut logging. Given the high percentage of clearcutting and oversotory removal proposed, it is likely that SPI is removing whatever habitat remains (trees up to 60" dbh and 200 years old). Most of the proposed logging is

cable and tractor on slopes up to 65% with a high erosion hazard. SPI wants to use 3 landings in streamside areas and 1 road in a streamside area. There is also over 4,200 feet of new road construction proposed, including 6 road-crossing repair sites with dip construction, rocking and ditch repair. 3 oversized units are proposed, and 3 water drafting sites. There is an old legacy road with 2 fillslope/cutslope failures associated with it. The THP also reports that habitat in the area is known to support goshawks and great gray owls but offers no other information. They reported 5 CA spotted owls although others found 7 owls within 1.3mi using a public database. There also is a population of threebrct onion and 5 populations of yellowlip pansy monkeyflower nearby

What about logging in Tuolumne?

You can see what has already been clearcut on a satellite map made for EPFW at www.sierraforest.org.ⁱⁱⁱ

- **In its Cow Camp timber plan, Sierra Pacific Industries is currently clearcutting in** the Tuolumne Game Refuge and in the watersheds of Beaver Creek, which flow through Calaveras Big Trees State Park.^{iv}
- **Grizzly Meadow THP** - involves 35 acres of selection logging, 47 acres of clearcutting, and 545 acres of "alternative visual retention" even-age treatments closely resembling clearcutting. Out of 628 acres designated for logging treatments in this Griswold Creek watershed, 592 acres of those acres are outside the stream corridor and are planned for aggressive removal of everything except, at most, 4-8 trees per acre.
- **Granite THP**, located near Cherry Lake in Tuolumne County, would allow 443 acres of selection logging, but also 165 acres of clear-cutting, and 154 acres of Alternative Prescription (Visual Retention), for a total of 319 acres of clearcut-like logging treatments.

What can you do protest the clearcutting in our region and state, and help the growing coalition of groups trying to restore responsible logging to our unique forests?

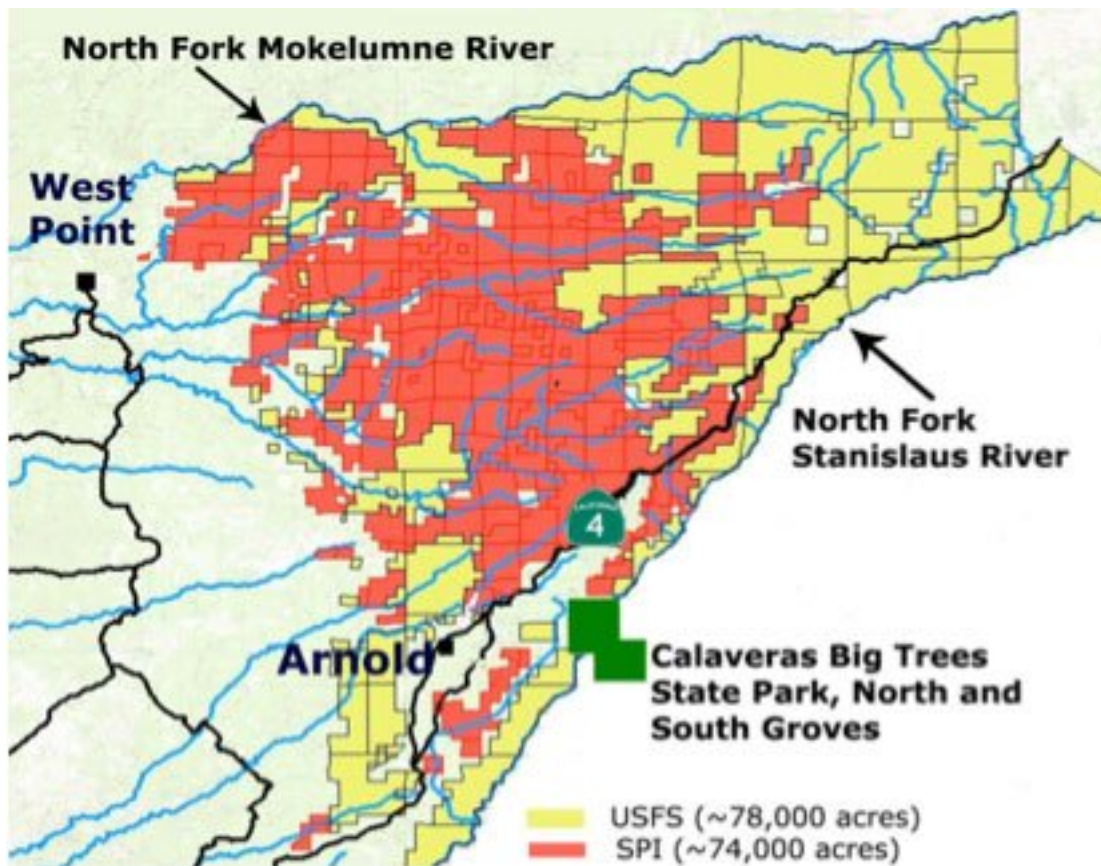
- **Take easy actions now!**
 - Go to <http://action.sierraclub.org/stopclearcutting> to ask Governor Brown and Resources Secretary John Laird to stop the clearcutting.
 - Go to <http://www.pelicannetwork.net> and www.battlecreek.org to find out how clearcutting is threatening a salmon spawning stream and historic salmon restoration project, and to send your comments about this special watershed to Governor Brown and Secretary Laird.
 - Find out more about how clearcutting endangers Sierra wildlife and plans by visiting www.sierraconservation.org, or www.cserc.org
 - Join Ebbetts Pass Forest Watch at www.forestwatchers.org, supporting its work for responsible logging, healthy watersheds, the Sierra's unique wildlife, and a strong local tourism-based economy.

