Draft Initial Study-Negative Declaration
For the Proposed
Soquel Demonstration State Forest
2014 General Forest Management Plan

Santa Cruz County, California

Prepared by:

The State of California
Board of Forestry and Fire Protection
P.O. Box 944246
Sacramento, CA

The Lead Agency Pursuant to Section 21082.1 of the
The California Environmental Quality Act

August 26, 2014

Contents

Initial Study-Negative Declaration 4
Regulatory Guidance 4
Purpose of the Initial Study 4
Project Location 5
Background and Need for the Project 5
Project Objectives 6
Project Description 6
Environmental Setting 10
Environmental Permits 12
Summary of Findings 14
Figure 1 – Project Vicinity Map 15
Figure 2 – Project Location Map 16
Figure 3 - SDSF Planning Watersheds 17
Environmental Factors Potentially Affected and Determination 18
Environmental Factors Potentially Affected: 18
Determination: 18
Environmental Checklist and Discussion 19
Aesthetics 19
Agricultural Resources 22
Air Quality 23
Biological Resources 26
Cultural Resources 36
Geology and Soils 40
Greenhouse Gas Emissions 46
Hazards and Hazardous Materials 49
Hydrology and Water Quality 58
Land Use and Planning 63
Mineral Resources 64
Noise 65
Population and Housing 67
Public Services 67
Recreation 68
Utilities and Service Systems 71

Mandatory Findings of Significance 73
References Cited 86
List of Preparers of This Document 88
List of Experts Consulted 89
Appendix A – SDSF General Forest Management Plan 90

Initial Study-Negative Declaration

This Initial Study-Negative Declaration (IS-ND) has been prepared by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) under contract to the California Board of Forestry and Fire Protection (Board) to evaluate potential environmental effects of the proposed Soquel Demonstration State Forest 2014 General Forest Management Plan (CAL FIRE, 2014). The project is located in Santa Cruz County, California near the communities of Aptos, Soquel and Los Gatos. This document has been prepared in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (Public Resources Code Section 21000 *et seq*.) and the State CEQA Guidelines (14 CCR § 15000 *et seq*.).

Regulatory Guidance

An Initial Study is prepared by a lead agency to determine if a project may have a significant effect on the environment (14 CCR § 15063(a)), and thus to determine the appropriate environmental document. In accordance with 14 CCR § 15070, a "public agency shall prepare…a proposed negative declaration or mitigated negative declaration…when: (a) The Initial Study shows that there is no substantial evidence…that the project may have a significant impact upon the environment, or (b) The Initial Study identifies potentially significant effects but revisions to the project plans or proposal are agreed to by the applicant and such revisions would reduce potentially significant effects to a less-than-significant level." In this circumstance, the lead agency prepares a written statement describing its reasons for concluding that the proposed project would not have a significant effect on the environment and, therefore, does not require the preparation of an Environmental Impact Report. This IS-ND conforms to these requirements and to the content requirements of 14 CCR § 15071.

Purpose of the Initial Study

CAL FIRE has primary authority for carrying out the proposed Soquel Demonstration State Forest (SDSF) 2014 General Forest Management Plan (GFMP) project and the Board is the lead agency under CEQA. The purpose of this IS-ND is to present to the public the environmental consequences of implementing the proposed project and describe the adjustments made to the project to avoid significant environmental effects or reduce them to a less-than-significant level. This disclosure document is being made available to the public for review and comment. The IS-ND is being circulated for public review and comment for a review period of 30 days. The beginning and ending dates of the 30-day public review period will be indicated on the Notice of Intent. Views and comments from the public and reviewing agencies on how the proposed project may affect the environment are welcomed. Written comments for the Board's consideration should be postmarked on or prior to the date the public review period will close as indicated on the Notice of Intent. Written comments via email must be received on or prior to the date the public review period closes, as listed on the Notice of Intent. Comments should be addressed to:

George Gentry, Executive Officer
State Board of Forestry and Fire Protection
P.O. Box 944246
Sacramento, CA 94244-2460
Phone: (916) 653-8007
Email: board.public.comments@fire.ca.gov

After comments are received from the public and reviewing agencies, the Board will consider those comments and may (1) adopt the Negative Declaration and approve the proposed project; (2) undertake additional environmental studies; or (3) abandon the project. If the project is approved, CAL FIRE will be responsible for implementing the project.

Project Location

SDSF is located in central Santa Cruz County (Figures 1 and 2). SDSF was originally part of the Shoquel Augmentation Rancho, a Mexican land grant; its boundaries were established by metes and bounds, rather than township and range. Elevation ranges from 500 to 2,500 feet. SDSF comprises 2,681 acres of which 2,677 acres are forest or woodland vegetation. SDSF is situated approximately eight miles northeast of Santa Cruz and 18 miles south of San Jose. The Forest of Nisene Marks State Park adjoins a majority of SDSF's southern boundary. The northeast corner of SDSF shares a common corner with lands owned by Midpenninsula Regional Open Space District. The remaining perimeter of SDSF is bounded by a myriad of smaller, privately owned parcels. The nearest community is Soquel, about seven miles to the south.

Background and Need for the Project

SDSF, when established in 1990, was the first addition to the Demonstration State Forest system in over 40 years. Former Assemblyman Sam Farr authored SDSF's enabling legislation, Assembly Bill (AB) 1965 of 1987 (now PRC §§ 4660-4664), which provided for the protection and preservation of SDSF as an intensively managed educational and research forest. It also contained special provisions for the use of SDSF, including a limited amount of commercial timber operations in order to provide funds for maintenance and operation, reasonable capital costs, and other expenses incurred in fulfilling the objectives of PRC § 4660.

The legislative authority for the State Forest System is contained in PRC §§ 4631-4658. CAL FIRE is responsible for the management of SDSF. As part of this oversight, the SDSF staff operates under a management plan, which provides general objectives and goals. The plan is required pursuant to PRC § 4645 and Article 8 of Board policy.

Guided by the statutes, the Board establishes policy, which governs SDSF and other state forests. Board policy states that the SDSF GFMP shall be prepared by CAL FIRE, with appropriate public review, for approval by the Board. CAL FIRE shall present to the Board a thorough review of each existing plan at least every five years. After each review, the Board may direct CAL FIRE either to continue management under the existing plan, to prepare amendments to the plan, or to prepare a new plan for public review and Board approval. CAL FIRE shall submit the requested amendments or plan to the Board within one year after each request. CAL FIRE shall

continue management under existing plans with appropriate consideration for changes in law or regulation, until amendments or new plans are approved by the Board.

CEQA requires analysis of the potential environmental impacts of a forest management plan. This requirement is fulfilled by this Negative Declaration.

Project Objectives

The project is to update the 1998 GFMP for SDSF. The project gives programmatic guidance to SDSF staff on the planned on-the-ground management of SDSF for the next five-to-ten years. It serves as a guide to forest managers as well as a public disclosure of the management direction at SDSF. It refers to, and should be interpreted in context with, the 2010 Option A Plan for SDSF (CAL FIRE, 2010), which contains a large landscape-level strategic analysis of sustainable management on SDSF. Using a planning interval of 100 years, the Option A Plan establishes the long-term sustained yield for SDSF and the long term strategy for protecting other public trust resources.

Project Description

The SDSF GFMP provides direction and guidance for the managed uses of forest resources and non-timber resources with an emphasis on resource protection and enhancement, demonstration and education, research, timber management, and recreation. Timber harvesting is one of the mechanisms used to implement forest management, protect public trust resources and generate revenue. Other mechanisms include reforestation, road rehabilitation, watershed restoration, fuels reduction, and other methods. All management activities conducted on SDSF under the guidance of the project are subject to further CEQA analysis at the project level. Much of this will occur under timber harvesting plans (THPs), which will undergo CAL FIRE's functional equivalent process (PRC § 21080.5). Other projects will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis as to the proper CEQA analysis. In any case, site-specific CEQA analysis, including imposition of mitigation to ensure a less-than-significant effect, will occur prior to on-the-ground implementation of specific management actions outlined in the GFMP. Specific research projects or management actions may require approval or qualify for an exemption from regulatory and programmatic direction by the California Board of Forestry and Fire Protection.

The GFMP is included in Appendix A. Other subjects and greater detail relating to the topics listed here can be found there.

Below is a listing of SDSF's general management goals.

<u>Resource Protection and Enhancement</u>

1. Protect, restore, and enhance the significant natural values of the Soquel Demonstration State Forest.
2. Provide watershed protection and conduct baseline studies and monitoring of hydrological resources.
3. Demonstrate fire protection using a coordinated fire prevention and control system, which includes education and enforcement of fire prevention guidelines, patrol,

vegetation management including prescribed fire, fuelbreak construction, pre-attack strategies, and suppression tactics.

4. Improve fisheries and wildlife habitat to foster healthy populations and promote biodiversity.
5. Monitor, study, and implement controls for various forest pests using Departmental and outside specialists.
6. Monitor, study, and implement controls for invasive plant species.
7. Identify all significant archaeological and historical features and protect them during all management activities.
8. Conserve soil resources by reducing erosion resulting from flooding, earthquakes, logging activities, roads, and trails.

Demonstration and Education

1. Conduct innovative demonstrations and education in forest management including silviculture, habitat diversity, logging methods, hydrology, resource protection, and recreation.
2. Provide forestry education opportunities for the public, forest landowners, the educational community, the media, natural resource professionals, and environmental groups.
3. Develop interpretive resources to help visitors understand the various coast redwood forest communities and the basics of forest land management.
4. Establish a volunteer program to assist staff in providing forestry interpretation for visitors.
5. Provide suitable public access and parking.
6. Plan for a Forestry Education Center to be designed and constructed to serve as the focal point for demonstration and education activities.

Research

1. Conduct research in forestry and natural resource management, including the benefits and risks of forest operations in watersheds close to urban areas.
2. Serve as a laboratory for in-house projects and encourage research by other agencies, interest groups, and educational institutions.
3. Disseminate information to appropriate individuals in an effective and timely manner.

Timber Management

1. Demonstrate sustained-yield timber harvesting practices through harvest operations that balance harvest rates with growth over time and are compatible with rural land use in Santa Cruz County, while promoting recreation opportunities, forest health, watershed protection, wildlife, and fisheries values as well as aesthetic enjoyment.
2. Protect old-growth redwood and old-growth Douglas-fir trees and recruit additional late-successional forest stands.
3. Incorporate demonstration, research, and restoration objectives into timber management activities whenever possible.
4. Research and implement hardwood stand management alternatives including modification to enhance wildlife habitat, utilization for various forest products, and conversion to softwood timber stands consistent with the legislative goals of PRC §§

4660-4664.

Recreation

1. Provide for recreational opportunities, which are oriented toward foot, bicycle, and equestrian traffic and include trails, roads, and picnic areas. Limited camping may be permitted if consistent with objectives and prior authorization is obtained.
2. Integrate recreation management, forestry education, resource protection and examples of timber harvesting so as to demonstrate how they can be compatible.
3. Prohibit fishing, the use of motorized vehicles, shooting, hunting, camping, fires, and night time use, unless specifically authorized.

SDSF Management Goals

SDSF management goals will be achieved by meeting a series of specific objectives, listed within the GFMP, for Biota, Fisheries, Watershed Assessment, Demonstration and Education, Timber Management, Research, Recreation, Resource Protection, Archeology, and Roads. These objectives include:

1. Conduct preharvest and post-project surveys to identify active nest sites of all raptors and special-status bird species that may occur. Those species are: Cooper's hawk, sharp-shinned hawk, long-eared owl, and yellow warbler. In addition, preharvest surveys will be conducted for California red-legged frog, foothill yellow-legged frog, and southwestern pond turtle.
2. Continue to use mechanical methods for controlling invasive species with Ben Lomond Conservation Camp crews and volunteers each year. Use additional follow up treatments to improve effectiveness, such as herbicide application or flaming where and when appropriate. Extra effort will be concentrated on new populations prior to them becoming established and producing seed banks.
3. Conduct biological assessments incrementally in new project areas. These will include results of California Natural Diversity Database reports, botanical surveys, and other site-specific assessments.
4. Implement mitigations through the THP process that benefit anadromous fish.
5. Coordinate with the County of Santa Cruz, the Resource Conservation District of Santa Cruz County, National Marine Fisheries Service, California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), and other groups to complete habitat restoration and maintenance projects, including installing large wood in Soquel Creek and control of invasive plants. Private groups such as the Monterey Bay Salmon and Trout Project or crews from the Ben Lomond Conservation Camp may help with projects such as channel stabilization, channel complexity and pool creation, retention of existing instream cover via large woody debris (LWD), riparian vegetation maintenance and enhancement, and reconnection of floodplains and off-channel habitat.
6. Continue fish sampling in Amaya Creek and the East Branch of Soquel Creek in cooperation with National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA Fisheries') Southwest Fisheries Science Center. Electrofishing will be the primary method, but other procedures such as underwater observation may be incorporated. Fish will be evaluated for species, size, health, and location.
7. Continue to monitor in-stream temperatures in the East Branch of Soquel Creek and Amaya Creek at the seven sites that have been established.

8. Build on existing funding from the Integrated Watershed Restoration Program to develop baseline fisheries, macroinvertabrate, water quality, and habitat data prior to implementation of fisheries restoration projects to assess effectiveness. Aquatic habitat surveys will be conducted in accordance with CDFW methodologies as funding allows.
9. Continue to implement the treatment priorities for high and moderate risk inventoried sediment sources in the Soquel Demonstration State Forest watershed assessment area developed by Pacific Watershed Associates (PWA) (Pacific Watershed Associates, 2003).
10. Demonstrate forest management practices and ecosystem enhancement techniques. To accomplish this, incorporate an identifiable demonstration feature in timber sale planning and implementation, recreation designs and development, and other forest management activities, as appropriate.
11. Continue to encourage educational organizations, such as local public schools, to use SDSF for forestry education programs and field trips. Stimulate participation by offering quality educational experiences that are both informative and enjoyable. Maintain old and establish new working relationships with educators and their students.
12. Coordinate planning of interpretive facilities with all activities, including recreational use, demonstration projects, resource protection, and timber harvesting. Install interpretive facilities near popular recreation sites, parking locations, and areas receiving silvicultural, enhancement, and restoration treatments.
13. Continue to develop volunteer programs and docent recruitment. Provide support to volunteers to lead tours, patrol the Forest, and assist with education, research, and monitoring programs.
14. Continue to progress on plans for the Forestry Education Center (FEC) based on expected use, cost, building size, and exhibit development. Select and acquire, if possible, an appropriate location for the FEC based on the above criteria as well as proximity to SDSF and accessibility by the general public.
15. Harvest between 800,000 and 900,000 board feet per year for the period from 2010 to 2020. This is estimated to be approximately 30-35 percent of growth.
16. Protect all old-growth redwood and old-growth Douglas-fir trees. Maintain and update the old-growth tree data base.
17. Promote the development of functional old-growth habitat characteristics in late-succession management areas within 300 feet of the East Branch of Soquel Creek, Amaya Creek, and Fern Gulch. Follow the Anadromous Salmonid Protection Rules for protection of Class I, II, and III watercourses to enhance riparian functions and to help recover state and federally listed fish species.
18. Re-inventory on a regular schedule, using either a temporary plot system or by installing a continuous forest inventory system of permanently monumented monitoring plots, to be re-measured at regular intervals. The next inventory will occur between 2016 and 2021.
19. Monitor timber operations areas for infestations of invasive, exotic species. Eradicate new populations prior to them becoming established and producing a seed bank.
20. Create a list of priority research needs, identify proper audiences, and define techniques to distribute information effectively and in a timely manner. Encourage innovative research in forest management, resource protection, and recreation. Investigate previous research to determine the extent of what has already been completed in the area as well as topics lacking in information.

21. Evaluate and grant requests for recreational Special Use Permits on a case-by-case basis.
22. Compile annual estimates of public use in user days, using patroller reports, surveys, trail counters, and other information.
23. Continue to support, and work to expand volunteer programs to enhance recreation, interpretation and patrol.
24. Develop an access plan, and acquire land or easements necessary to provide better public access via Soquel-San Jose Road.
25. Evaluate the need for a new Recreation and Trails Master Plan to improve the trail network and recreation opportunities.
26. Continue to identify fire defense improvements and continue their construction. Include the Unit Fire Protection staff in these decisions.
27. Continually monitor for signs of pests and notify the CAL FIRE Forest Pest Management Specialist of any findings. Take action as needed to minimize or eliminate any problems.
28. Continue to remove dying and dead trees adjacent to high-use roads, trails and other facilities.
29. Determine the best approach for a road management plan and develop a plan. This plan will include the inventory, assessment, and risk-rating of forest roads that was completed as part of the Santa Cruz County Resource Conservation District's Soquel Creek watershed assessment (PWA, 2003).
30. Investigate and, if possible, acquire additional administrative and public access. Alternative funding sources will be examined for these acquisitions as well as for construction and maintenance.
31. Widen and provide permanent abutments to the Highland Way entrance bridge in cooperation with Burch/Redwood Empire. Maintain trash racks above the inflow to culverts in the Forest. An inventory, assessment and risk-rating of culverts was completed as part of the Santa Cruz County Resource Conservation District's Soquel Creek watershed assessment (PWA, 2003). Continue to upgrade and remediate watercourse crossings identified in the PWA report.
32. Obtain review of the location of all roads, landings, and skid trails on unstable areas by a Certified Engineering Geologist.

Environmental Setting

SDSF is located almost entirely in the 9,068-acre Soquel Creek Planning Watershed (CalWater 3304.130101; Figure 3). Its land base covers approximately 21 percent of the drainage of the East Branch of Soquel Creek. A small area in the southwestern corner of SDSF drains to Hester Creek.

The East Branch of Soquel Creek is a perennial stream that flows through the entire length of SDSF. It is fed by the perennial streams of Fern Gulch and Amaya Creeks from the north, and numerous unnamed intermittent and ephemeral streams. The total size of the East Branch watershed is approximately 19 square miles or 12,240 acres.

Natural springs and sag ponds can be found in SDSF. The two largest springs are Sulphur Springs, located near Sulphur Springs Road, and Badger Spring, located near the main picnic area. Badger Spring was at one time a developed water source as is evident by the remains of a spring box and steel pipes scattered around the area. A third spring, located east of Sulphur Springs along Hihn's Mill Road, was created by the 1989 earthquake.

Amaya Pond, a seasonal body of water, is located in the northwestern arm of SDSF. Approximately one-half acre in size, it is located on the east side of Amaya Creek Road, approximately one-third of the way down from Comstock Mill Road.

The climate of the Santa Cruz Mountains is Mediterranean, characterized by dry, warm summers and wet, cool winters. SDSF is often cool and damp because of the dense canopy of forest vegetation and its location on a north-facing slope. The average minimum January temperature is 38 degrees Fahrenheit, and the average maximum July temperature is 76 degrees Fahrenheit.

Most of the precipitation in the area occurs from November through April. The average annual rainfall for the East Branch of Soquel Creek is 44 inches (Linsley et al., 1992). At elevations above 2,000 feet, snowfall occurs about every other year and averages less than five inches total.

During the late spring and early summer months, Santa Cruz County often has foggy or cloudy skies. In SDSF, this marine layer is generally limited to early morning and late evening hours. Winds generally blow from the west or southwest (onshore) and are mild to moderate throughout the year. Strong winds, however, come in with winter storms and are strongest at higher elevations. Pressure gradients inland may occasionally cause strong northeasterly winds to occur.

The parent material of soils found in SDSF is primarily sedimentary and consists of fine and coarse-grained sandstone, consolidated shale, weathered mudstone, and siltstone. Schist and intrusions of granitic rock are also present. There are nine soil series that developed from these parent materials. Five of the soils (Ben Lomond, Felton, Lompico, Nisene, and Aptos) support timber production, with the primary conifer species being coast redwood and Douglas-fir.

In 2006 an inventory was completed which gathered tree data on plots located on a grid layout. This data was analyzed along with digital image segmentation and aerial imagery to classify the vegetation using the California Wildlife Habitat Relationship (CWHR) habitat classification system. This effort concluded that four major forest types are located on SDSF: Coast Redwood, Montane Hardwood-Conifer, Coastal Oak Woodland, and Douglas-fir. The Coast Redwood forest is dependent on areas of high moisture and comprises about 1,229 acres of SDSF. The dominant tree of this community is coast redwood. Other common trees of this community are tanoak, Douglas-fir, and madrone.

The Montane Hardwood-Conifer community is dominated by both conifers and hardwoods, often in a closed canopy. About 969 acres of SDSF are categorized as montane hardwood-conifer. Primary tree species include Douglas-fir, Shreve oak, and redwood and to a lesser extent madrone, California bay-laurel, black oak, and big leaf maple. Montane Hardwood-Conifer forests are on the drier slopes above the redwood community, though the two overlap considerably. Also included in this community are stands with significantly more Douglas-fir, occupying about 214 acres.

The Coastal Oak Woodland community is composed primarily of hardwoods and covers about 262 acres. These hardwood stands appear to be long dominated by a combination of coast live oak, Shreve oak, and tanoak. They occupy sites less favorable to conifers. As with the Coast

Redwood and Montane Hardwood-Conifer communities, other hardwoods such as madrone, bay-laurel and black oak are also present.

Although Douglas-fir is found throughout SDSF, the true Douglas-fir forest type covers 214 acres and becomes more common within the eastern extent of the SDSF. The Douglas-fir forest type is typically associated with steeper, dryer slopes along the higher elevations of SDSF and is commonly found growing in conjunction with bay laurel and madrone. Stands vary from tightly spaced pole sized trees, originating from historic unstable areas, to more open stands containing larger dominant Douglas-fir with large sprawling canopies.
There are a few other limited communities present in SDSF. An abundant riparian community exists along the floodplain of the East Branch of Soquel Creek and to a lesser degree along Amaya Creek. This community is dominated by deciduous hardwoods such as white alder, big leaf maple, black cottonwood, and California sycamore. Along with these trees, red and yellow willows grow in dense clumps along the banks of the East Branch.

The freshwater marsh community in SDSF is scattered, including only Amaya Pond and a few natural springs (Sulphur, Badger, and a couple of small, unnamed springs caused by or increased from the Loma Prieta earthquake).

Approximately four acres of SDSF are comprised of grassland and mixed chaparral communities. SDSF's grasslands primarily contain wild oats and annual fescue grasses. Most grasslands are being encroached upon by coyote brush, lupine, poison oak, and Douglas-fir.

There is one significant chaparral stand located in the Longridge Road area on the south facing slope above Soquel Creek. Chaparral species are also found mixed in with the Montane Hardwood-Conifer and Coastal Oak Woodland vegetation types along the exposed ridge tops and on south-facing slopes at higher elevations. These dry locations support the fire-adapted woody shrubs of manzanita, buck brush, coyote brush, and chamise.

Existing facilities and infrastructure at SDSF include the road and trail system, two helipads, three water tanks, five picnic areas, two storage tanks, two portable toilets, and one parking lot. There are two permanent bridges on Hihn’s Mill Road. Public camping is not allowed, but there is one designated area where limited camping is allowed through a special permit available to educational groups, researchers, and personnel working on SDSF projects.

The SDSF office is in a trailer, located next to the Soquel Fire Station at 4750 Old San Jose Road, Soquel. It is outside SDSF boundaries, near the southwest corner of the property.

SDSF is entirely classified as Timber Production Zone (TPZ). TPZ land is devoted to and used for growing and harvesting timber and other compatible uses. Compatible uses include, but are not limited to: watershed management, fish and wildlife habitat, outdoor education and recreation activities, and may include a residence or other structure as necessary for management of land.

Environmental Permits

All projects conducted under the guidance of the SDSF GFMP are subject to additional CEQA documentation. The following is a list of permits that may be utilized by SDSF. Not all agencies listed below offer permitting options, but may provide guidance and consultation in the development of permits in the future. SDSF is not bound to the exclusive use of listed permits. This list includes permits which are most anticipated and may serve the greatest function on SDSF.

Timber Harvest Plan (THP)

- CAL FIRE
- California Department of Fish and Wildlife
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- California and Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Boards
- NOAA Fisheries
- California Geological Survey
- Santa Cruz County Planning Department

1600 Lake or Streambed Alteration Agreement

- California Department of Fish and Wildlife
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- NOAA Fisheries
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Depredation Permit

- California Department of Fish and Wildlife

Waiver of Waste Discharge

- Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board

Smoke Management Permit

- Monterey Bay Unified Air Pollution Control District

Summary of Findings

An IS-ND has been prepared to assess the project's potential effects on the environment and the potential significance of those impacts. Based on this IS-ND, it has been determined that the proposed project would not have any significant impacts on the environment. This conclusion is supported by the following findings:

1. The proposed project would have no impact related to Mineral Resources, Population and Housing, Public Services, and Transportation-Traffic.

2. The proposed project would have a less than significant impact on Aesthetics, Agricultural Resources, Air Quality, Biological Resources, Cultural Resources, Geology and Soils, Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, Hydrology and Water Quality, Land Use and Planning, Noise, Recreation, and Utilities and Service Systems.

Figure 1 – Project Vicinity Map

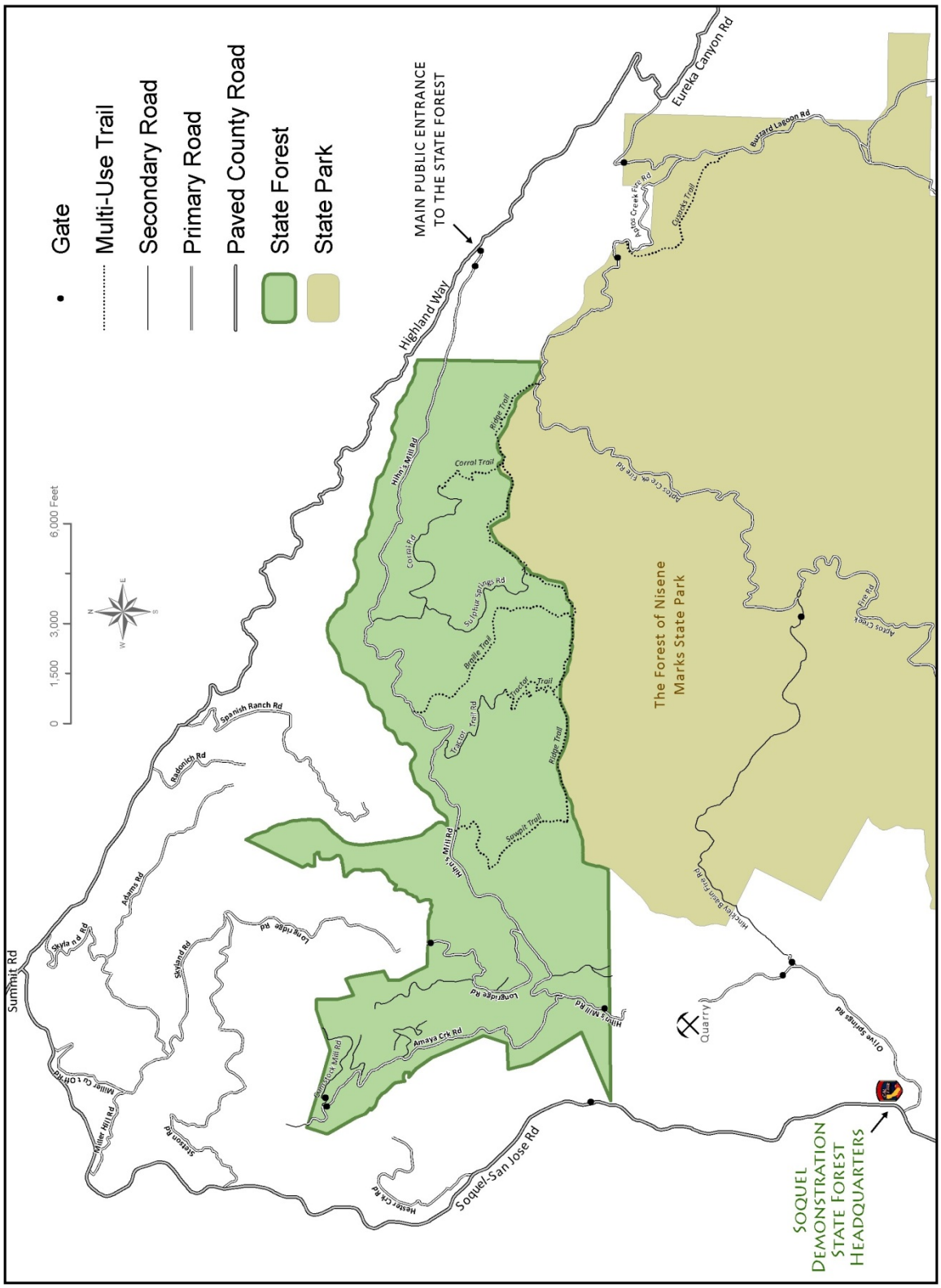

Figure 2 – Project Location Map

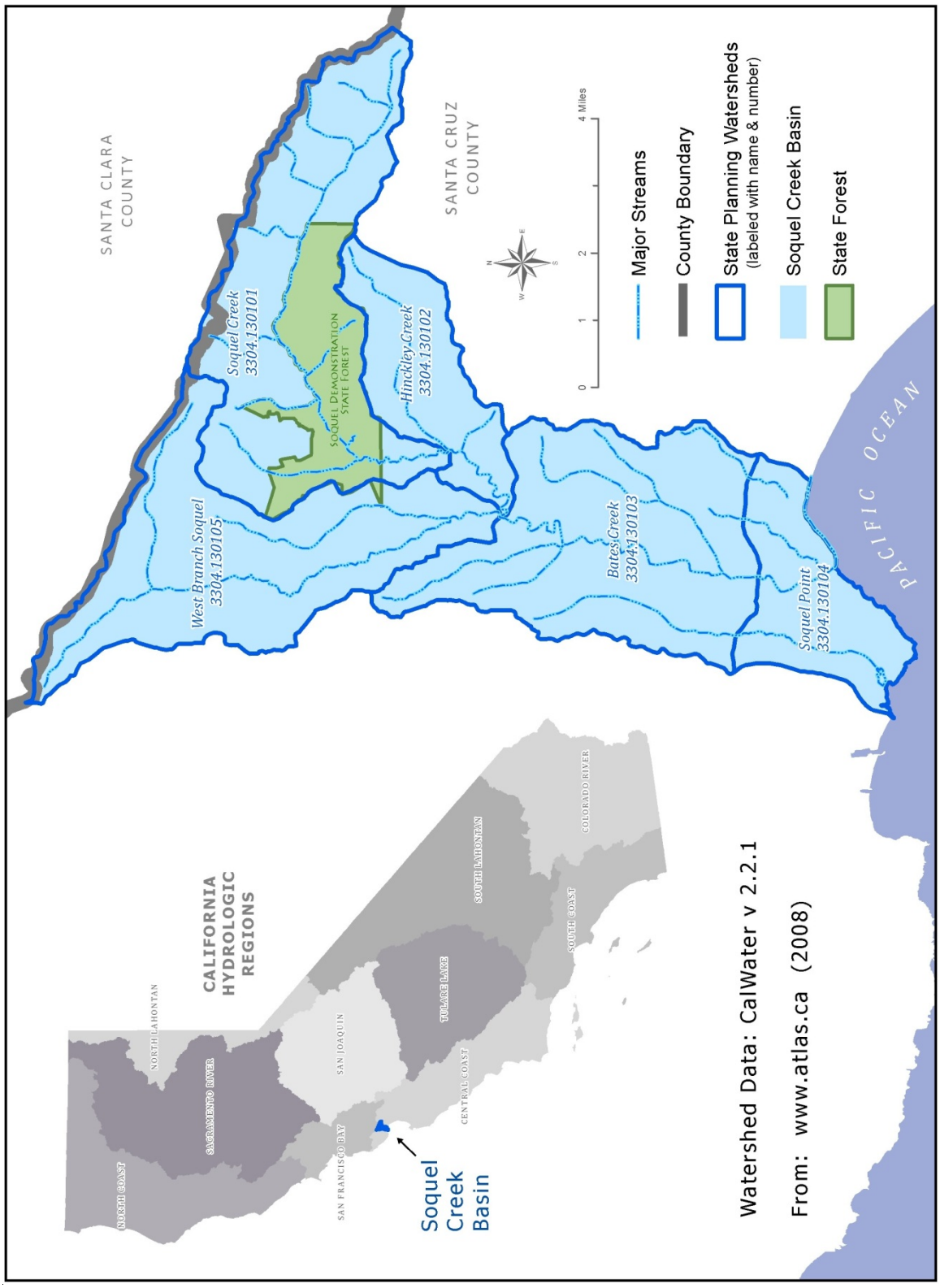

Figure 3 - SDSF Planning Watersheds

Environmental Factors Potentially Affected and Determination

The environmental factors checked below would be potentially affected by this project involving at least one impact that is a "Potentially Significant Impact" as indicated by the checklist on the following pages.

Environmental Factors Potentially Affected:

☒ Aesthetics	☒ Greenhouse Gas Emissions	☐ Population/Housing
☒ Agriculture Resources	☒ Hazards & Hazardous Materials	☐ Public Services
☒ Air Quality	☒ Hydrology / Water Quality	☒ Recreation
☒ Biological Resources	☒ Land Use / Planning	☐ Transportation/Traffic
☒ Cultural Resources	☐ Mineral Resources	☒ Utilities/Service Systems
☒ Geology / Soils	☒ Noise	☒ Mandatory Findings of Significance

Determination:

On the basis of this initial evaluation:

☒ I find that the proposed project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment, and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION would be prepared.

☐ I find that although the proposed project COULD have a significant effect on the environment, there WOULD NOT be a significant effect in this case because revisions in the project have been made by or agreed to by the project proponent. A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION would be prepared.

☐ I find that the proposed project MAY have a significant effect on the environment, and an ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required.

☐ I find that the proposed project MAY have a "potentially significant impact" or "potentially significant unless mitigated" impact on the environment, but at least one effect 1) has been adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and 2) has been addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis as described on attached sheets. An ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required, but it must analyze only the effects that remain to be addressed.

☐ I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, because all potentially significant effects (a) have been analyzed adequately in an earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION pursuant to applicable standards, and (b) have been avoided or mitigated pursuant to that earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION, including revisions or mitigation measures that are imposed upon the proposed project, nothing further is required.

_____ _____

George Gentry Date

Executive Officer

California Board of Forestry and Fire Protection

Environmental Checklist and Discussion

Aesthetics

Discussion

Activities on SDSF that could have an impact on aesthetics include timber harvesting and road construction, and to a lesser extent, trail construction. Timber harvesting and road construction would occur as part of a Timber Harvest Plan (THP). Trail construction would occur as a separate project.

SDSF has been subject to timber harvest and other associated activities by the State of California since 1990. The past management at SDSF has resulted in a landscape that has a mixture of different sizes and densities of trees in the timber stands. Timber harvests on SDSF would utilize only uneven-aged management consistent with the Forest Practice Rules (FPRs) for the Southern Sub-district of the Coast District. Other silvicultural methods permitted under the FPRs could be used in the future for research or demonstration purposes. Individual projects conducted under the guidance of the GFMP would have additional visual assessments done utilizing site-specific information.

One of SDSF's demonstration goals is to display that silvicultural treatments are compatible with aesthetic, biological, and recreation values. Ways to display this compatibility could include harvest methods that are aesthetically acceptable both from a distance and close-up, marking treatment boundaries so that they have minimal visual impact from roads or trails, and providing for habitat improvement through silvicultural prescriptions and harvest operations.

Prior to approval, THPs go through an interdisciplinary agency review and public comment period as part of a CEQA functional equivalent process. The review process ensures that potential visual impacts that could result from timber harvest activities are minimized. Furthermore, visual effects would be addressed by the FPRs, under Board of Forestry Technical Rule Addendum No. 2, Appendix Technical Rule Addendum No. 2, Visual Resources. The visual assessment area is generally the harvesting area that is readily visible to a significant number of people who are no further than three miles from the timber operations.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Would the project have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?	☐	☐	☒	☐

There are three scenic vistas within SDSF that are accessible to the public. These are the upper and lower helipads and a bench on Ridge Trail just above the upper helipad. The upper helipad offers views of the Soquel Creek watershed and surrounding private forest land, while the bench on Ridge Trail offers views of Hinckley Basin on The Forest of Nisene Marks State Park. The lower helipad offers views of the Soquel watershed and private forest land north of SDSF. The

helipads are maintained and used for landing helicopters for emergency response and training. The bench on Ridge Trail is also maintained to keep the vegetation low-growing.

Portions of SDSF are visible from roads to the north and west, including Highland Way, Mt. Bache, Loma Prieta, Amaya Ridge Road, Robinwood Lane, Comstock Mill Road, Radonich Road and Spanish Ranch Road.

Use of uneven-aged silviculture, which is the silvicultural method used at SDSF and in the Santa Cruz Mountains, consistent with 14 CCR 913.8(a) and 14 CCR 926.25(a)(1)-(3), would reduce potential visual impacts associated with timber harvesting to a level below significant. The trees retained as late successional, wildlife habitat, future crop trees, and growing stock would provide continuous forest cover after harvest operations. Harvested stands would be more open but should be well-stocked and composed of various age classes displaying distinct layers of tree crowns. Slash would be packed on skid trails after use, "camouflaging" their appearance. Recently harvested areas seen from the scenic vistas may appear somewhat different from adjacent, unharvested areas. However, maintenance of continuous forest cover and the treatment of skid trails with slash should ensure timber harvesting would not result in significant effects to scenic vistas. In addition, the visual assessment discussed previously, which is required in each THP, should ensure any site-specific impacts to scenic vistas are identified and mitigated, if necessary.

Trail construction would occur as a separate project and would be subject to CEQA environmental analysis. Such analysis should ensure any site-specific impacts to scenic vistas associated with trail construction would be identified and mitigated, if necessary.

The planned management activities described within the project would be consistent with previous management practices and would undergo additional CEQA analysis at the individual project level. This should identify and mitigate any significant effects to scenic vistas. This should ensure activities associated with the project should have <u>less than a significant</u> impact on any scenic vistas.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
b) Would the project substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?	☐	☐	☐	☒

There are no designated state scenic highways in the project area or within the visual range of the project area Therefore, implementation of the project should ensure <u>no impact</u> related scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
c) Would the project substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings?	☐	☐	☒	☐

SDSF has been subject to timber harvest and associated activities by the State of California since 1990. The past management SDSF has resulted in a landscape that has a mixture of different sizes and densities of trees in the forest. The principal roads and trails are well developed, but there could be additional road or trail building. The planned management of SDSF and the utilization of primarily uneven-aged management would result in the continuation of the varied appearance of the forested landscape. This appearance would be consistent with the past land use of the property.

The scenic stand of old growth redwoods at Badger Springs, as well as all other conifers with late successional characteristics would be excluded from timber harvesting, as mandated by SDSF's authorizing legislation AB 1965. The small group of old-growth trees located near Sulphur Springs would also be retained. Individual old-growth conifers would be identified and marked for preservation and protection during timber harvesting preparations.

As indicated in (a), use of uneven-aged silviculture, which is the silvicultural method used at SDSF and in the Santa Cruz Mountains, would reduce potential visual impacts associated with timber harvesting to a level below significant. The trees retained as late successional, wildlife habitat, future crop trees, and growing stock would provide continuous forest cover after harvest operations. Harvested stands would be more open but should be well-stocked and composed of various age classes displaying distinct layers of tree crowns. Slash would be packed on skid trails after use, "camouflaging" their appearance. Recently harvested areas should appear somewhat different from adjacent, unharvested areas. However, maintenance of continuous forest cover and the treatment of skid trails with slash should ensure timber harvesting would not substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings. In addition, the visual assessment discussed previously, which would be required in each THP, should ensure any site-specific impacts to visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings would be identified and mitigated, if necessary.

Trail construction would occur as a separate project and would be subject to CEQA environmental analysis. Such analysis should ensure any site-specific impacts to the visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings associated with trail construction would be identified and mitigated, if necessary.

The planned management activities described within the project would be consistent with previous management practices and would undergo additional CEQA analysis at the individual project level, which should identify and mitigate any significant effects to the visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings. This should ensure activities associated with the project should have a <u>less than significant impact</u> on the visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
d) Would the project create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?	☐	☐	☐	☒

There are no planned activities that would create a light source or create any glare as continuous forest cover will remain throughout the project area. Therefore, implementation of the project should result in no impact related to the creation of a new source of substantial light or glare that would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area

Agricultural Resources

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Would the project convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?	☐	☐	☐	☒

SDSF does not contain any farmland. Therefore, there should be no impact related to the conversion of Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance, as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
b) Would the project conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use or a Williamson Act contract?	☐	☐	☐	☒

SDSF is zoned Timber Production (TPZ) and the State does not have a Williamson Act contract. Therefore, there should be no impact related to existing zoning for agricultural use or a Williamson Act contract.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
c) Would the project conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code §12220(g)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code §4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code §51104(g))?	☐	☐	☐	☒

SDSF is zoned as TPZ, and the project would not propose any activity that conflicts with the restrictions or compatible uses applied to that zoning. Therefore, there should be no impact related to conflicts with, or rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code

§12220(g)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code §4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code §51104(g)).

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
d) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Development of the Forestry Education Center could require the conversion of a very small amount of forest land to a non-forest use. If this occurs, then SDSF would have to acquire the proper environmental permit from CAL FIRE, either a less than three acre conversion exemption or a THP and associated conversion permit. The amount of land converted to another use would be negligible and could not represent a potential significant impact. The conversion permit from CAL FIRE should address any associated impacts and include mitigations, if necessary. Thus, implementation of the project should result in a <u>less than significant impact</u> related to the loss of forest land or the conversion of forest land to non-forest use.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
e) Would the project involve other changes in the existing environment, which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland to non-agricultural use?	☐	☐	☐	☒

SDSF does not contain any farmland. Thus, there should be <u>no impact</u> related to changes in the existing environment, which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland to non-agricultural use.

Air Quality

<u>Discussion</u>

Activities on SDSF that could have an impact on air quality are open burning, including prescribed fire, and dust created from logging truck traffic or road and trail construction and maintenance. Monterey Bay Unified Air Pollution Control District (MBUAPCD) Rule 438 codifies the requirements and standards regarding the use of open outdoor fires within the Air District. Title 17 of the California Code of Regulations is also regulated by the MBUAPCD for smoke management guidelines for agricultural and prescribed burning and will therefore serve as regulatory guidance for applicable projects within the project area. Rule 400 addresses visible emissions, like dust or smoke, that may cause a nuisance or safety concern. Operations at SDSF would comply with Air District rules and regulations.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Would the project conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Open burning on SDSF to date has been restricted to burning piles during the non-fire season. If larger burns would be conducted in the future, any that would be greater than ten acres in size or where the expected emissions would be greater than one ton, an approved Smoke Management Plan (SMP) and burn plan would be required. Upon MBUAPCD approval of the SMP, SDSF would obtain an open burning permit from the fire authority, CAL FIRE. Additionally burning would only be conducted on "Burn Days" designated by MBUAPCD, unless a variance had been approved for specific burning criteria. Adherence to the SMP, burn permit and burning only on burn days unless a variance has been granted would be in compliance with the State Implementation Plan for air quality.

This should ensure project activities would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan. This should reduce any potential project impacts to air quality to a <u>less than significant</u> level.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
b) Would the project violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation?	☐	☐	☒	☐

MBUAPCD does not approve "Burn Days" if open burning has the potential to decrease air quality to a level that would violate air quality standards. Adherence to the SMP, burn permit and permissive burning only on burn days, unless a variance is granted, would reduce any potential impact to air quality to less than significant and would be in compliance with the State Implementation Plan for air quality.

Watering roads during hauling, road construction and maintenance would effectively control dust generation from SDSF roads. This would be in compliance with Rule 400 and ensure there would be no nuisance or safety concern associated with visible emissions.

This should ensure that the project should not violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation. This should reduce any potential project impacts to air quality to a <u>less than significant</u> level.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
c) Would the project result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard (including releasing emissions which exceed quantitative thresholds for ozone precursors)?	☐	☐	☒	☐

The North Central Coast Air Basin (NCCAB), in which the project site would be located, is under the jurisdiction of MBUAPCD and includes Santa Cruz, Monterey and San Benito Counties. Under the Federal Clean Air Act, as of March 2006 the NCCAB is designated an attainment area for the federal 8-hour ozone standard. (The federal 1-hour ozone standard was revoked in the basin on June 15, 2005.) The basin is designated unclassified/attainment for all other Federal standards, including those for carbon monoxide, nitrogen dioxide, inhalable particulates (PM10), and fine particulates (PM2.5).

Under the California Clean Air Act, the NCCAB is classified as nonattainment for the State 1-hour ozone standard. The air basin is also a nonattainment area for the State inhalable particulate (PM10) standard. The basin is an attainment area or is unclassified for all other State standards, including those for carbon monoxide, nitrogen dioxide, sulfur dioxide, and fine particulates (PM2.5). The project will not create a considerable net increase in any of these pollutants.

MBUAPCD does not approve "Burn Days" if open burning has the potential to decrease air quality to a level that would violate air quality standards. Adherence to the SMP, burn permit and burning only on permissive burn days, unless a variance would be granted, would be in compliance with the State Implementation Plan for air quality. This should ensure that the project should not result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard (including releasing emissions that exceed quantitative thresholds for ozone precursors). This should reduce any potential project impacts to air quality to a <u>less than significant</u> level.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
d) Would the project expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Open burning, hauling, road construction and road maintenance could expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations (smoke and dust). SDSF is located approximately eight miles northeast of the community of Santa Cruz. Adjoining properties include private residences and The Forest of Nisene Marks State Park. Smoke impacts to these neighbors and communities would be addressed in the SMPs. Smoke impacts would be minimized and adequate smoke dispersal obtained by the adherence to the SMP, burn permit and permissive burning only on permissive burn days unless a variance would be granted**.** Watering roads during hauling, road construction and maintenance would effectively control dust generation from SDSF roads. This

should ensure the project would not expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations. This should reduce any potential project impacts to air quality to a less than significant level.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Would the project create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Open burning, hauling, road construction and road maintenance could create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people (smoke and dust). SDSF is located approximately eight miles east of the community of Santa Cruz. Adjoining properties include private residences and The Forest of Nisene Marks State Park. Smoke impacts to these neighbors and communities would be addressed in the SMPs. Adequate smoke dispersal and smoke impacts to these communities would be minimized by the adherence to the SMP, burn permit and burning only on burn days unless a variance would be granted.

Water would be used for dust abatement on SDSF roads. Future treatments for dust control could employ lignin or other dust control measures as a demonstration study and to reduce water use.

This should ensure that the project should not create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people. This should reduce any potential project impacts to air quality to a less than significant level.

