

Patrick Emmert - Consulting Forester, RPF #1839

To: The Better Place Forests Company

From: Patrick Emmert - Consulting Forester - RPF #1839

Date: December 12, 2019

Re: Timber Compatibility Analysis for proposed Mariposa County Site - APN 003-010-034 and 003-010-035

Background:

The Better Place Forests Company plans to utilize this 170-acre property as a conservation memorial forest where the public will have the opportunity to purchase cremation spreading rights to individual trees in the well-managed forest setting. The objective of the conservation memorial forest will be to facilitate visitation and access for those that choose to participate, while improving the overall forest health through active management by reducing fuels, enhancing tree health, and managing non-native species. Since 2001, the property has been under active forest management with numerous timber harvesting operations and forest improvement treatments performed. Recent 2014-2019 management activities were focused on addressing the drought mortality that severely impacted the property, as well as Mariposa County. The forest property currently exceeds the minimum stocking standards of the state and the overall forest health is in excellent condition.

Analysis:

The forested property has functioned as a harvestable unit in the past and, as presented, the conservation memorial forest project will not diminish the forest productivity or eliminate the harvest infrastructure from the site. Management strategy involves safety-related improvements to an existing permanent road; construction of a 1,400 square foot structure for visitors, employees, and rest station with appropriate parking on an existing clearing/log landing; a trail network to facilitate cremation spreading and visitation; and continued forest management to perpetuate a healthy forest ecosystem. The strategy, as well as the improvements, are closely aligned with the Development standards outlined in Chapter 17.44 (TEZ). The construction of the structure and parking improvements are permitted under Section 1104.1 of Title 14 CCR, additionally outlined in Chapter 17.44 (TEZ). The forest management strategy of reducing fuels, enhancing tree health, and managing non-native species supports the Landowner's acknowledgement that the conservation memorial forest business concept requires the growing and harvesting of timber and forest products, as well as the uses and facilities appurtenant to timber growing and harvesting, including but not limited to roads, log landings, and log storage areas. In support of this, the Better Place Forest sales contract clearly states that a customer's tree can/may be felled for a variety of reasons, and if this occurs, a replacement tree will be planted in its place. Natural tree growth, as well as natural events such as insects, wind, snow, drought, and fire will occur and impact this forest setting in the future. The Forest and Land Management Plan prepared for Better Place Forests is

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intended to guide the Landowners in their accepted role as responsible Forest Stewards. Information contained in Future Timber Harvest Plans and Market Conditions/Locations, and Economic Assessment specifically address timber harvest methods, systems, CEQA authorizations, and forest product marketing opportunities.

Conclusion:

The utilization of the parcels by the Better Place Forest Company will not preclude the future harvesting of timber. This utilization appears to be consistent with the California Timberland Productivity Act of 1982.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Patrick Emmert", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Patrick Emmert  
RPF #1839