- Look at the satellite views of Calaveras and Tuolumne County and the entire Sierra Nevada range on Google Earth and at www.sierraforest.org

Background information on Sierra Pacific Industry’s clearcutting:

Sierra Pacific Industries has said it intends to clearcut 2/3 of the 1.7 million acres of California forest land. This is well over one million acres – over 1,750 square miles - of clearcutting in the Sierra Nevada.

SPI owns 74,000 acres of land in Calaveras County (shown in red in Figure 1, below). This means 50,000 acres of forest crucial to our lives and our communities are being clearcut and converted from diverse, natural forests into tree plantations. They are unlikely to ever again become rich biological forests, especially since SPI’s plan to is continue clearcutting these areas every 60-80 years.



ⁱ Last year one of Sierra Pacific Industry’s clearcut logging plans was **Squiggly**, which used logging methods like clearcuts to convert 384 acres of biodiverse timberland from natural forests into tree plantations.

ⁱⁱ **Swamped logging plan – 424 acres of clearcutting.** The Swamped THP would clearcut 424 acres plus result in another 116 acres being aggressively logged to create a shaded fuelbreak. Logging would occur in the Swamp Creek portion of the upper Mokelumne River watershed.

Projects are located in the Swamp Creek Watershed, which is a tributary of the South Fork Mokelumne River.

Directions:

From the town of White Pines off of Highway 4, take 7N08 approximately 10 1/4 miles to the first gate on the left after the bridge crossing on the South Fork Mokelumne River. Project 7 is approximately 2 1/2 miles down this road when taking the first left at the fork. Project #9 is approximately 3 miles when taking the first right.

South Rim logging plan – 298 acres of clearcutting and logging, which will convert native forests into evenaged tree plantations. The South Rim THP lies in the Mokelumne River watershed. This massive THP would allow 231 acres of clear-cutting, 206 acres of selection logging, 1,275 acres of commercial thinning, and 1,275 acres of shelterwood removal step for a total of 1,712 acres of logging. The 13 clearcut units proposed for this THP range in size from 12 to 15 acres.

LOCATION

The South Rim THP is located in both Amador and Calaveras County within the Lower Panther Creek watershed, in T7N, R14E, Sections 13,14,15,16,19,20,21,23,24,29 and 30. The plan is approximately 4 miles East of West Point.

The plan area may be reached by taking Winton Road out of West Point to Lily Valley Circle Road. There is a company gate at the top of Lily Valley Circle Drive that can be used to access the plan area.

ⁱⁱⁱ Last year one of Sierra Pacific Industry's clearcut logging plans was **Squiggly**, which used logging methods like clearcuts to convert 384 acres of biodiverse timberland from natural forests into tree plantations.

^{iv} **Cow Camp THP** – includes 317 acres of selection logging, but also **109 acres of clearcutting** and **140 acres of visual retention treatment for a total of 249 acres of clearcut-type logging** in an area northeast of Calaveras Big Trees State Park in the Beaver Creek watershed. This plan is 1½ air miles southeast of Boards Crossing in Tuolumne County.

Background on Cow Camp THP

The Cow Camp THP lies approximately 8 miles northeast of State Highway 4, within the Middle Beaver Creek watershed in Tuolumne County. SPI owns approximately 85% of the land within this watershed. The Cow Camp THP is located within the larger Beaver Creek Watershed complex, which has been designated a Keystone Watershed by the State of California. The Middle Beaver Creek watershed is also only a portion of the overall Beaver Creek Watershed, which includes the Upper and Lower Beaver Creek Watersheds. The planning area is located within a State Game Refuge and lies just northeast of Calaveras Big Trees State Park