Biological Resources

Discussion

SDSF supports a wide variety of fish, wildlife, and botanical species and their associated habitats. Timber harvest activities and road and trail building are the management activities on SDSF that have the highest potential to adversely impact biological resources. SDSF staff recognizes the importance of these biological resources and work to maintain, restore and enhance the occurrence of special habitat elements and unique habitats to promote species diversity and habitat quality. Several measures included in the Project should achieve these goals, including the following:

1. Ongoing monitoring will be performed to detect and assess special-status species. Monitoring will include keeping current with state and federal lists as well as conducting periodic floral and faunal surveys. New findings will be added to current species lists. Every consideration will be given to protecting these species and their habitat as required by law and determined by qualified biologists and botanists.
2. Old growth trees will be protected as outlined in SDSF's authorizing legislation, AB 1965. Areas of old-growth redwood have been located and protection will be provided in all phases of forest management. Additionally, areas have been designated to promote late-succession stands of trees.
3. Resource values of native habitat communities will be restored, maintained, or enhanced

to promote natural diversity and stability. Measures to achieve this include snag recruitment and retention, preservation of appropriate logs and other wood, debris maintenance of natural ponds and springs and protection of riparian zones for use as movement corridors for wildlife

4. Control or eradication of exotic plant species will be incorporated into management activities, as appropriate. Ben Lomond Conservation Camp crews, California Conservation Corps members, and volunteers will assist staff with the removal of exotics whenever possible.
5. Mushroom collection will be controlled by issuing permits for scientific, educational, and personal use. Mushroom gathering for commercial purposes will be prohibited.
6. The California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB) reports will be examined during project planning and measures will be incorporated into all project development and monitoring processes for all known species as well as special status species that may be present. CNDDB Field Survey forms will be submitted to CDFW for any sightings of listed, rare or special status species.
7. Pre-harvest and post-project surveys will be conducted to identify active nest sites of all raptors and special-status bird species that may occur in SDSF. Those species that may occur in SDSF are Cooper's hawk, sharp-shinned hawk, long-eared owl, and yellow warbler. In addition, preharvest surveys will be conducted for California red-legged frog, foothill yellow-legged frog, and southwestern pond turtle.
8. Biological assessments will be conducted incrementally in new project areas. These will include results of CNDDB reports, botanical surveys, and other site-specific assessments.
9. Stream channels, streambanks, and riparian zones will be protected during all management activities. Late-succession management areas (see the Timber Management Chapter) have been established along all fish-bearing streams and receive specialized management designed to enhance the riparian zone. This will ensure protection of stream integrity, including the channel, bank, and vegetation as well as fisheries resources.
10. The fisheries potential will be increased by improving the spawning and rearing conditions of the East Branch of Soquel Creek within SDSF. Projects will be implemented to increase winter high flow refuge and summer rearing, increase general habitat complexity, and reduce production of fine sediments.
11. Streamside management zones will be designed that properly address the inherently unstable nature of the East Branch watershed in SDSF. This includes extending zone widths beyond the standards set by the California Forest Practice Rules, for Class I fish-bearing watercourses, as is appropriate in sensitive areas. These zones must provide for the long-term recruitment of large wood, protection of the stream channels and banks, stream shading, sediment filtration, nutrient input, microclimate control, floodplain function, and prevention of significant ground disturbance.
12. Heavy emphasis will be placed on road design and maintenance, since roads generally produce the largest percentage of management-related sediment in forested watersheds. New seasonal and temporary roads should be outsloped to avoid concentrating water that could trigger landslides or transport sediment directly into flowing streams. Of foremost concern for new road construction is the avoidance of localized unstable areas. For mainline roads, road drainage structures and watercourse crossings must be adequately sized to ensure that the risk of failure is minimized. Roads no longer needed must be properly abandoned. Wet weather use for roads impacting flowing streams should not

occur and an active winter maintenance program is needed to ensure that drainage structures are adequately functioning.

13. No tractor operations will be permitted on slopes which average more than 35 percent without site-specific evaluations of slope stability and erosion potential. This will depend on the ability to mitigate such operations to levels of insignificance.

Other management goals for SDSF describe the need to maintain and enhance a healthy forest ecosystem with the widest possible diversity of managed forest stands in different successional stages; maintain or increase functional wildlife habitat; and provide research and demonstration opportunities for various biological resources. SDSF would balance sustained timber productivity with the long-term biological productivity of the timberland and protection of public trust resources. The forest management program under the guidance of this plan would be expected to produce a limited, perpetually sustainable harvest level. The planned harvest rates would be lower than that of most private owners due to restrictions in the enabling legislation, additional landscape and wildlife habitat constraints imposed on SDSF as a publicly owned forest, and the need to maintain the widest possible range of forest conditions in order to accommodate potential future research studies.

THPs approved according to the California Forest Practice Rules would require analysis and documentation to show that harvesting would achieve the maximum sustained production (MSP) of high quality timber products per Title 14 of the California Code of Regulation, Chapter 4, Subchapter 4, Article 3, 913.11. Under this regulation, Option A is used to describe the achievement of MSP. The Option A analysis was based on a forest-wide timber inventory from 2006 and was approved in 2010. Based on the analysis and data presented in the Option A and the GFMP, the long-term sustained yield[1] (LTSY) is 3.37 million board feet per year, or 1,255 board feet per acre per year. The corresponding near term harvest level through 2020 is 800,000 to 900,000 board feet per year. Based on the inventory derived from the 2006 inventory, this constitutes a harvest intensity of about one percent of the current inventory. Current estimated growth on SDSF is 2,615,360 board feet per year, or 975 board feet per acre per year, based on the 2006 inventory.

The annual harvest is less than the LTSY, due to the fact that the forest currently is not at the level of productivity reflected in the growth potential of the desired future conditions at the end of the planning interval. In addition to the constraints placed on the calculation of the LTSY in the harvest schedule, SDSF also has discretionary commitments to planned management practices for non-timber resources.

SDSF, Registered Professional Foresters (RPFs) or Forestry Aides working under the supervision of an RPF individually mark all harvest trees selected for each harvest. SDSF utilizes a marking system to assist personnel in the marking of timber for timber sales. This management measure ensures that all trees will be evaluated for the presence of nesting structures, potential snag and LWD recruitment, and the existence of any other special habitat elements. It is also CAL FIRE policy that all harvest trees or leave trees are to be marked.

SDSF staff along with partner agencies, NOAA Fisheries and CDFW, conduct various wildlife inventory studies to document the current status of various species (particularly anadromous

[1] Long term sustained yield is defined in the California Forest Practice Rules as the average annual growth sustainable by the inventory predicted at the end of a 100-year planning interval.

salmonids), and for the detection of rare, threatened or endangered species. All detections of rare, threatened or endangered species would be documented and assessed to determine if these biological resources would be impacted by any projects conducted under the guidance of this management plan.

Timber harvesting would occur as part of a THP, including road construction on the forest. The plan would evaluate impacts associated with the proposed timber operations on specific species potentially found on the individual THP area. The THP would undergo an inter-disciplinary review as part of the FPR's CEQA functional equivalent process. Plan preparation and review should ensure any site-specific impacts to biological resources associated with timber harvesting would be identified and mitigated, if necessary.

Trail construction would occur as a separate project and would be subject to CEQA environmental analysis. Such analysis should ensure any site-specific impacts to biological resources associated with trail construction would be identified and mitigated, if necessary.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Would the project have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special-status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	☐	☐	☒	☐

The biological assessment of SDSF conducted in 1991-92 found no threatened or endangered plant or wildlife species, however, since that time some of the species at SDSF havebeen listed. Table 1 below shows the list of special-status fish and wildlife species occurring or with the potential to occur at SDSF. Several birds listed as State Species of Special Concern or Watch List for the Special Concern list have been observed at SDSF including merlin, golden eagle, osprey, Cooper's hawk, sharp-shinned hawk, long-eared owl, olive-sided flycatcher, Vaux's swift, black swift and yellow warbler. Of these, the sharp-shinned hawk has been confirmed to have nested at SDSF. Suitable breeding, nesting, or foraging habitats exist in SDSF for all species observed except the golden eagle.

Central California Coast (CCC) Coho Salmon Evolutionarily Significant Unit (ESU) was federally listed as threatened in 1996 and relisted as endangered in 2005. In 2012 the range of CCC Coho was extended south to include Soquel and Aptos Creeks. Coho salmon south of the San Francisco Bay were listed as endangered under the California Endangered Species Act in 1995. Coho salmon were observed in Soquel Creek in 2008 in the vicinity of the Hinckley Creek confluence, about 0.5 miles downstream from SDSF. Present day surveys have not found Coho salmon within the SDSF boundary. However, historic populations were likely to have utilized portions of the East Branch of Soquel Creek within SDSF. CAL FIRE and SDSF are partners with the NMFS in the Recovery Plan for the CCC Coho salmon and have worked together to develop and support stream habitat improvement projects that will benefit Coho in the East Branch of Soquel Creek at SDSF as well as neighboring properties.

Steelhead within the CCC Distinct Population Segment were federally listed as threatened in 1997. The East Branch of Soquel Creek is known as an important spawning and rearing stream for steelhead. Several projects are ongoing that monitor the population and habitat conditions for steelhead that are discussed in (d) below.

The California red-legged frog has been found on SDSF and is federally listed as threatened. Other Species of Special Concern to the State of California that have been observed in SDSF are the foothill yellow-legged frog, western pond turtle and San Francisco dusky-footed woodrat. Ongoing research is occurring at SDSF regarding the specific species of woodrats that occur at SDSF. See Appendix B of the management plan for a complete list of all species known to occur at SDSF.

The CNDDB was queried on May 10, 2010 and again on August 7, 2012 to collect information on listed species and species of concern known to occur in the Laurel and Loma Prieta quadrangles that contain SDSF. A total of eight plant species are state and/or federally listed as threatened or endangered. In addition, six plant species are categorized as CNPS (California Native Plant Society) List 1B. The plants of List 1B are rare throughout their range with the majority of them endemic to California. Most of the plants of List 1B have declined significantly over the last century. List 1B plants constitute the majority of the plants in CNPS' Inventory with more than 1,000 plants assigned to this category.

All of the plants constituting List 1B meet the definitions of Sec. 1901, Chapter 10 (Native Plant Protection Act) or Secs. 2062 and 2067 (California Endangered Species Act) of the California Department of Fish and Wildlife Code, and are eligible for state listing. These species must be fully considered during preparation of environmental documents.

A nine quad search of processed CNDDB data, centered on the Laurel quadrangle identified 48 plant species. One plant species is CNPS List 1A, 32 are CNPS List 1B, and 15 are federal and/or state listed as threatened or endangered. Although there is no suitable habitat for most of these taxa on SDSF, the number of species listed provides a rough indicator of the extent of plant species of concern in the general vicinity of the SDSF.

Individual projects conducted under the guidance of the GFMP would require a separate biological assessment (during THP review or other CEQA review), based upon site-specific conditions. If during the assessment, project layout, or surveys, species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special-status species or their habitats were identified, protection measures and mitigations would be incorporated into the project. Protection measures and mitigations would be developed in cooperation with the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and/or CDFW.

This should ensure that impacts from the implementation of the Project should not have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special-status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by CDFW or USFWS. This should reduce any potential project impacts related to candidate, sensitive, or special-status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by CDFW or USFWS to a <u>less than significant</u> level.

Table 1. Special-status vertebrate fish and wildlife species occurring or with potential to occur at Soquel Demonstration State Forest.

SPECIES	LEGAL STATUS[a] FEDERAL/STATE	HABITAT	OCCURRENCE IN SDSF[b]
American peregrine falcon	/FP	Nests in cliffs, forages in a variety of habitats	4
Merlin	/WL	Wintering only, frequents open habitats	2
Marbled murrelet	T/E	Nests in old-growth conifer forest; forages in pelagic habitats	4
Golden eagle	BCC/FP	Nests in cliffs and trees in forests and woodlands; forages in grasslands, shrublands, and chaparral	2
Osprey	--/WL	Nests in snags and spike-top trees; forages in open water	2
Cooper's hawk	--/WL	Nests and forages in woodlands and forests; also forages in open habitats	2
Sharp-shinned hawk	--/WL	Nests and forages in conifer forest habitats	1
Long-eared owl	--/CSC	Nests and forages in riparian and woodland habitats	2
Olive-sided flycatcher	--/CSC	Tall conifers used for nesting, perching; Forages over open/low vegetation	2
Purple martin	--/CSC	Nests and forages in woodland and forest habitats in tree cavities	4
Vaux's swift	--/CSC	Nests in large tree cavities with a preference for redwood and Douglas-fir habitat	2
Black swift	--/CSC	Nests on cliffs, steep rocky outcrops, canyons near water	2
Yellow warbler	--/CSC	Nests and forages in riparian habitats	2
Foothill yellow-legged frog	--/CSC	Occurs in streams with rocky substrate	2
California red-legged frog	T/CSC	Occurs in slow-moving streams, pools and ponds	2
Western pond turtle	--/CSC	Occurs in pools, ponds, and lakes	2
Steelhead (Central CA Coast ESU)	T/CSC	East Branch Soquel Creek	1
Coho salmon(Central CA Coast ESU)	E/E	East Branch Soquel Creek	3
Pallid Bat	--/CSC	Buildings, rock outcrops	3
San Francisco dusky-footed woodrat	--/CSC	Forested habitats of moderate canopy and moderate to dense understory	2

a Status codes:
Federal: T = threatened, E = endangered, P = proposed for listing as threatened or endangered, BCC = bird of conservation concern USFWS
State: CSC = species of special concern, T = threatened, E = endangered, WL = watch list, FP = fully protected
b 1 = confirmed nesting/reproduction, 2 = observed, 3 = not observed, 4 = unlikely to occur

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
b) Would the project have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	☐	☐	☒	☐

A well-established riparian community with alder and groups of redwoods exists along both sides of Soquel Creek. Large trees contribute shade and large woody debris into the channel zone, particularly within the inner gorge areas. There is a 150-foot wide watercourse and lake protection zone (WLPZ) and a 300-foot wide Late Seral Management Area (LSMA) established around Soquel Creek. THP activities within these zones would have the primary purpose of improving riparian habitat and late seral forest conditions. THP-related action that could adversely impact aquatic habitat would be activity that results in accelerated fine sediment entering receiving waters. To lessen this possibility, all THPs would include watercourse protection measures that include improvements to drainage structures and erosion control measures to prevent sediment movement into aquatic habitat.

While protecting riparian habitat it would be important to utilize methods to maintain the health and resilience of the corridor. A simple no-management approach could lead to a buildup of flammable fuels that could cause increased burn severity and loss of key habitat elements in the case of a wildfire. Future modifications of the WLPZ and LSMA would be conducted to improve habitat for anadromous fish and improve resiliency of this zone to natural disturbances such as wildfire, flood, earthquakes or landslides, which are all normal natural processes that occur within the landscape that includes SDSF. Therefore, actions within the WLPZ and LSMA could include stream modification to improve fish habitat, timber harvesting to increase growth on larger trees, fuel reduction, removal of invasive species, road and crossing improvements, tree planting, and additional research on streams and aquatic species. Projects would be planned and carried out along with CAL FIRE partner agencies, CDFW, USFWS, and others to ensure compliance with the policies and regulations of these agencies and plans for recovery of listed species.

The stand of old growth redwoods at Badger Spring, as well as all other conifers with old growth characteristics are excluded from timber harvesting, as mandated by SDSF's authorizing legislation AB 1965. The small group of old-growth trees located near Sulphur Springs would also be retained. Individual old-growth conifers would be identified and marked for preservation and protection during timber harvesting preparations.

The Project would recognize the importance of riparian habitats and other sensitive natural communities and it would describe measures to maintain, restore and enhance the occurrence of special habitat elements and unique habitats.

Individual projects conducted under the guidance of the GFMP would assess impacts to riparian areas and sensitive communities. Individual THPs would assess all watercourses and other wet areas on the plan area for potential impacts from project-specific activities. If such activities

would cause a significant effect to a riparian area, then site-specific mitigation, which would reduce the effect to a less-than-significant level, would be required. In addition, each individual project would require a separate biological assessment (during THP review or other CEQA review), based upon site-specific conditions. In the case of THPs, this assessment should identify any significant effects to sensitive communities. For other projects, the biological assessment should identify significant effects to riparian areas or other sensitive communities. In all cases, if significant effects were identified, the project would have to include mitigation to reduce such impacts to a level less-than-significant.

This should ensure that impacts from the implementation of the Project should not have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations or by CDFW or USFWS.

With SDSF's goals to maintain, restore, and enhance the occurrence of special habitat elements and unique habitats to promote species diversity and habitat quality, and the implementation of the Project, impacts will be <u>less than significant</u> on riparian habitat and other sensitive natural communities identified in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
c) Would the project have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?	☐	☐	☒	☐

SDSF contains wetlands that might meet the definition of wetlands per Section 404 of the Clean Water Act. However, no formal wetland delineation has occurred or is planned. The Project would recognize the importance of wetlands and the habitats associated with them. It would describe measures to maintain all natural ponds and springs, and measures for riparian zone protection and restoration. All projects conducted under the guidance of the GFMP would have protection measures for all wetlands, springs, creeks, meadows, and natural ponds. These protection measures would either be prescribed per the requirements of the FPRs or through development of appropriate protection measures during non-THP project design. Both types of measures would undergo a CEQA-based analysis for adequacy. No wet areas that might meet the definition of wetlands per Section 404 of the Clean Water Act would be removed, filled, hydrologically interrupted or altered by any other means. There should be no substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means. Therefore, implementation of the project should result in a <u>less than significant impact</u> on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
d) Would the project interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?	☐	☐	☒	☐

The East Branch of Soquel Creek and Amaya Creek are Class I watercourses because they support perennial populations of steelhead. Spawning and rearing habitat exists throughout the East Branch of Soquel Creek within SDSF's property. Removal of large instream wood from the 1950s through the 1990s has contributed to a conspicuous lack of pool formations. Other characteristics of fishery habitat are generally good as evidenced by high, successful juvenile fish populations.

Amaya Creek is designated as a Class I watercourse because it supports perennial populations of steelhead trout in its lower reach. Amaya has dramatically different channel characteristics than Soquel Creek. Amaya has a constrained channel zone with a relatively steep gradient. Large volumes of logs and other woody debris are in the channel and perched along inner gorge slopes. Canopy cover is dominated by redwoods, although about 1/3 of the area is hardwood cover. Riparian vegetation exists only near the confluence with Soquel Creek and where historic mass wasting features have not fully re-vegetated. Most of Amaya Creek is within an inner gorge setting. Like Soquel Creek, Amaya would have a 150-foot wide WLPZ and a 300-foot wide LSMA.

Numerous fisheries habitat assessments have been conducted in the East Branch of Soquel Creek since 1990. In addition, many smaller scale assessments were conducted as part of the annual electrofishing fish sampling studies in Soquel Creek and Amaya Creek. Electrofishing sampling of steelhead began as a partnership effort with CDFW then later with NOAA Fisheries. In recent years NOAA Fisheries has greatly expanded the amount of fishery research conducted on SDSF at several locations including one which is located on Amaya Creek, and four others on the East Branch of Soquel Creek. In the past, habitat assessments have been conducted on the reaches involved with the sampling study to correlate with fish numbers.

A habitat survey was conducted by DW Alley and Associates in SDSF in September, 2009. Reach #12 is located along the East Branch of Soquel Creek from the confluence with Amaya Creek up to Ashbury Falls (2,644 feet). A summary of their findings is: 40% in pools, 6% in riffles, 5% in runs and 49% in step-runs. Additional habitat parameters included channel stratum observations and shade (canopy) cover attributes. In 1994, CAL FIRE sponsored a stream survey of fish habitat performed by the Coastal Resources Institute (CRI), a part of California Polytechnic University, San Luis Obispo California. A final report was submitted on July 6, 1994. CRI's Reach #2 covered the East Branch of Soquel Creek from just below the confluence of Amaya Creek to just above the confluence with Fern Gulch Creek (11,161 lineal feet). CRI summarized their findings as: 20% in pools, 36% in flatwater and 44% in riffles. CRI made the following comments on this reach:

"All habitat types were well represented on Soquel Creek. The pool to riffle ratio, however, falls short of the optimum 1:1, at 0.78:1. The shortage of pools was concentrated in reach two (C1),

where the pool to riffle ratio was 0.46:1. Overall, pool depths are sufficient for adult and overwintering habitat. Mean depths for Soquel Creek were greater than those required for adult migration, even at low summer flow. Migration through SDSF on the East Branch was free of obstacles from the southern border to Ashbury Falls."

DW Alley and Associates have also conducted numerous habitat assessments and electrofishing surveys on the East Branch of Soquel Creek over the years. In 2003, Mr. Alley described many instream obstacles throughout Soquel Creek just upstream of the Longridge Road crossing. These obstacles were comprised of boulder fields and/or "wood clusters." Each of these was described as being passable at flow volumes ranging from 100 to 600 cfs.

Although very limited habitat typing has been conducted in Amaya Creek, DW Alley did include this stream in his 2003 assessment. Mr. Alley indicated that there were four large wood clusters trapping "considerable sediment", with passage limitation starting roughly 2,000 feet from the confluence with Soquel Creek. Pools constituted less than 1/3 of the habitat, and this stream is one of the warmer tributaries to the East Branch of Soquel Creek. The lower reach of Amaya Creek is still considered to be good steelhead habitat with quality spawning substrate.

SDSF has begun the process of installing large wood structures into the bed and bank of the East Branch of Soquel Creek to create additional pools and cover. One of the project sites is a streambank failure site immediately upstream of the confluence of the East Branch of Soquel Creek and Amaya Creek. It will be repaired using large, woody debris logs with the rootwads attached that were sourced from the Fern Gulch THP. These projects add complexity in the watercourse and create cover habitat.

Redwood habitat and its mixed hardwood elements in the project area support a range of wildlife species, including potential roosting, feeding and nesting habitat suitable for Cooper's (*Accipiter cooperii)*, red-shouldered (*Buteo lineatus*) and sharp-shinned hawks (*Accipiter striatus*), great-horned owls (*Bubo virginiatus*) and other local nesting birds. Logging and road and trail construction activities could potentially have an impact on nesting of these and other birds and other wildlife. Management guidelines and other measures, including surveys for raptors and other nesting birds, would be expected to result in less than significant impacts to raptors or other migratory birds.

Recreational use of SDSF also has potential wildlife impacts. Use is expected to be highest during the weekend daytime hours. Due to the remote nature of the forest, use during the week is limited to usually a few dozen users per day at most. The forest is closed from sunset to sunrise and generally no use will occur at night. For these reasons, potential of significant disturbance to wildlife from recreational use would be unlikely.

Individual projects conducted under the guidance of the GFMP would require a separate biological assessment (during THP review or other CEQA review), based upon site-specific conditions. If during the assessment, project layout, or surveys, it appears any aspect of the project might interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or might impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites, then protection measures and mitigations would be incorporated into the project. Protection measures and mitigations would be developed in cooperation with USFWS and/or CDFW.

This should ensure that impacts from the implementation of the Project should not interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites. Therefore, implementation of the project should result in a less than significant impact to the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impeding the use of native wildlife nursery sites.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
e) Would the project conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?	☐	☐	☐	☒

No local tree preservation policy exists in this portion of Santa Cruz County. Therefore, implementation of the project should result in no impact related to conflicts with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
f) Would the project conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?	☐	☐	☐	☒

The proposed projects are not within the boundaries of a Habitat Conservation Plan or Natural Community Conservation Plan. Activities proposed in the GFMP comply with and will further efforts to implement the Final Recovery Plan for the Evolutionarily Significant Unit of Central California Coast Coho Salmon (NMFS, 2012). Therefore, implementation of the project should result in no impact related to conflicts with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan.

Cultural Resources

Discussion

An archaeological and historical field survey of SDSF was conducted during the summer of 1991. The chief investigator was Dr. Brian Dillon, a consulting archaeologist associated with the California State University at Northridge. In March of 1992, an archaeological and historical report was generated from the survey. In addition to study results, this report also includes information from archival records research and extensive oral history interviews. During the survey, Dr. Dillon and his crew discovered six archaeological sites within the State Forest boundaries: two prehistoric and three historic sites, as well as one site with both prehistoric and historic features. Additional studies covering SDSF history and archaeology have identified

many additional sites that are documented in Confidential Archaeological Addendums to THPs and archived with the Northwest Information Center.

The significance of each site was determined by its archaeological and historical value, as outlined in state and federal guidelines. Significance, as defined by these guidelines, is based on uniqueness and preservation, with both considered in the determination of a site's value. Uniqueness refers to how many other similar features exist (on other sites), while preservation refers to the condition of the features remaining on the site. A site is not considered significant if it, although unique, has been completely destroyed, as there is nothing left to protect or study.

A confidentiality policy exists that limits public disclosure of sensitive archaeological and historical resources. Consequently, site locations in SDSF with moderate to high levels of significance will not be revealed to the general public. The confidentiality policy protects the resources from artifact collection, site excavation, and vandalism. The policy was approved by the State Historical Resources Commission under authority of PRC § 5020.4(c).

Since 1991, several additional archaeological surveys have been conducted on SDSF. As a result of these surveys and the initial one conducted by Dr. Dillon, approximately 30 percent of SDSF has been examined at least once for archaeological resources. Surveys conducted since 1991 have resulted in the identification and recording of numerous additional prehistoric and historic-era sites.

SDSF's cultural resources management procedures are based on CAL FIRE's statewide Management Plan for Historic Buildings and Archaeological Sites (plan) (Foster and Thornton, 2001) and its accompanying environmental impact report (EIR), which prescribe general measures for identifying, evaluating and managing heritage resources on CAL FIRE lands statewide including SDSF. This management plan was initiated in 1991 pursuant to Executive Order W-26-92, CEQA and PRC § 5020 *et seq*., in coordination with the State Historic Preservation Office and in consideration of comments from the interested public and Native American Tribes and organizations. For each of CAL FIRE's properties, including SDSF, the plan summarizes the inventory of recorded historic buildings and prehistoric and historic archaeological sites; identifies those buildings and sites determined to be significant per National and State Registers criteria in consultation with SHPO; establishes decision making criteria for managing its historic buildings and identifies those targeted for preservation; describes CAL FIRE's archaeology program, role in fire protection, Native American gathering policy, and artifact collections; and establishes specific management objectives and measures.

Individual projects conducted under the guidance of the GFMP would assess impacts to cultural resources. Each THP would include a confidential archaeological addendum (CAA), which would be prepared per 14 CCR § 929.1. The CAA would include, among other things: (1) an archaeological records check; (2) evidence of written notification to Native Americans of the preparation of a plan; (3) results of a field survey for archaeological and historical sites within the site survey area; (4) documentation of pre-field research; (5) a description of all archaeological or historical sites identified within the site survey area; and (6) a description of any specific enforceable protection measures to be implemented both within the site boundaries and within 100 feet of the site boundaries. Other projects would be required to comply with CAL FIRE's *Archaeological Review Procedures for CAL FIRE Projects* (California Department

of Forestry and Fire Protection, 2010), which is an intradepartmental requirement for any CAL FIRE project subject to CEQA. *Archaeological Review Procedures for CAL FIRE Projects* would require the project proponent to complete the following actions to assess cultural resources: (1) complete an archaeological records check; (2) give written notification to Native Americans; (3) conduct a field survey for archaeological and historical sites; (4) conduct pre-field research; (5) consult with a CAL FIRE archeologist; (6) consult with Native Americans; (7) describe all archaeological or historical sites; and (8) describe specific enforceable protection measures. This assessment would have to be approved by a CAL FIRE archaeologist.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in Section 15064.5?	☐	☐	☒	☐

The historic period began along the central coast in 1769 and continues to the present day. The historic sites found in SDSF span from the Mexican Period, 1822 - 1848, to the Anglo-American Period, 1848 to present. The most recent site in SDSF, however, dates back to World War II.

Historic sites found on SDSF include the following features and artifacts: Depression-era split products manufacturing sites; logging-related equipment and materials such as 55-gallon drums, steel snatch-bocks, wire rope/cable of various diameters and style, crosscut saws, oiler jugs, and related items; logging-related features such as modified stumps, cable roads, and skid roads; sawmill-related equipment and materials and a sawpit; a livestock corral made from redwood pickets; scrapped automobiles and parts; segments of wagon roads constructed between 1857 and 1870; several segments of old fence comprised of mostly split redwood posts and fragments of rusted barbed wire; a variety of components from a steam donkey and the log skids which it was mounted upon; single-family wood-framed residences and various associated landscape features built between 1936 and 1959; remains of other structures of unknown age and purpose; and discarded cans, bottles and miscellaneous debris.

All of the sites and isolates described above were documented with records prepared in accordance with California Office of Historic Preservation (OHP) guidelines (CDPR 1995).

CAL FIRE's primary approach to managing significant heritage resources is to preserve them through avoidance of project-related impacts. If any unrecorded sites are discovered during surveys or management activities, a CAL FIRE Archaeologist will be contacted to determine the appropriate protection measures. Procedures described in Foster (2006) will be used to avoid impacts.

Individual projects conducted under the guidance of the GFMP would assess impacts to historic resources and provide mitigation, if necessary. Each THP would include a confidential archaeological addendum (CAA), which would be prepared per 14 CCR § 929.1. The CAA would include, among other things: (1) an archaeological records check; (2) results of a field survey for historical sites within the site survey area; (3) documentation of pre-field research; (4) a description of all historical sites identified within the site survey area; and (5) a description of any specific enforceable protection measures to be implemented both within the site boundaries

and within 100 feet of the site boundaries. Other projects would be required to comply with CAL FIRE's *Archaeological Review Procedures for CAL FIRE Projects* (California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, 2010), which is an intradepartmental requirement for any CAL FIRE project subject to CEQA. *Archaeological Review Procedures for CAL FIRE Projects* would require the project proponent to complete the following actions to assess cultural resources: (1) complete an archaeological records check; (2) conduct a field survey for historical sites; (3) conduct pre field research; (4) consult with a CAL FIRE archeologist; (5) describe all historical sites; and (6) describe specific enforceable protection measures. This assessment would have to be approved by a CAL FIRE archaeologist.

This should ensure that impacts from the implementation of the project should result in a less than significant impact related to causing a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in Section 15064.5.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
b) Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to Section 15064.5?	☐	☐	☒	☐

The prehistoric era is believed to have begun on the central coast about 4,000 years ago. The most active times were during the Late Prehistoric Period, 1000 - 1600 AD, when hundreds of sites were established. The prehistoric sites found in SDSF are from this Late Prehistoric Period.

Prehistoric sites found on SDSF include the following constituents: bedrock mortars (some including cupules and petroglyphs); portable size mortars; large lithic tools including manos, metates, a pestle and cooking stones; small lithic tools and debitage consisting of non-native rock types including chert; small stone manuports of unknown purpose; and midden soils.

Individual projects conducted under the guidance of the GFMP would assess impacts to cultural resources. Each THP would include a confidential archaeological addendum (CAA), which would be prepared per 14 CCR § 929.1. The CAA would include, among other things: (1) an archaeological records check; (2) evidence of written notification to Native Americans of the preparation of a plan; (3) results of a field survey for archaeological and historical sites within the site survey area; (4) documentation of pre-field research; (5) a description of all archaeological sites identified within the site survey area; and (6) a description of any specific enforceable protection measures to be implemented both within the site boundaries and within 100 feet of the site boundaries. Other projects would be required to comply with CAL FIRE's *Archaeological Review Procedures for CAL FIRE Projects* (California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, 2010), which is an intradepartmental requirement for any CAL FIRE project subject to CEQA. *Archaeological Review Procedures for CAL FIRE Projects* would require the project proponent to complete the following actions to assess cultural resources: (1) complete an archaeological records check; (2) give written notification to Native Americans; (3) conduct a field survey for archaeological sites; (4) conduct pre-field research; (5) consult with a CAL FIRE archeologist; (6) consult with Native Americans; (7) describe all archaeological sites; and (8)

describe specific enforceable protection measures. This assessment would have to be approved by a CAL FIRE archaeologist.

This should ensure that impacts from the implementation of the Project should result in a less than significant impact related to causing a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to Section 15064.5.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
c) Would the project directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?	☐	☐	☐	☒

No known paleontological or unique geologic features have been identified on SDSF. Any proposed excavation work will be limited to the first few feet of soil where any fossils will have been destroyed or buried by soil formation processes. This should ensure implementation of the project should result in no impact related to directly or indirectly destroying a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
d) Would the project disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?	☐	☐	☒	☐

There are no known cemeteries or human remains existing on SDSF. No human remains or associated grave goods were encountered during the archaeological survey work on SDSF, and human remains or grave goods would not likely be encountered during project activities. As mentioned previously, individual projects conducted under the guidance of the GFMP would assess impacts to cultural resources. This would include an archaeological records check, written notification to Native Americans and a field survey. These actions would likely discover evident or known human remains. None-the-less, the possibility exists for human remains to occur within the project area. Therefore, if such human remains were unearthed, SDSF would follow the HSC §7050.5, PRC § 5097.98 and AB 2641. This requires halting excavation, notifying the coroner, potentially contacting the Native American Heritage Commission, protecting the area and appropriately treating the discovery. This should ensure that implementation of the project should result in a less than significant impact to human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries.

Geology and Soils

a) Would the project expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:

i) Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? (Refer to California Geological Survey Special Publication 42.)	Potentially Significant Impact ☐	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated ☐	Less Than Significant Impact ☒	No Impact ☐
ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?	Potentially Significant Impact ☐	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated ☐	Less Than Significant Impact ☒	No Impact ☐
iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?	Potentially Significant Impact ☐	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated ☐	Less Than Significant Impact ☒	No Impact ☐
iv) Landslides?	Potentially Significant Impact ☐	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated ☐	Less Than Significant Impact ☒	No Impact ☐

i) Rupture of a known earthquake fault: SDSF is seismically very active. The San Andreas Fault runs through the northeastern boundary and along the East Branch of Soquel Creek to the mouth of Ashbury Gulch, where it turns north. The Zayante Fault, part of the San Andreas Rift Zone, runs through the southwest edge of SDSF. The epicenter of the 1989 Loma Prieta Earthquake was located approximately two miles south of SDSF, in The Forest of Nisene Marks State Park. Numerous cracks and fissures dating from the 1989 earthquake have been located in the State Forest. Geologic activity, coupled with past fires and severe rain storms, has helped form the steep terrain found throughout the Forest. These events have also contributed to the many landslides present within the inner gorges of streams and along steep roadcuts. The numerous natural springs and sag ponds found throughout the Forest are also the result of past geologic activity.

Ground rifts and ruptures are generally limited to areas in direct proximity to fault lines. No buildings exist on SDSF. In the future with additional land acquisition, some development could occur. The project would include planning for an eventual Forestry Education Center if CAL FIRE were able to acquire additional property that would provide adequate public access and opportunities for development. Any additional project for acquisition and development of a Forestry Education Center would be evaluated under a new CEQA analysis in the future. The current project would not propose construction of buildings used for human occupancy. This should ensure implementation of the project should not expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving the rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning

Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault. This is considered a less than significant impact.

ii) Strong seismic ground shaking: SDSF is located adjacent to the San Andreas Fault Zone and is subject to very intense shaking during earthquake events. Large, deep-seated landslides are found in the project area and across the forest and are likely related to earthquake activity. People recreating at SDSF, employees, researchers or contractors could potentially be harmed if an earthquake or landslide occurred while they were in the forest. However, such impacts could occur with or without the implementation of the current project. The project does not propose construction of buildings used for human occupancy. This should ensure implementation of the project should not expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving strong seismic ground shaking. This is considered a less than significant impact.

iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction: Seismic-related ground failure is possible. Such failure would most likely consist of rock-fall from steep outcrops that could be hazardous to people downslope of such outcrops. However, such impacts could occur with or without the implementation of the current project. The project does not propose construction of buildings used for human occupancy..This should ensure implementation of the project should not expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction.

The parent material of soils found in SDSF is primarily sedimentary and consists of fine and coarse-grained sandstone, consolidated shale, weathered mudstone, and siltstone. Schist and intrusions of granitic rock are also present. There are nine soil series which developed from these parent materials. They are all deep and well-drained soils except for the Maymen Stony Loam which is a shallow, well-drained soil. The combination of soil types, groundwater conditions, and seismic shaking intensity necessary for liquefaction does not appear present in SDSF, therefore the probability of seismic-induced liquefaction is very low.

This is considered a less than significant impact.

iv) Landslides: In 1992, a detailed geologic study was completed by the California Geologic Survey (Manson and Sowma-Bawcom, 1992). This investigation resulted in a report which focuses on the process and degree of instability in both the State Forest and surrounding areas. The report, titled *Geology, Slope Stability, and Earthquake Damage in Soquel Demonstration State Forest*, includes maps of general geologic and geomorphic characteristics, landslide features (indicating the relative degree of stability), stream orders, roads to be considered for abandonment, and Alquist-Priolo Special Studies Zones.

The few deep-seated landslides shown on the map move slowly and would be unlikely to expose people to potentially substantial adverse effects. Although the deep-seated landslides are capable of affecting buildings and infrastructure adversely, no buildings appear to be located in areas likely to be affected by the mapped deep-seated landslides. Proposed operations under the GFMP would be unlikely to affect the natural potential for existing deep-seated landslides to adversely affect existing structures. The project would not propose construction of new buildings used for human occupancy, which could expose people or structures to substantial adverse effects due to landslides.

Individual projects conducted under the guidance of the GFMP, which have the potential to affect soil stability (e.g. timber harvest, road building) would be subject to THP review or other CEQA review and comment. This review would minimize the likelihood of destabilizing operations being carried out.

Individual projects conducted under the guidance of the GFMP would assess impacts to soil stability. Individual THPs would assess existing and potential unstable areas on the plan area for potential impacts from project-specific activities. If such activities would cause slope instability, then site-specific mitigation, which would reduce the effect to a less-than-significant level, would be required. The California Geology Survey (CGS) is part of the multiagency THP review team that provides comments as well as expertise. CGS staff has Certified Engineering Geologists (CEGs) that participates in field review of individual projects. For other projects, the environmental assessment should identify significant effects to slope stability. CAL FIRE regularly consults with a CEG from CGS on such projects to address any slope stability issues. CGS' recommendations are then incorporated into the project design. In all cases, if significant effects were identified, the project would have to include mitigation to reduce such impacts to a level less-than-significant.

This should ensure implementation of the project should result in a <u>less than significant impact</u> related to exposure of people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving landslides.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
b) Would the project result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Road building and maintenance are critical elements of forest management. Forest roads are usually the largest source of management-related sediment and they provide the means to recreate, harvest timber, access emergency situations, maintain facilities, and patrol SDSF. Therefore, they should be in the best possible condition at all times. Culverts, bridges, ford crossings, water bars, rolling dips, and drainage ditches (structures which divert water away from or off of roads) need to be regularly inspected and repaired as necessary.

Winter inspection is crucial as the majority of water and soil movement occurs during the rainy season. New roads or skid trails would not be constructed or old roads or skid trails would not be rehabilitated without thorough evaluations of topography, intended use, soil stability, drainage capabilities, and construction costs. Roads that were not needed to provide access, or were at high risk for sediment production, or are difficult to maintain and monitor would be abandoned.

There are approximately 19 miles of existing or abandoned roads within SDSF. According to the analysis done in 1995 for the EIR, about 22 miles of new roads are needed to complete the Forest road network and approximately 15 miles of road will eventually be abandoned. The existing road density is about 4.6 miles per square mile.

California Forest Practice Rules specific to road building and maintenance would be applied during all forest management activities. This would be particularly emphasized during timber harvesting operations. These regulations, along with other site-specific strategies, would help minimize erosion and sediment delivery to watercourses, visual disturbance, and road construction and maintenance needs. Specific measures for a given road segment would be prescribed as part of THP layout. Such measures would be contained in the THP, which would go through the multi-disciplinary, CEQA functional equivalent review process. This should ensure any significant effects associated with erosion-related issues, including roads and other features, could be identified and appropriate mitigation prescribed. Generally, all construction or rehabilitation of roads would include outsloping of road surfaces, rolling dips, and limited use of inside ditches to minimize hydrologic connectivity to stream channels. A road management plan would be developed that includes status of all roads, trails and crossings and recommendations for repair or upgrade. This would build upon the information from the 2003 Pacific Watershed Associates road inventory for the Soquel Creek Watershed.

All roads and other improvements would be monitored and maintained in good condition. This would provide for safety and help prevent surface and mass erosion. All timber operations would be required to adhere to a waiver of waste discharge that is obtained from the Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (WQ). Included in the waiver would be the requirement for effectiveness monitoring. This monitoring along with regular winter monitoring conducted by SDSF staff would provide early detection of any erosion issues needing immediate correction. Where required, SDSF would obtain a 1600 permit under the Lake and Streambed Alteration Program, from the CDFW, for the installation or repair of watercourse crossings.

The program of road monitoring and maintenance, combined with adherence to the Forest Practice Rules, WQ waiver, and CDFW permits should ensure implementation of the project should not result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil. This should ensure the potential project impacts to soil erosion and topsoil loss will be <u>less than significant</u>.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
c) Would the project be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse?	☐	☐	☒	☐

In 1992, a detailed geologic study was completed by the California Geologic Survey (Manson and Sowma-Bawcom, 1992). This investigation resulted in a report which focuses on the process and degree of instability in both the State Forest and surrounding areas. The report, titled *Geology, Slope Stability, and Earthquake Damage in Soquel Demonstration State Forest*, includes maps of general geologic and geomorphic characteristics, landslide features (indicating the relative degree of stability), stream orders, roads to be considered for abandonment, and Alquist-Priolo Special Studies Zones.

The few deep-seated landslides shown on the map move slowly and would be unlikely to expose people to potentially substantial adverse effects. Although the deep-seated landslides are capable

of affecting buildings and infrastructure adversely, no buildings appear to be located in areas likely to be affected by the mapped deep-seated landslides. Proposed operations under the GFMP would be unlikely to affect the natural potential for existing deep-seated landslides to adversely affect existing structures. The project does not propose construction of new buildings used for human occupancy, which could expose people or structures to substantial adverse effects to landslides, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse.

Individual projects conducted under the guidance of the GFMP, which have the potential to affect soil stability (e.g. timber harvest, road building) would be subject to THP review or other CEQA review and comment. This review would minimize the likelihood of destabilizing operations being carried out.

Individual projects conducted under the guidance of the GFMP would assess impacts to soil stability. Individual THPs would assess existing and potential unstable areas on the plan area for potential impacts from project-specific activities. If such activities would cause slope instability, then site-specific mitigation, which would reduce the effect to a less-than-significant level, would be required. CGS is part of the multiagency THP review team that provides comments as well as expertise. CGS staff has a CEG that participates in field review of individual projects. For other projects, the environmental assessment should identify significant effects to slope stability. CAL FIRE regularly consults with a CEG from CGS on such projects to address any slope stability issues. CGS' recommendations are then incorporated into the project design. In all cases, if significant effects were identified, the project would have to include mitigation to reduce such impacts to a level less-than-significant.

This should ensure implementation of the project should not propose activities on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse. This should ensure the potential project impacts to soil instability will be <u>less than significant</u>.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
d) Would the project be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994, as updated), creating substantial risks to life or property?	☐	☐	☐	☒

No expansive soils as defined in the Uniform Building Code are located on SDSF. This should ensure implementation of the project would result in <u>no impact</u> related to expansive soils, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994, as updated), creating substantial risks to life or property.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
e) Would the project have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water?	☐	☐	☐	☒

There is one septic system located at SDSF Headquarters. The soils around headquarters are cable of supporting a septic system. The toilet located at the Highland Way parking area is self-contained and requires pumping for removal of the waste. A portable toilet on a trailer that is used for projects and special events, and is stored at SDSF Headquarters, is also self-contained and requires pumping for removal of the waste. The pumping of the portable toilet on a trailer occurs at the SDSF Headquarters where the toilet is stored when not in use. Licensed contractors dispose of the waste. This should ensure implementation of the project would result in no impact related to soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water.

Greenhouse Gas Emissions

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Would the project generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?	☐	☐	☒	☐

This analysis evaluates whether climate change and greenhouse gas (GHG) issues related to management of SDSF have the potential to be a significant environmental effect, either on a project basis or cumulatively. Table 2 summarizes estimated net carbon dioxide sequestration levels under proposed management at SDSF over a 100-year planning interval[2]. The analysis shows substantial positive carbon sequestration benefits. Proposed management at SDSF would sequester a net CO_2 equivalent of 1,241,625 metric tonnes of carbon at the end of 100 years. The GHG analysis is based upon the volume information calculated for and contained within the SDSF 2010 Option A (CALFIRE, 2010).

The analysis provided utilizes the Emissions Calculator Worksheets created by CAL FIRE. The analysis has been limited to the 2,413 acres that would be expected to be actively managed, and therefore modeled in the Option A. An additional 268 acres, that have been designated "unavailable"[3] would sequester additional carbon on SDSF, but are not included in this analysis.

SDSF includes both cable yarding (~803 acres) and tractor harvesting ground (~1610 acres). The 100-year emissions analysis would mirror the Option A using a 20-year cutting cycle, with half of the available acres scheduled for the first entry in the first decade, and half the available acres scheduled for first entry in the second decade. All inventory, growth, and harvest figures are based on the Option A document.

The conclusion from the above analysis is that there would be a substantial positive carbon sequestration benefit and a net negative emission of GHGs at SDSF under the guidance of the project. Orders of magnitude more biomass would be conserved than would be harvested. In

[2] A 100-year look-ahead period is necessary in forested ecosystems, where trees can take more than 50 years to reach maturity. The 100-year planning interval allows a minimum period necessary to evaluate long-term steady-state behavior of forested ecosystem while not exceeding the range of applicability of mathematical simulation models.

[3] Lands unavailable for timber harvesting include areas that are inoperable, old-growth protection areas and predominantly hardwood areas.

other words, the GFMP would propose to harvest less biomass (and to emit less CO_2) than growth.

Climate change science is still in its infancy. There are likely wide error bars around the above estimates, given the general level of the analysis and the continuing evolution of CO_2 calculation equations. The result that positive sequestration benefits would exceed emissions by orders of magnitude, however, lends validity to the general conclusion that sequestration would be much greater than emissions. Our conclusion is also supported by estimates from the Air Resources Board, which indicate that forest land use in California results in a net decrease in atmospheric carbon, not an increase http://www.arb.ca.gov/cc/inventory/archive/tables/net_co2_flux_2007-11-19.pdf.

Since the net amount of carbon that would be sequestered under the project is calculated to be significantly greater than the amount of carbon that would be released by SDSF management activities over a 100-years analysis period, implementation of the project should not generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment. This should ensure the potential project impacts to greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, should be a less than significant. In fact, significant beneficial impacts of net carbon sequestration could occur as a result of the proposed management activities.

Table 2: Summary of Soquel Demonstration State Forest Emissions and Sequestration

	Harvest decades 1,3,5,7,9 (odd decades)				Harvest decades 2,4,6,8,10 (even decades)				Project Summary Information
	Tractor (odd decades)		Cable (odd decades)		Tractor (even decades)		Cable (even decades)		
	Start	End	Start	End	Start	End	Start	End	
Emissions Source/Sink/Reservoir	"Metric Tonnes CO2 Equivalent Per Acre Basis"		"Metric Tonnes CO2 Equivalent Per Acre Basis"		"Metric Tonnes CO2 Equivalent Per Acre Basis"		"Metric Tonnes CO2 Equivalent Per Acre Basis"		"Metric Tonnes CO2 Equivalent Per Acre Basis"
Live Trees (Conifers and Hardwoods)	350.93	761.87	350.93	761.87	350.93	750.68	350.93	739.95	754.49
Wood Products		125.36		125.36		108.51		107.24	116.72
Site Preparation Emissions		0.00		0.00		0.00		0.00	0.00
Non-biological emissions associated with harvesting		-4.71		-4.11		-4.06		-3.51	-4.19
Non-biological emissions associated with milling		-1.64		-1.64		-1.42		-1.41	-1.53
Sum of Net Emissions/Sequestration over Identified Harvest Cycles (CO2 metric tonnes)		529.95		530.55		502.77		491.34	514.56
Project Acres		805		401.50		805		401.50	2413
Total Project Sequestration over defined Harvesting Periods (CO2 metric tonnes)		426,608		213,015		404,729		197,273	**1,241,625**

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
b) Would the project conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?	☐	☐	☐	☒

AB 32, the Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006 requires a reduction of GHG emissions to 1990 levels by 2020. The California Air Resources Board (ARB) is the lead agency for implementing AB 32, which developed the Climate Change Scoping Plan (California Air Resources Board, 2008). The Climate Change Scoping Plan (scoping plan) includes a comprehensive set of actions designed to reduce overall greenhouse gas emissions in California. The scoping plan was adopted in 2008 and updated in 2013. The 2020 scoping plan target for California's forest sector is to maintain the current five million metric tonnes of CO_2 equivalent of sequestration through sustainable management practices, potentially including reducing the risk of catastrophic wildfire, and the avoidance or mitigation of land-use changes that reduce carbon storage. In addition, the scoping plan supports voluntary actions, including expenditure of public funds for projects focused largely on conserving biodiversity, providing recreation, promoting sustainable forest management and other projects that also provide carbon sequestration benefits. Maintaining the current five million metric tonnes of CO_2 equivalent of sequestration through sustainable management practices is done by adhering to the current FPRs.

SDSF conducts all of its timber management actions in accordance with the FPRs. Relative to actions that would sequester carbon, this is done as outlined in SDSF's Option A Plan, which establishes the long-term sustained yield for SDSF and the long term strategy for protecting other public trust resources. The Option A conforms to 14 CCR § 913.1(a). The project would implement the actions outlined in the Option A. By practicing sustainable timber management practices, SDSF would act in a manner consistent with the goals of the scoping plan. Thus, the project would not conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases. This should ensure implementation of the project would result in no impact related to conflicts with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases.

Hazards and Hazardous Materials

Discussion

Potentially hazardous materials located on SDSF or used on SDSF for management activities would include equipment fuel and oil, petroleum and propane storage tanks, herbicides, marking paint, and incendiary and firing devices. Proper use, storage and transportation of these chemicals should not result in any potential significant impacts on the environment. Potential significant impacts could occur by accidental spilling of the material.

Guidance to insure that all material would be properly used, stored and transported is included in Appendix D of the GFMP. These would include the requirement for Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS), material labels, and any additional handing and emergency instruction of the materials to be kept on file at SDSF Headquarters. Any state employee handling these materials would be made aware of the potential hazards, given proper training and instruction, and also made aware of the location of the MSDS and any other documentation for the material. All contractors used in the application or use of these hazardous materials would have the appropriate licenses and be able to read and understand the MSDS, labels, appropriate recommendations and application instructions. The storage of potentially hazardous materials on SDSF would be in accordance with the MSDS, and any buildings that would be used for storage would display appropriate placards.

Small amounts of equipment fuel, oils and burn mix are stored in petroleum-approved containers in a placarded outbuilding at SDSF Headquarters. There are also petroleum and propane storage tanks located at SDSF Headquarters. These tanks are above-ground, and access is restricted to CAL FIRE employees.

Firing and incendiary devices are stored in accordance to the MSDS with ignition devices and fuel stored separately. These devices are only used by properly trained CAL FIRE employees. Storage buildings display the appropriate placard.

Dust abatement on SDSF is accomplished by use of water and water trucks.

Herbicides have been used on SDSF for demonstration, research and for the control of invasive exotic plants. The use of herbicides as a tool to control vegetation is determined by the vegetation present on site, by the vegetation targeted for control and the level of control needed to accomplish the goals of the project. These factors, as well as local weather patterns, soil types, topography, and the presence of threatened or endangered species would be used to determine if

herbicides will be used. The specific recommendation for the type of herbicide, application rate, timing, and application method would be determined by the site-specific conditions and made by a Licensed Pest Control Advisor (PCA) in compliance with 3 CCR §§ 6000-6960. In addition, herbicide application would be supervised by the PCA and used in accordance with the herbicide label.

The invasive plant species with the highest priority for control on SDSF are French broom, periwinkle, poison hemlock, jubata grass, English ivy, eupatory, subterranean clover, Italian thistle, yellow-star thistle, Italian ryegrass, forget me not, Bermuda buttercup and orchard grass. The herbicide application method has typically been a directed, foliar, application to target species using a backpack sprayer.

Individual herbicide applications would be based on label and MSDS restrictions, and written recommendations by PCA.. The recommendations would build upon the pesticide, surfactant and adjuvant labels and MSDS, which would provide information on the chemical's potential for movement and toxicity. The PCA recommendations would consider site-specific information such as vegetation present on site, targeted species, restrictions on chemical use, current and forecasted weather, soil types, topography, and the presence of threatened or endangered species. These recommendations would also evaluate proximity to schools, apiaries, neighbors, domestic water systems, presence of wetlands, watercourses, amphibians, and fish. If necessary these recommendations would include mitigations to reduce the impacts to apiaries, humans or biological resources. Mitigation examples could include, but are not limited to, drift control measures, buffers, avoidance, weather restrictions, and timing restrictions.

Specific herbicide use would depend on the nature of the vegetation and site conditions and could change based on availability from the manufacturer, registration status, feasible treatment alternatives and the recommendations of the PCA. To date the application for control of French broom has been on a very limited basis and has been confined to the areas with the heaviest infestations along roads and on the two helipads. The active ingredient used for the application was glyphosate.

New products, formulations and application techniques could provide better control and improved environmental toxicology profiles than the current chemicals being utilized at SDSF. Additionally, as part of SDSF's research and demonstration mission, small-scale herbicide trials or vegetation control studies could occur. Additional background on herbicide regulation and use is included as this topic is of concern to some members of the public. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency regulates pesticide use nationwide and has exclusive authority over pesticide labeling. Use of a pesticide is limited to the applications and restrictions on the label, and the label restrictions are legally enforceable. The California Department of Pesticide Regulation (DPR) regulates pesticides within California and has legal authority to adopt restrictions on pesticide use going beyond the regulations of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (7 USCA §136v). Under California law, pesticide products must be registered by DPR in order to be sold and used. Before a substance is registered as a pesticide for the first time, DPR conducts a thorough evaluation that provides CEQA equivalency. After a pesticide is registered for use, DPR has an ongoing obligation to review new information received about the pesticide that might show new problems beyond those identified in the registration process. DPR is the lead agency for regulating herbicide use under CEQA. Where the review of new information shows that a significant adverse impact has occurred, or is likely to occur, DPR is required to

reevaluate the registration. The regulatory program of DPR and the county agricultural commissioners is thorough, detailed, and involved.

Details of herbicide, surfactant and adjuvant chemistry, including mode of action and break down products as well as manufactures formulations are evaluated in depth by EPA and DPR during both the registration process and periodic reviews. In addition to the label and MSDS the following source should be reviewed for information relevant to the project; National Pesticide Information Center http://npic.orst.edu/.

DPR's program for regulating pesticides was certified by the Secretary of the Natural Resources Agency as a functional equivalent program under PRC § 21080.5 in the same manner as the state's program of regulating timber harvesting was certified (14 CCR § 15251(i)). Because the program is certified, DPR does not prepare EIRs, but prepares other documents in the place of EIRs (PRC § 21080.5(d)(3)). Because the registration evaluation process considers use of an herbicide in a broad area and in a variety of conditions, the documents are the functional equivalent of a program EIR for each pesticide. By the terms of its certification, the program is prevented from approving the registration as requested if there are feasible alternatives or mitigation measures available that could lessen any significant adverse effects on the environment (PRC § 21080.5(d)(2)(A)). By FAC § 12825, DPR may refuse to approve the registration of a new pesticide if its use would cause a significant adverse effect on the environment.

If DPR determines that further restrictions need to be placed on the use of a pesticide product to mitigate potential adverse effects, including human health effects and environmental effects, DPR classifies the pesticide as a restricted pesticide, and individual applications need a permit from the county agricultural commissioner. Site-specific application and use of restricted pesticides is evaluated by the county agricultural commissioner during its review of applications for restricted materials permits. Not all pesticides are restricted, and only restricted pesticides require a permit from the county agricultural commissioner. The commissioner can require a permit for use of a pesticide that DPR has not designated as restricted, if the commissioner makes a finding that the pesticide will present an undue hazard when used under local conditions.

Because DPR is the CEQA lead agency, its determination that the use will not have a significant effect on the environment is binding on all State agencies, including CAL FIRE (PRC § 21080.1, 14 CCR § 15050). Accordingly, if a DPR registered herbicide will be used in accordance with the directions and restrictions on the pesticide product label and any other restrictions established by DPR, SDSF would be required to find that the use will not have a significant effect on the environment unless there is new information showing significant or potentially significant effects not analyzed by DPR. The significant new information must show that the use would cause a new significant effect on the environment that had not been analyzed previously, that a previously analyzed effect would be much more severe, or that a new feasible alternative or mitigation measure, considerably different from ones analyzed previously, would lessen the significant effect but the project proponents declined to adopt it (14 CCR § 15088.5(a)). If CAL FIRE received comments on proposed herbicide use, CAL FIRE would need to determine whether the information qualifies as significant new information. CAL FIRE would consult with DPR and the county agricultural commissioner about the submitted information both to obtain the evaluation by the agencies with their expertise and to alert them about the issues. DPR could

respond to the information with a decision to reevaluate the registration of the herbicide or it could advise CAL FIRE that the information is repetitive of what was evaluated during the registration decision.

The Santa Cruz County Agricultural Commissioner has responsibility for compliance and enforcement actions, registration of businesses that perform pest control in Santa Cruz County, issuing Restricted Materials Permits and Operator ID numbers and other regulatory responsibilities.

When herbicides would be used on individual projects, conducted under the guidance of the GFMP, SDSF would review the recommended herbicide's, surfactant's, and adjuvant's intended use and the possible environmental effects of each. SDSF would work with the PCA to determine whether the proposed use would be consistent with the label and the registration limitations.

Details of herbicide, surfactant and adjuvant chemistry, including mode of action and break down products as well as manufactures formulations are evaluated in depth by EPA and DPR during both the registration process and periodic reviews. In addition to the label and MSDS the following source should be reviewed for information relevant to the project; National Pesticide Information Center http://npic.orst.edu/ .

SDSF would also check for significant new information showing changes in circumstances or available information that would require new environmental analysis. Significant new information should be referred to DPR for that department's analysis as part of its ongoing evaluation program.

Accidental spills would be minimized, avoided or controlled, by adherence to the PCA's recommendation, the product label and mitigations described in the second paragraph of this discussion. Additionally when herbicides would be used on SDSF all herbicide containers would have to be secured when being transported and all empty containers would have to be triple rinsed and disposed of properly off-site, with rinse water being put into the mixing tank. Any herbicide work conducted by contractors would be closely monitored by SDSF staff. When herbicides are handled and applied according to the product label instruction, PCA's recommendation, and the MSDS, significant adverse impacts to people, wildlife, water resources and the environment should not occur.

The measures described above would ensure that no significant adverse environmental or human health impacts occur as a result of pesticide application. Cumulative impacts are unlikely because herbicide uses related to different control projects would be separated in time and distance so that their individual effects do not reinforce or interact with each other. Herbicide use under the plan would be neither widespread nor frequent. Herbicide could be used for demonstration, research and for the control of invasive exotic plants. Forestry herbicide uses would be substantially less, in both frequency and amount, than in agricultural or urban settings.

Other pesticides including rodenticides and fungicides would not be routinely used. Any future use would be carefully evaluated in Pest Control Recommendations and associated CEQA documents.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Would the project create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Potentially hazardous materials located on SDSF or used on SDSF for management activities would include equipment fuel and oil, petroleum and propane storage tanks, herbicides, marking paint, and incendiary and firing devices. Adherence to regulations and guidance included in the GFMP should ensure implementation of the project would not result in any potential significant impacts from the routine use, transport, and storage of hazardous materials. As discussed above, this would include: (1) keeping MSDS, material labels, handing instructions, and emergency instruction on file; (2) making employees aware of potential hazards; (3) providing proper training and instruction in the use, transport and storage of hazardous materials; (4) making employees aware of the location of the MSDS and other documentation; (5) requiring contractors using hazardous materials to have appropriate licenses and the ability to read and understand the MSDS, labels, recommendations, and application instructions; (6) storing hazardous materials in accordance with the MSDS; (7) requiring storage buildings to display placards; (8) using herbicides per label instructions, MSDS restrictions, and written recommendations of the PCA; (9) reviewing each herbicide's, surfactant's, and adjuvant's intended use and environmental effects; (10) working with the PCA to determine whether the proposed use would be consistent with the label and the registration limitations; (11) checking for significant new information showing changes in circumstances or available information requiring new environmental analysis; (12) referring significant new information to DPR; (13) rinsing and disposing empty containers properly off-site; and (14) closely monitoring contractors using herbicides. Any future use would be carefully evaluated in Pest Control Recommendations and associated CEQA documents. This should reduce any potential significant impacts from the use, transport, and storage of hazardous materials to a <u>less than significant</u> level.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
b) Would the project create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and/or accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Potentially hazardous materials located on SDSF or used on SDSF for management activities would include equipment fuel and oil, petroleum and propane storage tanks, herbicides, marking paint, and incendiary and firing devices. Adherence to regulations and guidance included in the GFMP should ensure implementation of the project would not result in a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and/or accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment. As discussed above, this would include: (1) keeping MSDS, material labels, handing instructions, and emergency instruction on file; (2) making employees aware of potential hazards; (3) providing proper training and instruction in the use, transport and storage of hazardous materials; (4) making employees aware of the location of the MSDS and other documentation; (5) requiring contractors using hazardous materials to have appropriate licenses and the ability to read and

understand the MSDS, labels, recommendations, and application instructions; (6) storing hazardous materials in accordance with the MSDS; (7) requiring storage buildings to display placards; (8) using herbicides per label instructions, MSDS restrictions, and written recommendations of the PCA; (9) rinsing and disposing empty containers properly off-site; and (10) closely monitoring contractors using herbicides. This should ensure implementation of the project would result in a less than significant impact related to the creation of a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and/or accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
c) Would the project emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?	☐	☐	☐	☒

The nearest school is approximately three miles southwest of SDSF, along Soquel-San Jose Road. Thus, the project would not emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school. Therefore, implementation of the project should result in no impact related to hazardous emissions or the handling of hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
d) Would the project be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code §65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?	☐	☐	☐	☒

SDSF is not on any list of hazardous material sites, including the one compiled pursuant to GC §65962.5. Therefore, implementation of the project should result in no impact to locations associated with hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code §65962.5 that would create a significant hazard to the public or the environment.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?	☐	☐	☐	☒

SDSF is not located within two miles of an airport. Thus, the project would result in no impact related to a safety hazard associated with an airport land use plan, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport for people residing or working in the project area.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?	☐	☐	☒	☐

There are two helipads located at SDSF. Adherence to air traffic safety regulations should prevent safety hazards to neighbors or those working on the Forest. This should ensure implementation of the project would result in a <u>less than significant impact</u> related to safety hazard associated with private air strips for people residing or working in the project area

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
g) Would the project impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Timber operations have the potential to temporarily block roads with downed timber. 14 CCR § 918.3 requires that all logging roads must be kept passable during the fire season for fire truck travel. To maintain compliance with 14 CCR 918.3, in the event that timber would block emergency response equipment, all timber operators would be required to have equipment available on site to open the road immediately for emergency response equipment and to permit non-motorized public access to and from SDSF. Otherwise, the project would not impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan. This should ensure implementation of the project should result in a <u>less than significant impact</u> relative to emergency response.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
h) Would the project expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires, including where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas or where residences are intermixed with wildlands?	☐	☐	☒	☐

The CAL FIRE San Mateo-Santa Cruz Unit Chief is responsible for fire protection in the SDSF. The Forest Manager, the Unit's Operations Chief for Santa Cruz County, and the local CAL FIRE Battalion Chief would work together to ensure an adequate fire protection program would be in place for SDSF. In addition, SDSF staff would work with other agencies as needed to provide fire protection.

Pre-suppression is defined as fire protection activities performed before fire occurrence to ensure reduced fire intensity and effective fire suppression. Pre-suppression plans discuss site-specific ways to minimize loss and to reduce hazard and risk. The current pre-suppression plan for SDSF would be updated by the local CAL FIRE Battalion Chief with assistance from the Forest Manager. The more comprehensive plan would include the definition and assessment of high risk and hazard areas within the watershed boundaries, maps of fire defense improvements,

prevention techniques, and an evaluation of available resources. State Forest staff would continue to work on these activities along with Unit fire protection personnel.

Fire defense improvements would be strategically located to protect forest land and neighboring properties. Improvements at SDSF include three water tanks, shaded fuel breaks, and two helipads. In addition, appropriate signing, fire hazard reduction, and adequate access to roads and trails would be added or maintained.

Fire hazard and prevention information, as well as Demonstration State Forest regulations, would be posted on all information boards. The parking area, information boards, and picnic areas would be treated to reduce fire hazards for safety and demonstration purposes. The major roads and trails in SDSF would be maintained to provide access for fire protection purposes.

Shaded fuelbreaks protect high value areas such as forest land, historical sites, and neighboring property. Typically, they are areas 100 to 300 feet wide where vegetation and other forest fuels have been decreased in order to reduce the rate of spread of an advancing fire. Less wide shaded fuel breaks are also beneficial. Within SDSF, all main roads and prominent ridgelines would be treated as shaded fuelbreaks. Within these shaded fuelbreaks, dead trees and ladder fuels (shrubs and lower tree limbs) would be removed and the overstory canopy would be thinned to a level where shade would still retard the growth of new ground fuels. The understory would be modified so that a low-growing ground cover would be retained within the fuelbreak to provide fuels to start a backfire. Whenever possible, fuelbreaks should visually merge with the surrounding landscape, conforming to the natural features of the area. Periodic maintenance would be needed to maintain fuelbreak specifications.

Shaded fuelbreaks in SDSF are being constructed, with the help of crews from Ben Lomond Conservation Camp, along ridges and high use roads and trails. This is to provide safe locations for fire control lines and backfiring; ridgelines are commonly used as control points. Shaded fuelbreaks and roads also aid in the compartmentalization of the property in order to contain a wildfire to its smallest size possible given existing infrastructure. This would minimize the need to install firelines with bulldozers in the event of a wildfire.

Restrictions are in effect for hunting and shooting, smoking, and fires within SDSF. Recreational fires are not permitted anywhere in SDSF, including parking areas. A possible exception to these regulations would be campfires in the permit-only group campground (to be considered on a case-by-case basis). Hunting and shooting are administratively prohibited in SDSF, although hunting may be allowed in the future consistent with a program specifically designed by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife for SDSF.

The periods of extreme fire danger for SDSF usually occur from July through October though these periods may be extended by severe weather. During these periods, SDSF would follow the Unit's Red Flag Alert Plan. This would be consistent with the plan The Forest of Nisene Marks State Park follows during extreme fire danger conditions. The Forest Manager would coordinate with the Unit Operations Chief to determine necessary actions to be employed. The steps would include increasing patrols of SDSF, posting red flag alert signs, providing more fire prevention

information and awareness of current conditions for visitors, and reducing the number of visitors in SDSF by posting the area as closed.

SDSF staff would coordinate with the Unit Fire Prevention staff for educational purposes. Educational information would be used to reduce the number of human-caused fires within the State Forest. Target groups would include neighbors, visitors, school groups, and local organizations. Neighboring property owners would be encouraged to meet with Burrell and Soquel Forest Fire Station personnel for information on CAL FIRE's Fire Prevention Program in order to minimize the risk of wildfire.

Signs would be posted on all information boards alerting visitors to the dangers of fire and ways they can minimize these dangers. Dangerous Fire Area signs would be posted when appropriate. During regular patrols, visitors would be informed of fire hazards and prevention methods.

School groups and local organizations would be referred to Fire Prevention staff or local fire stations for fire safety information and presentations. Groups visiting SDSF for education programs would be informed of fire safety, hazards, and prevention techniques. Education programs would also cover the ecological role of fire in the environment and the importance of fire in maintaining biodiversity.

Forest patrol is an important part of fire protection and prevention. SDSF staff would coordinate with the Unit Fire Prevention staff for patrol purposes. Patrols would include public contact, fire detection, and patrol of roads and trails during the fire season. CAL FIRE personnel would be utilized for weekend patrols and major holidays, especially during periods of high fire danger. CAL FIRE peace officers would either provide direct supervision or lead these activities. Additional patrols could be conducted by volunteers as deemed appropriate and safe by CAL FIRE. SDSF staff foresters would also enforce fire-related California Forest Practice Rules at active logging sites on the Forest.

Suppression tactics are based on information from and implementation of the pre-suppression plan. SDSF staff could support initial attack fire control personnel by providing local expertise regarding current road conditions, fuelbreaks to be utilized for compartmentalization of the fire, vegetation conditions, and cultural resources. The staff could also evacuate visitors, close the fire area, perform law enforcement tasks, provide access through gates, provide information on the location of water tanks, helipads and water drafting sites and assist with media information as appropriate.

Detection strategies would include daily patrols, searching for evidence of fires, and CAL FIRE air flights during extreme fire danger periods or after lightning storms. Also, the Unit’s Emergency Command Center would check the Automatic Lightning Detection System (ALDS) for possible strikes in the Forest.

Pile burning could be conducted during the non-fire season on permissive burn days. Any burn piles would be completely extinguished at the end of the work day, prior to personnel leaving the area. Burning for forest management or for hazard reduction would be conducted in compliance

with an approved burn plan under prescribed conditions and would be consistent with CAL FIRE's Vegetation Management Program.

The proposed project is in a wildland area and people visiting SDSF may be exposed to a wildfire. CAL FIRE would close public access to the forest if there was an active fire in the area. The project would provide a use similar to those currently in the forest and would not create new sources of ignition which could threaten neighboring properties.

All of the above measures should ensure the project should not expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires. This should ensure implementation of the project should result in a <u>less than significant impact</u> related to exposure of people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires.

Hydrology and Water Quality

<u>Discussion</u>

The Santa Cruz County Resource Conservation District (2003) watershed assessment concluded that overall lateral channel stability of Soquel Creek was relatively high during the previous 54 years with minor adjustment at several points of meander along the East Branch and mainstem. Major sediment production from natural sources was found to occur in both the East and West Branches and is most pronounced following earthquakes, large magnitude floods or forest fires, and is usually related to landsliding. However, SDSF would continue to remediate existing sediment sources both during timber harvests and after, working towards a net decrease in sediment inputs from timber harvest operations.

Recent impacts in the Soquel Creek watershed have occurred that have not been considered in past watershed assessments. These include the 2008 Summit Fire, which burned approximately 4,270 acres in portions of the Soquel Creek, Corralitos Creeks, Brown's Creek, and Uvas Creek watersheds (SEAT, 2008). Soquel Creek suffered the greatest amount of high burn severity, with 382 acres. In total, 1130 acres burned in the Soquel Creek watershed (34% high burn intensity, 43% moderate, 20% low, and 3% unchanged.)

Additionally, a large landslide event delivered an extensive amount of fine sediment into the East Branch of Soquel Creek in 2011. Highland Way was closed by a re-activated landslide on approximately March 26, 2011. The slide contributed a substantial amount of soil, rock, and organic debris into the East Branch of Soquel Creek that has had short- and long-term impacts.

Due to the sensitivity of the hillslopes and current channel conditions, special considerations would be needed when planning forest management activities in the East Branch. Appropriate mitigations should continue to be utilized and remedial improvements implemented to repair existing problem areas, such as those suggested in the PWA (2003) report. If these considerations would be employed, future timber sales could occur without significant adverse impacts to the beneficial uses of the basin.

Ongoing management of SDSF would involve maintaining proper drainage along roads and trails by repairing culverts, water bars, and other drainage structures to reduce or prevent soil erosion and stream sedimentation. SDSF would be required to monitor all timber operations (including all harvesting areas and new roads, skid trails, and landings) after significant storm events for five to seven years following completion of operations. Increased monitoring would occur the first winter after operations above what is required by regulations. An active watershed remediation program would continue to be used that includes monitoring watershed conditions and implementing enhancement projects. Monitoring has included a forestwide inventory of stored sediments and active landslides, and mapping mass wasting hazards and surface erosion potential. Sediment risk-reduction projects have been rated for cost-effectiveness (PWA, 2003) and would continue to be implemented in conjunction with timber operations according to their priority as available funding permits.

Individual projects conducted under the guidance of the GFMP would assess impacts to hydrological processes and water quality. Individual THPs would assess existing watercourses and other hydrologic areas on the plan area for potential impacts from project-specific activities. If such activities would impair water quality, then site-specific mitigation, which would reduce the effect to a less-than-significant level, would be required. Most of this would involve application of the FPRs' extensive watercourse and lake protection rules. Representatives from CDFW and WQ are part of the multiagency THP review team that provides comments as well as expertise. Both of these agencies' staff regularly participates in field review of individual projects. For other projects, the environmental assessment should identify significant effects to water quality and hydrological processes. CAL FIRE regularly consults with CDFW and WQ on such projects to address any water quality issues. Agency recommendations are then incorporated into the project design. In all cases, if significant effects would be identified, the project would have to include mitigation to reduce such impacts to a level less-than-significant.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Would the project violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Soquel Creek and Soquel Lagoon are listed under Section 303(d) of the Clean Water Act for pathogens and sediment by the Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board. Construction and development was listed as a source of sediment. The proposed projects would include design features that would minimize potential for erosion and delivery of sediment. THPs and other projects would be required to comply with waste discharge requirements of the Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board Basin Plan prior to project implementation. This would ensure these projects would not violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements. This should ensure project implementation should result in a <u>less than significant impact</u> to water quality standards and waste discharge requirements.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
b) Would the project substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that there would be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater table level (e.g., the production rate of pre-existing nearby wells would drop to a level that would not support existing land uses or planned uses for which permits have been granted)?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Currently there are no water diversions or wells operating at SDSF, and the GFMP would not call for development of any groundwater supplies. An investigation and assessment for a potential well site to provide for an emergency water supply for firefighting and for water for road maintenance and construction could occur. A separate, future CEQA analysis and review would be conducted for any potential wells. The project should not substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that there would be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater table level (e.g., the production rate of pre-existing nearby wells would drop to a level that would not support existing land uses or planned uses for which permits have been granted). This should ensure that implementation of the project would result in <u>no impact</u> to groundwater supplies or groundwater recharge.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
c) Would the project substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, in a manner which would result in substantial on- or off-site erosion or siltation?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Road and trail construction and maintenance, installation of erosion control structures, installation and repair of watercourse crossings, and installation of the LWD research project all have the potential to alter the existing drainage patterns and cause substantial on or off site erosion. These projects would be designed to be hydrologically disconnected from the drainage network and would not significantly impact routing of water to the drainage network or soil infiltration rates that could cause increases in peak flows. The project should not substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, in a manner that would result in substantial on- or off-site erosion or siltation. This should ensure implementation of the project should result in a <u>less than significant impact</u> on the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, in a manner that would result in substantial on- or off-site erosion or siltation.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
d) Would the project substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in on- or off-site flooding?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Proposed projects would not substantially alter the existing drainage pattern in a way that would result in on- or off-site flooding. These projects would be designed to be hydrologically disconnected from the drainage network and would not significantly impact routing of water to the drainage network or soil infiltration rates that could cause increases in peak flows. The project should not substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner that would result in on- or off-site flooding. This should ensure implementation of the project should result in a <u>less than significant impact</u> on the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner that would result in on- or off-site flooding.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
e) Would the project create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff?	☐	☐	☐	☒

The project would not be in a developed area and would not impact any existing or planned stormwater drainage systems. The project would be designed to minimize potential for erosion and would not provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff. The intact continuous forest cover and the non-paved road surfaces would allow for maximum infiltration and penetration for groundwater. This should ensure that project implementation should result in <u>no impact</u> related to the creation or contribution of runoff water that would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
f) Would the project otherwise substantially degrade water quality?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Besides potential for erosion and sedimentation discussed above, which would be evaluated on a project-by-project basis with appropriate mitigation incorporated, as needed, no other impacts to water quality would be likely to result from the project. This should ensure that project implementation should result in a <u>less than significant impact</u> to water quality.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
g) Would the project place housing within a 100-year flood hazard area as mapped on a federal Flood Hazard Boundary or Flood Insurance Rate Map or other flood hazard delineation map?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Future activities could involve reconstruction of the current Soquel Fire Station, and SDSF Office, and building of a new Forestry Education Center. Any new or rebuilt structures would not be located in a flood hazard area as mapped on a federal Flood Hazard Boundary or Flood Insurance Rate Map or other flood hazard delineation map. This should ensure implementation of the project would result in <u>no impact</u> to housing dues to its placement within a 100-year flood hazard area as mapped on a federal Flood Hazard Boundary or Flood Insurance Rate Map or other flood hazard delineation map.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
h) Would the project place within a 100-year flood hazard area structures that would impede or redirect flood flows?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Future activities could involve reconstruction of the current Soquel Fire Station and, SDSF Office, and building of a new Forestry Education Center. Any new or rebuilt structures would not be located in a 100-year flood hazard area structures that would impede or redirect flood flows. This should ensure implementation of the project would result in <u>no impact</u> to flood flows due to structure placement on a 100-year flood hazard area.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
i) Would the project expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving flooding, including flooding as a result of the failure of a levee or dam?	☐	☐	☐	☒

The project would not be located in a flood zone or below a levee or dam. These projects would be designed to be hydrologically disconnected from the drainage network and would not significantly impact routing of water to the drainage network or soil infiltration rates that could cause increases in peak flows. This should ensure that implementation of the project should result in <u>no impact</u> to people or structures as a result of the failure of a levee or dam.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
j) Would the project result in inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow?	☐	☐	☐	☒

The project would not be located in an area potentially inundated by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow. The project would be located along the San Andreas Fault Zone and could be impacted by large landslides in the event of earthquakes or significant rainfall events. This should ensure there implementation of the project should result in no impact as a result of inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow.

Land Use and Planning

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Would the project physically divide an established community?	☐	☐	☐	☒

SDSF was established in 1990, and logging and other forest management activities began on the property at least 100 years previously. SDSF and the adjacent Forest of Nicene Marks State Park are used and appreciated by many neighboring landowners for hiking, biking, equestrian use, and other outdoor activities. The activities associated with implementation of SDSF's GFMP would not occur within an established community. Therefore, implementation of the project would result in no impact related to physically dividing an established community.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
b) Would the project conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including, but not limited to, a general plan, specific plan, local coastal program, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?	☐	☐	☒	☐

All proposed projects would be consistent with the SDSF GFMP, which would include provisions to ensure environmental effects would be avoided or mitigated. Proposed projects would not conflict with any other land use plans, policies, or regulations. The SDSF is zoned as TPZ and the land use designation is Mountain Residential. All proposed uses would be compatible with this zoning and designation. Thus, implementation of the project should not conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including, but not limited to, a general plan, specific plan, local coastal program, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect. This should ensure implementation of the project should result in a less than significant impact regarding any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including, but not limited to, a general plan, specific plan, local coastal program, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
c) Would the project conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan?	☐	☐	☐	☒

There are no habitat conservation plans or natural community conservation plans associated with SDSF. This should ensure implementation of the project should result in no impact related to conflicts with any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan.

Mineral Resources

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Would the project result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?	☐	☐	☐	☒

The project would not result in the loss of availability of known mineral resources. SDSF has limited rock sources that have been utilized for stream projects and watercourse crossing armament. The rock sources are not commercial, and the rock is only utilized on SDSF.

The Olive Springs Quarry is a commercial quarry located on the southwest side of SDSF. In the interests of safety, access between the two properties is controlled by a locked gate, and public access to SDSF is not allowed via this route.

Implementation of the project should not result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state. This should ensure implementation of the project should result in no impact to a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
b) Would the project result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan, or other land use plan?	☐	☐	☐	☒

SDSF is not designated in any plan as having locally important mineral resources. The Olive Springs Quarry is a commercial quarry located on the southwest side of SDSF on neighboring property. In the interests of safety, access between the two properties is controlled by a locked gate, and public access to SDSF is not allowed via this route. Implementation of the project should not result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan, or other land use plan. This should ensure implementation of the project should result in no impact to a locally important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan, or other land use plan.

Noise

Discussion

SDSF is bordered by both state and private property. The Forest of Nisene Marks State Park borders SDSF for three and one-half miles along Santa Rosalia Ridge to the south. Approximately three-hundred-forty acres directly east of SDSF are owned by Roger and Michelle Burch. This land is managed by Redwood Empire and includes the main entrance and parking area for SDSF off Highland Way. To the north and west, the adjacent ownerships are private rural-residential parcels. Most of these parcels range in size from one to 80 acres. On the southwest border is the property containing the Olive Springs Quarry, owned by the CHY Company.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Would the project create exposure of persons to or generation of noise levels in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or in other applicable local, state, or federal standards?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Projects would involve use of chainsaws and small and large construction equipment that would create minor and temporary increases in noise. Work sites would be closed to public access and posted with warning signs to direct members of the public away from areas where exposure to noise levels in excess of standards in the Santa Cruz County general plan might occur. The project should not create exposure of persons to or generation of noise levels in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or in other applicable local, state, or federal standards. Thus, implementation of the project should result in a less than significant impact to noise.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
b) Would the project create exposure of persons to or generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?	☐	☐	☐	☒

No excessive groundborne vibrations or groundborne noises would be created by the project. Thus, implementation of the project should have no impact related to excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
c) Would the project create a substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?	☐	☐	☐	☒

No permanent sources of noise would be created by the project. Thus, implementation of the project should result in no impact related to creation of a substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
d) Would the project create a substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?	☐	☐	☒	☐

The project would involve use of chainsaws and large and small construction equipment that would create minor and temporary increases in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity during timber harvesting, and the installation and maintenance of projects including roads, trails, shaded fuelbreaks, stream restoration and research sites. No area would be subject to excessive noise levels for an extended period of time. No noise complaints were received by the forest during harvest activities for past timber harvesting operations. Forest management and residential property management noise related to chainsaws, heavy equipment, chippers and other power tools are common in the neighborhoods surrounding SDSF. Thus, implementation of the project should not create a substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project. Noise impacts from future timber harvesting operations and other forest management activities should be less than significant.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?	☐	☐	☐	☒

The project would not be located within an airport land use plan or within two miles of an airport. Therefore, there should be no impact to people residing or working in the project area from excessive noise levels due to proximity to an airport.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?	☐	☐	☒	☐

The project would not be in the vicinity of a private airstrip. There are two helipads located at SDSF. Future use of the helipads would not be expected to cause an increase in noise over historic levels. Implementation of the project should not expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels. Therefore, there should be a less than significant impact to of people residing or working in the project area from excessive noise levels.

Population and Housing

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Would the project induce substantial population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?	☐	☐	☐	☒

The project would not increase population growth. SDSF and the surrounding forestlands are zoned TPZ and no developments of homes or businesses would occur. Therefore, the project should have no impact related to inducing substantial population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure).

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
b) Would the project displace substantial numbers of existing homes, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?	☐	☐	☐	☒

The project would not propose any activities that could displace any residences. Therefore, the project should have no impact related to the displacement of substantial numbers of existing homes, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
c) Would the project displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?	☐	☐	☐	☒

The project would not propose any activities that could displace any persons. Therefore, the project should have no impact related to the displacement of substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere.

Public Services

Discussion

Proposed projects would not affect response times for emergency services. The proposed shaded fuelbreaks and road rehabilitation and maintenance projects would be expected to reduce fuel loads, improve fire safety, and improve emergency response times at SDSF.

Both the enabling legislation and Board policy specify education and demonstration as primary purposes of SDSF. SDSF currently hosts several tours and presentations annually, for groups including Mountain Elementary School, Soquel High School, alternative high schools and home school groups. Future projects would continue to provide access to SDSF for schools and other groups.

SDSF is public land and the project would not limit public access to SDSF; it is hoped that future acquisitions could open new access points to SDSF.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, or the need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives for any of the public services: Fire protection? Police protection? Schools? Parks? Other Public Facilities?	☐	☐	☐	☒

The project would not propose any activities that could result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, or the need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives for public services. Therefore, implementation of the project should have <u>no impact</u> on maintenance of acceptable service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives for public services, including fire protection, police protection, schools, parks, or other public facilities.

Recreation

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?	☐	☐	☒	☐

The primary recreational uses on SDSF are hiking, biking, and riding horses; this is expected to continue in the future. The amount of recreational use could increase over time, both on SDSF and the adjacent Forest of Nisene Marks State Park. Increases in recreational use would not be expected to cause significant deterioration of either SDSF or the State Park. SDSF has a very active and engaged volunteer work force for trail maintenance. Therefore, implementation of the project should have a <u>less than significant impact</u> related to an increase in the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
b) Would the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities that might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Future proposed projects at SDSF could include expansion of the road and trail system and construction of a Forestry Education Center. To minimize ground disturbance, the development of new roads and trails would utilize, to the maximum extent possible, existing roads and skid trials. Prior to construction of roads and trails in new locations, archaeological, geological, and biological surveys would be conducted. These surveys would provide the baseline information needed to avoid and minimize impacts on the environment. Therefore, implementation of the project should have a less than significant impact related to recreational facilities or the need for construction or expansion of recreational facilities that might have an adverse physical effect on the environment.

Transportation/Traffic

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Would the project conflict with an applicable plan, ordinance or policy establishing measures of effectiveness for the performance of the circulation system, taking into account all modes of transportation including mass transit and non-motorized travel and relevant components of the circulation system, including but not limited to intersections, streets, highways and freeways, pedestrian and bicycle paths, and mass transit?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Roads on the project area are not part of the traffic or transportation circulation system in Santa Cruz County. Thus, implementation of the project should ensure there would be no **c**onflict with an applicable plan, ordinance or policy establishing measures of effectiveness for the performance of the circulation system, taking into account all modes of transportation including mass transit and non-motorized travel and relevant components of the circulation system, including but not limited to intersections, streets, highways and freeways, pedestrian and bicycle paths, and mass transit. This should ensure that there would be no impact to the traffic or transportation circulation system.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
b) Would the project conflict with an applicable congestion management program, including but not limited to level of service standards and travel demand measures, or other standards established by the county congestion management agency for designated roads or	☐	☐	☐	☒

highways?

Roads on the project area receive use by persons working or recreating on SDSF but are not part of the traffic or transportation circulation system in Santa Cruz County. Thus, implementation of the project should ensure there would be no **c**onflict with an applicable congestion management program, including but not limited to level of service standards and travel demand measures, or other standards established by the county congestion management agency for designated roads or highways. This should ensure that there would be no impact to the traffic or transportation circulation system.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
c) Would the project result in a change in air traffic patterns, including either an increase in traffic levels or a change in location that results in substantial safety risks?	☐	☐	☐	☒

The project would not include any activity that would influence any existing air traffic patterns. Therefore, implementation of the project should result in no impact to air traffic patterns, including either an increase in traffic levels nor a change in location that results in substantial safety risks.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
d) Would the project substantially increase hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?	☐	☐	☐	☒

There are no known design features along the access roads to SDSF, which are considered hazardous. There would be no expected increase in hazards associated with SDSF traffic. The local residents are accustomed to traffic associated with recreational use, timber harvesting, and other forest management activities, and these would not be expected to change substantially in the future. Therefore, implementation of the project should result in no impact to hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) nor incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment).

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
e) Would the project result in inadequate emergency access?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Proposed projects would not affect the primary emergency access routes along Hihn's Mill Road and/or via the two helicopter landing zones in SDSF.

The public parking area located near Highland Way provides adequate capacity for public visitors. Ongoing maintenance and management of wet weather closure of the parking area would continue.

Therefore, implementation of the project should result in no impact related to inadequate emergency access.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
f) Would the project conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs supporting alternative transportation (e.g., bus turnouts, bicycle racks)?	☐	☐	☐	☒

The project would not be expected to impact the public transportation system. Hiking and biking are popular forms of recreation on SDSF; any future projects relating to these uses would aim to enhance the experience of Forest visitors. Therefore, implementation of the project should result in no impact to adopted policies, plans, or programs supporting alternative transportation (e.g., bus turnouts, bicycle racks).

Utilities and Service Systems

Discussion

There is a septic system located at SDSF Headquarters trailer, one self-contained portable toilet located near the parking lot at the Highland Way entrance to the Forest and one self-contained portable toilet on a trailer stored at the SDSF Headquarters that is used for projects and events.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Would the project exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board?	☐	☐	☐	☒

The septic system at SDSF Headquarters is adequate for the facilities and use. The toilet facility at the Highland Way entrance and the portable toilet on a trailer that is stored at the office when not in use for an active project or event can accommodate visitor and forest worker needs. Both systems meet the wastewater treatment requirements of the Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board. Therefore, implementation of the project should result in no impact related to exceeding wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
b) Would the project require or result in the construction of new water or wastewater treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Future projects could include replacement of the fire station and Forest office and/or construction of a Forestry Education Center. Additional septic tanks and/or toilets would be added as needed for projected future use. Any new systems would meet any wastewater treatment requirements of the Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board.

Prior to construction or excavation for new facilities, archaeological, geological, and biological surveys would be conducted. These surveys would provide the baseline information needed to avoid and minimize impacts on the environment.

Therefore, implementation of the project should result in a <u>less than significant impact</u> related to construction of new water or wastewater treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
c) Would the project require or result in the construction of new storm water drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?	☐	☐	☐	☒

There are no storm water facilities associated with this project. These projects would be designed to be hydrologically disconnected from the drainage network and would not significantly impact routing of water to the drainage network or soil infiltration rates that could cause increases in peak flows. Therefore, implementation of the project should result in <u>no impact</u> related to the construction of new storm water drainage facilities or the expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
d) Would the project have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources, or are new or expanded entitlements needed?	☐	☐	☐	☒

The existing water on SDSF and the SDSF water rights would be sufficient to accommodate the project. A new well to be located on SDSF is being evaluated and any plan for development of a well site would be considered under a specific CEQA analysis for such a project. Therefore, implementation of the project should result in <u>no impact</u> related to the sufficiency of water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources or the necessity of new or expanded entitlements.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
e) Would the project result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider that serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand, in addition to the provider's existing commitments?	☐	☐	☐	☒

The wastewater generated at SDSF would be treated on-site via septic tank(s) and leachfields. Waste from the self-contained toilets is pumped out and removed by licensed contractors. Proposed projects would not be expected to cause a significant increase in the amount of wastewater generated on SDSF. Therefore, implementation of the project should result in no impact related to a determination by the wastewater treatment provider that serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand, in addition to the provider's existing commitments.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
f) Would the project be served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Proposed projects would not be expected to substantially increase the production of solid waste generated on SDSF and should not exceed the capacities of the county landfill. Therefore, implementation of the project should result in no impact related to service by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
g) Would the project comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste?	☐	☐	☐	☒

The project would not violate any federal, state, or local statutes regulating solid waste. Therefore, implementation of the project should result in no impact related to compliance with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste.

Mandatory Findings of Significance

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Would the project have the potential to substantially degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of an endangered, rare, or	☐	☐	☒	☐

threatened species, or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?

The project is an update of the SDSF GFMP and proposes no substantial changes in the management of SDSF. The implementation of the GFMP and projects conducted under its guidance have potential to impact fish, wildlife and botanical species and/or their habitat. Projects conducted under the guidance of the GFMP would have separate analyses conducted based on the project's specifications and site-specific information. Potential impacts would be less than significant with the adherence to all applicable laws and regulations, obtaining the appropriate permits and adherence to management guidelineoutlined in the SDSF GFMP. See also the discussion above under, Biological Resources, and item Hydrology and Water Quality.

The implementation of the GFMP would have a less than significant impact on cultural resources. Archeological surveys have been conducted on approximately 30 percent of SDSF. The cultural sites discovered have been recorded and appropriate protection measures have been developed and implemented. Any projects conducted in unsurveyed areas, which could cause ground disturbance, would require a survey and a records check for previously recorded cultural resources. Any new sites discovered would be recorded, and would have appropriate protection measures developed and implemented. See also the discussion above under, Cultural Resources.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
b) Would the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects.)	☐	☐	☒	☐

Assessment Area

The cumulative watershed assessment area includes the 9,068-acre Soquel Creek Planning Watershed (CalWater 3304.130101). This assessment area is used because the key cumulative impact issues related to forest management typically express themselves at the scale of planning watersheds or a subset of the planning watershed area. The biological assessment area varied with the species being evaluated.

SDSF is located almost entirely within the drainage of the East Branch of Soquel Creek, its landbase covering approximately 21 percent of the basin. A small area in the southwestern corner of SDSF drains to Hester Creek.

The East Branch of Soquel Creek is a perennial stream that flows through the entire length of SDSF. It is fed by the perennial streams of Fern Gulch and Amaya Creeks from the north, and

numerous unnamed intermittent and ephemeral streams. The total size of the East Branch watershed is approximately 19 square miles or 12,240 acres.

Natural springs and sag ponds can be found in SDSF. The two largest springs are Sulphur Springs, located near Sulphur Springs Road, and Badger Spring, located near the main picnic area. Badger Spring was at one time a developed water source as is evident by the remains of a spring box and steel pipes scattered around the area. A third spring, located east of Sulphur Springs along Hihn's Mill Road, was created by the 1989 earthquake.

Amaya Pond, a seasonal body of water, is located in the northwestern arm of SDSF. Approximately one-half acre in size, it is located on the east side of Amaya Creek Road, approximately one-third of the way down from Comstock Mill Road.

Approximately eight miles of fish bearing streams flow through Soquel DSF, including the East Branch of Soquel Creek (5.5 miles), Amaya Creek (2 miles), and Fern Gulch Creek (0.5 miles). The East Branch is one of the best remaining steelhead trout spawning and rearing areas in the county. This, along with their cultural values, makes the fisheries of SDSF an important resource. The portion of the East Branch that runs through SDSF is well known for its steelhead rearing habitat. The California Department of Fish and Wildlife prohibits angling in this part of the Soquel Creek watershed in order to protect this important resource.

Soquel Creek, including the East Branch, is also part of the domestic water supply for the local community. The lower portion of Soquel Creek serves as part of the natural groundwater recharge system for residents' wells and supplies surface water to a number of intakes along the creek. Soquel Creek is within the Central Coast California (CCC) Coho Salmon Evolutionarily Significant Unit (ESU).

The elevation of SDSF ranges from 500 feet at the East Branch of Soquel Creek to 2,500 feet at the southeast corner on Santa Rosalia Ridge. The higher elevations occur in the southeast portion of the Forest and decrease along the ridge going southwest.

In 2006, a timber inventory was completed which gathered tree data on plots located on a grid layout. This data was analyzed along with digital image segmentation and aerial imagery to classify the vegetation using the California Wildlife Habitat Relationship (CWHR) habitat classification system. Using this protocol six CWHR habitats were classified on SDSF. These are by order of abundance; Redwood, Montane Hardwood-Conifer, Coastal Oak Woodland, Douglas-fir, Mixed Chaparral and Annual Grassland.

In SDSF, an abundant riparian community exists along the floodplain of the East Branch of Soquel Creek and to a lesser degree along Amaya Creek. There are a few other limited communities present in SDSF. Freshwater marshes are areas where the soil stays wet the majority of the year, supporting characteristic vegetation. These marshes usually occur along the perimeter of ponds, at springs, near shallow pools of streams, or in areas of high water tables. The freshwater marsh community in SDSF is scattered, including only Amaya Pond and a few natural springs (Sulphur, Badger, and a couple of small, unnamed springs caused by or increased from the Loma Prieta earthquake).

Past, Present and Future Projects

Past Timber Harvest Activities

The harvest of timber in the hills above Corralitos began in the 1800's. Since that time a vast array of equipment and extraction methods were used to harvest timber. The original harvests were characterized by clear cutting, burning, and logging with animals. Harvesting in the project area began in the 1920s utilizing steam donkeys. By the 1940s timber was extracted with tractors and other modern harvesting equipment. Prior to the Forest Practices Act of 1972 and the implementation of the County permitting process, timber harvesting was generally unrestricted. The earliest logging used clear-cutting methods, high grading and broadcast burning of slash. Impacts to the watershed were substantial with legacy effects remaining today. Substantial soil erosion, gullying, and debris flows were caused by early logging. This resulted in logs and logjams in the streams, as well as increased bed loads and pool filling. Natural processes are generally healing much of the hill slope damage, but many logjams and sediment loads could still be working their way through the stream systems. These activities of 70 to 90 years ago have created the baseline conditions for all recent projects.

Since the State Forest Practice Rules have been fully enforced, timber harvest operations have been restricted. Harvest related erosion has been reduced and sediment inputs to the streams have been substantially reduced. Existing problems from historic logging are addressed with each timber harvest plan. Planted and natural regeneration have developed into multi-layered canopies in the forest with woody debris on the ground, and increasing tree sizes, forest density, and growth. Recent projects that have actively managed roads and skid trails continue to be maintained, and stream crossings improved to reduce erosion.

Since the dedication of SDSF in 1990, four Timber Harvest Plans (THPs) have been completed. The first, Longridge THP (1-94-307 SCR) harvested in 1995, was a 64-acre single tree selection harvest and yielded 556,000 board feet[4]. The Amaya Creek THP (1-98-027 SCR) harvested in 1998, was also a selection harvest, but included some small (1/4-1/2 acre) harvest groups. This THP harvested 138 acres and yielded 1.6 million board feet. Operations on the Rim THP (1-09-107 SCR) occurred over two years and were completed in 2012. The Rim THP was 258 acres and yielded 1.6 million board feet. The fourth plan, the Fern Gulch THP (1-09-096 SCR) was also completed in 2012 and yielded 2.2 million board feet on 201 acres. All four harvests combined represent about 6 million board feet over a period of 22 years, roughly equal to the Forest-wide growth in two and one-half years. The Comstock Mill THP (1-13-027 SCR) is currently active. Harvesting operations on 228 acres are expected to yield approximately 1.8 million board feet.

Past Agriculture Impacts

Grazing and agriculture has been a consistent land use in the region since the mid-1800s. Beginning in the late 1860s, vineyards were established in the Highland area. These vineyards fell victim to fire or disease and were largely gone by 1907. Lands were burned and cleared of natural vegetation and orchards were established. Some of these cleared and tilled lands were in

[4] Conifer volume is measured in board feet; a board foot is a unit of measure one foot by one foot by one inch.

the riparian areas of fish bearing watercourses. The orchards required water that was obtained from watercourses or groundwater sources. Runoff through these areas would deliver sediment and excess nutrients directly into the watercourses. As land management activities have changed, some orchards and pastures have reverted back to brush and forestland.

Past Residential Impacts

The Shoquel Rancho was established for Martina Castro in 1833 and augmented in 1844. Homesteading on the Rancho began in the mid-1850s. The rancho was partitioned in 1860 to various landowners. Since that time, ranches and houses have been constructed throughout the Soquel Creek watershed. Past development practices such as building over ephemeral creeks and landslides, led to significant levels of soil disruption. These development sites are currently in varying stages of recovery. The Sulphur Springs Lodge once existed on what is now SDSF. This structure and any associated outbuildings were removed well before the property came under State management.

Past Road Impacts

The original roads in the Soquel Creek watershed followed along the major watercourses. These roads were designed to assist timber harvest and agriculture in the region. Such roads removed riparian vegetation and delivered high loads of sediment directly into the water courses. After World War II, the use of tractors in road construction became widespread. Large amounts of soil were moved during construction of new forest roads and crossings. These crossings utilized organic material that eventually failed, contributing large amounts of sediment into the watercourses. Private residential roads often used the same building techniques. Past road construction has altered the ecosystem in Soquel Creek more than any other human activity.

The road and trail infrastructure within the project area was largely in place by the late 1920s. For the most part, these roads and trails are stable. Highland Way was constructed across multiple large-scale landslides, within the San Andreas rift zone, that deliver into Soquel Creek. These landslides add new amounts of sediment and large woody debris into the watercourse each year.

Past Recreational Impacts

The SDSF land has been legally open for public use since State acquisition in 1990. Recreational use has been and continues to be in the form of hiking, horseback riding, and predominately mountain biking. Recreational trails generally following the network of old logging roads and trails.

Current Timber Harvest Activities

The sediment and debris from the early logging 80 to 90 years ago are still working their way through the watershed system. The excessive bedloads that may exist in the watershed that support the fishery have been present for 80 years or more. It is unlikely that logging has had significant additive effects since stringent regulation was introduced in 1972.

The below harvest plans have been implemented within the Soquel Creek Assessment watershed. All of these timber harvests are in the Southern Subdistrict of the Coast District and are required to utilize selection silviculture.

With selection being the primary silviculture prescription in Santa Cruz, combined with conservative harvest levels within Class I and II Watercourse and Lake Protection Zones, harvest related impacts to the Soquel Creek Watershed are determined to have no significant negative impacts.

Projects Approved During the Last 14 Years Within the Soquel Creek Planning Watershed (Calwater version 2.2 watershed #3304.130101)			
Projects Approved During the Last 14 Years Within the Soquel Creek Planning Watershed (Calwater version 2.2 watershed #3304.130101)			
THP #	**Acres**	**Yarding Method**	**Status**
1-00-035 SCR	80	Ground Based	Completed
1-03-019 SCR	19	Ground Based	Completed
1-04-138 SCR	14	Ground Based	Completed
1-08-131 SCR*	162*	Ground Based/Cable	Completed
1-09-043 SCR	29	Ground Based	Completed
1-09-064 SCR	384	Ground Based	Completed
1-09-096 SCR	201	Ground Based/Cable	Completed
1-09-107 SCR	158	Ground Based	Completed
1-12-014 SCR	188	Ground Based/Cable	Active
1-13-027 SCR	228	Ground Based	Active
1-14-042	76	Ground Based	Approved
Total Acreage 1,463			
*THP spans multiple planning watersheds. Only acreage within the Soquel Creek Planning Watershed is included.			

Since 2000 there have been 1,539 acres of selective harvest proposed within the Soquel Creek Watershed. This represents 16% of the Watershed Assessment Area (WAA) or 1.2% of the watershed per year.

The Olive Springs Quarry has been in operation since 1932 and has converted substantial acreage of upland redwood and chaparral to an industrial hard rock mine. Conditions and mitigations to minimize adverse impacts resulting from the operation are found in the Olive Springs Quarry Final SEIR that was prepared by LSA and dated 11/30/93 and further certified by the County of Santa Cruz as part of Mining Approval #88-0233.

Current Agricultural Impacts

This activity currently covers approximately 1.8% of the watershed. Farming activities in the upper elevations of Soquel Creek remove water for irrigation. Excess fertilizers may be components of runoff from agriculture fields into the water system. Orchards and fields may

fracture forested ecosystems, which can be detrimental to species requiring large expanses of connected habitat.

Current Residential Impacts

Most human activities, such as residences, roads, and agricultural uses (including logging), will continue to have the potential for effects on watershed resources. As the regional population increases, the impacts of recreational use, air pollution, fire risk, and land development will also increase. There are several residences located lower in the watershed adjacent to Soquel Creek. Such residences permanently limit the amount of canopy over watercourses and increase the potential for chemical and sediment contaminants to enter the watercourse. Soquel Creek and Soquel Lagoon are 303 (d) listed for pathogens and sediment by the Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board. Construction and development was listed as a source of sediment. Accelerated erosion can occur from roads, home sites, and agricultural land. Chemical pollutants can enter waterways from septic systems, backyard pesticides, petroleum use, and roads. The amount of ground water drawn for domestic use depletes the amount of water available for natural systems in the ecosystem. The increasing rural development reduces the inventory of productive soils, displaces wildlife, fragments wildlife habitat, reduces recreational opportunities, and disrupts visual resources. The County and State mitigate regulate most of these activities through with regulations designed to reduce environmental impacts. The State Forest Practice Rules, the THP review process, and Forest Practice enforcement, particularly in the Santa Cruz Mountains, minimize the impacts from timber harvesting.

Current Road Impacts

There are an estimated 45 miles of roads that occupy about 1% of the watershed by acreage. Some of the most significant roads are County or State maintained public roads such as Highland Way, Summit Road, Spanish Ranch Road, and Aptos Creek Fire Road. Highland Way is the primary road into the upper watershed, existing adjacent to Soquel Creek for approximately 41% (2 ¼ miles) of its length. The location of the road has permanently limited the amount of canopy cover over the watercourse. The road also drains directly into Soquel Creek, resulting in the potential deposition of sediment and chemicals from the road surface. Various arterial roads in the watershed are also located along the watercourses. The Aptos Creek Fire Road, Hinckley Basin Road and Buzzard Lagoon Road are all dirt roads in the watershed (or partially in the Soquel Watershed) that receive year round traffic despite county and State Park efforts to restrict winter use. Most of the roads in the watershed are residential and have varying maintenance levels. Most of the harvest infrastructure roads within SDSF receive little use in between harvest cycles, and are subject to regular maintenance. Within the watershed improper or poor road maintenance contributes sediment and other pollutants to the creek.

Current Recreational Impacts

The Forest of Nisene Marks State Park is adjacent to the Soquel Demonstration State Forest. The State Park and State Forest have significant bicycling and hiking use. During harvesting activities, adjacent roads and trails are closed for recreation use. Signs are posted on sign boards, and at the public entrance. All trails and roads within the forest are signed with identifying

names and mileages. During past harvests, public use closures were generally adhered to and did not create a major inconvenience to the overall recreation experience available on the remainder of the forest.

Various group conference centers are located within the watershed. Their use is usually highest during the summer months.

Buzzard Lagoon Road and Aptos Creek Fire Road are used as access routes into the State Park. These roads also receive a significant amount of off-road vehicle use and vandalism. Restricting use of these roads during saturated soil conditions has been unsuccessful. A gate approximately one mile up Aptos Fire Trail limits traffic to pedestrians, bicycles, and State Park employees.

The public is allowed non-motorized access along Hihn's Mill Road, which is used to access the network of trails throughout SDSF. The parking lot on Hihn's Mill Road is sometimes illegally used to host large scale gatherings. These gatherings happen during late night and early morning hours. SDSF staff coordinates with law enforcement to curtail these activities as much as possible. The mornings following such events reveal scattered amount of trash, bottles, fire pits, trampled vegetation, drug paraphernalia, and human waste. The proximity of this parking lot to Soquel Creek adds to the potential for impact from these gatherings. A new gate at the Highland Way Bridge and new signage referencing the potential violations of law were installed in 2012.

Future Timber Harvest Activities

The 188 acre Spanish Ranch THP, and the 228 acre Comstock Mill THP started active timber operations in 2014. THP # 1-14-042 SCR, 76 acres off of Buzzard Lagoon Road, has recently been approved.
SDSF's projected annual harvest level for the planning period from 2010 to 2020 will average between 800,000 and 900,000 board feet (approximately 30 to 35 percent of annual Forest-wide growth). This harvest level is equal to 8.6 million board feet per decade and is consistent with AB 1965 in that it provides for limited timber management and promises a managed research forest.

So far during planning period one (2010 to 2020) in year 2014, 3.8 million board feet have been harvested on SDSF. This harvest rate is substantially lower than SDSF's current conifer growth rate of 2.6 million board feet per year and is less than one percent of the standing conifer inventory. It is expected that a timber harvest of 1.5 to 2 million board feet will occur every other year from 2014 to 2020.

Future Residential Impacts

There is currently a sparse scattering of residences in the watershed and it can be assumed that some increase in density will occur over time. Conversions will likely occur where other land management practices, such as timber production and agriculture, become economically infeasible for landowners. Pressures currently existing on water resources will grow stronger. Critical habitat in the assessment area will likely be lost to residences as more development

occurs. This will place a greater ecological value on lands that provide habitat opportunities such as those zoned for timber production.

Resource Values

Adverse cumulative impacts arising from forest management activities typically have the potential to affect the six resources areas identified below:

- Aesthetics
- Air Quality
- Biological Resources
- Geology and Soils
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- Hydrology and Water Quality

Aesthetics

The discussion of aesthetics in above considered this resource area from a cumulative effects perspective (i.e., (a) effects on a scenic vista and, (c) visual character) and found that there would be no significant adverse impact.

Air Quality

The discussion of air quality in above considered this resource area from a cumulative effects perspective ((a) conflict with air quality plan, (b) violate air quality standards, and (c) result in a cumulative considerable net increase in any criteria pollutant) and found that there would be no significant adverse impacts.

Biological Resources

The discussion of biological resources above considered a number of elements of this resource area from a cumulative effects perspective and found that there would be no significant adverse impact. These include (a) impacts via habitat modification on listed species, (b) impacts on riparian habitat or sensitive natural communities, and(c) effects on wetlands.

The discussion above identified management measures from the GFMP that would be specifically intended to protect biological resources from both individual and cumulative impacts. These measures would go above and beyond the requirements of the Forest Practice Rules.

The project would not generate cumulative impacts related to wildlife, habitat diversity or ecosystem productivity. One-hundred year modeled projections of forest habitat conditions within SDSF boundaries for the approved Option A indicate that the acreage of late seral forest types on SDSF would increase significantly over the next several decades. Forest management practices on other properties SDSF within the assessment area would be expected to remain similar to that of the last ten years for the foreseeable future, and could be treated as a neutral to beneficial factor.

Snag and large woody debris retention standards in the GFMP and the Forest Practice Rules would be formulated to improve wildlife habitat and diversity. It would be expected that these retention standards would have a beneficial effect over time.

All stream channels, streambanks, and riparian zones would be protected during forest management activities. Protection of watershed values is an integral part of the overall management of SDSF and would be directly correlated with silvicultural practices and logging standards pursuant to section 4651 of the Public Resource Code and the Forest Practice Act[5].

Geology

For the most part, the Forest is underlain by fine grained sedimentary rocks that are highly weathered and easily eroded. The headwater channel of the East Branch follows the San Andreas Fault Rift Zone and is heavily disturbed from landslides triggered by earthquake activity. Hillslopes throughout the Forest are commonly steep and prone to large, deep-seated landslides. Even greater instability occurs in active inner gorge zones near stream channels. Mass erosion events (e.g., large landslides) comprise the major component of sediment sources in the watershed.

Hydrology and Water Quality

Please see the Watershed Assessment chapter of the SDSF GFMP for a detailed discussion of assessments of the Soquel Creek watershed conducted by various researchers over the past 20 years. Study results may be summarized as follows. The East Branch of Soquel Creek watershed is a highly sensitive basin. This is due to its inherent natural hillslope instability related to seismic forces, steep slopes, weak bedrock, and frequent high intensity rainfall events. Impacts from past management activities, prior to implementation of the modern California Forest Practice Rules in 1973, have contributed greatly to degraded conditions in the basin, as has residential development. In spite of these problems, the East Branch below Ashbury Gulch has not been overwhelmed with sediment, and it is clear from abundant observations of steelhead redds (gravel beds where female fish lay eggs) and young fish that healthy spawning and rearing habitat exists.

The East Branch system is stressed by fine sediment moving downstream from tributaries, partially due to its close proximity to the San Andreas Fault Zone. This material is filling pools required for rearing habitat for listed anadromous salmonids. Lack of sufficient volumes of large wood and overdrafting of water in low flow summer months compounds this problem. As a result, the aquatic environment is sensitive to further degradation and timber operations must be carried out with extra caution.

Due to the sensitivity of the hillslopes and current channel conditions, special considerations are needed when planning forest management activities in the East Branch. Appropriate mitigations would continue to be utilized and remedial improvements implemented to repair existing

[5] Timber Harvest Plans submitted within these watersheds will comply with the Forest Practice Rule 14 CCR 936.9, "Protection and Restoration in Watersheds with Threatened or Impaired Values."

problem areas. If these considerations would be employed, future timber sales could occur without significant adverse impacts to the beneficial uses of the basin.

Ongoing management of SDSF would involve maintaining proper drainage along roads and trails by repairing culverts, water bars, and other drainage structures to reduce or prevent soil erosion and stream sedimentation. SDSF would be required to monitor all timber operations (including all harvesting areas and new roads, skid trails, and landings) after significant storms for five to seven years following completion of operations. Increased monitoring would occur the first winter after operations above what is required by regulations. An active watershed remediation program would continue to be used that includes monitoring watershed conditions and implementing enhancement projects. Monitoring has included a forest-wide inventory of stored sediments and active landslides, and mapping mass wasting hazards and surface erosion potential. Sediment risk-reduction projects have been implemented in conjunction with timber operations according to their priority as available funding permits. New road and trail assessments would be planned to occur at SDSF to determine priority areas for treatment.

Hazards and Hazardous Materials

The key hazardous materials concern related to cumulative effects on SDSF is the use of herbicides. The discussion of potential herbicide cumulative effects was addressed above and found that there would not be the potential for a significant adverse impact.

Management Activities

The major types of land use in the East Branch watershed are timber management, recreation on public land, vineyards, and residential development. The East Branch watershed's long history of timber harvesting began with clearcutting in the 1870s and continued into the 1940s. Timber was originally removed by oxen (1870-1895), then by steam donkey (1895-1930), and finally by crawler tractor. Following World War II, selective harvesting replaced clearcutting, continuing to the present day. Currently, nearly all of the old-growth timber has been harvested except for reserved groves and widely scattered suppressed trees. Second-growth harvesting has taken place on approximately 1400 acres over the past 10 years (2004-2014) within the 9068 acre Soquel Creek Watershed. In recent years, cable yarding has been used along with tractor logging to selectively harvest timber in the basin. Approximately twenty percent of the Soquel Basin has never been harvested as it is in chaparral.

The project would not generate cumulatively considerable impacts from timber harvesting. The modeled one-hundred-year projections of forest habitat conditions show that the acreage of different habitat types on SDSF would not diminish over time. SDSF's forest management activities would continue to provide a diversity of forest stands and habitat types of various seral stages and provide connectivity of these habitats within the assessment area. The planned harvests at SDSF, and harvest units would be separated in time and distance.

An analysis of past and current THPs in the assessment area identified one open THP on Spanish Ranch and one at SDSF (the Comstock Mill THP). An analysis of these plans along with the proposed project led to the conclusion that the project related impacts when added to the other projects in the vicinity of SDSF would not have considerable cumulative impacts.

Recreation in the form of hiking and mountain biking takes place primarily in The Forest of Nisene Marks State Park and SDSF (SDSF also allows horseback riding). Additionally, adjacent property owners often allow friends and neighbors to utilize their lands as an access route to the State Park or SDSF.

The Olive Springs Quarry, located near the East Branch channel, has produced sand and gravel from granitic rock exposed along the Zayante Fault since the 1950s. Residential development has occurred in the chaparral communities and has steadily expanded over the past 40 years. Over the whole Soquel Creek watershed, housing development is rated as moderate to high, with approximately 7,000 housing units present in the basin. No projects involving residential development, agriculture, or quarry operations would be proposed under the SDSF GFMP. Proposed projects would not impact any of these land uses in the assessment area.

Road repair and maintenance projects would be expected to have a neutral to positive environmental effects. The SDSF current road maintenance procedures and the future road management plan provide for development and use of a systematic protocol for avoiding and repairing road related cumulative impacts over time and distance.

The project would not generate cumulatively considerable impacts from recreation. Recreation on SDSF is dispersed and occurs at low levels that have been shown to have negligible impacts on the environment. The GFMP would not propose any significant changes in recreation patterns or intensity.

The project would not generate cumulatively considerable impacts from research. Research installations are most often non-interventional and they would be of a size and density such that they would not create a significant adverse environmental impact, either singly or cumulatively.

The project would not generate cumulatively considerable impacts from the use of herbicides. Herbicide use would be separated in time and distance so that their individual effects would not reinforce or interact with each other. Herbicide use on SDSF would occur infrequently and in small amounts. They could be used for demonstration or research projects, or for the control of invasive exotic plants. These conclusions are based on the analysis in the Hazards and Hazardous Materials section above.

Discussion and Conclusions

The above analyses of resource values including soil, water and biological resources, show that the assessment area watershed is a dynamic landscape. Forest management activities in the assessment area, including on SDSF, over the last several decades have not resulted in cumulatively considerable environmental impacts.

The proposed project would propose no substantial changes in the management of SDSF. The planned utilization of uneven-aged management would continue to maintain a landscape that would be varied and would have a mixture of various timberstand types and wildlife habitats.

Alone or in combination with management on neighboring properties, the proposed project would not represent a substantial deviation from past practices in the assessment area. Past practices have been shown not to cause cumulative environmental impacts through State-

approved MSP documents and individual THPs. MSP documents and THPs from all landowners in the assessment area provide a basis for evaluating the potential cumulative effects of timber harvesting. The sustainable harvest levels, silvicultural methods and environmental protection measures in these MSP documents, when evaluated over the assessment area, show that cumulatively considerable environmental impacts from forest management activities, alone or in combination, should not occur.

Possible site-specific impacts would be addressed on a project by project basis. The development of THPs or other projects subject to CEQA under the guidance of the GFMP would be subject to separate cumulative effects analysis consistent with CEQA. The analysis would be conducted based on the project's specifications and any current or reasonably foreseeable future projects in the analysis area.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
c) Would the project have environmental effects that would cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?	☐	☐	☒	☐

No project related environmental effects were identified that would cause a substantial adverse effect on human beings. As described herein, the proposed project has the potential to impact Aesthetics, Agricultural Resources, Air Quality, Biological Resources, Cultural Resources, Geology and Soils, Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, Hydrology and Water Quality, Land Use and Planning, Noise, Recreation, and Utilities and Service Systems. However, with the adherence to all applicable laws and regulations, obtaining the appropriate permits, and adherence to the management measures and guidelines described in the SDSF GFMP, these impacts would be reduced to a <u>less than significant level.</u>

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Appendix A – SDSF General Forest Management Plan

SOQUEL DEMONSTRATION STATE FOREST

GENERAL FOREST MANAGEMENT PLAN

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FORESTRY

AND FIRE PROTECTION

SOQUEL, CALIFORNIA
March 4, 2014

SOQUEL DEMONSTRATION

STATE FOREST

DRAFT

GENERAL FOREST

MANAGEMENT PLAN

This final General Forest Management Plan is intended to set the goals and to guide the development of programs and facilities on Soquel Demonstration State Forest (SDSF). It was approved by the SDSF Advisory Committee on January 14, 2014 and by the Board of Forestry on xxx.

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FORESTRY
AND FIRE PROTECTION

SOQUEL, CALIFORNIA
March 4, 1998
Revision date: March 4, 2014

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION **3**

CALIFORNIA'S DEMONSTRATION STATE FOREST SYSTEM 3
THE GENERAL FOREST MANAGEMENT PLAN 3
FUTURE PLANNING 4

CHAPTER 2: MANAGEMENT GOALS **5**

RESOURCE PROTECTION AND ENHANCEMENT 5
DEMONSTRATION AND EDUCATION 6
RESEARCH 7
TIMBER MANAGEMENT 7
RECREATION 7

CHAPTER 3: PROPERTY DESCRIPTION **9**

LOCATION AND BOUNDARIES 9
ADJACENT OWNERSHIP 9
HISTORY OF OWNERSHIP 9
CLIMATE 12
SOILS AND GEOLOGY 12
WATER RESOURCES 15
ZONING AND GENERAL PLAN 15
CHARACTERISTIC FEATURES 16

CHAPTER 4: ADMINISTRATION **18**

THE LEASE 18
CAL FIRE ADMINISTRATION 18
FUNDING AND TAXES 19
ADVISORY COMMITTEE 20
SAFETY 21
LAW ENFORCEMENT 22
ACCESS NEEDS 22
LAND ACQUISITION PRIORITIES 23
COOPERATION WITH ADJACENT LANDOWNERS 24
COOPERATION WITH OTHER AGENCIES AND INSTITUTIONS 24

CHAPTER 5: BIOTA **26**

INTRODUCTION 26
HABITAT COMMUNITIES 26
FUNGAL RESOURCES 31
FERAL PIGS 31
CORVIDS 32
INVASIVE SPECIES 32
PLANT SPECIES OF CONCERN 34
SPECIAL-STATUS WILDLIFE SPECIES 34
MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES 37

PLANNED ACTIONS 38

CHAPTER 6: FISHERIES 40

INTRODUCTION 40
HABITAT AND RESOURCE CONSIDERATIONS 48
AQUATIC INVERTEBRATES 51
MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES 54
PLANNED ACTIONS 55

CHAPTER 7: WATERSHED ASSESSMENT 57

PHYSIOGRAPHY OF THE WATERSHED 57
BENEFICIAL USES 57
LAND USE HISTORY 61
CUMULATIVE WATERSHED EFFECTS ASSESSMENT 61
MONITORING AND ENHANCEMENT 66
MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES 677
PLANNED ACTIONS 677

CHAPTER 8: DEMONSTRATION AND EDUCATION 688

INTRODUCTION 688
DEMONSTRATION PROGRAM 688
FORESTRY EDUCATION 70
INTERPRETATION 71
VOLUNTEER PROGRAM 72
FORESTRY EDUCATION CENTER 73

CHAPTER 9: TIMBER MANAGEMENT 76

INTRODUCTION 76
HARVEST HISTORY 76
CONIFER VOLUME INVENTORY 77
GROWTH 79
VEGETATION TYPE 80
TIMBER SITE CLASS 80
SILVICULTURE 80
OLD-GROWTH AND LATE-SUCCESSION MANAGEMENT 85
HARVEST SYSTEMS 88
HARVEST PLANNING 889
TIMBER OPERATIONS MONITORING 94
TIMBER MARKETS 94
HARDWOOD MANAGEMENT 95
DEMONSTRATION AND RESEARCH PROGRAMS 96
MINOR FOREST PRODUCTS 97
MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES .....
99 PLANNED ACTIONS 100

CHAPTER 10: RESEARCH 102

INTRODUCTION 102
COMPLETED PROJECTS 102
RESEARCH PRIORITIES 107
MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES 108
PLANNED ACTIONS 109

CHAPTER 11: RECREATION 110

INTRODUCTION 110
RULES, REGULATIONS & POLICIES 110
RECREATION STUDY & PLAN 111
PARTNERSHIPS 112
REGIONAL CONTEXT 113
PUBLIC ACCESS & STAGING AREAS 115
EXISTING FACILITIES 115
RECREATION PROGRAMS 121
MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES 122
PLANNED ACTIONS 123

CHAPTER 12: RESOURCE PROTECTION 124

FIRE PROTECTION 124
FOREST PEST MANAGEMENT 132

CHAPTER 13: ARCHAEOLOGY 137

HISTORY OF SDSF AREA 137
ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESEARCH 137
PREHISTORIC SITES 138
HISTORIC SITES 138
MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES 139
PLANNED ACTIONS 139

CHAPTER 14: ROADS AND OTHER IMPROVEMENTS 141

SDSF FACILITIES 141
PUBLIC ACCESS ROADS 142
ROAD BUILDING AND MAINTENANCE 143
MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES 144
PLANNED ACTIONS 145

REFERENCES 147

LITERATURE 147
PERSONAL COMMUNICATION 156

APPENDICES 157

APPENDIX A: TEXT OF ASSEMBLY BILL 1965 157
APPENDIX B: SPECIES LISTS FOR SDSF 159
APPENDIX C: SOQUEL DEMONSTRATION STATE FOREST MONITORING PLAN ... 174
APPENDIX D : BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES 17480

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1. Locator Map for SDSF 10

Figure 2. SDSF and Adjacent Ownerships 11

Figure 3. Locations of Soil Series in SDSF 13

Figure 4. Recent Acquisition Map for SDSF 24

Figure 5. Vegetation Type Map for SDSF 28

Figure 6. Estimated Juvenile Steelhead Population Comparison, Index Reaches, Soquel Demonstration State Forest, 1993-2012 47

Figure 7. Water Temperature Data for Soquel Demonstration State Forest 52

Figure 8. Soquel Creek Watershed Map 58

Figure 9. Annual Peak Streamflow for Soquel Creek 59

Figure 10. Rainfall and Streamflow for East Branch of Soquel Creek 60

Figure 11. SDSF Timber Harvesting Plans 78

Figure 12. Timber Site Class Map for SDSF 81

Figure 13. Conifer Diameter Class Distribution for SDSF 82

Figure 14. Old-growth Stands and Late-succession Management Areas 85

Figure 15. SDSF Projected Inventory by Planning Period 92

Figure 16. SDSF Projected Annual Growth and Harvest 92

Figure 17. Santa Cruz County Stumpage Values 95

Figure 18. Estimated Basal Area for SDSF's Hardwood Tree Species 96

Figure 19. Transportation System of SDSF 117

Figure 20. Recent Fire History 127

Figure 21. Fire Defense Improvements 128

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. Soil Type and Associated Erosion Hazard of SDSF..... 14

Table 2. Key to California Wildlife Habitat Relationship Vegetation Type Codes. 27

Table 3. Exotic Invasive Plants Occuring at SDSF 33

Table 4. Special-status Vertebrate Fish and Wildlife Species Occuring or with Potential to Occur at Soquel Demonstration State Forest ...……36

Table 5. Habitat Requirements and Vulnerability by Each Salmon Life Stage…… 45

Table 6. SDSF 2006 Timber Inventory Summary 79

Table 7. Individual Redwood and Douglas-fir Tree Characteristics 86

Table 8. SDSF Forest Land Availability..... 91

Table 9. Projected SDSF Forest-wide (full and limited availability) Average Annual Inventory, Harvest and Growth by Planning Period 91

Table 10. Forest Pests of the Soquel Creek Watershed 134

Table 11. Drivable Road Segments of SDSF..... 143

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON SOQUEL DEMONSTRATION STATE FOREST

Total acres:	2,681
Vegetation types present:	Redwood, Montane Hardwood-Conifer, Coastal Oak Woodland, Douglas-fir, Mixed Chaparral, Annual Grassland, Riparian Community, and Freshwater Marshes
Miles of roads:	19
Miles of trails:	12.2
Primary management goals:	Watershed protection, monitoring, and study; public education about forestry, timber production, and the environment; and protection of old-growth redwoods.

The Soquel Demonstration State Forest (SDSF) was established in 1990 according to Assembly Bill 1965 of 1987 (now Public Resources Code (PRC) Sections 4660-4664). The basic purpose of the enabling legislation is to establish and preserve SDSF (also referred to as the Forest) as an intensively managed, multifaceted research forest. The Public Resources Code Sections 4660-4664 state that SDSF will do all of the following:

- Provide watershed protection for local communities and base-line monitoring and studies of the hazards, risks, and benefits of forest operations and watersheds to urban areas.

- Provide public education and examples illustrating compatible rural land uses, including sustained yield timber production, as well as the historic development of timbering and forestry machinery, within the context of local community protection and nearby pressures.

- Provide a resource for the public, environmental groups, elected officials, environmental planners, the educational community, and the media as an open environment for the inspection and study of environmental education, forestry practices, and effects thereof.

- Protect old-growth redwood trees.

Soquel Demonstration State Forest is located near the center of Santa Cruz County, California, approximately eight miles northeast of the city of Santa Cruz. Positioned in the southern portion of the Santa Cruz Mountains, SDSF is eighteen air miles south of San Jose and within a two-hour drive of the San Francisco and Oakland metropolitan areas.

SDSF is bordered by both state and privately-owned properties. These include The Forest of Nisene Marks State Park, timberland managed by Redwood Empire, the Olive Springs Quarry, and private rural-residential parcels that range in size from 1 to 80 acres.

Public access is currently limited to a road access point off Highland Way or entry through The Forest of Nisene Marks State Park. The inability of the public to drive to the Forest when county

roads are closed limits accomplishment of SDSF's mission to provide for forestry education and demonstration.

Between the late 1920s and early 1940s, the previous owner managed the timber resource on an even-aged basis with clearcutting and natural regeneration. Since 1990, SDSF has been managed on an uneven-aged basis, utilizing either single tree and/or small group selection. Watershed, soil, fisheries, and wildlife resources are monitored and protected before, during, and after all timber harvesting activity. Funds derived from timber harvesting provide for forest staff, facilities, operations and maintenance.

Existing old-growth redwood areas in the Forest have been excluded from timber harvesting, as mandated by SDSF's authorizing legislation. In addition, late-succession areas are managed to promote the development of old-growth habitat. These areas make up 15 percent of the overall forest, and protect 300 feet on each side of the East Branch of Soquel Creek, Amaya and Fern Gulch Creeks. The East Branch of Soquel Creek provides valuable steelhead trout spawning and rearing habitat, and is part of the domestic water supply for the local community.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON THE GENERAL FOREST MANAGEMENT PLAN

In 1988, The Nature Conservancy entered into a lease with the State of California to manage the SDSF property. The lease and management responsibilities were transferred to the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE, formerly CDF) in 1990. The first General Forest Management Plan was developed with input from the public, resource management professionals, and members of the SDSF Advisory Committee.

The Board of Forestry and Fire Protection (the Board) approved the original General Forest Management Plan on May 18, 1998. The environmental impacts of the 1998 management plan were investigated in an Environmental Impact Report (EIR), State Clearinghouse Number 94023033. Mitigation measures identified in the EIR have been incorporated into a Monitoring Plan located in Appendix C.

The SDSF General Forest Management Plan remains in effect until it is amended or a new plan is adopted. In 2003 and 2009, the Board reviewed and reauthorized the plan. No revisions were made at those times. This revision of the plan incorporates the results of new studies, monitoring and research pertaining to fisheries, wildlife habitat, watershed issues, archaeology, and timber management.

CAL FIRE plans to work with the Advisory Committee to reexamine the General Forest Management Plan every five years and determine what changes are needed. These will be developed by CAL FIRE and the Advisory Committee in accordance with Public Resources Code Sections 4660 – 4664 and the California Environmental Quality Act.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

CALIFORNIA'S DEMONSTRATION STATE FOREST SYSTEM

The demonstration state forest system of the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) was established in the mid-1940's to meet local needs for research, demonstration, and education related to forest management. Currently, the demonstration state forest (DSF) system encompasses over 71,000 acres of land in the form of eight state forests. DSFs are healthy, living forests which demonstrate conservation and protection of wildlife, fisheries, vegetation, soil, and watershed resources as well as sustained-yield forest management activities.

The Soquel Demonstration State Forest (SDSF), when established in 1990, was the first addition to the DSF system in over 40 years. SDSF contains 2,681 acres including mostly coast redwood and mixed evergreen forest types. Former Assemblyman Sam Farr authored SDSF's enabling legislation, Assembly Bill 1965 of 1987 (now Public Resources Code (PRC) Sections 4660-4664), which provided for the protection and preservation of SDSF as an intensively managed educational and research forest. It also contained special provisions for the use of SDSF, including a limited amount of commercial timber operations on the property within SDSF in order to provide funds for the maintenance and operation of SDSF, reasonable capital costs, and other expenses incurred in fulfilling the objectives of PRC Section 4660 on SDSF. AB 1965 is reprinted in Appendix A of this plan.

SDSF was formally transferred from its interim managers, The Nature Conservancy (TNC), to CAL FIRE on July 13, 1990. Former CAL FIRE Director Harold Walt, former Assemblyman Sam Farr, a representative of State Controller Gray Davis, and Steve Johnson of TNC dedicated the Forest, emphasizing the nature and purpose of this addition to the DSF system.

SDSF was the first of California's demonstration state forests to have an advisory committee formed to assist the Department in planning future management of the Forest. The Advisory Committee, also required by AB 1965, met monthly during the planning process to facilitate the creation of the original 1998 General Forest Management Plan. The Advisory Committee reconvened in 2011 and plays a vital role in reviewing the revisions to this updated version of the plan.

THE GENERAL FOREST MANAGEMENT PLAN

Following the acquisition of the SDSF property (see the Administration Chapter), TNC created an interim management plan for what they called the Soquel Creek Forest. Recognized as a temporary plan, TNC's document provided direction for current and future management decisions involving SDSF. The 1998 General Forest Management Plan incorporated elements of the TNC plan and information from other sources. It was developed with input from the public and resource professionals. Public workshops were held to obtain feelings, opinions, and factual information about the management of SDSF's forest resources. Furthermore, individuals representing many interests contributed data, publications, and personal knowledge for

consideration through conversation with Forest staff. Public comments and concerns relating to various subjects are summarized in each chapter. A supplemental document, titled Public Input to the Soquel Demonstration State Forest General Management Plan, presents all input received during the development of the draft plan.

Local resource professionals contributed a significant amount to the 1998 plan. Knowledgeable individuals served on the Advisory Committee, provided factual information about various resources, and composed elements of the plan itself. Without their assistance and experience, this management plan could not have been written.

The environmental impacts of the 1998 management plan were thoroughly investigated by Jones and Stokes Associates, Inc. in an Environmental Impact Report (EIR), State Clearinghouse Number 94023033, which was completed in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). A primary objective of this EIR was to identify mitigation measures to reduce or avoid adverse environmental impacts that could result from implementation of any SDSF projects. As required by CEQA, mitigation measures identified from this EIR have been incorporated into a Monitoring Plan located in Appendix C.

FUTURE PLANNING

The Board of Forestry and Fire Protection (the Board) approved the original General Forest Management Plan on May 18, 1998. In 2003 and 2009, the Board reviewed and reauthorized the plan. No revisions were made at those times. As indicated throughout this plan, SDSF staff continues to formulate more specific management guidelines and planned actions. This revision of the plan includes new studies and the results of monitoring and research regarding the management of components such as fisheries, wildlife, watershed, archaeology, and timber.

This SDSF General Forest Management Plan will be in effect until it is either amended or a new plan is adopted in accordance with the procedures prescribed in PRC Section 4663. Working with the Advisory Committee, CAL FIRE will reexamine the General Forest Management Plan every five years, as per the policy of the Board of Forestry and Fire Protection, and determine whether any changes are necessary or desirable. This plan embodies the legislative intent of PRC Sections 4660-4664, and any subsequent amendments of this plan or any new plan must be consistent with the PRC except to the extent, if any, that subsequent legislation changes that intent. If changes are desired, the changes will be developed by CAL FIRE and presented to the Advisory Committee for consideration at one or more public meetings. The changes shall be approved by the Advisory Committee prior to review and adoption by the Board. (Statutory authority for final adoption of the plan rests with the Board per 0351.10 and PRC 4645.) Any changes will be subject to environmental review as provided by the California Environmental Quality Act.

CHAPTER 2: MANAGEMENT GOALS

SDSF's management goals represent a combination of legislation, policy, and public input. PRC Sections 4660-4664, the enabling legislation for Soquel Demonstration State Forest, is the preeminent authority with regard to the management of SDSF. Consistent with the objectives of that legislation to protect and preserve SDSF as an intensively managed, multifaceted research forest and to the extent not in conflict with that enabling legislation, SDSF will be managed in accordance with the state forest system legislation (PRC Sections 4631-4658) and Board of Forestry and Fire Protection policy.

Public Resources Code Section 4660 states that the intent of the Legislature in establishing the Soquel Demonstration State Forest is to provide an environment that will do all of the following:

* Provide watershed protection for local communities and base-line monitoring and studies of the hazards, risks, and benefits of forest operations and watersheds to urban areas.

* Provide public education and examples illustrating compatible rural land uses, including sustained yield timber production, as well as the historic development of timbering and forestry machinery, within the context of local community protection and nearby pressures.

* Provide a resource for the public, environmental groups, elected officials, environmental planners, the educational community, and the media as an open environment for the inspection and study of environmental education, forestry practices, and effects thereof.

* Protect old-growth redwood trees.

Section 4661 further states that CAL FIRE may permit a limited amount of commercial timber harvesting in order to provide the funds needed for the maintenance and operation expenses of SDSF, reasonable capital costs, and other expenses incurred in fulfilling the objectives of PRC Sections 4660-4664 on SDSF.

Below is a listing of SDSF's general management goals which elaborate on the legislative intent. Other subjects and greater detail relating to the topics listed here can be found throughout the following chapters of this General Forest Management Plan.

RESOURCE PROTECTION AND ENHANCEMENT

1. Protect, restore, and enhance the significant natural values of the Soquel Demonstration State Forest.

2. Provide watershed protection and conduct baseline studies and monitoring of hydrological resources.

3. Demonstrate fire protection using a coordinated fire prevention and control system which includes education and enforcement of fire prevention guidelines, Forest patrol, and vegetation management including prescribed fire, fuelbreak construction, pre-attack strategies, and suppression tactics.

4. Improve fisheries and wildlife habitat to foster healthy populations and promote biodiversity.

5. Monitor, study, and implement controls for various forest pests using Departmental and outside specialists.

6. Monitor, study, and implement controls for invasive plant species.

7. Identify all significant archaeological and historical features and protect them during all management activities.

8. Conserve soil resources by reducing erosion resulting from flooding, earthquakes, logging activities, roads, and trails.

DEMONSTRATION AND EDUCATION

1. Conduct innovative demonstrations and education in forest management including silviculture, habitat diversity, logging methods, hydrology, resource protection, and recreation.

2. Provide forestry education opportunities for the public, forest landowners, the educational community, the media, natural resource professionals, and environmental groups.

3. Develop interpretive resources to help Forest visitors understand the various coast redwood forest communities and the basics of forest land management.

4. Establish a volunteer program to assist Forest staff in providing forestry interpretation for visitors.

5. Provide suitable public access and parking.

6. Plan for a Forestry Education Center to be designed and constructed to serve as the Forest's focal point for demonstration and education activities.

RESEARCH

1. Conduct research in forestry and natural resource management, including the benefits and risks of forest operations in watersheds close to urban areas.

2. Serve as a laboratory for in-house projects and encourage research by other agencies, interest groups, and educational institutions.

3. Disseminate information obtained from the State Forest to appropriate individuals in an effective and timely manner.

TIMBER MANAGEMENT

1. Demonstrate sustained-yield timber harvesting practices through harvest operations that balance harvest rates with growth over time and are compatible with rural land use in Santa Cruz County, while promoting recreation opportunities, forest health, watershed protection, wildlife, and fisheries values as well as aesthetic enjoyment.

2. Protect old-growth redwood and old-growth Douglas-fir trees and recruit additional late-successional forest stands.

3. Incorporate demonstration, research, and restoration objectives into timber management activities whenever possible.

4. Research and implement hardwood stand management alternatives including modification to enhance wildlife habitat, utilization for various forest products, and conversion to softwood timber stands consistent with the legislative goals of PRC Sections 4660-4664.

RECREATION

1. Provide for recreational opportunities which are oriented toward foot, bicycle, and equestrian traffic and include trails, roads, and picnic areas. Limited camping may be permitted if consistent with Forest objectives.

2. Integrate recreation management, forestry education, resource protection and examples of timber harvesting so as to demonstrate how they can be compatible.

3. Unless specifically authorized, the activities that are prohibited include fishing, the use of motorized vehicles, shooting, hunting, camping, fires, and night time use.

THE FOLLOWING PUBLIC COMMENTS WERE RECEIVED DURING REVIEW OF THE 1998 GENERAL FOREST MANAGEMENT PLAN

Throughout the planning process, members of the public have indicated that adherence to SDSF's enabling legislation, AB 1965, is legally required. Neighbors and visitors of the Forest have communicated that management goals and actions should abide by the written legislation. CAL FIRE intends to abide by this plan and to act consistently with the intention of the enabling legislation as expressed in this plan.

CHAPTER 3: PROPERTY DESCRIPTION

LOCATION AND BOUNDARIES

Soquel Demonstration State Forest is located near the center of Santa Cruz County, California, approximately eight miles northeast of the city of Santa Cruz (Figure 1). Positioned in the southern portion of the Santa Cruz Mountains, SDSF is eighteen air miles south of San Jose and within a two-hour drive of the San Francisco and Oakland metropolitan areas. Access to the property is via State Highway 1 or 17 and local county roads. The entrance to the Forest is from Highland Way, a county road in the Santa Cruz Mountains that connects State Highway 17 with Watsonville. Virtually all of the Forest's 2,681 acres are located within the East Branch of Soquel Creek watershed.

SDSF's boundaries were originally established by metes and bounds rather than the more familiar township and range system. Formerly part of the Shoquel Augmentation Rancho (a Mexican land grant that was later more commonly referred to as Soquel), this area has always been defined differently than the land which surrounds it. Some of the corners listed in the survey, prepared by George Dunbar of Dunbar Land Surveys, have been verified and are in place. The Santa Cruz County parcel numbers for the Forest are 098-101-04; 098-161-06; 098-351-01[1]; and 099-181-02, 03, 04, 06.

ADJACENT OWNERSHIP

SDSF is bordered by both state and private property (Figure 2). The Forest of Nisene Marks State Park borders the State Forest for three and one-half miles along Santa Rosalia Ridge to the south. Approximately three-hundred-forty acres directly east of the Forest boundary are owned by Roger and Michelle Burch. This land is managed by Redwood Empire and includes the main entrance and parking area for the Forest off Highland Way. To the north and west, the adjacent ownerships are private rural-residential parcels, including the large holding of Spanish Ranch. Most of these parcels range in size from 1 to 80 acres. On the southwest border is the property containing the Olive Springs Quarry, owned by the CHY Company.

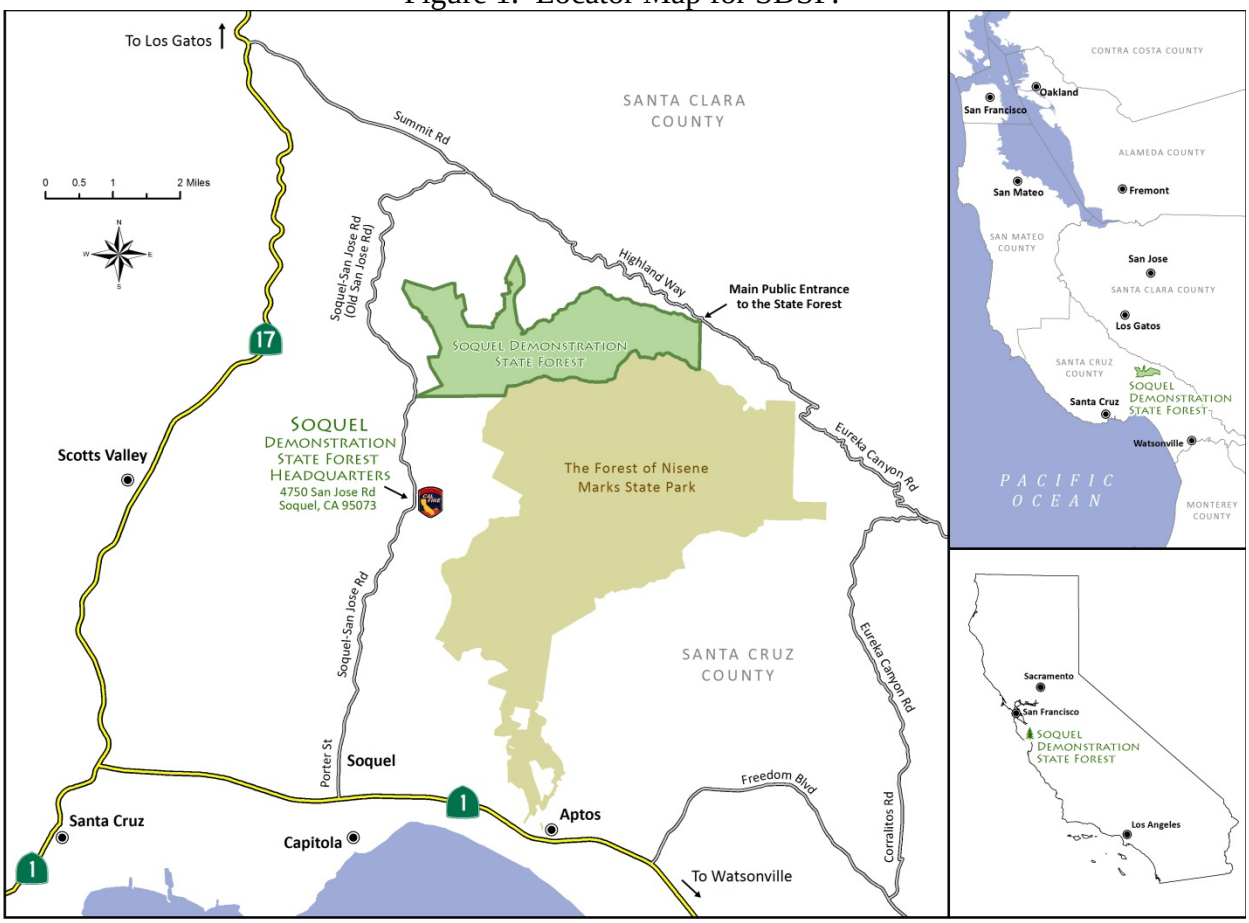
With the considerable amount of private property surrounding the Forest, public access is currently limited. The only undisputed public access points into the Forest are from Highland Way and The Forest of Nisene Marks State Park.

HISTORY OF OWNERSHIP

Prior to the arrival of Europeans, the Ohlone Indians inhabited the area. In the mid-1800's, the title to the 32,000-acre Shoquel Augmentation Rancho was awarded to Martina Castro de Depeaux viuda de Lodge viuda de Cota, the daughter of a Spanish Colonial

[1] Note that historic parcel number 098-161-02 was changed to 098-351-01 by the Santa Cruz County Assessor in 1998.

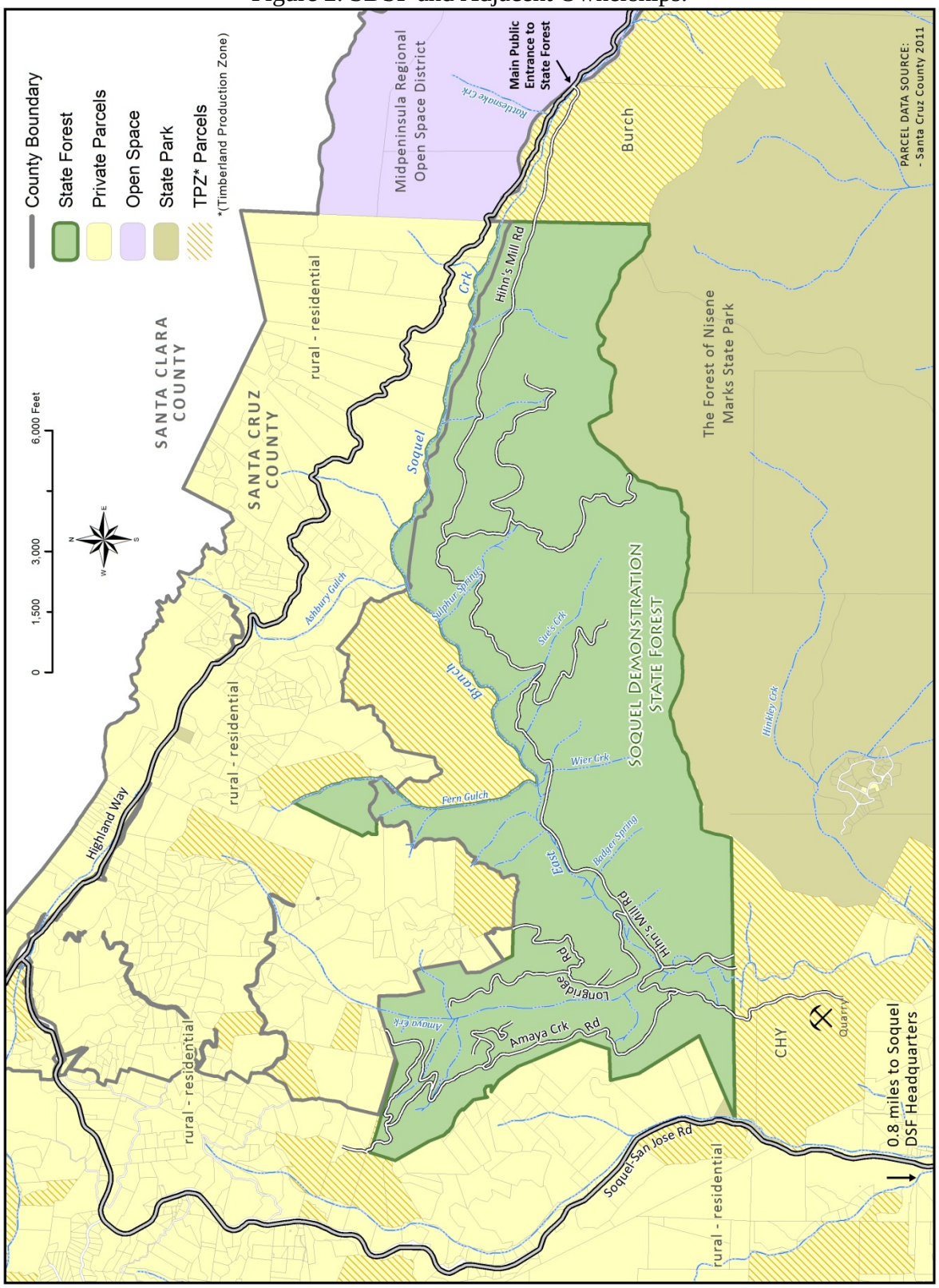
Figure 1. Locator Map for SDSF.



soldier. SDSF was contained within the rancho, and Martina gave this portion to her daughter, Antonia Lodge de Peck. Frederick A. Hihn, a German-born entrepreneur, was able to acquire portions of the Shoquel Augmentation through a discrepancy in legal title. He was particularly interested in Lodge de Peck's parcel and purchased it in 1863.

In the 1880's, Hihn established the Valencia-Hihn Company and began selectively logging the old-growth redwood on his lands to produce shingles, posts, and rails. Upon his death in 1913, Hihn's heirs assumed management of his lands and continued to harvest the area. In 1924, the Valencia-Hihn Company sold their land to the Monterey Bay Redwood Company (MBRC). The MBRC owned the State Forest property for 37 years and performed extensive harvesting in the 1920s and 1930s. They sold their property to the Glenco Forest Products Company of Sacramento in 1961, which later changed its name to the CHY Company. Eighteen years later, in 1979, CHY sold the State Forest portion of their land to the Pelican Timber Company. Additional details about the history of the Forest can be found in Archaeological and Historical Survey of Soquel Demonstration State Forest (Dillon, 1992).

Figure 2. SDSF and Adjacent Ownerships.



In 1988, Pelican was involved in a debt-for-nature land swap with the State of California and the Bank of America (see the Administration Chapter for more details). A result of this land swap was the creation of SDSF as authorized by former Assemblyman Sam Farr's Assembly Bill 1965. The Nature Conservancy acted as the interim managers of the Forest until its transfer to CAL FIRE in 1990.

CLIMATE

The climate of the Santa Cruz Mountains is Mediterranean, characterized by dry, warm summers and wet, cool winters. SDSF is often cool and damp because of the dense canopy of forest vegetation and its location on a north-facing slope. The average minimum January temperature is 38 degrees Fahrenheit, and the average maximum July temperature is 76 degrees Fahrenheit.

Most of the precipitation in the area occurs from November through April. The average annual rainfall for the East Branch of Soquel Creek is 44 inches (Linsley et al., 1992). At elevations above 2,000 feet, snowfall occurs about every other year and averages less than five inches total.

During the late spring and early summer months, Santa Cruz County often has foggy or cloudy skies. In the Forest, this marine layer is generally limited to early morning and late evening hours. Winds generally blow from the west or southwest (onshore) and are mild to moderate throughout the year. Strong winds, however, come in with winter storms and are strongest at higher elevations. Pressure gradients inland may occasionally cause strong northeasterly winds to occur.

SOILS AND GEOLOGY

SOIL TYPES

The parent material of soils found in SDSF is primarily sedimentary and consists of fine and coarse-grained sandstone, consolidated shale, weathered mudstone, and siltstone. Schist and intrusions of granitic rock are also present. There are nine soil series which developed from these parent materials; see Table 1 and Figure 3 (USDA, 2004). They are all deep and well-drained soils except for the Maymen Stony Loam which is a shallow, well-drained soil. According to the Natural Resources Conservation Service, most of the soils support watershed, recreation, and wildlife resources. Five of the soils (Ben Lomond, Felton, Lompico, Nisene, and Aptos) also support timber production, with the primary species being coast redwood and Douglas-fir.

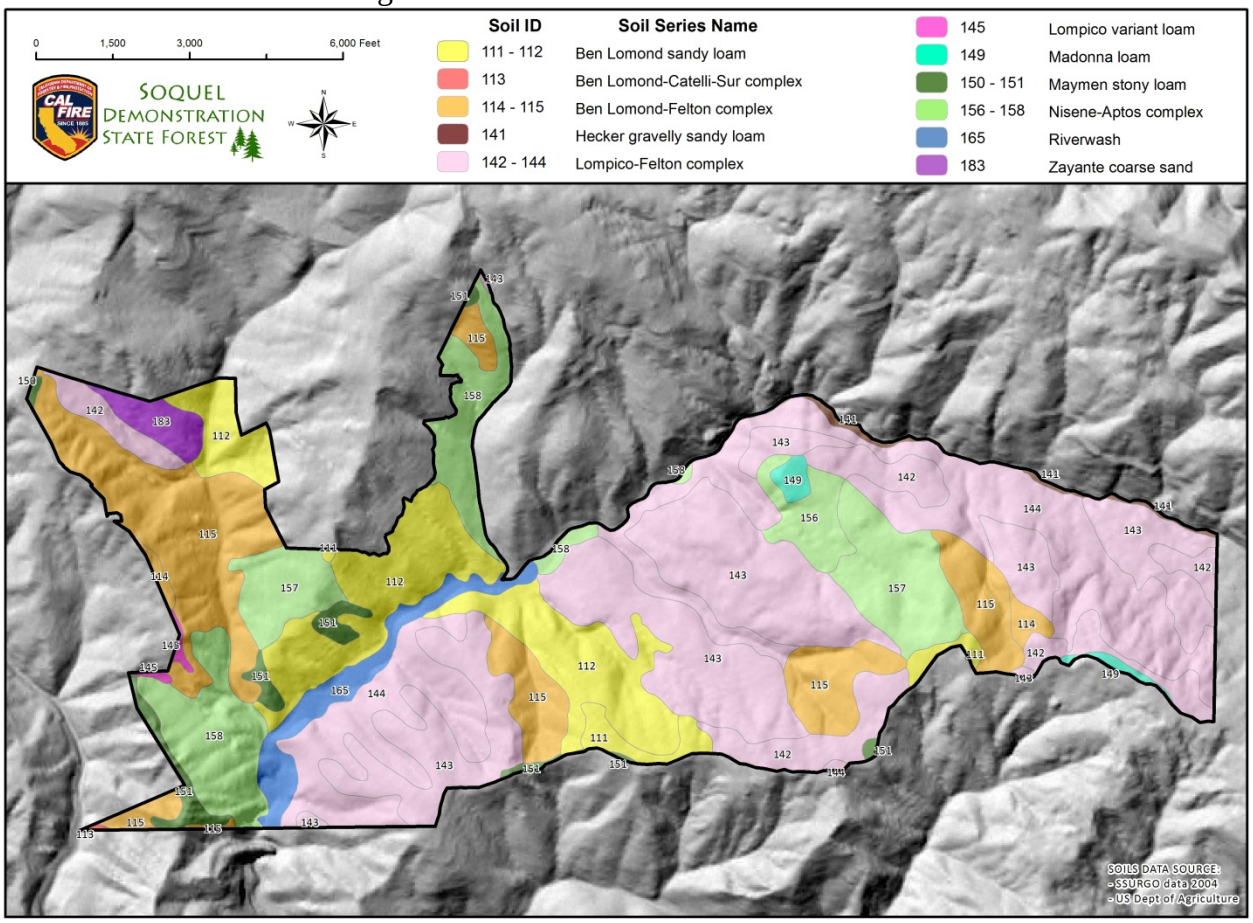
GEOLOGIC ACTIVITY

In 1992, a detailed geologic study was completed by the California Geologic Survey (Manson and Sowma-Bawcom, 1992). This investigation resulted in a report which focuses on the process and degree of instability in both the State Forest and surrounding areas. The report, titled Geology, Slope Stability, and Earthquake Damage in Soquel Demonstration State Forest, includes maps of general geologic and geomorphic characteristics, landslide features (indicating the relative degree of stability), stream orders, roads to be considered for abandonment, and

Alquist-Priolo Special Studies Zones[2].

SDSF is seismically very active. The San Andreas Fault runs through the northeastern boundary and along the East Branch of Soquel Creek to the mouth of Ashbury Gulch, where it turns north. The Zayante Fault, part of the San Andreas Rift Zone, runs through the southwest edge of the Forest. The epicenter of the 1989 Loma Prieta Earthquake was located approximately two miles south of SDSF, in The Forest of Nisene Marks State Park. Numerous cracks and fissures dating from the 1989 earthquake have been located in the State Forest. Geologic activity, coupled with past fires and severe rain storms, has helped form the steep terrain found throughout the Forest. These events have also contributed to the many landslides present within the inner gorges of streams and along steep roadcuts. The numerous natural springs and sag ponds found throughout the Forest are also the result of past geologic activity.

Figure 3. Location of Soil Series in SDSF.



[2] Alquist-Priolo Special Studies Zones are areas along traces of the San Andreas Fault where geologic investigations are required prior to development.

The elevation of SDSF ranges from 500 feet at the East Branch of Soquel Creek to 2,500 feet at the southeast corner on Santa Rosalia Ridge. The higher elevations occur in the southeast portion of the Forest and decrease along the ridge going southwest.

Table 1. Soil Type and Associated Erosion Hazard of SDSF[3].

SOIL TYPE	PERCENT SLOPE	PERCENT ACRES	EROSION HAZARD
Ben Lomond sandy loam	15-50	1.77	moderate to high
Ben Lomond sandy loam	50-75	11.61	very high
Ben Lomond-Felton complex	30-50	0.66	high
Ben Lomond-Felton complex	50-75	15.81	very high
Hecker gravelly sandy loam	50-75	0.48	very high
Lompico-Felton complex	5-30	7.44	moderate to high
Lompico-Felton complex	30-50	23.95	high
Lompico-Felton complex	50-75	14.71	very high
Madonna loam	15-30	0.88	high
Maymen stony loam	15-30	0.06	high
Maymen stony loam	30-75	1.97	high to very high
Nisene-Aptos complex	15-30	1.90	moderate to high
Nisene-Aptos complex	30-50	6.76	high
Nisene-Aptos complex	50-75	7.62	very high
Riverwash	-	2.94	-
Zayante coarse sand	30-50	1.44	moderate to high

[3] From Soil Survey of Santa Cruz County, California (US Department of Agriculture, 2004).

WATER RESOURCES

The East Branch of Soquel Creek is a perennial stream that flows through the entire length of the Forest. It is fed by the perennial streams of Fern Gulch and Amaya Creeks from the north, and numerous unnamed intermittent and ephemeral streams. The total size of the East Branch watershed is approximately 19 square miles or 12,240 acres.

As previously mentioned, natural springs and sag ponds can be found in the Forest. The two largest springs are Sulphur Springs, located near Sulphur Springs Road, and Badger Spring, located near the main picnic area. Badger Spring was at one time a developed water source as is evident by the remains of a spring box and steel pipes scattered around the area. A third spring, located east of Sulphur Springs along Hihn's Mill Road, was created by the 1989 earthquake. The natural springs of Sulphur and Badger, as well as other unnamed springs, are also special to SDSF. These springs, plus Amaya Pond, enhance particular biotic communities and offer various research opportunities.

Amaya Pond, a seasonal body of water, is located in the northwestern arm of the Forest. Approximately one-half acre in size, it is located on the east side of Amaya Creek Road, approximately one-third of the way down from Comstock Mill Road. (See Preliminary Biological Assessment of Soquel Demonstration State Forest, Santa Cruz County, California, [Holland et al., 1992] for more details about Amaya Pond.)

The portion of the East Branch that runs through the Forest is well known for its steelhead rearing habitat. The California Department of Fish and Wildlife prohibits angling in this part of the Soquel Creek watershed in order to protect this important resource. The Fisheries Chapter of this report contains more information on the creek and its fisheries assets.

Soquel Creek, including the East Branch, is also part of the domestic water supply for the local community. The lower portion of Soquel Creek serves as part of the natural groundwater recharge system for residents' wells and supplies surface water to a number of intakes along the creek. Soquel Creek is within the Central Coast California (CCC) Coho Salmon Evolutionarily Significant Unit (ESU). (See the Fisheries and Watershed Chapters for additional information on watershed condition, use, and management.)

ZONING AND GENERAL PLAN

The Santa Cruz County General Plan (1994) can be described as the county's "blueprint" for future development. It is a long-range policy document that looks at the future of the community and takes into account the types of development that will be allowed, the spatial relationships among land uses, and the general pattern of future development. The stated objective for timber production (Santa Cruz County General Plan, Chapter 5, and Objective 5.12) is to encourage the orderly economic production of forest products on a sustained yield basis under high environmental standards, to protect the scenic and ecological values of forested areas, and to allow orderly timber production consistent with the least possible

environmental impacts.

Under the concept of zoning, various kinds of land uses are grouped into general categories or “zones”. A zoning ordinance is the local law (refer to County Code) that spells out the immediate, allowable uses for each parcel within the County. Zoning regulates present development through specific standards such as lot size, building setbacks, and a list of allowable uses. Zoning must comply with the general plan. The purpose of zoning is to implement the policies of the general plan. The Santa Cruz County General Plan allows timber harvesting and associated operations, requiring approval of a Timber Harvesting Plan by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection for the following zoning designations: Timber Production (TP), Parks, Recreation and Open Space (PR) (except in the coastal zone), Mineral Extraction Industrial (M-3), and the Commercial Agriculture (CA) (except in the coastal zone).

SDSF is entirely classified as Timber Production Zone (TPZ). This statewide zoning designation was created by the Forest Taxation Reform Act of 1976. Counties throughout the State were required to rezone parcels that met the definition of Timberland as defined in Government Code Section 51104(g) and consistent with Sections 51112 and 51113. TPZ land is devoted to and used for growing and harvesting timber and other compatible uses as defined in Section 51104(h). Compatible uses include but are not limited to: watershed management, fish and wildlife habitat management, outdoor education and recreation activities, and may include a residence or other structure as necessary for management of land zoned as Timberland Production.

Any development must meet not only the specific requirements of the zoning ordinance, but also the broader policies set forth in the local general plan. For the purpose of determining the development potential of rural parcels, the Santa Cruz County General Plan designates SDSF land as Mountain Residential. Objectives of this designation are to provide for very low density residential development in areas which are unsuited to more intensive development. Additional considerations include the presence of physical hazards and development constraints, the lack of public services and facilities to support higher densities, the protection of natural resources, the retention of rural character, and for maintaining sustainable use of natural resources.

CHARACTERISTIC FEATURES

A distinctive feature of SDSF is its proximity to the large urban areas of San Francisco Bay, Monterey Bay, and San Jose. This provides prime opportunities for urban children to experience forestry education on a first-hand basis.

The presence of steelhead trout in a portion of the Soquel Creek watershed also contribute to the special characteristics of SDSF. Once abundant along the entire west coast, steelhead populations have declined due to habitat loss and several other factors. The East Branch of Soquel Creek, the portion of Soquel Creek that flows through the Forest, supports a steelhead

population and its required habitat. A very limited number of coho salmon and their habitat are also present in the watershed.

As mentioned above, the San Andreas Fault and Rift Zone are directly associated with SDSF. The effects of both ancient and contemporary seismic activity are apparent throughout the Forest. The history and future of this very active system make for an interesting addition to SDSF's abundant natural features.

Finally, the Forest contains archaeological and historical sites discovered during on-going archaeological surveys. The Archaeology Chapter of this plan describes the sites and their significance in detail. Both prehistoric and historic, these sites will enhance SDSF's demonstration and education programs.

CHAPTER 4: ADMINISTRATION

THE LEASE

On March 7, 1988, State Controller Gray Davis and the Bank of America settled a 13-year long lawsuit over unclaimed bank accounts. The settlement included $35.7 million in cash and four undeveloped natural parcels in Tehama and Sonoma Counties. The property that is now SDSF was acquired during the settlement process and added to the package.

The settlement properties are held in a trust with the State as the beneficial owner and the Exchange Bank as trustee. The properties can be sold to pay unclaimed funds if they exceed the $35.7 million in cash set aside for this purpose. It is doubtful, however, that this will ever happen.

At the time of the settlement, The Nature Conservancy (TNC) volunteered to act as steward for these properties. A 25-year lease was developed which stated that TNC would manage these properties and that past land use practices could continue. Any revenues generated from these activities were to pay for property taxes, operations and maintenance, natural resource enhancement, and access improvement projects.

The Nature Conservancy transferred their lease of the Santa Cruz County property (now SDSF) to CAL FIRE on April 18, 1990. CAL FIRE assumed management at that time and a dedication ceremony for SDSF was held on July 13, 1990. In 2013, at the end of the 25-year lease, the property will be transferred permanently to the State, free and clear.

Under the terms of the lease, both the trustee and the Controller have certain rights and responsibilities. The trustee’s primary responsibility is to monitor the lessee's performance as managers of the properties. The Controller is responsible for the sale of any or all the properties in the event that cash assets are insufficient to satisfy all claims. As previously mentioned, this is unlikely to occur.

CAL FIRE ADMINISTRATION

Authority to *administer and operate* state forests in California comes from the Legislature and is contained in the Public Resources Code (Sections 4631-4664 and 4701-4703). Rules and regulations governing *use* of state forests are contained in the California Code of Regulations (Title 14, Sections 1400-1439 and 1510-1521). The State Board of Forestry and Fire Protection gives policy direction to the Demonstration State Forest Program, which is administered by the Director of CAL FIRE.

CAL FIRE is administratively broken into two Regions, each with a Region Chief who reports to CAL FIRE's Director. Each region includes units, and state forests are administered by a local Unit Chief. SDSF is in the Northern California Region (with headquarters in Redding) and is within the San Mateo-Santa Cruz Unit (headquartered in

Felton). The State Forest office is located next to the CAL FIRE Soquel Forest Fire Station at 4750 Soquel-San Jose Road in Soquel, California. When fully staffed, SDSF has a staff of five: Forest Manager, Assistant Forest Manager, half-time Office Technician, and two seasonal Forestry Aides. The Forest Manager is supervised by the Unit Chief.

The Forest staff is responsible for the on-site operation of the Forest as provided for by the Public Resources Codes, California Code of Regulations, and the State Board of Forestry and Fire Protection. Forest regulations, policy, and other issues prescribed by the Director of CAL FIRE are used to develop plans and procedures to govern development and perform maintenance of the Forest. The General Forest Management Plan will be reviewed and approved by SDSF' s Advisory Committee (described below) and ultimately approved by the Board of Forestry and Fire Protection.

SDSF is an important resource for CAL FIRE training as well as for other agencies and affiliated organizations. CAL FIRE specifically uses SDSF for training of state personnel in chain saw operations, off highway driving for fire apparatus, wilderness first aid, search and rescue operations, swift water rescue, Forest Practice Regulations, Resource Management training for Joint Apprenticeship Committee requirements, archaeology, and erosion control practices.

FUNDING AND TAXES

The Demonstration State Forest Program, including SDSF, is funded through the regular annual state Budget Act. AB 1965 did not establish a separate fund for SDSF and it is not listed as a line item in the state budget. Revenues from all state forests are deposited in a special fund called the Forest Resources Improvement Fund (FRIF), providing money for the annual budgets of state forests.

Expenditures for all state forests are included in a single budget line item in the Department's annual budget. Soquel State Forest was added to the Department's state forest budget in the 1990-91 fiscal year with a minimum of staffing and operating expense. The Budget Change Proposal recognized that there would be little revenue from SDSF for the first few years and that FRIF would need to contribute over one million dollars in operating expenses before the Forest could produce revenue. It was also recognized that many years would pass before revenues would equal expenses.

The Department may permit a limited amount of commercial timber operations on SDSF in order to provide funds on a cumulative basis as necessary for the maintenance and operation expenses of SDSF, reasonable capital costs, and other expenses incurred in fulfilling the objectives of PRC Sections 4660-4664 on SDSF. The enabling legislation requires a minimum level of timber harvesting, or “floor”, to provide income for all costs of operation and for research and educational purposes of SDSF. The legislation authorizes a higher level of harvesting, or “ceiling”, which shall not exceed long-term sustained yield (LTSY) and on a cumulative basis shall not exceed the level of timber harvesting necessary to provide the funds needed for the maintenance and operation expenses, reasonable capital costs, and other

expenses incurred in fulfilling all the objectives identified in PRC Sections 4660-4664 on SDSF. These additional objectives include watershed protection and monitoring, demonstrations of compatible rural land uses, and historic development of timbering and forestry machinery.

As a practical matter, the various objectives overlap and cannot be completely separated. For example, demonstration or experimental timber harvesting could qualify as research and public education as well as being an example of compatible rural land uses. The protection of old-growth redwood trees will occur under normal operations of SDSF and does not need to be identified as a separate purpose with separate funding.

Funding for SDSF needs to be increased over time in order to fulfill the objectives of PRC 4660-4664. In order to adhere to the administrative and budgeting processes currently in place while simultaneously assuring compliance with the limitations placed on the Department by the enabling legislation, the Department will publish accurate annual reports which will compile revenues and expenses itemized by program. The Department will post the Annual Report on the CAL FIRE website. Large capital expenses (e.g., for additional properties to provide proper access to SDSF or for construction of a Forestry Education Center and administrative facility) will be funded through the FRIF fund or any fund source approved by the Legislature. Amortization of these capital outlays may be included in the computation of cumulative expenses in the annual reports.

The State pays property taxes to the County of Santa Cruz on land values within SDSF. Additionally, purchasers of state forest timber are liable for payment of timber yield taxes according to Public Resources Code, Section 4654. SDSF's timber sale purchasers are required to file quarterly tax returns with the California Board of Equalization.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The legislation which created SDSF (AB 1965) called for the establishment of an advisory committee to assist with the development of SDSF's General Forest Management Plan. A main function of the committee is to act as a critical link between CAL FIRE and the community in the planning effort. This allows SDSF to learn what the community expects and their opinions regarding relevant issues.

The original Advisory Committee had nine members appointed by the Director of CAL FIRE in August of 1991. Five positions were specified by the legislation and four were added by the Director. The original committee consisted of one representative from each of the following:

* State Board of Forestry and Fire Protection
* Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors
* California Department of Parks and Recreation
* California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW - formerly the Department of Fish and Game)

* The Forest of Nisene Marks State Park Citizens Advisory Committee
* The Nature Conservancy
* Soquel Creek Water District
* Neighborhood Representative
* Local Registered Professional Forester

The Committee held monthly meetings during the development of the 1998 General Forest Management Plan. The Advisory Committee became inactive following the approval of the 1998 Plan. The Advisory Committee reconvened in 2011 to provide input on updating the Plan. Most of the groups listed above continue to be represented on the Committee. However, the Soquel Creek Water District removed itself from the Committee and the State Park Citizens Advisory Committee has been disbanded. The latter groups have been replaced with representatives from the Stewards of Soquel Forest and from the Resource Conservation District of Santa Cruz County. Each member serves a three-year term or until the General Forest Management Plan updating process is completed (whichever is longer). Once these conditions have been met, one third of the members' terms shall expire on the last day of each year. Following the approval of the updated Plan, the group will meet twice a year or as needed to review progress on plan implementation and contribute to on-going planning activities.

SAFETY

The remote and rustic character of SDSF makes safety an important management consideration. Forest visitors need to be informed of safety issues and hazards inherent to the Forest. Roads, trails, and facilities are maintained in safe condition. The staff coordinates with local CAL FIRE Emergency Command Center, the Loma Prieta Volunteer Fire and Rescue, the county Sheriff's Office, and other agencies and groups for emergency medical response. Forest personnel, including volunteers, are trained in first-aid; permanent Forest personnel maintain certification as Emergency Medical Responders. Additionally, search and rescue organizations are allowed to train in the Forest so as to develop their skills and better acquaint themselves with the terrain.

The following safety protocols are currently in place:

* Restriction and regulation signs are posted at Forest entrances. Hazards, safety issues, and the primitive nature of the area are stated on signboards and in the SDSF brochure.

* The staff works with the California Department of Parks and Recreation to provide trail maintenance, safety, and coordinated emergency response along the common boundary.

* All trails, roads, and emergency helicopter landings are regularly inspected and maintained. Fallen trees and other hazards are removed as needed to maintain safe conditions.

* Motorized vehicles owned by the public are prohibited beyond designated parking areas. Exceptions are made through special permission and for management, patrol, and emergency purposes.

* Coordination with CAL FIRE's Emergency Command Center in Felton and the county Sheriff's Office ensures effective emergency response in the Forest. All responses for emergency assistance will be recorded and compiled, including calls for police, fire, medical, or search and rescue services (see to Appendix C).

* Volunteers from the Stewards of Soquel Forest and the SDSF chapter of the International Mountain Bike Association provide trail maintenance and patrols, assistance to forest visitors, and support for emergency response.

LAW ENFORCEMENT

Forest regulations and policies are posted on signs and enforced through patrol and citation of violators (also see the Resource Protection Chapter). CAL FIRE peace officers, authorized under the California Penal Code, will be used to detain violators, with local law enforcement agencies providing backup when necessary. The CDFW wardens will enforce fishing, hunting, and trapping laws. Apprehension and prosecution of violators shall be actively pursued. Violators will generally be cited and expected to appear in court, but may be taken into custody if warranted. Methods to prevent illegal activities and alternatives which curtail unwanted behavior will be explored and developed to reduce law enforcement problems.

State Forest trespass violators will normally be cited under sections of the California Code of Regulation (Title 14). Illegal trespass includes removal of trees without a permit and parking, camping/campers, or building in the Forest.

Marijuana cultivation in the Forest has been relatively minor. Since the dedication of the Forest, the remnants of nine old gardens have been found and four active gardens have been eradicated. The general inactivity of marijuana cultivation is due in part to the majority of the Forest being south of the East Branch of Soquel Creek with a northern exposure. Furthermore, SDSF is inaccessible by vehicles and, therefore, is not readily available for use.

Detection of marijuana gardens will occur during normal patrol activities or as leads are developed. Most detection efforts will depend on flights by the Santa Cruz County Sheriff's Marijuana Eradication Program. Information about gardens found in SDSF will be referred to the Sheriff's Office.

ACCESS NEEDS

As stated in the Soquel Demonstration State Forest Recreation Study Final Report (McNally

and Hester, 1993) and the Recreation Chapter, Forest access is a significant problem and complex issue. The inability of the public to drive to the Forest when county roads are closed and trespass across private property to and from the Forest are challenges.

The SDSF property came into state management with two verified legal access routes (see the Roads and Other Improvements Chapter for more details). The first is an administrative and public right-of-way through the Burch property off Highland Way. The second is across CHY Company property, through the Olive Springs Quarry, which includes a right-of-way for administrative use only.

Many visitors come in via Ridge Trail from The Forest of Nisene Marks State Park. Some recreationists, particularly equestrians, have permission to pass through private property to enter the Forest. The public's use of Comstock Mill Road is prohibited due to neighbors' opposition.

There is an obvious need to develop improved access into the State Forest, particularly along the south and west ends where most trespassing occurs. It is important to provide Forest visitors with additional safe and legal access in order to reduce trespass onto private property. Furthermore, alternative access points are necessary when landslides close Highland Way and/or Eureka Canyon Road.

LAND ACQUISITION PRIORITIES

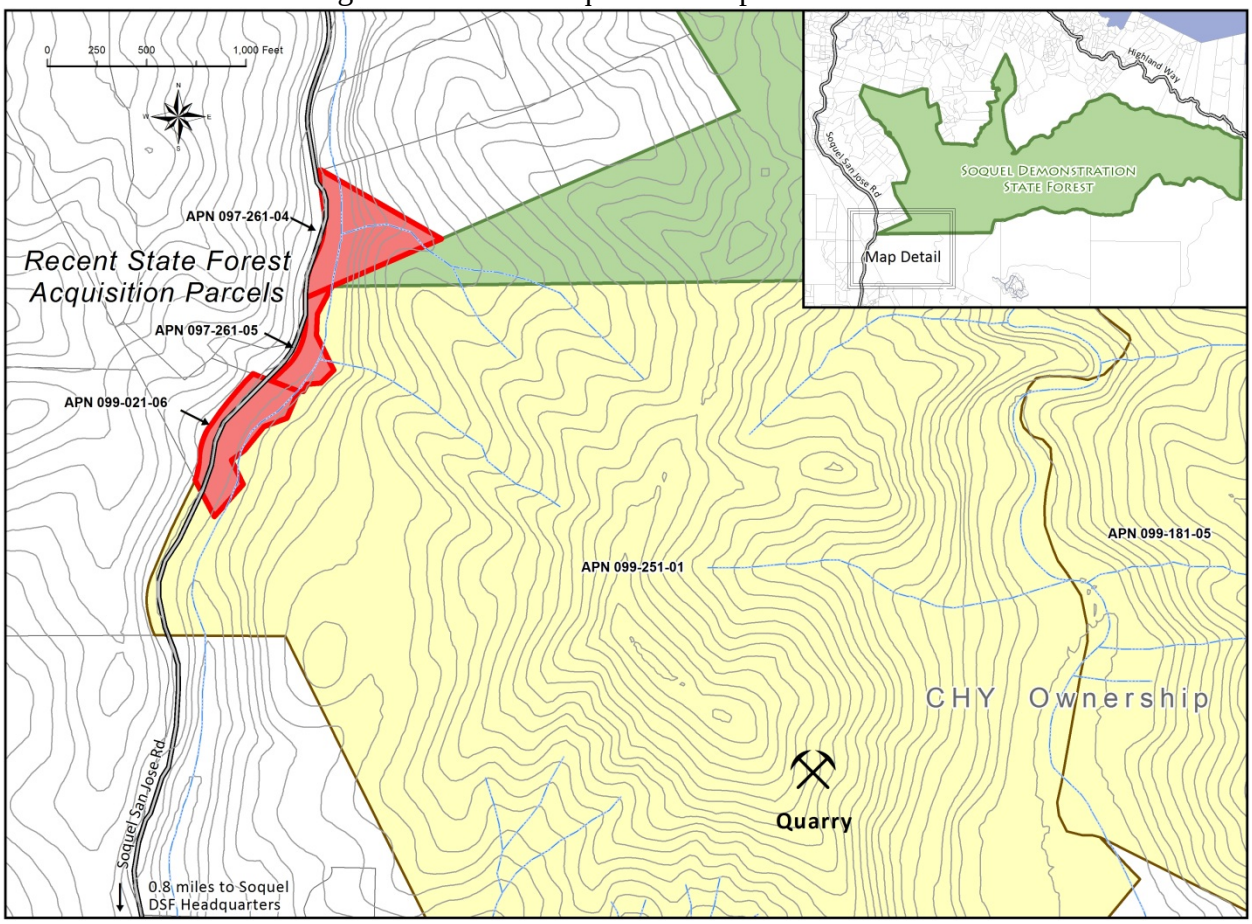
Land acquisition to improve access to SDSF is a top priority. This has been actively pursued since the dedication of the Forest. Negotiations with various neighboring property owners regarding appropriation and/or easements have been ongoing. Parcels formerly owned by the Noren family were purchased in 2005. These parcels make up about 9.5 acres and are shown on the Acquisition Map (Figure 4). The State acquired the properties for the express purpose of providing an improved access to SDSF in anticipation that successful negotiations with the CHY Company would eventually add the other key piece needed for this access. This parcel is adjacent to the Noren properties and would provide a suitable road alignment into the SDSF ownership, as well as a site for the Forestry Education Center and other facilities (see the Demonstration and Education Chapter for more information).

Another potential acquisition parcel is the Burch property which contains the entrance to the Forest (see Figure 2 in the Property Description Chapter). The benefits of this procurement would include access control, additional areas for resource management and recreational visitor use, and a location for an informational kiosk and restroom. There would also be clear authority and responsibility for maintenance of and improvements to the bridge, roads, and parking area.

Other options for improving public access aside from direct land purchases will be considered. These could include purchase or trade of rights of way or easements, lot line adjustments or land trades. Any land acquisitions funded by timber harvest revenues from SDSF shall be limited to those which improve access to SDSF or otherwise directly enhance

SDSF. All acquisitions for SDSF will comply with CEQA.

Figure 4. Recent Acquisition Map for SDSF.



COOPERATION WITH ADJACENT LANDOWNERS

As the previous CAL FIRE Director, Harold Walt, indicated at SDSF's dedication ceremony in 1990, it is important for SDSF to cooperate with their neighbors. Forest staff will continually work with the community regarding local issues. These issues include but are not limited to fire prevention, trespass, watershed impacts, fisheries restoration in the East Branch of Soquel Creek, mitigation of recreational and timber harvest impacts, emergency response and invasive species management. SDSF staff works with local schools in forestry education and also coordinates fire prevention programs with the local CAL FIRE Unit.

COOPERATION WITH OTHER AGENCIES AND INSTITUTIONS

SDSF cooperates with other agencies in resource protection, fire prevention and suppression, law enforcement, and safety. Cooperation is also encouraged for demonstration, forestry education, and university research projects. Other agencies that work with SDSF include the California Department of Parks and Recreation, California Department of Fish and Wildlife,

California Geological Survey, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Southwest Fisheries Science Center, National Marine Fisheries Service, US Fish and Wildlife Service, US Geological Service, the County of Santa Cruz, and the Resource Conservation District of Santa Cruz County. Cooperative institutions of learning and research include UC Santa Cruz, Cabrillo College, California Polytechnic State University at San Luis Obispo, San Jose State University, UC Berkeley, UC Cooperative Extension, Washington State University, West Valley College and local public schools.

THE FOLLOWING PUBLIC COMMENTS WERE RECEIVED DURING REVIEW OF THE 1998 GENERAL FOREST MANAGEMENT PLAN

Public comments and concerns involving the administration of SDSF have largely been focused on the issue of safe and legal access but have also touched upon the FRIF program and Advisory Committee composition.

Suitable public access into SDSF is a major concern for neighbors, users, and Forest staff. As previously stated, there is an obvious need to develop adequate entry and exit points and to stop illegal trespass. Several individuals have made specific requests regarding the location of access points, usually focusing on the area from Olive Springs Quarry to Comstock Mill Road. However, neither end is owned or controlled by the state and only administrative access is allowed. SDSF will continue working with its neighbors and on potential access acquisitions to alleviate this complex and pressing issue.

During the process of establishing SDSF and creating the General Forest Management Plan, questions regarding the purpose and use of FRIF monies have been raised. As required by the Public Resources Code, all revenues from SDSF's timber sales must go into FRIF to be managed and allocated. As part of a state agency, SDSF will adhere to the requirements of FRIF as outlined by law.

Finally, neighbors of the State Forest have expressed that they would like greater representation on SDSF's Advisory Committee. Letters were written to former CAL FIRE Director Richard Wilson by both neighbors and the committee chairman requesting a review of the public's concerns. After a careful and lengthy evaluation, the Director determined that the committee composition was adequate due to strong current local representation.

CHAPTER 5: BIOTA

INTRODUCTION

Biota are defined as the flora (vegetation) and fauna (wildlife) which inhabit a particular area. When people envision forests such as SDSF, biotic elements are what generally come to mind. Biota, however, are only one element of an ecosystem, small pieces of the larger puzzle.

An ecosystem has been defined as "the interacting populations of plants, animals, and microorganisms occupying an area, plus their physical environment" (Hunter, 1990). The physical environment consists of abiotic factors such as soil, water, space, and climate. The presence and actions of humans make up a yet another component of ecosystems. Though humans often consider themselves to be separate entities, at a basic level they are part of the biota and are intricately connected to everything in an ecosystem. When biotic, abiotic, and human components of a forest ecosystem are working together in dynamic balance, diverse biota and healthy forests are attained. (Dynamic balance refers to the continual interaction of ecosystem components which leads to a balanced yet constant state of change.) In real life, there are rarely clear boundaries between adjacent habitat communities or even ecosystems. Ecosystems and habitats blend and overlap but can be given a label based on general wildlife, vegetation, and location features. Management planning for ecosystems or habitat communities which looks at landscape patterns caused by this overlap can benefit all inhabitants, whether they be stationary (e.g., plants) or mobile (e.g., animals).

Prescribed fire plays an important role in reducing fuel loads, recycling nutrients and sustaining plant communities. Prescribed burning has been a tradition, ritual and tool since prehistoric times in the Santa Cruz Mountains and has shaped the environment that we see today. Many species and habitats have become rare due to the suppression of fire. By conducting prescribed burns under controlled conditions, hazardous forest fuels are reduced which limits the risk of a catastrophic wildfire while at the same time providing for ecological benefits. Further discussion about prescribed burning is discussed in the Resource Protection Chapter.

In this chapter, the biota are described for each habitat type, or community, found in the Forest. Only the most common plants and animals found in these communities are mentioned, but complete flora and fauna lists are located in Appendix B. For a detailed account of the biota of SDSF, refer to Preliminary Biological Assessment of Soquel Demonstration Forest, Santa Cruz County, California (Holland et al., 1992). For specific information about trees (size, abundance, etc.), see the Timber Management Chapter. Fisheries resources are described in a separate chapter.

HABITAT COMMUNITIES

Communities consist of the living organisms collectively found in an ecosystem (Hunter,

1990). Even though considerable overlap often occurs, communities are individually labeled and classified for research, inventory, and education purposes. They are generally named for the dominant plant species within each community. The dominant plant species is dependent on specific environmental conditions (e.g., soil, climate, water) that further characterize the community. Because communities overlap, plants indicative of one habitat type may be found in others. Poison oak, for example, can be found growing in virtually all of the communities of SDSF but is most abundant in drier habitat types. Also, some fauna considered to be permanent residents of a particular community actually travel through several communities. These animals, including large mammals (deer, bobcat, gray fox, mountain lion), can be found throughout SDSF as they search for food, water, and shelter.

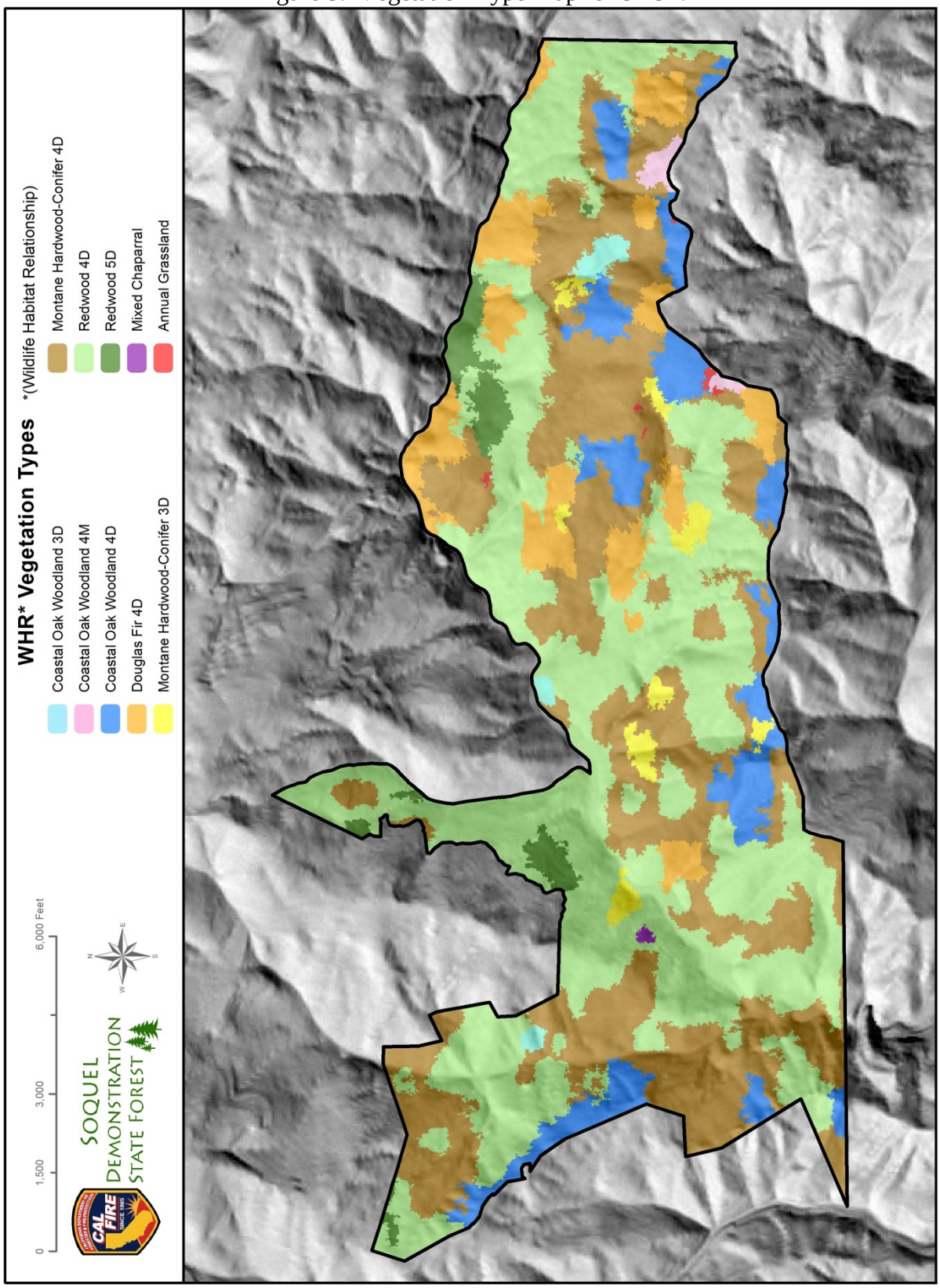
In 2006, a timber inventory was completed which gathered tree data on plots located on a grid layout. This data was analyzed along with digital image segmentation and aerial imagery to classify the vegetation using the California Wildlife Habitat Relationship (CWHR) habitat classification system. Using this protocol six CWHR habitats were classified on SDSF. These are by order of abundance; Redwood, Montane Hardwood-Conifer, Coastal Oak Woodland, Douglas-fir, Mixed Chaparral and Annual Grassland. The CWHR system further classifies each type by the amount of canopy closure. The amount and extent of tree canopies are used in the CWHR system to help predict which wildlife species may be supported by these ecosystems. On SDSF there are Moderate (M) density (40% to 59% canopy closure) and Dense (D) (60% to 100% canopy closure) density classes. The CWHR system then further categorizes by the average tree size classes. On SDSF the size classes correspond to 3 (pole size, 6 to 11 inches diameter at breast height), 4 (small tree size, 11 to 24 inches diameter breast height) and 5 (medium/large tree size, greater than 24 inches diameter breast height). Figure 5 displays these types with their corresponding locations and acreages.

Table 2. Key to California Wildlife Habitat Relationship Vegetation Type Codes.

SDSF CWHR Vegetation Types		
CWHR Classification	**Average Tree Size (inches dbh[4])**	**Canopy Closure (%)**
Coastal Oak Woodland 3D	pole size (6 - 11)	60 - 100
Coastal Oak Woodland 4M	small tree size (11 - 24)	40 - 59
Coastal Oak Woodland 4D	small tree size (11 - 24)	60 - 100
Douglas-Fir 4D	small tree size (11 - 24)	60 - 100
Montane Hardwood-Conifer 3D	pole size (6 - 11)	60 - 100
Montane Hardwood-Conifer 4D	small tree size (11 - 24)	60 - 100
Redwood 4D	small tree size (11 - 24)	60 - 100
Redwood 5D	Medium/large tree size (>24)	60 - 100
Mixed Chaparral		
Annual Grassland		

[4] Diameter at breast height

Figure 5. Vegetation Type Map for SDSF.



COAST REDWOOD FOREST COMMUNITY

The coast redwood forest is dependent on areas of high moisture and comprises about 1,229 acres of SDSF. In its northern range in California, large continuous stands of redwood are formed. Southern redwood forests are restricted to moist canyon slopes and riparian zones since more moisture is available in these areas. As its name suggests, the dominant tree of this community is coast redwood, the majority of which in SDSF are second growth (regrowth after original clearcutting). Small groves of old-growth redwoods occur at Badger and Sulphur Springs, and individual old-growth redwood trees are scattered throughout the Forest. Other common trees of this community are tanoak, Douglas-fir, and madrone. Understory species found in the redwood community of SDSF are redwood sorrel, California hazel, wild ginger, and western sword fern. Common wildlife residents include pygmy nuthatch, Steller's jay, and Trowbridge's shrew. The redwood community provides nesting habitat, cover, and food for birds and a variety of small mammals. Redwood forests have comparatively little forage value for deer and other large mammals, however, limiting use of this habitat type.

MONTANE HARDWOOD-CONIFER COMMUNITY

This forest community is dominated by both conifers and hardwoods, often in a closed canopy. About 969 acres of the Forest are categorized as Montane Hardwood-Conifer. Primary tree species include Douglas-fir, Shreve oak, and redwood; and to a lesser extent madrone, California bay-laurel, black oak, and big leaf maple (Holland et al., 1992). Montane Hardwood-Conifer forests are on the drier slopes above the redwood community, though the two overlap considerably. Also included in this community are stands with significantly more Douglas-fir which are classified as CWHR Douglas-fir and compose about 214 acres.

Common understory species include poison oak, California blackberry, vetch, toyon, and yerba buena. Familiar wildlife species are Merriam's chipmunk, dusky-footed woodrat, western gray squirrel, California slender salamander, acorn woodpecker, sharp-shinned hawk, and screech owl. Evidence of feral pig activity is also found throughout the community. Oak trees located in these areas have very high value for wildlife, providing both nesting and roosting substrates and a food source through acorn production.

Some stands in this community historically supported a more significant conifer component than exists today. These stands failed to regain the original species distribution following intensive harvesting during the 1930s and 1940s. These stands are dominated by tanoak and Shreve oak. Understory vegetation is typically minimal except for occasional conifers where canopy openings permit (See the Timber Management Chapter for additional hardwood management discussion).

COASTAL OAK WOODLAND COMMUNITY

The Coastal Oak Woodland community is composed primarily of hardwoods and covers

about 262 acres. These hardwood stands appear to be long dominated by a combination of coast live oak, Shreve oak, and tanoak. They occupy sites less favorable to conifers. As with the Coast Redwood and Montane Hardwood-Conifer communities, other hardwoods such as madrone, bay-laurel and black oak are also present. These stands include large senescent oaks with unique structural features beneficial to wildlife. Acorn production is important to many species, especially as winter range. Understory species are similar to the Montane Hardwood-Conifer community. Any management activities conducted in these stand types will be conducted solely for long term maintenance. Management activities may include selective harvesting of hardwoods for fuelwood as well as tree planting where conditions are favorable for increasing the diversity of species and stocking. Several research opportunities exist in the Coastal Oak Woodland Community especially related to Sudden Oak Death Death (*Phytophthora ramorum*) and other hardwood specific pathogens. See the Research Chapter for information on hardwood research projects.

RIPARIAN COMMUNITY

Riparian communities are named for the intermittent or continual presence of fresh water rather than the vegetation of such areas. Riparian communities are located along the edges and floodplains of streams or surrounding lakes. In SDSF, an abundant riparian community exists along the floodplain of the East Branch of Soquel Creek and to a lesser degree along Amaya Creek. This community is dominated by deciduous hardwoods such as white alder, bigleaf maple, black cottonwood, and California sycamore. Along with these trees, red and yellow willows grow in dense clumps along the banks of the East Branch. Horsetails and hedge nettles are common ground cover along the edges. Wildlife residents include vireos, warblers, Pacific-slope flycatcher, long-tailed weasel, and raccoon. Pacific newts, brown-colored salamanders with bright orange bellies, are abundant in the riparian community and a great delight to young forest visitors. The Pacific tree frog, thought to be common, is only found in a few locations (Holland et al., 1992). Additionally, large colonies of ladybug beetles gather along creeks to overwinter and breed.

Riparian communities are the most productive and resilient terrestrial habitat type for wildlife because of structural diversity and the presence of water. Many migratory songbirds are dependent on riparian habitat for breeding and foraging. Large mammals use the riparian zone as a water supply, and incorporate it into their home ranges. The riparian community is probably the most significant habitat type in the Forest due to its high value to wildlife and limited regional occurrence.

OTHER COMMUNITIES AND ADDITIONAL SPECIES

There are a few other limited communities present in SDSF. Freshwater marshes are areas where the soil stays wet the majority of the year, supporting characteristic vegetation. These marshes usually occur along the perimeter of ponds, at springs, near shallow pools of streams, or in areas of high water tables. The freshwater marsh community in SDSF is scattered, including only Amaya Pond and a few natural springs (Sulphur, Badger, and a couple of small, unnamed springs caused by or increased from the Loma Prieta earthquake).

Wildlife residents include migratory waterfowl, great blue heron, black phoebe, belted kingfisher, and garter snakes.

Approximately four acres of SDSF are comprised of grassland and mixed chaparral communities. Some of the grassland areas are natural, due to soil conditions conducive to permanent grassland establishment. Other grassland areas are the result of past disturbance. SDSF's grasslands primarily contain wild oats and annual fescue grasses. Most grasslands are being encroached upon by coyote brush, lupine, poison oak, and Douglas-fir. Common wildlife residents of the grasslands are the gopher snake and Botta pocket gopher.

There is one significant chaparral stand located in the Longridge Road area on the south facing slope above Soquel Creek. Chaparral species are also found mixed in the Montane Hardwood-Conifer and Coastal Oak Woodland vegetation types along the exposed ridge tops and on south-facing slopes at higher elevations. These dry locations support the fire-adapted woody shrubs of manzanita, buck brush, coyote brush, and chamise. Common wildlife residents are Bewick's wren, California towhee, scrub jay, western fence lizard, and brush rabbit.

FUNGAL RESOURCES

A local mycological organization has identified a wide variety of mushrooms in the Forest (refer to Appendix B). Fungi are broken into three categories based on their relationship to the immediate environment: mycorrhizal, saprophytic, and parasitic. Saprophytic fungi occur on wood that is already dead whereas parasitic fungi attack and can kill live trees. The most common fungi found in SDSF are mycorrhizal.

Mycorrhizal species form a symbiotic relationship with the trees they grow under. These organisms grow around the rootlets and collect water and trace nutrients for use by trees. The trees in turn provide carbohydrates to the fungi. Trees and mycorrhizae, therefore, depend on one another for optimum health. According to a representative of the Fungus Federation, SDSF is a reasonably healthy forest because of the wide occurrence of mycorrhizal fungi (Nathan Wilson, personal communication, 1993).

In general, mycological research of California's wildlands has been minimal, particularly regarding conditions conducive to fungi growth. SDSF provides ample opportunities for mycological research including fungi population analysis and succession of fungal species in the Forest. To protect the fungal resources of SDSF, a permit system for mushroom collection is maintained that prohibits any collection for commercial purposes.

FERAL PIGS

Since the establishment of SDSF, feral pigs (*Sus scrofa*) have been observed throughout the Forest. Feral pigs are an introduced species and are present throughout the Santa Cruz Mountains. Their populations shift from year to year based on weather patterns and forage availability, and seem to be transient between the Forest and the surrounding areas. The pigs

are a problematic species because they can cause damage and/or alter the Forest's native communities. They frequently wallow in soft soil and wet, marshy areas which can contribute to sediment in watercourses and disturb flora and fauna that use these habitats. Their rooting/foraging behavior often damages roads and encourages invasive plant species. Feral pigs also aggressively defend themselves and under certain conditions may pose a threat to Forest users. In the past, the Forest has received calls about damage done to neighboring properties because of the belief that the feral pigs reside in SDSF. Requests were made for increased monitoring and management of the feral pig population.

The population is managed through the California Department of Fish and Wildlife's (CDFW) Wild Pig Depredation permitting process. When increased pig activity is noted during patrols (rooting along roads, tree damage, wallowing at sumps and ponds), depredation permits are issued.

CORVIDS

Corvids are birds from the genus *Corvus*, and in the Santa Cruz Mountains include common species such as crows, ravens and jays. Unlike many other bird families, corvid fitness and reproduction increase with human development. Corvids are especially significant in the Santa Cruz Mountains because they are major predators on eggs and chicks of the endangered marbled murrelets. Large populations of corvids are frequently associated with campgrounds in forests where unnatural foodstuffs are found. Big Basin State Park, a nesting site for murrelets, works specifically to contain trash and food at campgrounds as well as inform the recreating public about the sensitivity of nesting murrelets. Corvid populations are unlikely to be higher in SDSF than in the surrounding privately managed timberlands. Camping is not allowed on a regular basis at SDSF and visitors are expected to pack out all trash. Signs are posted to pack your trash and Forest staff makes a great effort to pick up any trash left behind in the parking area on a regular basis. Marbled murrelets have never been detected at SDSF, although the old-growth stand near Badger Spring is considered suitable habitat for the species. Surveys were conducted in 2003 and 2004 by biologist David L. Suddjian, and no murrelets were detected on any of the surveys.

INVASIVE SPECIES

Invasive species control is an ongoing process at SDSF. Forest staff along with Ben Lomond Conservation Camp Crews and volunteers log hundreds of person hours each year to reduce and control French broom. The primary method to reduce invasive species (predominantly French broom and jubata grass) has been a continuous mechanical removal approach by pulling plants and roots or cutting stems. Other control methods such as herbicide applications and flaming have not been employed extensively, however more efficient and cost effective approaches will be considered. Herbicide use is part of the overall invasive species control program and efforts to control large continuous infestations of French broom with herbicides began in 2013. Combining hand-pulling with herbicide spraying every other year has proven effective for controlling French broom on Santa Cruz Water District properties.

Efforts will be made to control existing invasive plant populations, reduce opportunities for further spread of existing species, and prevent the introduction of other species not currently present on SDSF. During the preparation of the Fern Gulch THP, a botanical survey was conducted where 24 non-native species were identified which are representative of species found throughout SDSF (Table 3). Approximately half of the species identified are considered a high priority for control.

Many non-native plant seeds prefer bare mineral soil to germinate. Preventing the establishment of new or expansion of established populations is emphasized through THP mitigations that minimize soil disturbance and the amount of exposed mineral soil following operations. Additional project mitigations include avoiding the introduction of weedy grasses into project areas, avoiding the use of invasive seeds for erosion control, and using only certified weed-free straw (preferably rice straw) for mulching to prevent erosion. Short-lived cereal crops like barley and rye have been used for erosion control locally in Santa Cruz County and have not been found to be invasive.

Table 3. Invasive exotic plant species occurring at SDSF.

Common Name	Scientific Name
*French Broom	*Genista monspessulana*
*Periwinkle	*Vinca major*
*Poison hemlock	*Conium maculatum*
*Jubata Grass	*Cortaderia jubata*
*English Ivy	*Hedera helix*
*Eupatory	*Ageratina adenophora*
*Subterranean clover	*Triflorium subterraneum*
*Italian thistle	*Carduus pycnocephalus*
*Italian ryegrass	*Lolium multiflorum*
*Forget me not	*Myosotis latifloria*
*Bermuda buttercup	*Oxalis pes-capre*
*Orchard grass	*Dactylis glomerata*
Bull thistle	*Circium vulgare*
Cutleaf geranium	*Geranium dissectum*
Rough cat's-ear	*Hypochaeris radicata*
Common chickweed	*Stellaria media*
Field bindweed	*Convovulus arvensis*
Broadleaf fleabane	*Conyza sumatrensis*
Spiny sowthistle	*Sonchus asper*
Soft chess	*Bromus hordeaceus*
Bur-Chevril	*Anthriscus caucalis*
Sticky chickweed	*Cerastium viscosum*
Fiddle dock	*Rumex pulcher*
Olive	*Olea europaea*

* The survey botanist recommended these species have the highest priority for control.

PLANT SPECIES OF CONCERN

The California Natural Diversity Data Base (CNDDB) was queried on May 10, 2010 to collect information on listed species and species of concern known to occur in the Laurel quadrangle that contains the Soquel Demonstration State Forest. A total of eight plant species are state and/or federally listed as threatened or endangered. In addition, six plant species are categorized as CNPS (California Native Plant Society) List 1B. The plants of List 1B are rare throughout their range with the majority of them endemic to California. Most of the plants of List 1B have declined significantly over the last century. List 1B plants constitute the majority of the plants in CNPS' Inventory with more than 1,000 plants assigned to this category.

All of the plants constituting List 1B meet the definitions of Sec. 1901, Chapter 10 (Native Plant Protection Act) or Secs. 2062 and 2067 (California Endangered Species Act) of the California Department of Fish and Wildlife Code, and are eligible for state listing. These species must be fully considered during preparation of environmental documents.

A nine quad search of processed CNDDB data, centered on the Laurel quadrangle identified 48 plant species. One plant species is CNPS List 1A, 32 are CNPS List 1B, and 15 are federal and/or state listed as threatened or endangered. Although there is no suitable habitat for most of these taxa on Soquel Demonstration State Forest, the number of species listed provides a rough indicator of the extent of plant species of concern in the general vicinity of the State Forest (see Appendix B for a list of plant species known to occur at SDSF).

SPECIAL-STATUS WILDLIFE SPECIES

Although the biological assessment of the Forest conducted in 1991-92 found no threatened or endangered plant or wildlife species, this is not the case today. The Central California Coast (CCC) coho salmon Evolutionarily Significant Unit (ESU) was federally listed as threatened in 1996 and relisted as endangered in 2005. In 2012 the range of CCC coho was extended south to include Soquel and Aptos Creeks. Coho salmon south of the San Francisco Bay were listed as endangered under the California Endangered Species Act in 1995. Steelhead within the CCC Distinct Population Segment (DPS) were federally listed as threatened in 1997. See the Fisheries Chapter for more information about the status and recovery plans for coho and steelhead.

The California red-legged frog has been found on the Forest and is federally listed as threatened. Additionally, a few wildlife species of special concern to the State of California have been seen in SDSF (Holland et al., 1992 and CDF, 1994). Those species observed were the foothill yellow-legged frog, western pond turtle, sharp-shinned hawk, Cooper's hawk, and golden eagle. The long-eared owl and yellow warbler may also occur in the Forest, but they have not been observed. Suitable breeding, nesting, or foraging habitats exist in the Forest for all species observed except the golden eagle.

The Laurel quadrangle CNDDB query for animal species indicates the occurrence of two

federally listed endangered insects and two federal or state listed threatened and endangered fish species. In addition, one amphibian is federally listed as threatened and one amphibian, one reptile, and one mammal species are presently California Department of Fish and Wildlife Species of Special Concern. See Table 4 for further information.

THE FOLLOWING PUBLIC COMMENTS WERE RECEIVED DURING REVIEW OF THE 1998 GENERAL FOREST MANAGEMENT PLAN

A major focus in the management of SDSF's biota involves species evaluation and monitoring, particularly for special status species. Comments have largely focused on fauna though concern about edge vegetation and introduced plant species has been expressed. As stated in the Management Guidelines and Planned Actions below, SDSF plans to monitor selected biotic elements of the Forest and evaluate effects of forest management activities on the condition of those resources.

Another primary concern is the restoration of degraded habitats and maintenance of exceptional resource values in SDSF. Emphasizing this concern are comments regarding management of habitats individually (e.g., manage riparian habitats separately from mixed evergreen habitats) and management activities which allow interior forest species to thrive. Many commenters feel that development and management of SDSF should be performed in such a way that biotic resources are preserved or improved. The Management Guidelines and Planned Actions deal with these issues as well.

Finally, input has been received regarding the desire for details on exactly how SDSF will manage and maintain its biotic resources. Since this management plan is intended to be general, specific information on the what, how, why, and when of SDSF management activities will be outlined in other formats. More specific management strategies will be developed for different areas and habitats based on anticipated management endeavors and research and monitoring results.

Table 4. Special-status vertebrate fish and wildlife species occurring or with potential to occur at Soquel Demonstration State Forest.

SPECIES	LEGAL STATUS[a] FEDERAL/STATE	HABITAT	OCCURRENCE IN SDSF[b]
American peregrine falcon	/FP	Nests in cliffs, forages in a variety of habitats	4
Merlin	/WL	Wintering only, frequents open habitats	2
Marbled murrelet	T/E	Nests in old-growth conifer forest; forages in pelagic habitats	4
Golden eagle	BCC/FP	Nests in cliffs and trees in forests and woodlands; forages in grasslands, shrublands, and chaparral	2
Osprey	--/WL	Nests in snags and spike-top trees; forages in open water	2
Cooper's hawk	--/WL	Nests and forages in woodlands and forests; also forages in open habitats	2
Sharp-shinned hawk	--/WL	Nests and forages in conifer forest habitats	1
Long-eared owl	--/CSC	Nests and forages in riparian and woodland habitats	2
Olive-sided flycatcher	--/CSC	Tall conifers used for nesting, perching; Forages over open/low vegetation	2
Purple martin	--/CSC	Nests and forages in woodland and forest habitats in tree cavities	4
Vaux's swift	--/CSC	Nests in large tree cavities with a preference for redwood and Douglas-fir habitat	2
Black swift	--/CSC	Nests on cliffs, steep rocky outcrops, canyons near water	2
Yellow warbler	--/CSC	Nests and forages in riparian habitats	2
Foothill yellow-legged frog	--/CSC	Occurs in streams with rocky substrate	2
California red-legged frog	T/CSC	Occurs in slow-moving streams, pools and ponds	2
Western pond turtle	--/CSC	Occurs in pools, ponds, and lakes	2
Steelhead (Central CA Coast ESU)	T/CSC	East Branch Soquel Creek	4
Coho salmon(Central CA Coast ESU)	E/E	East Branch Soquel Creek	3
Pallid Bat	--/CSC	Buildings, rock outcrops	3
San Francisco dusky-footed woodrat	--/CSC	Forested habitats of moderate canopy and moderate to dense understory	2

a Status codes:
Federal: T = threatened, E = endangered, P = proposed for listing as threatened or endangered, BCC = bird of conservation concern USFWS
State: CSC = species of special concern, T = threatened, E = endangered, WL = watch list, FP = fully protected
b 1 = confirmed nesting/reproduction, 2 = observed, 3 = not observed, 4 = unlikely to occur

Table 4 Sources:
Jones and Stokes Associates, Inc., 1996
California Department of Fish and Game Special Animals List, July 2009
California Department of Fish and Game State and Federally Listed Endangered & Threatened Animals of California, January 2010
California Department of Fish and Game, California Natural Diversity Database, Laurel Quadrangle, May 10, 2010

MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

1. Ongoing monitoring will be performed to detect listed and special status species. Monitoring will include keeping current with state and federal lists as well as conducting periodic floral and faunal surveys. Inventories will emphasize special-status species expected to be present but not yet observed in SDSF. New findings will be added to current species lists. Every consideration will be given to protecting these species and their habitat as required by law and determined by a qualified biologist.

2. Old-growth trees will be protected as outlined in SDSF's authorizing legislation, AB 1965. Areas of old-growth redwood have been located and protection will be provided in all phases of forest management. Additionally, areas have been designated to promote late-succession stands of trees (see the Timber Management Chapter for more details).

3. Restore, maintain, or enhance resource values of native habitat communities to promote natural diversity and stability. Measures to achieve this include:

    * snag recruitment and retention
    * preservation of appropriate logs and other woody debris
    * maintenance of natural ponds and springs
    * protection of riparian zones for use as movement corridors for wildlife

4. Achieve mutual benefit with timber harvesting, demonstration and education, and recreation programs while respecting native biotic elements. Wildlife habitat improvements, such as those mentioned in Management Guideline 3 above, will be considered during the planning and implementation of timber sales, demonstration and education activities, and recreational facilities. Conversely, possible impacts of present or future wildlife and vegetation management projects on other management objectives will be studied prior to project approval and implementation.

5. Control and/or eradication of exotic invasive plant species utilizing Integrated Pest Management techniques will be incorporated into management activities, as appropriate. Ben Lomond Conservation Camp crews are utilized for hand pulling and cutting. Forest volunteers also help with the removal of invasive plants. Additional

efforts including herbicides and/or flaming[5] will be employed where and when appropriate.

6. Control mushroom collection by issuing permits for scientific, educational, and personal use. Mushroom gathering for commercial purposes is prohibited.

PLANNED ACTIONS

1. Encourage researchers to study wildlife habitats, populations and unique characteristics at SDSF. Continue to support the UC Santa Cruz Puma Project and the newly developed herpafauna survey efforts; both are described further in the Research Chapter.

2. Examine the California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB) reports during project planning and incorporate measures into all project development and monitoring processes for all known species as well as special status species that may be present. Submit CNDDB Field Survey forms to CDFW for any sightings of listed, rare or special status species.

3. Conduct preharvest and post-project surveys to identify active nest sites of all raptors and special-status bird species that may occur in the Forest. Those species that may occur in SDSF are Cooper's hawk, sharp-shinned hawk, long-eared owl, and yellow warbler. In addition, preharvest surveys will be conducted for California red-legged frog, foothill yellow-legged frog, and southwestern pond turtle.

4. Continue to evaluate the feral pig situation, and develop management strategies and actions to diminish existing problems.

5. Continue to build the inventory of old-growth trees across SDSF (further described in the Old Growth section of the Timber Management Chapter).

6. Continue to use mechanical methods for controlling invasive species with Ben Lomond Conservation Camp Crews and volunteers each year. Use additional follow up treatments to improve effectiveness, such as herbicide application or flaming where and when appropriate. Extra effort will be concentrated on new populations prior to them becoming established and producing seed banks.

7. Conduct biological assessments incrementally in new project areas. These will

[5] Flaming uses a propane torch to kill plants when they are very small by applying heat. This method is very effective for controlling weeds such as broom, is faster and cheaper than pulling, and is more selective than herbicide use. This method can be safely used without risk of fire hazard during periods with cool temperatures and high vegetation moisture levels in the targeted vegetation.

include results of CNDDB reports, botanical surveys, and other site specific assessments.

CHAPTER 6: FISHERIES

INTRODUCTION

Approximately 7.5 miles[6] of fish-bearing streams flow through SDSF, including the East Branch of Soquel Creek (5 miles), Amaya Creek (2 miles), and Fern Gulch Creek (0.5 miles). The East Branch currently provides valuable steelhead trout spawning and rearing habitat and could provide essential habitat to promote reintroductions and recovery of coho salmon. Based on the amount of stream miles within SDSF and the high potential for ecological restoration of lost or degraded habitat components such as instream complexity and floodplain connectivity, SDSF provides a unique opportunity to support recovery of this invaluable fisheries resource.

RANGE AND LEGAL STATUS: STEELHEAD TROUT AND COHO SALMON

The fishery resources of greatest concern in SDSF are the steelhead trout and coho salmon. Anadromous fish such as steelhead and coho spawn (mate and lay eggs) in freshwater creeks or rivers but spend most of their adult lives in the ocean.

Historically, coho salmon spawned in coastal streams from the Bering Sea of the Arctic and the coast of Japan to the Monterey Bay in California. The steelhead's range extended further to the north coast of Baja California. Steelhead and coho populations have been declining throughout their entire range, both in fresh and salt water, for decades due to a number of factors including habitat loss and fragmentation in freshwater systems. In California, numbers decrease from north to south, with the southernmost population of steelhead and coho at the greatest risk of extinction. This is particularly important since Soquel Creek and Aptos Creek represent the southernmost watershed along the Pacific Coast with recent confirmed observations of coho salmon. While the Soquel Creek watershed is within the range of steelhead and coho, there has been a considerable decline in numbers for both species, with coho observations limited to a few individuals in 2008.

Legal Status: Steelhead

While steelhead were technically removed from the genus *Salmo* nearly 40 years ago and incorporated in the genus *Oncorhynchus*, they are often still referred to by their traditional common name steelhead trout. For the purposes of this document, we will simply refer to the species as "steelhead". The genus and species for steelhead is *Oncorhynchus mykiss*. It should be noted that steelhead are genetically identical to rainbow trout with the fundamental difference between the two fish having to do with life history. While steelhead are anadromous and move between the ocean and freshwater, rainbow trout are year-round residents in freshwater and do not migrate to or from the ocean. Steelhead within Soquel

[6] According to the Soquel Creek Salmonid Assessment and Enhancement Plan (Alley, 2003) fish migration barriers exist in Fern Gulch up 382 feet from the confluence with Soquel Creek and partial barriers exist on Amaya Creek at 2,091 feet, 2,181 feet and 3,886 feet from the confluence with Soquel Creek.

Creek are part of the Central California Coast (CCC) Distinct Population Segment (DPS) and were federally listed as Threatened under the Endangered Species Act in August of 1997. The CCC DSP stretches from the Russian River in the north to Aptos Creek in the south. As such, Soquel Creek is near the southernmost portion of the range of this DPS. Steelhead from the Pajaro River south to the Santa Maria River are within the South Central California Coast (SCCC) DPS and are considered to be a different genetic population. The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), which is charged with protection of federally listed anadromous fish, is in the process of developing a recovery plan for the CCC steelhead and the draft plan is expect to be released to the public in early 2014. According to Jon Ambrose (pers com) of NMFS, plan recommendations will closely overlap with the recommendations put forth in the recently published CCC Coho Recovery Plan (NMFS, 2012). The steelhead plan will provide additional details and recommendations for recovery of steelhead within this DPS and, in conjunction with the coho plan, can be used to identify and guide recovery actions on SDSF. While steelhead are not technically listed under the California Endangered Species Act, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW and formerly the California Department of Fish and Game) issued the 1996 "Steelhead Restoration and Management Plan for California" in an effort to focus conservation actions on the protection of this species. Finally, CDFW also develops an annual "Statewide Steelhead Task List" to support and guide funding actions through the Fisheries Restoration Grants Program (FRGP).

Legal Status: Coho

Coho salmon within Soquel Creek belong to the CCC Evolutionarily Significant Unit (ESU) of the species. This ESU was first listed under the Federal Endangered Species Act as Threatened in October of 1996 (Federal Register, 1996) and then relisted as Endangered in June of 2005 (Federal Register, 2005). At the time of listing, the ESU extended from Punta Gorda in the north to the San Lorenzo River in the south. In March of 2012, the NMFS extended the southern range of the ESU to include Soquel and Aptos Creeks. This decision was based on, "observations of coho salmon in Soquel Creek in 2008, genetic analysis of tissue samples indicating that the fish from Soquel Creek were closely related to nearby coho salmon populations in the ESU, and the ecological similarity of Soquel and Aptos creeks with other nearby creeks that support coho salmon" (Federal Register, 2012). Coho salmon south of the San Francisco Bay were listed as endangered under the California Endangered Species Act in 1995. California Fish and Game Commission extended the range of the listing designation north to Punta Gorda, Humboldt County in 2005.

Both the State and Federal governments have developed recovery actions for this species. The Recovery Strategy for California Coho Salmon was adopted by the California Fish and Game Commission in February 2004. The primary objective of the Recovery Strategy is to return coho salmon to a level of sustained viability, while protecting the genetic integrity of the ESU. For the Big Basin Hydrological Study Unit, of which Soquel is a part, the key recovery recommendations focus on protection of instream flows, upgrading of culverts for fish passage and mobilization of Large Woody Debris (LWD), and implementation of high priority restoration actions for coho from watershed plans. NMFS published the "Final CCC Coho Recovery Plan" in September of 2012 and this plan provides specific data and recovery

recommendations for Soquel Creek. The plan identifies SDSF as a recovery partner for restoration actions in the East Branch of Soquel Creek, including Amaya Creek, which are considered core areas for species recovery. The Plan calls for a recovery target of 1,122 returning adult coho and highlights the following five high priority immediate restoration actions:

- Delineate reaches possessing both potential winter rearing and floodplain areas
- Implement a long term study project in Soquel Demonstration State Forest to demonstrate effective LWD projects to citizens of Santa Cruz County
- Promote conjunctive use of water for water projects whenever possible
- Provide incentives to water rights holders willing to convert some or all of their water rights to instream use
- Re-establish a naturally reproducing run of coho salmon

LIFE HISTORY AND HABITAT USE

As anadromous fish species, both steelhead and coho utilize freshwater for mating/spawning, egg development and early maturation and move to the ocean for a period of rapid growth and weight gain prior to returning to freshwater to spawn. The life cycle begins with the development of eggs into young fish in freshwater streams. Once the eggs hatch, young fish develop in the watercourse and gradually make their way to the ocean. Steelhead trout in this area typically spend two years in fresh water, although a few may spend additional years inland before migrating out to sea. The length of time spent in streams depends on environmental and genetic factors, and some individuals never migrate (Barnhart, 1986). Research by Smith (2005) suggests that one of the key environmental factors may be food supply and growth. According to these data, size is a critical factor in determining when a juvenile steelhead will leave freshwater, and once juveniles reach approximately 3.5 inches in forklength by the fall, they tend to out-migrate the following spring. While growth in freshwater habitats in SDSF may require at least two years due to slow growth rates, steelhead growth can increase substantially in food rich lagoon environments like the Soquel Lagoon (Alley 2011).

In order to acclimate to saltwater, both steelhead and coho go through a process of smoltification prior to entering the ocean and juvenile fish leaving freshwater are referred to as smolts. Steelhead and coho along the California coast usually spend two years in salt water, attaining sexual maturity and storing fat for their journey back up their natal streams to spawn and restart the life cycle process. While females of both species and most males spend two years in the ocean, a portion of male coho, called jacks, are known to return to freshwater after one year in the ocean. Due to the abundance of food, anadromous fish species experience most of their growth once they have reached the ocean. Therefore, jacks are generally identified due to their smaller size and weight.

While there are many similarities in the life cycle for these species, there are some key differences that should be highlighted. These include:

- Timing of adult return to freshwater and spawning- Coho are known to return to their natal streams in the southern portion of the ESU between November and January with the height of spawning peaking in February and March (NMFS 2012, from Moyle, 2002). Steelhead spawners generally return to their natal streams later in the winter and spawn through April or May depending on climatic conditions.
- Juveniles freshwater rearing- Whereas steelhead often spend multiple years as juveniles in freshwater, the vast majority of juvenile coho salmon spend only one year in freshwater before going to the ocean. As such, coho smolts are generally younger and smaller than most steelhead smolts.
- Post spawning adults - While coho adults always die following spawning, some steelhead adults can return to the ocean after spawning and may repeat that cycle to spawn up to four times, though most repeat spawners do so only twice.

The basic stream attributes for steelhead and coho spawning, rearing, and migration include cool water temperature, high concentrations of dissolved oxygen, adequate water depth, sufficient pool space, and low sediment levels (Barnhart, 1986 and Anderson, 1995). Riparian habitat also provides a favorable microclimate for amphibians. Riparian vegetation also stabilizes streambanks and can play a major role in either supporting or degrading habitat for these fish. Riparian zones are strips of water-loving vegetation and associated organisms that follow the path of watercourses. Essential to healthy aquatic ecosystems, these zones help maintain favorable water quality and provide important food and habitat conditions. Trees along the water's edge shade the water, maintaining cool temperatures for anadromous fish spawning and rearing, as well as maintaining ground cover that intercepts eroded materials from upslope, minimizing the amount of sediment that enters the stream. Additionally, vegetation adds food and nutrients to the water for use by both fish and aquatic invertebrates. Large woody debris falling into the water provides cover for fish, collects and controls the movement of sediment, and creates deep scour pools favored by rearing juveniles.

Water temperature is a critical habitat component that can have dramatic effects on growth and development of steelhead and coho. A complication to understanding the effect of temperature on salmonids is that food availability is the key variable that governs how water temperatures affect fish. While both salmonid species have mortality thresholds with respect to water temperature, higher water temperatures do not always directly relate to lower growth and productivity. Water temperatures above 21.1ºC (70°F) make it difficult for coho salmon and steelhead to extract oxygen from the water. Optimal rearing temperatures for juveniles are 7.22-14.4ºC (45-58°F) for steelhead and 11.67-14.4ºC (53-58°F) for coho (Ligon et al., 1988). Temperatures between 14ºC and 21ºC (57°F and 69.8°F) may have a positive impact on growth if there is ample food supply to keep up with the increased metabolic demand of fish caused by higher water temperatures. Conversely, temperatures at and below the lower end of optimal can slow metabolism significantly and result in muted growth rates, translating to lower ocean survival rates.

Table 5 provides details linking fish life stage with habitat requirements. All of these habitat conditions need to be considered when working to restore, maintain, or enhance anadromous

populations. Data from the NMFS 2012 CCC Coho Recovery Plan highlight the need to prioritize restoration actions that increase the extent and availability of "off-channel" habitats such as floodplains, backchannels, alcoves and tributaries. The Plan also calls for implementation of projects that increase the amount of LWD in the stream. Both LWD and off-channel habitats are particularly important for coho, but also valuable to steelhead, for providing refuge to adult and juvenile fish during high flows in the winter and low flows in the summer. LWD aids in the sorting of stream bed materials. In the winter, when flashy flows result in high instream velocities, off-channel habitats and LWD can provide slow water sheltering areas for fish of all sizes. During the summer, deep pools formed through scour downstream of LWD provide salmonids with cool water refuge and cover from predation. Perennial off-channel habitats such as ponds, alcoves and back-channels can provide some of the highest quality summer rearing habitat with high levels of primary productivity and insect production.

LOCAL FISH POPULATIONS

Anadromous fish populations in Soquel Creek and along most of the Central Coast have declined significantly since the late 1960s. While steelhead declines have been significant, the 2012 CCC Coho Recovery Plan sums up the status of CCC coho as, *"... gravely close to extinction. Despite being listed under the Federal and California Endangered Species Acts, populations of CCC coho salmon continue to decline precipitously. Immediate and focused action is essential to increase the survival of, and provide the highest protection for, remaining populations (NMFS, 2012)."*

While there are scant data on coho population numbers in Soquel Creek over the past 50 years, there is a significant body of archaeological data that indicates the historic range of this species extended as far south as the Pajaro River and possibly the Salinas River. In addition to natural runs, we also know that coho salmon were planted into the East Branch of Soquel Creek in the 1930s originating from the Brookdale, Big Creek, Prairie Creek and Fort Seward hatcheries (Anderson, 1995). Coho salmon were thought to be extinct in Soquel Creek in the 1990s and most of the first decade of this century, until a small population of juvenile fish was observed in 2008 near the entrance of Hinckley Creek below SDSF. For the purposes of the Final CCC Coho Recovery Plan (NMFS, 2012), these juvenile coho form the basis of the estimate of two adults in Soquel in 2008 (i.e., at least one spawning pair of coho were in Soquel for these juveniles to exist). Genetic analysis of tissue samples indicates that the 2008 coho salmon in Soquel Creek were closely related to nearby wild coho salmon populations in the ESU.

Table 5. Habitat Requirements and Vulnerability by Each Salmon Life Stage (NMFS, 2012).

Eggs: Incubation requires clean water, free of contamination and siltation. Disturbance of a single "red" (nest of eggs) could result in the death of thousands of salmon embryos.	**Freshwater Streams**
Alevins: After hatching, alevins remain nestled in the small spaces between the gravels, and feed from their attached yolk sacs. They are highly vulnerable to siltation and scour. Once the yolk is absorbed, the young salmon emerge from the gravels.	**Freshwater Streams**
Juveniles: Deep cool pools are critical for the summer rearing juvenile's survival. Riparian vegetation helps support some of the insects consumed by juveniles, provides cover from predators (when recruited to streams can create wood-formed pools), and limits solar radiation to streams keeping water temperatures cool. Tree roots stabilize streambanks and create habitat structure. Large woody debris or downed wood creates cover and refugia for the tiny salmon to reside during high velocity flows. Pools and wetlands provide shelter from high flows, predators, and help filter sediments from the water column.	**Freshwater Streams**
Smolts: Juvenile salmon undergo a physiological change known as "smoltification" enabling them to transition, in estuaries or lagoons, for a life adapted to saltwater. Smoltification can occur primarily within the freshwater areas, or in the nearshore environment. Smolts need adequate flow from upstream rearing areas to be able to travel downstream to estuaries. Estuaries should provide cover and adequate feeding habitats to facilitate the transition into the ocean. Estuaries should be deep to provide cool temperatures and buffered with freshwater to dilute seawater (Moyle, 2002). The quality of these areas has implications to the survival of smolts entering the ocean environment.	**Freshwater Streams, Estuaries, Lagoons, and Ocean**
Sub-Adults/Adults: Maturation occurs during ocean residency over a two year period leading up to the adult salmon's return to streams of their birth. The patterns of migration in the ocean vary, and shifts in ocean conditions affect food, migration patterns and survival. Fish in the ocean need adequate supplies of food to facilitate rapid growth. As the salmon return to their natal stream to reproduce, they once again undergo change from saltwater to freshwater; they depend on the near shore and estuarine environments for this transition.	**Ocean**
Spawners: Migration begins after heavy late fall or winter rains breach sand bars of coastal streams, allowing fish to move into lagoons (Moyle, 2002). Once the adult spawners arrive at their home river or stream, they need adequate flows, cool water temperatures, deep pools and cover to rest and hide as they migrate upstream. Females seek clean, loose gravel of a certain size in highly oxygenated riffle type flow water for laying their eggs. The site must remain stable throughout egg incubation and emergence, and allow water to percolate through the gravel to supply oxygen to the developing embryo.	**Ocean, Estuaries, Freshwater Streams**

There are significant amounts of data on the historic steelhead populations in Soquel Creek. Soquel Creek was historically considered one of the most important steelhead spawning and rearing streams in Santa Cruz County (Titus et al., 2005). Based on data collected during surveys in 1959, the juvenile abundance in this system corresponded to an adult steelhead run of approximately 500-1,000 spawning pairs or 1,000-2,000 adult fish (Becker and Reining 2008). Alley (2006) calculated adult steelhead population indices for Soquel Creek between 1997 and 2005 as an average of 523, with a range between 360-780 adults. These data were calculated based on estimates of juvenile population size and an application of an adult return model and these estimates are considered the best available data for the watershed.

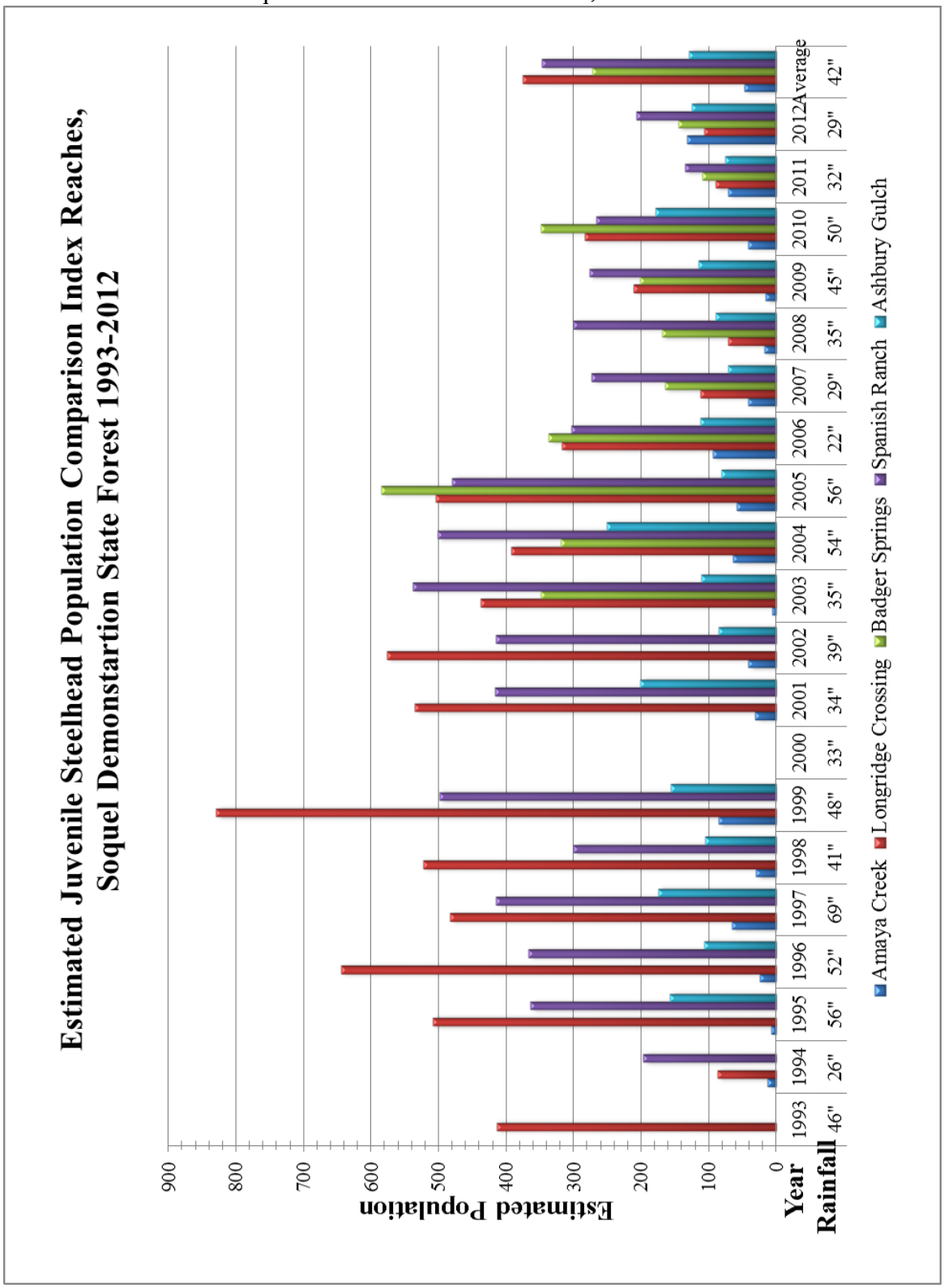
Local fish population inventories along the East Branch of Soquel within SDSF began in 1993 and are conducted annually in cooperation with NOAA's Southwest Fisheries Science Center (SWFSC). This work is conducted by electrofishing at five sites: four on the East Branch of Soquel Creek and one on Amaya Creek (Sogard et al., 2009). The surveys assist with monitoring the fish populations in fish bearing creeks that run through SDSF and also Support research performed by biologists from NOAA's SWFSC to monitor steelhead growth and migration. The graph below (Figure 6) shows a summary of data for the time period 1993 to 2012.

Historic populations of both coho and steelhead throughout most of California were supplemented through much of the 20th century by releases of hatchery fish for commercial or recreation purposes. Principal hatchery production for the Central California Coast steelhead originates from the Warm Springs Hatchery on the Russian River and the Monterey Bay Salmon and Trout Project on a tributary of Scott Creek. The most recent planting of hatchery-raised steelhead in SDSF (i.e., the East Branch of Soquel Creek) occurred in the 1930s when steelhead trout from the Brookdale and Big Creek hatcheries were released in the East Branch of Soquel Creek (M. McCaslin pers. comm.). The Monterey Bay Salmon and Trout Project stocked steelhead annually in the main stem of Soquel Creek (downstream of SDSF) in the 1980s and 1990s. Hatchery steelhead planting was discontinued in Soquel Creek in 2001 because of CDFW's concern regarding genetic integrity of planting fish that originated in the San Lorenzo River stock (Alley, 2001 and 2002).

No production/mitigation hatcheries (hatcheries that produce fish with the goal of increasing recreational and commercial harvest or for mitigation purposes) for CCC coho salmon currently exist. The two hatchery operations in the CCC ESU (noted above) are captive broodstock facilities operated expressly for conservation and recovery purposes with significant oversight by CDFW and NMFS. Coho salmon reared at these two facilities are listed under the Endangered Species Act. In Santa Cruz County the goals of the captive broodstock program include increasing population size, maintaining genetic diversity, and producing sufficient numbers of fish to promote straying into neighboring streams (Sturm et al., 2009).

In order to help protect remaining steelhead trout populations in Soquel Creek, CDFW prohibits angling in the East Branch of Soquel Creek (Fish and Wildlife South Central District Regulation, Title 14, Section 7.00 [e] [4]). This regulation was adopted by the

Figure 6. Estimated Juvenile Steelhead Population Comparison Index Reaches
Soquel Demonstration State Forest, 1993-2012



California Fish and Game Commission in December of 1981 and became effective in March, 1982. In spite of this regulation, poaching of adult steelhead during winter spawning is prevalent and continues to affect fish populations. To avoid adverse impacts of public use on fish in SDSF, Forest staff and CDFW will conduct ongoing patrols to enforce prohibitions on fishing and fish harassment.

Other species of fish within the boundaries of SDSF include the Pacific lamprey, resident rainbow trout (population above Ashbury Gulch), Sacramento sucker, prickly sculpin, and northern threespined stickleback. Additional fish species that could be found in the East Branch include coast range sculpin and California roach.

HABITAT AND RESOURCE CONSIDERATIONS

HABITAT LOSS AND DEGRADATION

The loss of habitat for both winter and summer rearing is thought to have had a significant impact on the anadromous fish populations of the Soquel Creek drainage. Habitat availability and quality has declined due to diversion and overdrafting of water by residents, past logging practices, flood control measures (including LWD removal), increased development along the creek (including vegetation removal), pollution, and naturally unstable hillslopes. These impacts have synergistically increased water temperature and sediment inputs, altered stream flow patterns, reduced habitat complexity, and decreased the amount of surface water during the critical summer months and periods of drought. (See the Watershed Assessment Chapter for details on SDSF's watercourse conditions.)

SDSF comprises about 10% of the watershed area of the Soquel Creek basin. Over the years, the combination of increased sediment and lowered water levels has resulted in a considerable loss of pool habitat and a simplification of the channel throughout the Soquel Creek watershed. Making matters worse, wholesale removal of LWD from the 1950s to the 1990s further exacerbated the loss of pools as well as the disconnection of the channel from many "off-channel" habitats. With systematic removal of LWD, channels tend to incise with the removal of the natural grade control that LWD can create, leading to decreased bank stability/increased bank erosion as well as disconnection from side channels, alcoves, and floodplains that have not experienced the same rate of incision. Since formation of habitat complexity elements like sheltered pools for winter refuge and summer rearing or gravel bars for spawning are directly linked to changes in streamflow velocity (i.e., sediment deposition where water is slow and scour where water is fast), loss of LWD and its natural ability to affect water velocity can result in simplification of the stream, loss of pools and more uniform water velocities. Loss of covered pool habitat and disconnection of off-channel habitats, along with general fresh and saltwater habitat degradation (producing low marine survival rates), are believed to have directly contributed to the nearly complete disappearance of the coho salmon along California’s central coast. Extremely low population numbers make it clear that human intervention and cooperation with recovery actions are essential for coho to become viable again and for existing steelhead populations to rebound (NMFS,

2012). Restoration of overwintering refuge from high water velocities both in the channel and "off-channel", as well as summer rearing habitat, will benefit recovery of both steelhead and coho populations.

The diversion and overdrafting of water are significant problems in the Soquel Creek drainage, especially along its lower reaches. Near the town of Soquel, a portion of the creek has dried up on various occasions, including the summers of 1991, 1992, and 1994. Some residents along the creek use the water for agricultural as well as domestic needs. The Soquel Creek Stream System was formally adjudicated by Decree No. 57081, Superior Court for Santa Cruz County. The Decree was entered March 14, 1977 in Book 2731, page 581 of Official Records. There are water allotment requirements, but the requirements of fish were not considered when maximum amounts for residences and businesses were allocated. Although Soquel Creek was adjudicated, no water master was appointed and no diversion rates were independently measured to confirm that the adjudication is being followed. Because young steelhead (and coho) will move both upstream and downstream as upper portions of streams dry out in the summer, drying of downstream reaches limits available space and foraging areas for the entire population and could limit the ability of juvenile salmonids to gain access to wetted reaches and habitat in SDSF.

Greater public awareness and response regarding value and current status of the aquatic resources of the Soquel drainage are essential for garnering support for implementation of fish-friendly management actions and implementation of ecological restoration projects. Information, education and programs to help residents conserve water, allow the creek to flow in its natural channel, preserve riparian corridors, understand the value of LWD, and prevent accelerated erosion should be pursued. While improving the anadromous fish resource within SDSF is a start, it is not enough because Soquel Creek's fisheries require enhanced habitat conditions along every reach of the watercourse and throughout the watershed.

HABITAT RESTORATION AND ENHANCEMENT

Fish habitat at SDSF will be enhanced through implementation of habitat enhancement projects in conjunction with ongoing timber operations. The NMFS 2012 Recovery Plan for Central California Coast Coho Salmon (NMFS, 2012) recommends increasing the quantity of large wood in the channel as one of the highest priorities for Soquel Creek. In response, a Large Woody Debris (LWD) and Habitat Complexity Project has been designed for the East Branch of Soquel Creek. The proposed project is also part of the Integrated Watershed Restoration Program (IWRP) for Santa Cruz County and designed collaboratively with NMFS, CDFW, CAL FIRE, the California Geological Survey, NOAA’s Southwest Fisheries Science Center (SWFSC), *Alnus* Ecological and the Resource Conservation District of Santa Cruz County. In an effort to collaboratively identify the best opportunities for fisheries habitat restoration along the creeks of SDSF, a group of fisheries scientists, resource specialists, and ecosystem restoration experts from the agencies list above, walked nearly two miles of East Branch in November of 2010 and identified restoration opportunities. The group agreed that these reaches were lacking complexity, that channel incision had left large

areas of floodplain disconnected from the channel, and that SDSF had a unique opportunity to implement an array of different type projects to benefit fisheries. The group identified eight potential project sites and then refined the project list down to five sites. The final project, as designed, entails placing LWD along a 0.7 mile section of the creek in four, 200-foot reaches. Three of the four reaches each contain three LWD elements, and the fourth has one LWD structure. Each element includes one to four pieces of LWD. In order to address the potential of LWD to mobilize and move far downstream, beyond the boundaries of SDSF, the project was designed to use a significant number of trees that are between 1.5 times and two times the width of the streambank and have their rootwads still attached. Between the heavy rootwads and long trunks, restored structures will closely mimic trees naturally falling in the stream due to landslide or bank undercuts and the structures will be unlikely to move a significant distance downstream, even in major storm events. Due to the size of the LWD required for each site (60 feet long or longer and up to approximately 50 inches diameter breast height) and the desire for the project to be a demonstration for private landowners, SDSF excavated 12 riparian redwood trees and dropped the entire tree and roots into the stream. A pilot project to determine the feasibility of this type of activity was successfully implemented in 2012 at one of the four sites. The other three sites were constructed in the late summer/early fall of 2013. Two additional rootwads with 25 foot logs attached were imported from the Fern Gulch timber sale for use in the project area.

Preliminary data from California Geological Survey indicates that the LWD projects at the pilot site have already had a significant effect on channel complexity with pools developing, the channel becoming more sinuous, and gravel bars forming between the wood structures (Reynolds, 2013). A fifth site for this LWD project is a stream bank repair site just east of Hihn's bridge where a fish-friendly revetment system will be installed with rootwads and other components that will serve the dual purpose of repairing the road and providing shelter and pools for fish. This road repair project is scheduled for construction in the late summer of 2014. A long term monitoring plan has been developed by NOAA's Southwest Fisheries Science Center (see Monitoring Section below for more details). Note that the baseline data collection for the monitoring work was funded by the State Coastal Conservancy and will aggregate biological and physical effectiveness data from LWD restoration sites on Soquel Creek at SDSF with those from a site on San Vicente Creek in northern Santa Cruz County.

While these first five sites represent an important start to the process of reversing historic trends in loss of habitat and significant impacts to salmonid populations, a number of other fisheries restoration opportunities have been identified along the East Branch of Soquel Creek in SDSF including two potential sites to reconnect historic backchannels/alcoves and a number of opportunities to enhance and reconnect floodplains. A complete halt to removal and/or cutting of LWD within SDSF is perhaps the lowest cost and most effective action to take to improve conditions for listed salmonids within the Forest. CAL FIRE has the unique opportunity to take the lessons learned from these projects and the related changes in management and work across the landscape with private forest landowners to use THPs and other means to implement additional stream and floodplain restoration projects.

MONITORING

A fisheries resources assessment was completed and used to develop a draft Fisheries Management Plan in 1995 (Berlekamp and Sutfin, 1995). The assessment inventoried the condition of the fisheries population as well as habitat status within SDSF. The management plan includes prioritized improvements, monitoring systems, research opportunities, and funding sources (see Appendix C). Subsequent fisheries assessments in the watershed have been completed by the Santa Cruz County Resource Conservation District (Alley, 2003) and by NMFS (NMFS, 2012).

Fish population inventories began in 1993 and are conducted annually in cooperation with NMFS. This work is conducted by electrofishing at five sites: four on the East Branch of Soquel Creek and one on Amaya Creek. The surveys assist with monitoring the fish populations in fish bearing creeks that run through SDSF and also support research performed by biologists from NOAA's SWFSC to monitor steelhead growth and migration (Sogard, 2009).

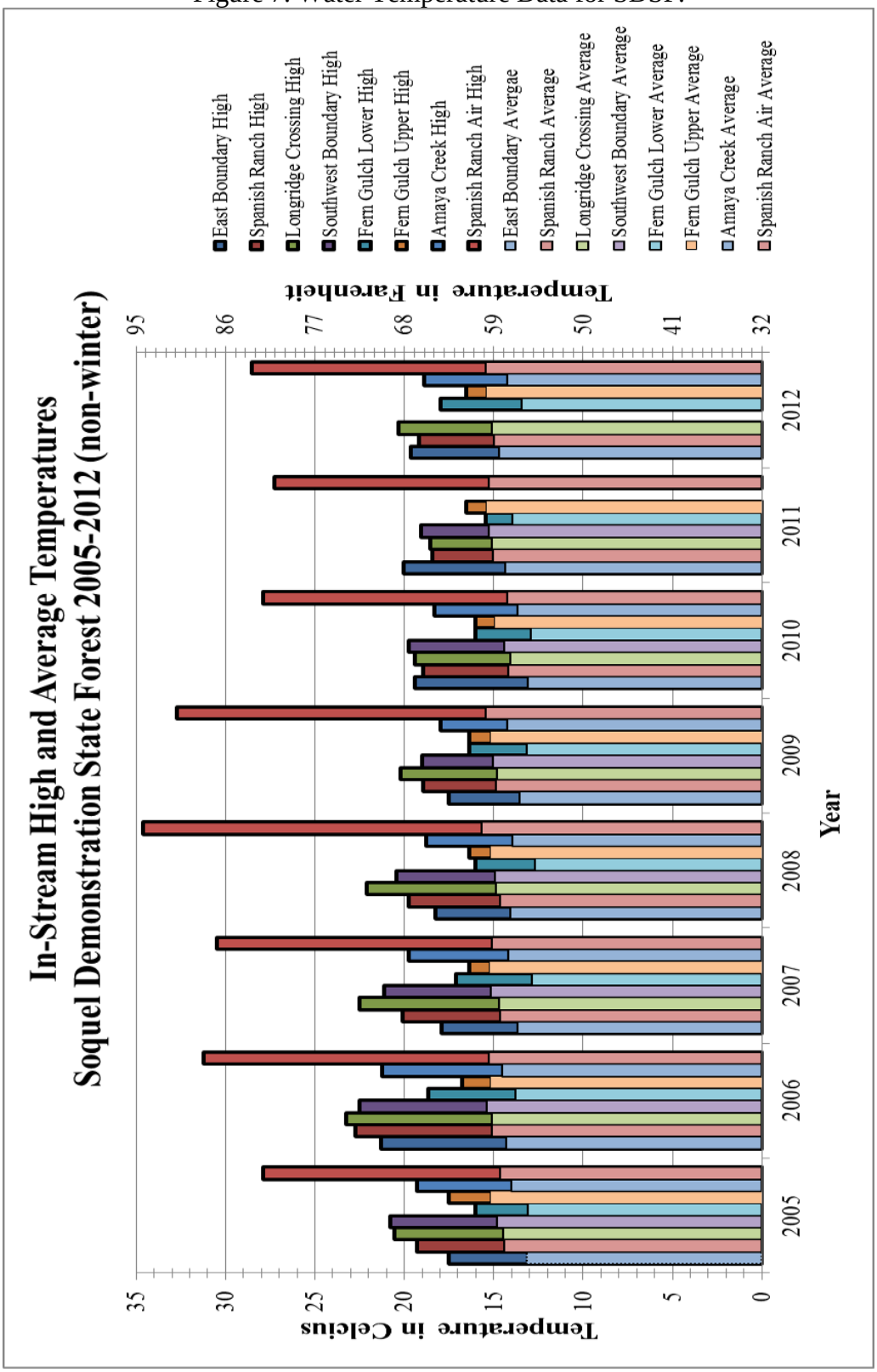
In-stream temperature loggers are installed at seven locations in SDSF to measure and record stream water temperatures throughout the dry season. An additional temperature logger is also installed at one site to measure and record air temperature during the same time period. In 2006, the California Regional Water Quality Control Board for the Central Coast Region released a set of protocols for continuous water temperature monitoring for their timber harvesting water quality waiver program. SDSF's methods are consistent with these protocols. An analysis of the number of days with temperature readings exceeding 21.1°C and 14.4°C provides valuable information for fisheries management in SDSF. No temperatures greater than 21.1 ºC were recorded in 2009 - 2011. In 2008, Longridge Crossing had two days over 21.1°C. Temperatures over 21.1ºC were recorded on 11 days in 2007. Detailed reports and temperature data analysis are compiled annually. The graph below (Figure 7) is a summary of the high temperatures recorded from 2005 to 2012. In 2011, the Amaya Creek logger was defective and in 2012 the Southwest Boundary logger was defective.

AQUATIC INVERTEBRATES

Aquatic invertebrates are organisms that lack an internal skeleton and live in water for at least part of their life cycle. They include insects (e.g., mayflies, stoneflies, caddisflies), crustaceans (e.g., crayfish), mollusks (e.g., snails), and freshwater earthworms. An important component of aquatic ecosystems, aquatic invertebrates are an essential part of the food web. They typically act as indicator species of fishery habitat quality and water pollution.

When tree litter falls into the water, microorganisms such as bacteria and fungi colonize and decompose the coarse particulate organic matter, creating a much more nutritious material. This substance, algae, and other invertebrates become food for invertebrates, which in turn become food for fish. In this way, aquatic invertebrates provide a link in the food chain between decomposers and fish, a connection crucial to fish survival.

Figure 7. Water Temperature Data for SDSF.



In fresh water such as the East Branch, juvenile steelhead feed primarily on immature, aquatic stages of insects, but will also feed on adult terrestrial insects (Barnhart, 1986). Steelhead prefer the larvae of mayflies, true flies (e.g., midges), and caddisflies. They are often opportunistic, however, and may feed on any available insect. Adult steelhead typically do not eat during migration and spawning, instead utilizing energy from fat accumulated while living in the ocean.

Since they function as food, aquatic invertebrates, particularly insects, are key indicators of good fish habitat. In most cases, abundant and diverse species of aquatic invertebrates signify an adequate food supply, increasing the ability of the stream to support larger and healthier populations of fish. Similarly, invertebrates need adequate amounts of leaf litter falling into the stream (therefore, adequate riparian vegetation) and appropriate conditions to support the bacteria and fungi which convert the litter to a usable form. Because of their specific roles and different, species-specific habitat requirements, invertebrates are useful indicators of stream conditions and changes. Through inventory and monitoring the composition of aquatic invertebrate communities, the health of aquatic ecosystems can be carefully evaluated. Regular inventory and monitoring has not occurred at SDSF. Some aquatic invertebrate data have been collected through various CDFW studies, but the data have not been made available. Future plans for studies of aquatic invertebrates are included in the monitoring plan by NMFS for the Large Woody Debris and Habitat Complexity Project. This work would monitor the habitat, including aquatic invertebrates, for the restored sites as well as control sites along the East Branch Soquel Creek.

THE FOLLOWING PUBLIC COMMENTS WERE RECEIVED DURING REVIEW OF THE 1998 GENERAL FOREST MANAGEMENT PLAN

Comments and concerns regarding the aquatic resources of Soquel Creek were numerous and often passionate. Given the condition of California's CCC coho salmon and steelhead resource and the significance of the Soquel Creek watershed, one would expect a great concern for its future. The comments, concerns, and suggestions received as a result of this concern are represented by two major categories.

The first and probably most important concern involves the maintenance and enhancement of fisheries and other aquatic resources within SDSF. Individuals have stated that, at the very least, SDSF should maintain the resources as they currently exist. Additionally, suggestions for improving the habitat and, therefore, the steelhead fishery touched on in-stream improvements and careful logging methods. SDSF will assuredly work to enhance all wildlife resources and habitats, including those of steelhead. Moreover, SDSF is already working with NMFS and intends to continue to be an active partner in recovery of both steelhead and coho in the Soquel Creek Watershed.

The second category of concern is really an extension of the first. Comments related that, in order to maintain and enhance SDSF's aquatic resources, inventories and monitoring of these resources must be performed. Specifically, commentators expressed that biologists familiar with the Soquel Creek watershed should set up and maintain a monitoring system which

tracks the effects of SDSF's management activities on the resource. Strategies to ensure maintenance and enhancement of aquatic organisms could in turn be developed from the results of inventory and monitoring activities. SDSF plans to conduct the activities mentioned above, as well as research and habitat improvement projects, in order to satisfy these concerns (see Planned Actions below).

Consistent with the Anadromous Salmonid Protection Forest Practice Rules approved in 2009, conifers will be planted in riparian zones, in areas where none exist, to promote long-term recruitment of large instream woody debris. These conifers will eventually provide small intertwined pieces of debris, such as branches and twigs, that act as collectors of leaf litter and provide more food for invertebrates.

MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

1. Protect stream channels, streambanks, and riparian zones during all management activities. Late-succession management areas (see the Timber Management Chapter) have been established along all fish-bearing streams and receive specialized management designed to enhance the riparian zone. This will ensure protection of stream integrity, including the channel, bank, and vegetation as well as fisheries resources.

2. Increase the fisheries potential by improving the spawning and rearing conditions of the East Branch of Soquel Creek within SDSF by implementing projects to increase winter high flow refuge, summer rearing, and increase general habitat complexity as well as projects that reduce production of fine sediments.

3. Demonstrate that other forest management activities are compatible with the maintenance of healthy fisheries populations and habitats through educational programs and tours of harvested areas and stream enhancement projects.

4. Help residents of the East Branch watershed learn about the components of a healthy watershed and the importance of stewardship as it relates to LWD management, management of rural roads, and water conservation. Educational programs, either formal or informal, will focus on stream health, riparian zones, and the impacts of human use. Once established, the Forestry Education Center (refer to the Demonstration and Education Chapter) will likely be the setting for these programs, allowing residents and other interested individuals to learn about the significance of aquatic ecosystems.

5. Continue to work with NMFS and CDFW on means and methods to help provide incentives and to facilitate private landowners playing an active role in recovery of threatened and endangered salmonids (e.g., assistance with permitting, including LWD projects as part of THPs, etc.)

PLANNED ACTIONS

1. Implement mitigations through the timber harvesting plan process that benefit anadromous fish.

2. Monitor the Large Woody Debris and Habitat Complexity Project in cooperation with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, National Marine Fisheries Service, California Geological Survey, Resource Conservation District of Santa Cruz County, SWFSC and local qualified biologists.

3. Continue to support aquatic ecosystem research opportunities in the East Branch and its tributaries.

4. Coordinate with the County of Santa Cruz, the Resource Conservation District of Santa Cruz County, National Marine Fisheries Service, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, and other groups to complete habitat restoration and maintenance projects, including installing large wood in Soquel Creek and control of invasive plants. Private groups such as the Monterey Bay Salmon and Trout Project or crews from the Ben Lomond Conservation Camp may help with projects such as channel stabilization, channel complexity and pool creation, retention of existing instream cover via LWD, riparian vegetation maintenance and enhancement, and reconnection of floodplains and off-channel habitat.

5. Restoration and enhancement projects for the Forest will be prioritized based on recommendations in the Soquel Creek Watershed Assessment and Enhancement Project Plan (Alley, 2003), the DFG Recovery Strategy for Coho (DFG, 2004), the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) in their Final Recovery Plan for the Evolutionarily Significant Unit of Central California Coast Coho Salmon (NMFS, 2012), and the forthcoming NMFS Recovery Plan for the Distinct Population Segment of Central California Steelhead. In addition, the Forest will continue dialogue with biologists from NMFS as well as NOAA's Southwest Fisheries Science Center, CDFW and private biologists to identify critical opportunities for restoration and enhancement of fisheries resources. Projects will be implemented over time as funding, equipment, and/or personnel become available.

6. Continue fish sampling in Amaya Creek and the East Branch of Soquel Creek in cooperation with NOAA’s Southwest Fisheries Science Center. Electrofishing will be the primary method but other procedures such as underwater observation may be incorporated. Fish will be evaluated for species, size, health, and location.

7. Continue to monitor in-stream temperatures in the East Branch of Soquel Creek and Amaya Creek at the seven sites that have been established.

8. Build on existing funding from the Integrated Watershed Restoration Program to develop baseline fisheries, macroinvertabrate, water quality, and habitat data prior to

implementation of fisheries restoration projects to assess effectiveness. Aquatic habitat surveys will be conducted in accordance with CDFW methodologies as funding allows.

9. Monitor projects that are implemented in accordance with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife methodologies.

10. Explore opportunities for working with the Monterey Bay Salmon and Trout Project, NMFS, NOAA, and CDFW on the potential to add sites within SDSF to the introduction list for coho from the broodstock hatchery program.

11. Conduct ongoing patrols with the assistance of the California Department of Fish and Wildlife to enforce prohibitions on fish poaching and harassment. Incidents will be recorded, compiled, and evaluated annually to determine significant adverse effects on SDSF fisheries.

CHAPTER 7: WATERSHED ASSESSMENT

PHYSIOGRAPHY OF THE WATERSHED

SDSF is located almost entirely within the drainage of the East Branch of Soquel Creek, its landbase covering approximately 21 percent of the basin. For the most part, the Forest is underlain by fine grained sedimentary rocks that are highly weathered and easily eroded. The headwater channel of the East Branch follows the San Andreas Fault Rift Zone and is heavily disturbed from landslides triggered by earthquake activity. Hillslopes throughout the Forest are commonly steep and prone to large, deep-seated landslides. Even greater instability occurs in active inner gorge zones near stream channels. Mass erosion events (e.g., large landslides) comprise the major component of sediment sources in the watershed.

As stated in the Property Description Chapter, the Soquel Creek watershed (see Figure 8 below) has a Mediterranean climate with cool, wet winters and warm, dry summers. Mean annual precipitation in the East Branch watershed varies from 30 to 46 inches and takes place primarily between November and April. Discharge records from the USGS stream gauging station located immediately upstream from the bridge in the town of Soquel show that the average discharge is 1.05 cubic feet per second per square mile. High intensity, long duration winter storms, however, produce extreme levels of runoff. Major floods occurred during December, 1955 and January, 1982, producing log jams and flooding in the town of Soquel (Lassettre and Kondolf, 2003; see Figure 9). Singer and Swanson (1983) state that Soquel has a chance of being flooded once every seven to ten years.

Since 1996 streamflow has been measured at a gauge on the East Branch of Soquel Creek just below the Olive Springs Quarry. This gauge and the data are maintained by the Soquel Creek Water District. The watershed area above the gauge is 13.9 square miles and includes essentially the entire SDSF area (a very small percentage of SDSF drains to Hester Creek). Data from this gauge have been coupled with data from a permanent rainfall gauge located just outside the Forest on Longridge Road and are represented on Figure 10 below.

BENEFICIAL USES

The two main beneficial uses of the East Branch of Soquel Creek are cold water fisheries and water supplies for various purposes. The East Branch supports spawning and summer rearing habitat for coho salmon and steelhead trout, but the number of returning fish has declined significantly in the past 40 years (refer to the Fisheries Chapter). For example, in 1982 steelhead populations were only one-third to one-quarter of what they were thought to have been in the 1960s (Singer and Swanson, 1983). Coho salmon were thought to be extirpated from the Soquel Creek basin since 1968 (SCCRCD 2003, NMFS 2012), but 170 young-of-the-year fish were documented during surveys conducted in a stream reach below SDSF in August 2008. The major factors limiting anadromous fish populations are believed to be low summer flows, and limited rearing habitat due to siltation of pools and removal of woody debris. Large wood loading, floodplain connectivity, and estuary function were listed

Figure 8. Soquel Creek Watershed Map.

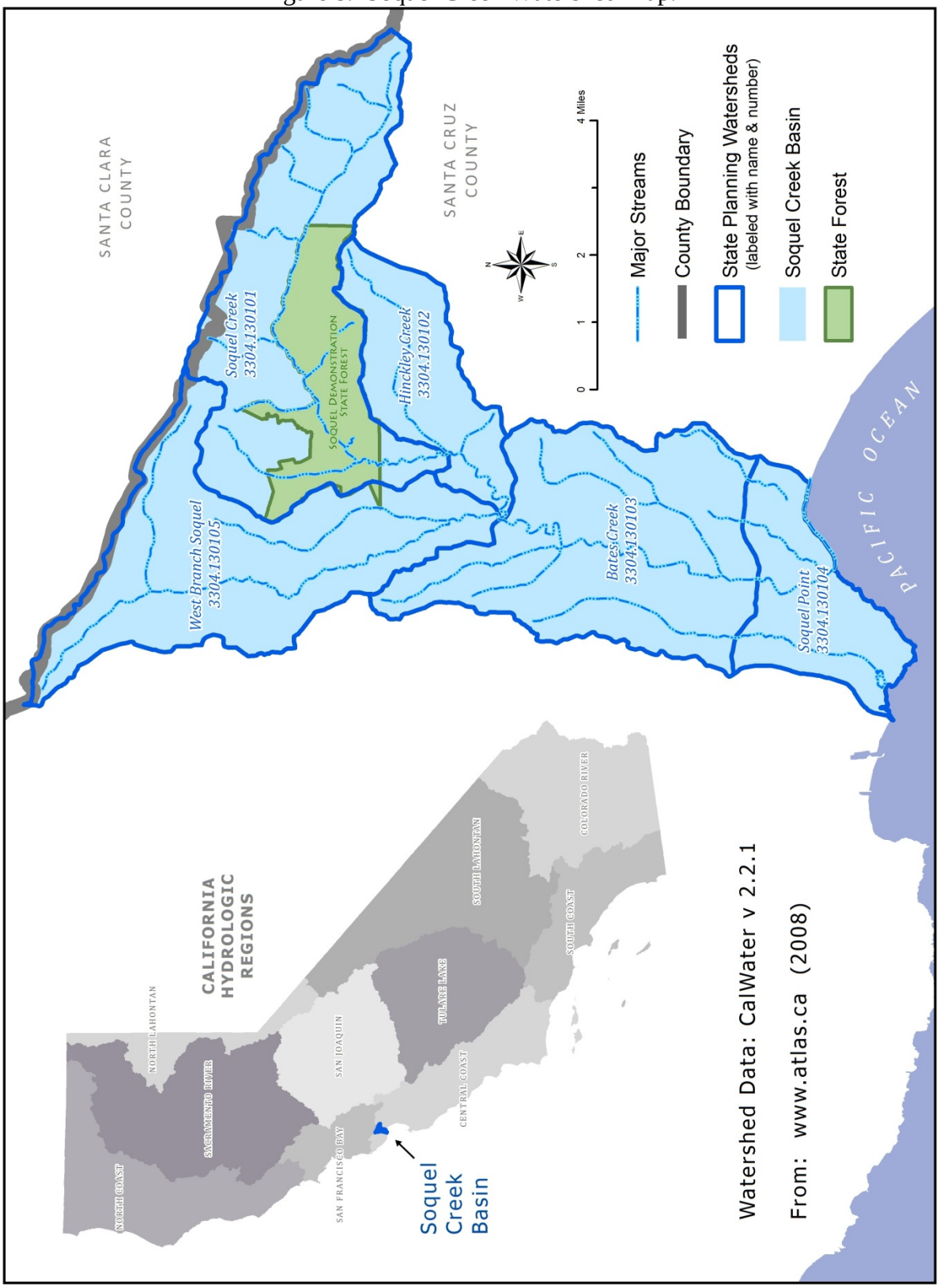
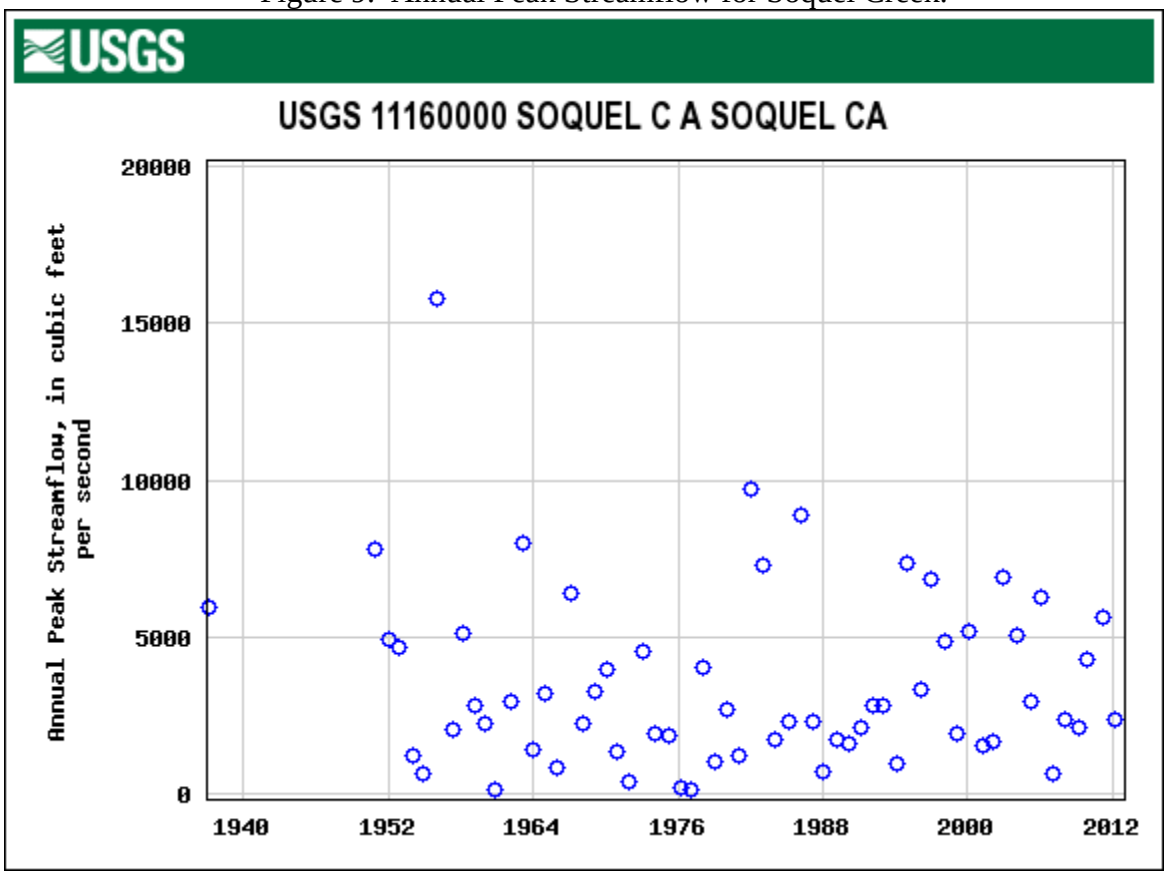


Figure 9. Annual Peak Streamflow for Soquel Creek.

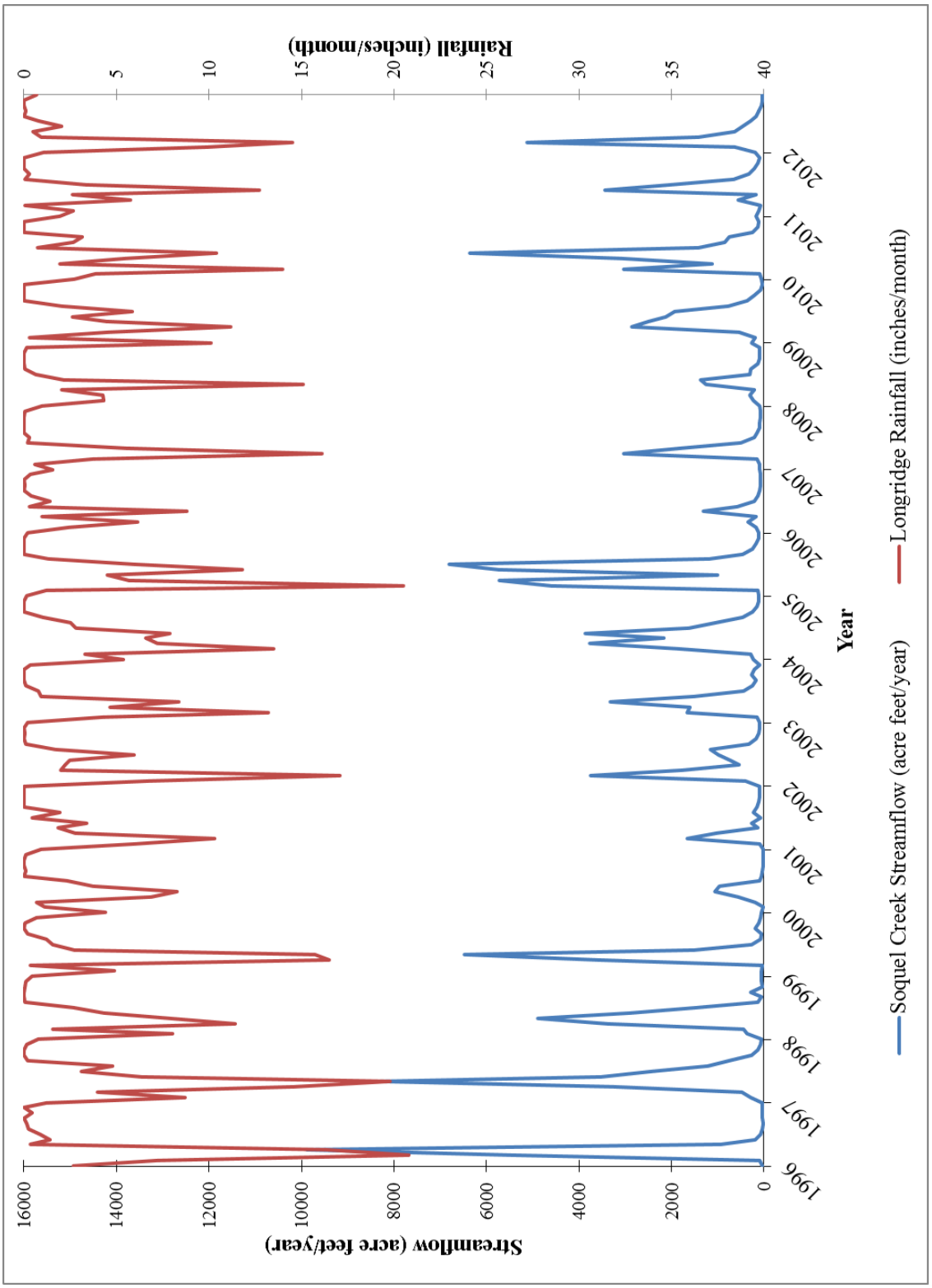


as poor for the Soquel Creek watershed in the Central California Coast (CCC) coho salmon recovery plan (NMFS, 2012). Soquel Creek and Aptos Creek are considered to be the southernmost extent of coho salmon in California.

The other primary beneficial use in the main stem of Soquel Creek is water supply. There are eight dams in the Soquel Creek watershed that impede or block anadromous salmonid migration (NMFS, 2012). Additionally, numerous small diversions exist that provide water for domestic, agricultural, and industrial purposes. Two permitted domestic water supply systems exist in the main Soquel Creek watershed that utilizes surface flow, but there are no permitted systems utilizing surface water in the East Branch basin. The East Branch Soquel Creek watershed assessment conducted in 1993 reported that there were six surface water diversions in the East Branch basin (Cafferata and Poole, 1993). The largest diversion in the East Branch is operated by the Olive Springs Quarry.

Diversions and overdrafting of groundwater in low discharge summer months have dewatered portions of the East Branch stream channel during drought years. This is likely to be a critical limiting factor for the fisheries resource in the lower part of the basin. Soquel Creek is a fully adjudicated stream under Decree No. 57081. After complaints by the city of Capitola in 1988, the State Water Resources Control Board concluded that a watermaster was needed to effectively regulate water use under low flow conditions, particularly during

Figure 10. – Rainfall and Streamflow for East Branch of Soquel Creek.



drought years, due to the complicated interrelationships of the water rights on Soquel Creek (Cafferata and Poole, 1993). To date, however, no watermaster has been appointed (Alley, 2004).

LAND USE HISTORY

The major types of land use in the East Branch watershed are timber management, recreation on public land, vineyards, and residential development. The East Branch watershed's long history of timber harvesting began with clearcutting in the 1870s and continued into the 1940s. Timber was originally removed by oxen (1870-1895), then by steam donkey (1895-1930), and finally by crawler tractor. Following World War II, selective harvesting replaced clearcutting, continuing to the present day. Currently, nearly all of the old-growth timber has been harvested except for minor reserved groves and widely scattered suppressed trees. Second-growth harvesting has taken place on approximately 961 acres over the past 10 years (2003-2013) within the 9068 acre Soquel Creek Watershed. In recent years, cable yarding has been used along with tractor logging to selectively harvest timber in the basin. Approximately twenty percent of the Soquel Basin has never been harvested as it is in chaparral.

Recreation in the form of hiking and mountain biking takes place primarily in The Forest of Nisene Marks State Park and SDSF (SDSF also allows horseback riding). Additionally, adjacent property owners often allow friends and neighbors to utilize their lands as an access route to the park or SDSF. The Olive Springs Quarry, located near the East Branch channel, has produced sand and gravel from granitic rock exposed along the Zayante Fault since the 1950s. Residential development has occurred in the chaparral communities and has steadily expanded over the past 40 years. Over the whole Soquel Creek watershed, housing development is rated as moderate to high, with approximately 7,000 housing units present in the basin. Residential and commercial development is considered a very high threat to coho salmon (NMFS, 2012).

CUMULATIVE WATERSHED EFFECTS ASSESSMENT

Cumulative watershed effects (CWE) can be defined as the physical and biological impacts that result from multiple land use disturbances over space and time. These impacts occur within and away from the locations of actual land use and are transmitted through the fluvial system. When considering CWE, it is appropriate to estimate how current and future projects, when combined with impacts from past activities, will influence beneficial uses present in the basin under review. Techniques to determine whether CWE are significantly adversely impacting beneficial uses have been developed, but are generally considered to be inadequate for varying reasons. Existing CWE assessment approaches mostly range from checklists or indices that are subjective but inexpensive and simple, to complex physically based models that have large data needs and are difficult to apply (Litschert, 2009).

Watershed analyses and assessments are often used to evaluate cumulative watershed effects. For example, Berg et al. (1996) found that watershed analysis was the most suitable approach for assessing cumulative watershed effects in the Sierra Nevada. While a formal watershed analysis has yet to be completed for the Soquel Creek watershed, several watershed assessments and studies have been completed over the past 30 years that contribute a considerable amount of information regarding cumulative watershed effects. These studies include: Singer and Swanson (1983), Cafferata and Poole (1993), Santa Cruz County Resource Conservation District (2003), Alley and Associates (2003, 2004), Balance Hydrologics (2003), Greening Associates (2003), Pacific Watershed Associates (2003), and Lassettre and Kondolf (2003). Cafferata and Poole's rapid landscape-level watershed assessment for the East Branch of Soquel Creek was conducted in 1992 and 1993. It is described below in considerable detail. Since specific harvest units had not been defined, the entire Forest served as the project area for this assessment. CWE assessment guidelines suggest that assessment areas must be large enough to detect past impacts and small enough to determine what the impacts of the proposed projects will be on the area. This assessment completed for the East Branch watershed evaluated the current condition of stream channels in the basin and determined how they would likely be altered with future timber operations.

The watershed assessment for SDSF was broken down into two main tasks: a stream channel inventory and a hillslope erosion/sedimentation evaluation. The stream channel inventory was completed in 1992 and illustrated the current condition of the channel network within the assessment area. Channel stability was rated with the U.S. Forest Service's Pfankuch Method, while channel condition was evaluated with CAL FIRE's Guidelines for Assessment of Cumulative Impacts (CDF, 1994). Due to limited personnel and time constraints, stream channels within SDSF were analyzed in greater detail than channels located in other areas of the basin (Poole, 1992).

The hillslope component of the CWE evaluation was completed in the summer of 1993. Quantitative estimates of erosion risk and erosion volumes associated with anticipated activities (e.g., timber harvesting and road building) were made based on the results of the Critical Sites Erosion Study (CSES; Lewis and Rice, 1989; Rice and Lewis, 1991). A selected number of random sample locations were installed on existing, planned, and abandoned roads, as well as past harvest areas. The resulting data were input into equations to estimate the risk of generating critical, or large, erosion sites (i.e., a large erosion event producing more than 100 cubic yards per acre). These equations are based on measurements made for slope, amount of hillslope or road curvature, soil color, and rock hardness.

On-site measurements were made to assess other sources of erosion not addressed by the CSES. Estimates were then made of the amount of sediment that could result from the approximated erosion. The significance of the estimated sedimentation was studied by comparing it with expectations of sediment yield for Soquel Creek. Since long-term sediment data from the Soquel Creek basin were not available, information from the San Lorenzo River, a similar, neighboring basin, was used. The methodology utilized for the hillslope erosion and sedimentation analysis was designed by Rice (1993) and was used in

several parts of the state in the 1990's.

Locations in the East Branch assessment area that were found to have poor stability and channel conditions were Amaya Creek, Hinckley Creek, and the East Branch between Ashbury Gulch and the upper SDSF boundary. The reaches with the best ratings for stability (high-fair) and channel conditions were the upper part of the East Branch above SDSF and the main stem of Soquel Creek below the junction with the West Branch. The reaches of the East Branch between Ashbury Gulch and the junction with the West Branch were reported as having intermediate stability and channel conditions.

Summarizing the results for the 10 miles of the East Branch surveyed, fair channel stability was the most frequent finding (10% good, 67% fair, and 23% poor). This compares reasonably well to the fair/poor relative overall rating for sediment contribution assigned to the East Branch by Singer and Swanson (1983). The exception was the highly impacted reach along the San Andreas Rift Zone. Additionally, the major tributaries were severely degraded by heavy landsliding activity. Very large quantities of sediment are stored in these headwater tributaries, as well as in wide, vegetated terraces along the lower reaches of the East Branch. Observation of the East Branch channel revealed that riffle stretches generally had cobble and gravel sized particles protecting the stream bottom surface. Inspection of stable pools below Ashbury Gulch, however, showed that this habitat type contained significant percentages of fine sediment.

Large woody debris was not found to be blocking anadromous fish passage in the East Branch, but was limiting habitat use in the major tributaries. Large wood was generally lacking along most of the East Branch of Soquel Creek below Ashbury Falls, except where it had accumulated in a few fairly stable locations. Large woody debris is valuable because of the pool habitat for young salmonids that forms around it in gravel dominated stream systems.

Results of the hillslope evaluation indicate that the risk of generating critical erosion sites is not significantly different from the average for the rain-dominated portions of the northern Coast Ranges in California (Cafferata and Poole, 1993). Very large amounts of existing erosion were measured on a few of the plots, however, and existing erosion was found to be considerably higher than the amount estimated from the critical site equations. For example, one of the road plots had a culvert that had carved an exceptionally large gully below its outlet, while another had large amounts of cut and fill slope erosion 50 feet from a Class II stream (as defined by the California Forest Practice Rules). Therefore, the potential for producing large erosion events is clearly evident in this terrain, even though the critical site equations did not generate exceptionally large estimates.

The terrain slope and distance to a Class II stream were used as an index of the proportion of erosion which would become sediment. The average sediment delivery was found to be much higher than is commonly assumed in forested watersheds. This is due to very high delivery from relatively few plots with extensive amounts of existing erosion. Long-term sediment data do not exist for Soquel Creek at the USGS gaging station; the nearest station

with long-term discharge records and a reasonable sediment record is found on the San Lorenzo River at Big Trees State Park. A statistical analysis indicated that peak storm discharges on Soquel Creek were significantly related to those of the San Lorenzo River. The peak storm discharge/annual sediment yield relationship generated for the San Lorenzo River was then used to estimate the annual sediment yield at Soquel Creek.

Extreme natural variability in sediment yield for Soquel Creek was found for 1952 to 1990, with the range spanning several orders of magnitude. The estimate of mean annual sediment yield based on the stream discharge record for Soquel Creek (60,392 yd^3 or 2.35 yd^3/ac/yr) was somewhat higher than that calculated based on hillslope erosion plot measurements. Due to the assumptions involved in making these estimates, however, it is unlikely that these estimated sediment yields are significantly different. Both estimates of sediment discharge for Soquel Creek are high for forested areas and illustrate the erosive nature of the basin. Cafferata and Poole (1993) concluded that it was unlikely, however, that the limited timber harvesting and rebuilding of abandoned roads planned for SDSF would significantly elevate the erosion rate and have a significant adverse impact on the aquatic system. The anticipated sediment production from SDSF's timber production was found to be small compared to the range of variability in sediment flux observed in this basin.

More recent watershed assessment work in the Soquel Creek watershed can be compared to the results of the Cafferata and Poole (1993) rapid assessment. For example, Lassettre and Kondolf's (2003) much more detailed large wood study included the lower part of East Branch of Soquel Creek. They reported an average large wood loading for this reach of 0.005 m^3/m^2, which they stated lies at the low end of the range of observed values for North American streams (e.g., approximately 36 times lower than for old growth coast redwood forests in Humboldt County). Similarly, Alley and Associates (2003) reported that large wood was extremely scarce in Soquel Creek compared to other coastal streams recently surveyed.

Large wood loading in the East Branch of Soquel Creek is low due to extensive log removal efforts by Santa Cruz County from the 1950s to the 1990s. The Santa Cruz County RCD watershed assessment (SCCRCD, 2003) concluded that the scarcity of large wood limits juvenile salmonid production throughout the Soquel Creek watershed. Similar to other studies, their assessment states that large wood is scarce in the middle part of the East Branch and recruitment is low for this channel reach.

Balance Hydrologics (2003) reported that Soquel Creek has experienced prolonged periods (up to 25 to 30 years) of disturbed watershed conditions over the past 150 years. These conditions, they found, were caused by both natural processes and anthropogenic activities, with the later likely resulting in an increase in the natural, base rate of sediment production in the watershed, although small relative to natural rates. Landslides along Highland Way as well as recent wildfires (Summit Fire and Loma Fire) have also contributed sediment to Soquel Creek.

The Santa Cruz County Resource Conservation District (2003) watershed assessment project concluded that overall lateral channel stability of Soquel Creek was relatively high during the previous 54 years with minor adjustment at several points of meander along the East Branch and mainstem. Major sediment production from natural sources was found to occur in both the East and West Branches and is most pronounced following earthquakes, large magnitude floods or forest fires, and is usually related to landsliding. However, SDSF will continue to remediate existing sediment sources both during timber harvests and after, working towards a net decrease in sediment inputs from timber harvest operations.

The SCCRCD (2003) assessment states that several factors appear to limit distribution and abundance of steelhead. These factors include passage impediments, poor spawning habitat quality (high proportion of fine sediment, number of constricting, steep riffles below spawning glides), low spring and summer baseflows, limited amount of escape cover (provided by instream wood, undercut banks, unembedded boulders, and water depth), elevated water temperature, and limited water depth. Throughout the watershed, low baseflows and sedimentation limit the amount and quality of rearing habitat.

Pacific Watershed Associates (2003) inventoried the SDSF road network (18.2 miles) and found 82 sites with significant sediment delivery potential. Fifty-seven of these sites were at stream crossings. Three crossing sites were identified as having high treatment immediacy, with a potential sediment delivery of approximately 1,631 yds^3. Sites requiring significant analysis, design, and heavy equipment investment, are upgraded and/or mitigated, as CEQA projects are planned and implemented across SDSF. For example, one high priority culvert replacement as well as three other identified sites, were mitigated through implementation of the Rim THP and accompanying CDFW streambed alteration permit in 2011. Additional rocking of the main roads in SDSF has also been implemented annually. Upgrades and mitigations along Longridge Road and Hihn's Mill Road were implemented as part of the Fern Gulch timber sale.

Recent impacts in the Soquel Creek watershed have occurred that have not been considered in past watershed assessments. These include the 2008 Summit Fire, which burned approximately 4,270 acres in portions of the Soquel Creek, Corralitos Creeks, Brown's Creek, and Uvas Creek watersheds (SEAT, 2008). Soquel Creek suffered the greatest amount of high burn severity, with 382 acres. In total, 1130 acres burned in the Soquel Creek watershed (34% high burn intensity, 43% moderate, 20% low, and 3% unchanged.)

Additionally, a large landslide event delivered an extensive amount of fine sediment into the East Branch of Soquel Creek in 2011. Highland Way was closed by a re-activated landslide on approximately March 26, 2011. The slide contributed a substantial amount of soil, rock, and organic debris into the East Branch of Soquel Creek that has had short and long term impacts.

CONCLUSIONS

In summary, it can be stated that the East Branch of Soquel Creek watershed is a highly

sensitive basin. This is due to its inherent natural hillslope instability related to seismic forces, steep slopes, weak bedrock, and frequent high intensity rainfall events. Impacts from past management activities, prior to implementation of the modern California Forest Practice Rules in 1975, have contributed greatly to degraded conditions in the basin, as has residential development. In spite of these problems, the East Branch below Ashbury Gulch has not been overwhelmed with sediment, and it is clear from abundant observations of steelhead redds (gravel beds where female fish lay eggs) and young fish that spawning and rearing habitat remains.

The East Branch system is stressed by fine sediment moving downstream from tributaries, partially due to its close proximity to the San Andreas Fault Zone. This material is filling pools required for rearing habitat for listed anadromous salmonids. Lack of sufficient volumes of large wood and overdrafting of water in low flow summer months compounds this problem. As a result, the aquatic environment is sensitive to further degradation and timber operations must be carried out with extra caution.

Due to the sensitivity of the hillslopes and current channel conditions, special considerations are needed when planning forest management activities in the East Branch. Appropriate mitigations must continue to be utilized and remedial improvements implemented to repair existing problem areas, such as those suggested in the PWA (2003) report. If these considerations are employed, future timber sales can occur without significant adverse impacts to the beneficial uses of the basin.

MONITORING AND ENHANCEMENT

Ongoing management of SDSF will involve maintaining proper drainage along roads and trails by repairing culverts, water bars, and other drainage structures to reduce or prevent soil erosion and stream sedimentation. SDSF is required to monitor all timber operations (including all harvesting areas and new roads, skid trails, and landings) annually for 5-7 years following completion of operations. Increased monitoring occurs the first winter after operations above what is required by regulations. An active watershed remediation program will continue to be used that includes monitoring watershed conditions and implementing enhancement projects. Monitoring has included a forestwide inventory of stored sediments and active landslides, and mapping mass wasting hazards and surface erosion potential. Sediment risk-reduction projects have been rated for cost-effectiveness (PWA, 2003) and will be implemented in conjunction with timber operations according to their priority as available funding permits.

THE FOLLOWING PUBLIC COMMENTS WERE RECEIVED DURING REVIEW OF THE 1998 GENERAL FOREST MANAGEMENT PLAN

Public comments regarding the East Branch watershed have focused on its distinction and sensitivity. Individuals are concerned that forest management activities will result in general watershed degradation, including sedimentation of streams and excessive hillslope erosion. This is particularly important to them in regard to steelhead numbers and habitat, and

possible impacts upon their land during high intensity rainfall. As stated in this and other chapters, careful pre-project evaluation and measures to ensure the maintenance of watershed integrity are a priority for SDSF. The CWE assessment work discussed above and other studies assist the Forest staff to understand and manage for the sensitive nature of the basin.

MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

1. Design streamside management zones that properly address the inherently unstable nature of the East Branch watershed in SDSF. This includes extending zone widths beyond the standards set by the California Forest Practice Rules, for Class I fish-bearing watercourses, as is appropriate in sensitive areas. These zones must provide for the long-term recruitment of large wood, protection of the stream channels and banks, stream shading, sediment filtration, nutrient input, microclimate control, floodplain function, and prevention of significant ground disturbance.

2. Place heavy emphasis on road design and maintenance, since roads generally produce the largest percentage of management-related sediment in forested watersheds. New seasonal and temporary roads should be outsloped to avoid concentrating water that could trigger landslides or transport sediment directly into flowing streams. Of foremost concern for new road construction is the avoidance of localized unstable areas. For mainline roads, road drainage structures and watercourse crossings must be adequately sized to ensure that the risk of failure is minimized. Roads no longer needed must be properly abandoned. Wet weather use for roads impacting flowing streams should not occur and an active winter maintenance program is needed to ensure that drainage structures are adequately functioning. (Refer to the Roads and Other Improvements Chapter for more information.)

3. No tractor operations will be permitted on slopes which average more than 35 percent without site-specific evaluations of slope stability and erosion potential. This will depend on the ability to mitigate such operations to levels of insignificance.

PLANNED ACTIONS

1. Continue to record data on all timber harvesting operations done in the Forest that could influence soil and water resources. Link THP road mitigation sites, information on road construction and harvesting, and monitoring results through our GIS database.

2. Continue to implement the treatment priorities for high and moderate risk inventoried sediment sources in the Soquel Demonstration State Forest watershed assessment area developed by PWA (2003).

3. Evaluate the performance of each previously-implemented remediation project to determine the success in reducing the risk of large-scale sedimentation. Redesign and modify any project not meeting its intended objective (see to Appendix C).

CHAPTER 8: DEMONSTRATION AND EDUCATION

INTRODUCTION

As stated in the Timber Management Chapter, a goal of SDSF is to demonstrate sustained-yield timber production with innovative forest management practices within the context of local community protection, and subject to the limitation of commercial timber harvesting provided in the legislation (PRC 4660-4664). The intent of this goal is to encourage conscientious forestry practices on private lands and demonstrate these practices to the surrounding urban populations. This can lead to improved attitudes toward our natural resources and forestry in general, enhancing responsible stewardship of our forest lands.

Another goal is to show Forest visitors that timber management, forestry education, public recreation, and environmental protection are interrelated and compatible. This will be accomplished through combinations of these programs whenever possible. SDSF's location is well suited for the development of forestry education programs because it is close to schools in both the Monterey Bay and south San Francisco Bay areas. This proximity is ideal for groups to learn the importance of forest ecology and management. Similarly, it offers local landowners and the general public an opportunity to view the protection, management, and utilization of renewable natural resources. Field trips involve public motor vehicle use.

The Demonstration and Education Programs of SDSF rely on interpretation, volunteer participation, and the future creation of a Forestry Education Center. Each of these elements, as well as the Demonstration and Education Programs themselves, are outlined in the following paragraphs, and further described in the Education Study (Blazej, 1997).

DEMONSTRATION PROGRAM

OVERVIEW

The Demonstration Program is a major focus of SDSF for a number of reasons. Most importantly, it provides an opportunity for the general public and educational groups to observe an active working forest. Forestry demonstration can assist the public in understanding forest management and its role in resource conservation and local economics. Additionally, it reminds us of the many wood products we use daily and the importance of keeping forests healthy and productive. Knowledge such as this can help change the negative public image generally associated with forest management practices. Also, the demonstration of various forest activities can potentially benefit small private landowners in the management, protection, and enhancement of their forest lands.

The opportunity for demonstration projects has increased as SDSF has become better established. The Forest staff remains aware of the demonstration potential at the onset of new activities. Demonstration projects may be short term, with several topics addressed each year, or long term, extending over many years.

The primary consideration of the Demonstration Program is to enhance the public's understanding and awareness of forest management principles and techniques consistent with environmental protection. Throughout the process of establishing projects, a strong emphasis will be placed on environmental protection. The following are demonstration opportunities at SDSF:

- Silvicultural Systems
- Tractor/Cable Harvesting Operations
- Disease and Insect Management
- Recreation Management
- Reforestation Methods
- Fisheries Protection/Enhancement
- Road Construction/Maintenance
- Old-Growth Redwood Protection
- Watershed Restoration
- Exotic Species Control
- Erosion Control
- Hardwood Management
- Growth and Yield
- Riparian Management
- Cumulative Watershed Effects
- Fuelwood Management
- Prescribed Burning
- Habitat Enhancement(Aquatic and Terrestrial)
- Fire Protection
- Rare Plant Management

Part of the demonstration that is done at SDSF involves public field trips of active timber harvests. Four to five field trips were held each year for the 1995 Longridge harvest, the 1997 Amaya harvest and the 2012 Fern Gulch harvest. The field trips were attended by 30 to 40 people per trip. Each timber harvest has also held a specific field trip for the SDSF Advisory Committee to provide an opportunity to review current operations. During the tours over the years the advisory committee, media, and public have had the opportunity to observe operations including rubber-tired skidding, tree falling, horse skidding, cable yarding, a portable mill demonstration, the Badger Spring's old growth grove, the Olive Springs Quarry operation, log truck loading, erosion control techniques, and watercourse crossing installations. Topics discussed have included the history and goals of SDSF, watershed protection and enhancement, and timber management. Questionnaires were filled out by field trip participants to get feedback about their experience and recommendations for future field trips. Almost without exception, the field trip participants enjoyed the opportunity and stated that they would be interested to come back in the future. These field trips will continue to be a part of future harvests at SDSF.

PLANNED ACTIONS

1. Demonstrate forest management practices and ecosystem enhancement techniques. To accomplish this, incorporate an identifiable demonstration feature in timber sale planning and implementation, recreation designs and development, and other forest management activities, as appropriate.

2. Develop and implement outreach programs to contact the general public, school groups, and private landowners for demonstrational opportunities. Encourage visits and tours by interested public groups, individuals, schools, and professional organizations.

3. Establish safe and efficient methods of displaying information from demonstration projects and conducting tours of these areas. Displays should be made available and tours held at times that encourage Forest user group's attendance and participation (e.g., summer weekends, evenings).

FORESTRY EDUCATION

OVERVIEW

SDSF has proven to be a valuable and attractive venue for forestry education, just as the Recreation Study (McNally and Hester, 1993) indicated it would. SDSF provides informative and fun educational opportunities and as many hands-on experiences as possible. The program is applied in conjunction with demonstration objectives and occurs in many different forms. Forestry education introduces various target groups to progressive forest management practices, resource protection, logging history, forest ecology, and research. This is accomplished through literature provided, indoor presentations, and outdoor programs.

Instructional organizations can learn about SDSF's resources by sponsoring classroom presentations or bringing groups to the Forest. School programs may represent a theme, such as Arbor Day or Earth Day, and include activities both at school and SDSF. Classroom and outdoor presentations might also be subject oriented, with topics such as watershed management, forest ecology, soil biology, fisheries habitat restoration, or wildlife found in the Forest.

Educator training programs, like the one at Elkhorn Slough Reserve or the Forestry Institute for Teachers, provide a means for teachers and their students to experience forestry education without relying on Forest staff. After completing training, educators may bring their students to the Forest for non-staffed instructional field trips. This removes the time burden from Forest staff members while allowing instructors to absorb new information and reinforce their own training.

SDSF staff has assisted with Forest Conservation Days, the web of life based educational program for fifth graders, since its inception in 1992. SDSF staff is also involved with the California Forestry Challenge, which is a competitive event for high school students in technical forestry and current forestry issues. Since SDSF cannot currently provide a suitable venue for hosting these events on the Forest due to lack of staff, infrastructure and services on site, SDSF staff participates in these programs that occur locally each year.

Information for the general public, professional organizations and small private landowners is disseminated through tours, newsletters, brochures, workshops, seminars, and the CAL FIRE State Forest website. Newsletters and brochures cover information such as current events, research projects, or compatible rural land uses. Workshops provide opportunities to learn about forest management techniques and how to solve problems in a group setting.

Seminars focus on specific topics as well as the presentation of ideas, research results, and group discussion.

PLANNED ACTIONS

1. Continue to provide educational information and programs related to forest management and ecosystem processes as described above and in the SDSF Education Study (Blazej, 1997).

2. Utilize various methods to distribute information about the forest resources of SDSF to different user groups. Methods to present facts about SDSF may include oral presentations, written information, interpretive facilities, and the internet.

3. Continue to encourage educational organizations, such as local public schools, to use SDSF for forestry education programs and field trips. Stimulate participation by offering quality educational experiences that are both informative and enjoyable. Maintain old and establish new working relationships with educators and their students.

4. Encourage teachers to attend and provide information about teacher training programs that will allow educators to lead their own forestry education programs. Offer workshops on topics such as forest ecology, wildlife habitat requirements, and watershed dynamics which apply directly to SDSF.

INTERPRETATION

OVERVIEW

The public can gather information about SDSF in a variety of ways while visiting the Forest. Interpretive facilities such as self-guided trails, information boards, and hands-on activities offer the Forest visitor an opportunity to learn the many features of SDSF. Since groups who utilize the Forest differ in their use of its many resources, information that applies to and interests many different individuals is essential. Interpretive facilities are a great way for the staff to meet the important goals of public demonstration and education without being relied upon for instruction.

INTERPRETIVE OPPORTUNITIES

Self-guided walking tours incorporate designated stops that are marked and indicated in a guide book. Stops on trails in SDSF might focus on unique sites and vegetation of the Forest or provide activities that facilitate learning. Interpretive trails will work well in SDSF because hiking is a common activity. The Forest provides many possibilities for educational trails, including a number of old logging trails and roads.

Information boards are effective tools that offer educational and operational information. Boards located at parking areas, popular recreation sites, trail heads, and along trails provide information in the form of displays and brochures. Facts that relate to general Forest news are best suited to this type of interpretive facility, and include subjects like riparian protection, current logging practices, and forest ecology.

Hands-on activities with touchable items and sensory-oriented exercises for adults and children are another form of forestry education. These activities either stand alone or are coordinated with self-guided and staff-led tours. For example, a touchable tree round on a self-guided trail may help visitors understand how tree age is determined or how human history compares to that of a tree. Forestry tools such as clinometers or diameter tapes are used to show visitors and school groups how trees are measured. Areas containing hands-on activities are located near popular recreation sites, picnic areas, and parking areas.

Staff-lead tours will travel over expansive areas not covered by self-guided trails and contain stops that are not visibly marked. Guidebooks and hands-on activities may accompany tours, with staff members offering supplemental information.

On the internet – see http://www.icogitate.com/~tree/SDSF.htm.

PLANNED ACTIONS

1. Coordinate planning of interpretive facilities with all Forest activities, including recreational use, demonstration projects, resource protection, and timber harvesting. Install interpretive facilities near popular recreation sites, parking locations, and areas receiving silvicultural, enhancement, and restoration treatments.

VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

OVERVIEW

A volunteer program is used to assist the small Forest staff in several ways, including efforts to provide a complete and comprehensive forestry interpretive program. The major volunteer group associated with SDSF is the Stewards of Soquel Forest. The Stewards of Soquel Forest is a non-profit group that was established in 2000. The goals of the Stewards of Soquel Forest are to enhance the public's experience on the Forest, foster educational programs and assist with trail maintenance and infrastructure improvements. The Stewards have held education and demonstration events, raised funds for SDSF programs and facilities and have been instrumental in maintaining SDSF recreational trails (additional information is provided in the Recreation Chapter). SDSF's volunteers have an interest in both SDSF and natural resources in general, and enjoy sharing their experiences with others.

SDSF's volunteers can be available for public contact and interpretation in both the Forest and educational settings (such as classrooms). In the field, they benefit the Forest by

providing visitors with information on current events, facilities, vegetation and wildlife, cultural history, and rules and regulations. Ideally, volunteers will have training in first aid and be able to radio for help during emergencies.

Volunteers also assist in research and monitoring programs, and maintenance and construction projects. The individual skills and talents of SDSF's volunteers, such as knowledge of local flora and fauna, leadership and interpretive skills, and experience working with people, are utilized to support the Forest. Through their work, volunteers benefit the operation of SDSF and acquire a better appreciation of state forests and natural resources in general.

PLANNED ACTIONS

1. Continue to develop volunteer programs which include docent recruitment. Volunteers will lead tours, patrol the Forest, and assist with education, research, and monitoring programs.

2. Continue to provide training to familiarize volunteers with the history of the state forest system, SDSF's history and objectives, rules and regulations, patrol procedures, and interpretive skills. General training will also include more specific information relating to SDSF's access routes, vegetation, wildlife, and research and monitoring objectives.

FORESTRY EDUCATION CENTER

OVERVIEW

If created, the Forestry Education Center (FEC) will be the focal point of SDSF. It could house the Forest headquarters, staff offices, an interpretive center for Forest visitors, and a meeting place for demonstration and educational tours. The FEC may also house a resource library, research laboratory, overnight accommodations, and an auditorium. The auditorium, useful for both administrative and educational purposes, could serve as a location for meetings, classes and workshops, seminars, informational slide shows, and videos.

The FEC would be used to present a range of information about SDSF’s resources including maps, self-guided tour booklets, announcements of current events and management activities, signups for demonstration tours, and fire prevention information. Examples of interpretive exhibits and displays that could be made available through the FEC include:

Logging History/Equipment
Silvicultural Systems
Wood Products
Watershed Protection
Fire Safe Programs
Herbarium
Tree Physiology
Wildlife
Habitat Restoration
Fisheries

Plans have been approved for a replacement facility at the current SDSF office site in conjunction with the replacement of the CAL FIRE Soquel Forest Fire Station. The new SDSF office would replace the trailer acquired in 1992 and would include offices and a classroom. The project has not been funded and there is no estimate of when CAL FIRE might eventually fund implementation.

PLANNED ACTIONS

1. Continue to progress on plans for the FEC based on expected use, cost, building size, and exhibit development. Select and acquire, if possible, an appropriate location for the FEC based on the above criteria as well as proximity to the State Forest and accessibility by the general public. For a detailed analysis of these topics, see the Forestry Education Center Study, Soquel Demonstration State Forest Proposed Program (Butler and Hester, 2001) and companion reports, Forestry Education Center Study, Soquel Demonstration State Forest Listening Report (Butler et al., 2001) and Forestry Education Center Study, Soquel Demonstration State Forest, An Analysis of California Environmental Education Centers (Butler et al., 2001).

2. Determine specifically how the FEC will be used. Conduct subsequent environmental documentation under CEQA. Design and build the facility, including grounds, so that expected use can be accommodated. Expansion and improvement of the Center in the future should also be taken into consideration during initial planning.

3. Plan and develop public education exhibits that meet forestry demonstration and educational objectives yet remain interesting and fun for all age groups. Encourage rotating presentations from local schools or special interest groups as well as permanent displays.

4. Seek alternative funding sources as contributions toward development and operation of the FEC. Supplemental funding from grants and private donations may be used for interpretive presentations, display development, and facility improvements.

THE FOLLOWING PUBLIC COMMENTS WERE RECEIVED DURING REVIEW OF THE 1998 GENERAL FOREST MANAGEMENT PLAN

Public comments and concerns relating to forestry demonstration and education have conveyed much enthusiasm. Respondents to the recreation study (see the Recreation Chapter) indicated excitement about the potential opportunities to view and learn about the workings of a forest such as SDSF. Additionally, comments about the FEC and demonstration goals express an interest in the facilities and methods through which demonstration and education will take place.

Forest neighbors and users have indicated curiosity in the future of the FEC, specifically its location and proximity to the Forest. Since the actual development of the FEC has yet to be

determined, its location and accessibility remain undecided. Time and finances permitting, SDSF plans to carefully select and acquire a piece of property well-suited to everyone's needs.

CHAPTER 9: TIMBER MANAGEMENT

INTRODUCTION

The main purpose of SDSF's timber management and harvest program is to conduct demonstrations, education, and research in forest management. Sustained yield management is being demonstrated through the use of timber harvesting that ensures proper land stewardship, improves forest health, and protects and preserves SDSF as an intensively managed, multifaceted research forest. This is consistent with the legislative goals of PRC Sections 4660-4664.

As stated above, a major purpose of the SDSF timber management program is to demonstrate sustained yield management with examples of timber harvesting. In simple terms, sustained yield is the yield of commercial wood that an ownership can produce continuously at a given intensity of management consistent with required environmental protection and which is professionally planned to achieve, over time, a balance between growth and harvest. SDSF is used to demonstrate examples of timber harvesting under sustained yield management, while also sustaining or improving air, fish and wildlife, water resources, watersheds, aesthetic values, and recreation. Silvicultural methods and harvest techniques that can be applied under the California Forest Practice Rules for the Southern Subdistrict of the Coast Forest District are and will continue to be researched and utilized to demonstrate sustained yield management with an uneven-aged forest structure.

The harvesting of timber will comply with the discussion found in the Funding and Taxes section of the Administration Chapter. A secondary goal of harvesting timber is to generate revenue to cover maintenance, operation, and other costs of SDSF. This includes funds needed for research, inventory, monitoring, and rehabilitation projects of the various resources in SDSF. Revenues did not meet expenditures, even at the current minimum levels, during the initial nor the second ten-year period of this plan. It is anticipated that revenues and expenditures will converge in approximately the fifth decade of operations. Specific revenue projections are not made because of the inherent uncertainty of timber values and markets. Annual harvest levels may need to be adjusted from time to time to reflect physical conditions in SDSF, such as catastrophic events. If a significant drop in timber prices occurs, timber harvesting will not exceed the limits discussed in the Harvest Planning section of this chapter. CAL FIRE will attempt to maintain basic operation and maintenance services from the FRIF fund in line with other State Forests. For SDSF, this plan provides for harvest levels well below the level of growth. If future harvest continues at the current level, the forest will develop denser stands with bigger trees and more closed canopy over time.

HARVEST HISTORY

The first timber harvesting in SDSF occurred during the late 1800's when the Forest was part of land owned by F. A. Hihn (see the Property Description Chapter for a more detailed

account of the history of ownership). Hihn logged old-growth redwood along portions of Amaya Creek and his private road, which is now called Hihn's Mill Road. Upon his death in 1913, Hihn's heirs assumed ownership of his lands and continued limited old-growth redwood and tanoak removal.

In 1924, the property was sold to the Monterey Bay Redwood Company (MBRC). The MBRC harvested approximately 100 million board feet of old-growth redwood from 1926 to 1942. Between 1926 and 1934, logs were yarded to roads using ground lead cable systems powered by steam donkeys. Logs were taken to the millpond, located south of Olive Springs, on trailers towed by tractors. From 1934 to 1942, logs were yarded by tractor and transferred to the mill by log trucks.

The MBRC sold their property to Glenco Forest Products, later known as the CHY Company, in 1961. During their ownership of the SDSF property, CHY performed a small amount of selective timber harvesting between the Sulphur Springs area and the eastern boundary.

In 1979, the Pelican Timber Company purchased a portion of CHY's land, including what is now SDSF, and prepared extensive harvest plans. Pelicans's Timber Harvesting Plans were strongly opposed and, after court battles, expired before large amounts of timber were removed. Pelican did harvest a small amount, however, prior to state acquisition of the property. Approximately 15 acres of hardwoods in the Sulphur Springs area and 230 acres of second-growth redwood and hardwoods along the western boundary were selectively harvested under timber harvesting plans (THPs) 1-80-328 SCR, 1-81-25 SCR, and 1-83-56 SCR, operated on between 1979 and 1984.

Since the dedication of SDSF in 1990, four THPs have been completed (Figure 11). The first, Longridge THP (1-94-307 SCR) harvested in 1995, was a 64-acre single tree selection harvest and yielded 556,000 board feet[7]. The Amaya Creek THP (1-98-027 SCR) harvested in 1998, was also a selection harvest, but included some small (1/4-1/2 acre) harvest groups. This THP harvested 138 acres and yielded 1.6 million board feet. Operations on the Rim THP (1-09-107 SCR) occurred over two years and were completed in 2012. The Rim THP was 258 acres and yielded 1.6 million board feet. The fourth plan, the Fern Gulch THP (1-09-096 SCR) was also completed in 2012 and yielded 2.2 million board feet on 201 acres. All four harvests combined represent about 6 million board feet over a period of 22 years, roughly equal to the Forest-wide growth in two and one-half years. The Comstock Mill THP (1-13-027 SCR) is planned for operations in 2014 on 228 acres for approximately 1.8 million board feet.

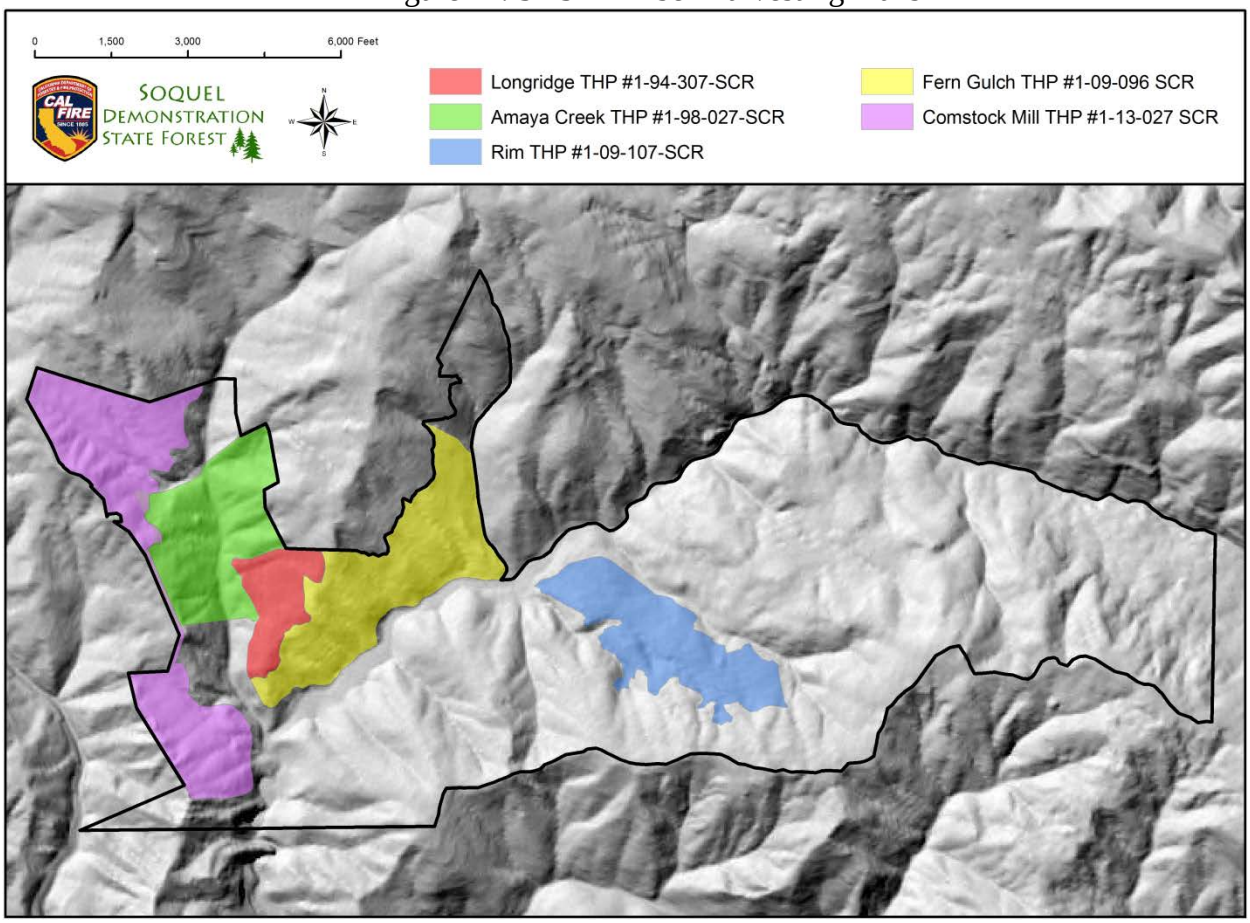
CONIFER VOLUME INVENTORY

There have been four known timber inventories completed for the SDSF property since the turn of the 20th century. The first inventory was completed in 1916 preceding significant

[7] Conifer volume is measured in board feet; a board foot is a unit of measure one foot by one foot by one inch.

harvest of the area. Timber cruisers from San Francisco were hired to cruise the Valencia-Hihn ownership comprising 7,071 acres including the SDSF acreage. The purpose of the cruise was to estimate the standing timber volume and to establish the value prior to selling the land. When sold to the Monterey Redwood Company, 4,488 acres were estimated to contain 172 million board feet of redwood and Douglas-fir (Powell, n.d.). This yields an average per acre volume for this land, which includes SDSF property as well as portions of adjacent watersheds, of 38,300 board feet per acre. However, evidence from other similar tracts and logging history in the area suggest that this figure likely underestimates the amount of timber volume present in the redwood stands at that time.

Figure 11. SDSF Timber Harvesting Plans



The second inventory was completed in 1978 for Harwood Products, a potential buyer of the property, to ascertain timber growth and volume. Average stand age was approximated to be anywhere from 30 to 90 years old. The average volume per acre for the SDSF portion of the property was estimated at 13,600 board feet, 90 percent of which was redwood. The third inventory was conducted by SDSF staff in the summer of 1991. The goals of this variable-radius plot inventory were to establish current volume and basal area by species and to acquire information on species distribution. Based on harvest history, the average age of

most Forest stands was estimated to be 65 years old. The average volume for SDSF was estimated to be 28,850 board feet per acre, with a forest-wide total conifer volume of approximately 77.3 million board feet.

The most recent inventory was completed in the spring of 2006. This was a variable-radius plot inventory with plots placed every five acres on a systematic grid. Data measured for all live trees included species, size and unique features such as goose pens, fire scars, and broken tops with potential wildlife habitat value. Table 6 contains the results for trees per acre, volume, and basal area of commercial conifers and hardwoods. The average age of most forest stands was estimated to be 80 years old based on harvest history. The average conifer volume for SDSF was 42,441 board feet per acre with a forest-wide total conifer volume of approximately 117.4 million board feet. This represents a 52 percent increase in Forest-wide volume in 15 years.

Table 6. SDSF 2006 Timber Inventory Summary.

	Redwood	**Douglas-fir**	**Total Conifer**	**Hardwood**	**Total**
Trees per acre	180	33	213	315	529
Basal Area[8] per acre	178	35	212	116	328
Volume per acre (Board feet for Conifers) (Cubic Feet for HW >=7.0")	34,445	7,996	42,441	2,648	NA
Forest Wide Total Volume	95,261,398	22,114,678	117,376,076	7,323,309	NA

GROWTH

A conifer growth study was conducted at SDSF in 1993. This study produced per acre values for redwood and Douglas-fir on a forest-wide basis. The 1993 survey consisted of visits to 30 of the plots installed in the 1991 inventory to assess growth. Volume growth was estimated based on measurements of tree height and five- and ten-year radial increment growth. The results of this study indicated that forest-wide annual conifer growth averaged 972 board feet per acre with a standard error of 7.2 percent.

Growth based on the 2006 inventory data was estimated using the Forest and Stand

[8] Basal area is the total cross sectional area of trees measured at four-and-one-half feet above ground and expressed as per unit area of land (typically square feet per acre). It is a measure of forest stocking or density.

Evaluation Environment (FORSEE) growth and yield model. Growth varied by vegetation type and stand density. The percent growth ranged from up to three percent in the lower density oak woodland stands to one percent in the highest density redwood stands. The average overall conifer growth for the Forest was estimated to be 975 board feet per acre per year, which represents 2.1 percent forest-wide growth per year. The growth across the Forest is estimated to be 2,615,360 board feet per year.

In the future, a continuous forest inventory will be utilized at SDSF by establishing permanent plots systematically located across the Forest. Through this method, sample inventories can be completed periodically to monitor changes in Forest structure and growth rates over time.

VEGETATION TYPE

A new vegetation type map for SDSF was developed by staff foresters based on their on-the-ground experience, historical vegetation type maps, a remotely sensed imagery vegetation classification project (Clinton, 2009), and the 2006 inventory plot data. The vegetation map uses a standard California Wildlife Habitat Relationships classification system (Mayer and Laudenslayer, 1988) that includes tree species, structure, and density. Figure 5 (see Chapter 5) shows the vegetation type map for the Forest.

TIMBER SITE CLASS

In 2010, a timber site class map for SDSF was developed by staff foresters to update the timber type map for the Forest that was created in 1979 by Hammon, Jensen, Wallen, and Associates. The site polygon boundaries were based on their experience and knowledge of the productive potential of different areas on the Forest, guided by site tree data gathered in the 2006 inventory. Additional site tree data was also gathered to fill in any gaps in the site tree coverage. A total of 186 site trees were measured. Site class I is the most productive while site class IV is the least productive timberland based on dominant tree height at a given age. Figure 12 shows the timber site class map for the Forest. The most prevalent site class is III (1473 acres), followed by site II (1172 acres), and site IV (36 acres). There is no site I timberland in the Forest.

SILVICULTURE

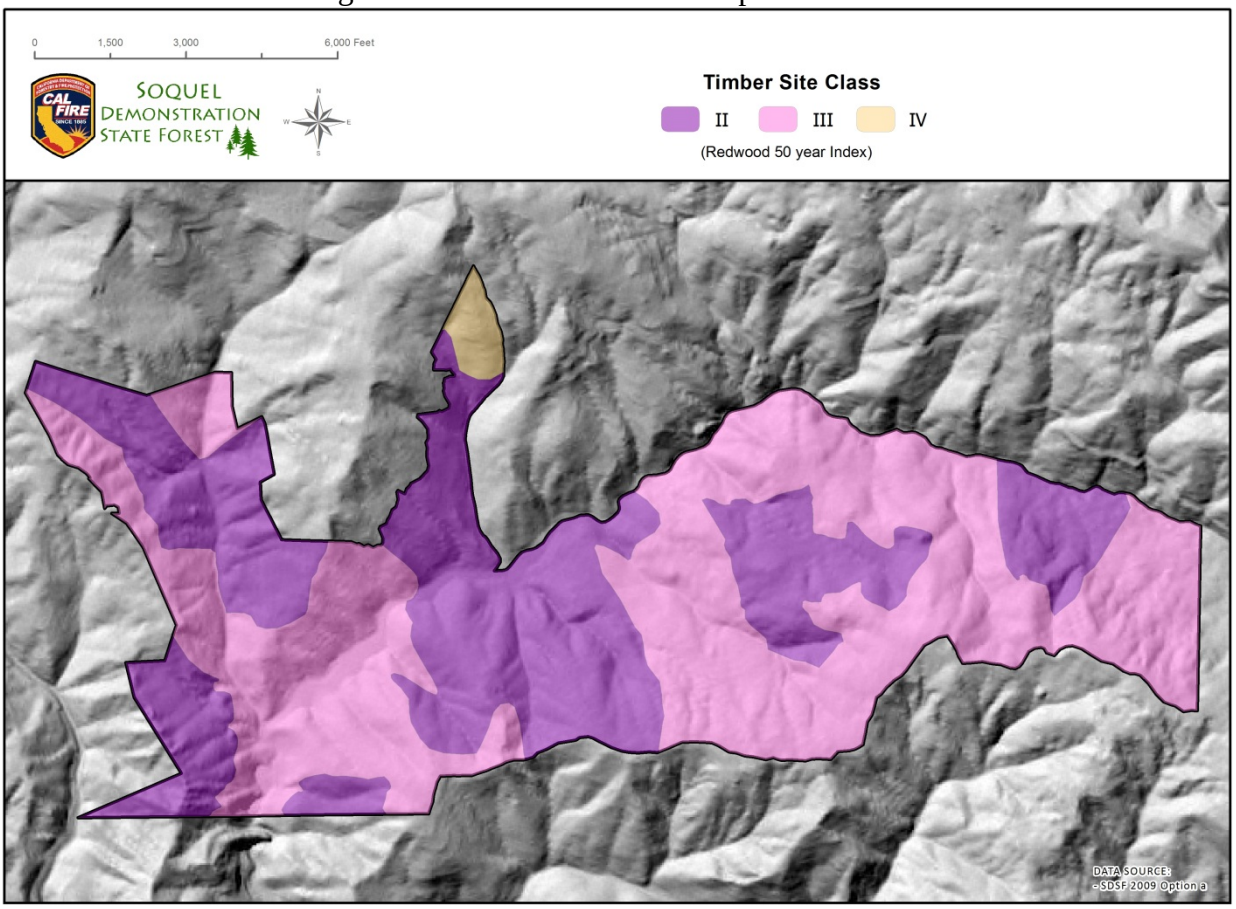
MANAGEMENT GOALS

The overarching management goal for SDSF is to maintain the Forest as a managed working demonstration forest typical of managed forests in the area with a range of successional stages across the Forest. Early to late successional forest stages are managed across the landscape over time to meet research and demonstration mandates in the context of a changing climate, continually changing societal preferences and research needs.

FOREST DESCRIPTION

SDSF is well suited for harvesting with adequate stocking composed of coast redwood and Douglas-fir. Hardwoods, especially tanoak, are a large component Forest-wide but have been declining due to Sudden Oak Death. The normal process in forest succession is for conifers to overtop and suppress hardwoods, as is occurring in SDSF. This process will ultimately move parts of the Forest through its current mid-successional stage into a late-successional condition. The 80-year-old conifer forest is reasonably healthy though overly dense in some areas (i.e., too many trees in any one location). SDSF will research and demonstrate ways to improve forest structure and vigor through timber harvesting.

Figure 12. Timber Site Class Map for SDSF.



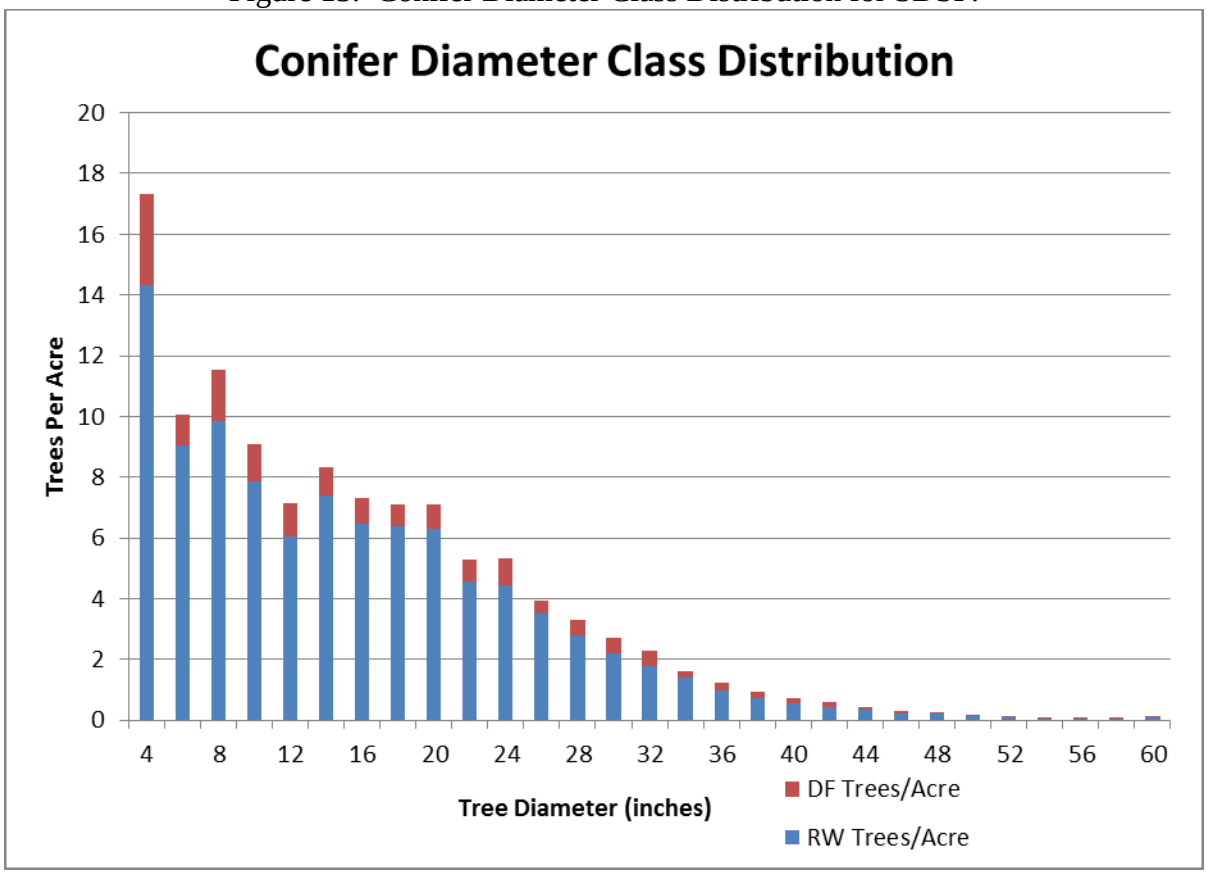
The diameter distribution (tree diameter class plotted against the number of trees per acre) of SDSF resembles a traditional uneven-aged forest even though the forest is really a young, even-aged stand (Figure 13). Uneven-aged forests contain many diameter classes and at least three age classes. These forests are typically managed on a size and structure basis. Even-aged forests contain one to two age classes of trees and are managed according to age.

The diameter class distribution of a truly uneven-aged forest forms an inverse J-shaped curve, indicating decreasing numbers of trees as diameter increases. Smaller diameter

classes commonly represent younger trees; the number of those smaller trees which mature into larger and, theoretically, older trees then decreases through time, as the curve shape implies. Having a greater number of trees in smaller diameter classes is preferable in order to ensure that an adequate amount of regeneration is present and can keep the forest viable through periods of natural mortality.

Redwood trees are shade tolerant and many will persist in the understory as small trees over many years. By harvesting competing trees and providing more growing space, the remaining smaller trees in the understory will respond by increasing growth. Redwood trees have a tremendous ability to be released through removal of competition, which is a unique characteristic of the species. Harvesting also stimulates sprouting which introduces yet another age class to the Forest, but adequate sprout growth requires relatively high levels of light (Berril and O'Hara, 2009).

Figure 13. Conifer Diameter Class Distribution for SDSF.



SILVICULTURAL TREATMENTS

Silvicultural treatments involve management decisions and actions which direct forest growth, harvest, and regeneration. Between the late 1920s and early 1940s, SDSF was managed on an even-aged basis with clearcutting and natural regeneration. Currently, forests

in Santa Cruz County, including SDSF, are managed on an uneven-aged basis as required by the Coast Forest District's Southern Subdistrict rules specified by the California Forest Practice Rules. Two ways to establish and maintain uneven-aged conditions are through single tree or small group selection harvest; both of these methods will continue to be demonstrated by SDSF. Although timber harvesting focuses on the removal of conifers, some hardwoods will also be removed to prevent hardwoods from dominating the residual stands. Sudden Oak Death is also taken into consideration for management decisions and silvicultural prescriptions as new information is learned and forest health conditions change across SDSF.

The silvicultural objectives are to achieve maximum sustained production, a broad range of diameter classes, multi-aged stands, promotion of growth, and encouragement of natural regeneration. Selective harvesting can improve stagnant forest conditions and enhance overall health. For example, removal of some trees from overcrowded stands will enable remaining trees to grow faster because of reduced competition for light, water, and nutrients. Sprouts and seedlings can also become established easier for the same reasons, thereby increasing both size and age diversity.

All silvicultural methods permitted under the California Forest Practice Rules may be used to varying degrees for research, demonstration, and creation of a range of seral stages with diverse forest structure. This protects the Forest's ability to adapt and change as silvicultural paradigms continue to change. Selection of a silvicultural prescription and cutting cycle for any given stand will depend on the specific conditions present, including vegetation types, site classes, historic management and the coordination required for resource protection, recreation and neighborhood concerns.

For most trees species the literature suggests that as trees mature, growth rates level off and slowly decline until natural mortality occurs. However, recent work on large, unsuppressed coast redwood trees in Humboldt County provides information pertinent to SDSF stands. This research suggests that as these trees age, ground-level measurements of annual growth (including height, ring width, and basal area increment) exhibited decreasing growth (or no change in growth) with age. Wood production of the entire main trunk and whole crown, however, increased with size and age up to and including the largest and oldest trees measured (Sillett et al., 2010). Trees similar to those that were measured in the study would be comparable to the protected old-growth trees at SDSF. Old-growth trees will not be included in uneven-aged management as they will be considered separately from the rest of the Forest (see the following Old-Growth and Late-Successional Management section.)

In most cases, forest regeneration will occur naturally after harvesting. This is the best means for SDSF since the dominant tree species, coast redwood, sprouts quickly and vigorously from remaining stumps given sufficient light. Research will be undertaken to study harvest levels required for successful regeneration and sprout growth. Berrill and O'Hara (2009) recommend reducing basal area by at least 45% at each cutting cycle in multiaged stands to provide sufficient light and sustain sprout growth and vigor. In areas that do not regenerate sufficiently (e.g., areas of Douglas-fir, heavy competition, or group

openings), supplemental tree planting will take place. Tree planting will also take place for research and demonstration purposes, experimenting with alternative means of forest regeneration. Redwood or Douglas-fir nursery stock will be favored over hardwood seedlings except in areas where hardwood regeneration is insufficient.

SILVICULTURAL PRESCRIPTIONS AND LANDSCAPES

Silvicultural activities such as harvest and regeneration require planning which is typically outlined in silvicultural prescriptions. Silvicultural prescriptions for SDSF will encourage attention to landscape perspectives and patterns that benefit vegetation, wildlife, and other values, as the Forest is managed for a range of successional stages across the landscape.

Management from a landscape perspective focuses on landscape patterns and the responses of biotic (e.g., plants, animals) and abiotic (e.g., soil and water) factors to changes in those patterns. A large part of this type of management involves the response of biota to both natural and unnatural disturbances (such as burned areas or opening stands through logging) in the landscape, also known as edge effect. Edge effect, considered to be both beneficial and detrimental, can have impacts on species that are adapted to interior forested habitats. The use of selection methods for harvest, however, can help minimize negative impacts by eliminating sharp contrasts between areas of harvest and adjacent forested areas.

As part of demonstration and research objectives, SDSF will experiment with different sizes of group selection openings as well as feathering the edges of openings. The main purpose of experiments is to determine the extent of edge effect on biota associated with different harvest levels and sizes of group selection openings. Results of demonstration and research projects will be used in the development of future silvicultural prescriptions and activities.

CUTTING CYCLE

Designated forest stands will be available for selective harvest every 10 years and successive entries may be up to 20 years or more in some stands. The length of cutting cycles for individual stands will depend on tree densities, diameter distributions, growth rates, stand objectives and other parameters.

Traditionally, harvesting removes the amount of growth that has occurred since the previous harvest. However, over the next decade in most stands within SDSF not all of the growth between cutting cycles will be removed (see the Harvest Planning section). By not removing all of the growth, the amount of volume remaining following each stand entry will increase over time. This reflects SDSF’s mandate of remaining a demonstration of a financially viable working forest while at the same time enhancing public trust resources.

SILVICULTURAL TREATMENTS AND NON-TIMBER RESOURCES

One of SDSF's demonstration goals is to display that silvicultural treatments are compatible with aesthetic, biological, and recreation values. Ways to display this compatibility may

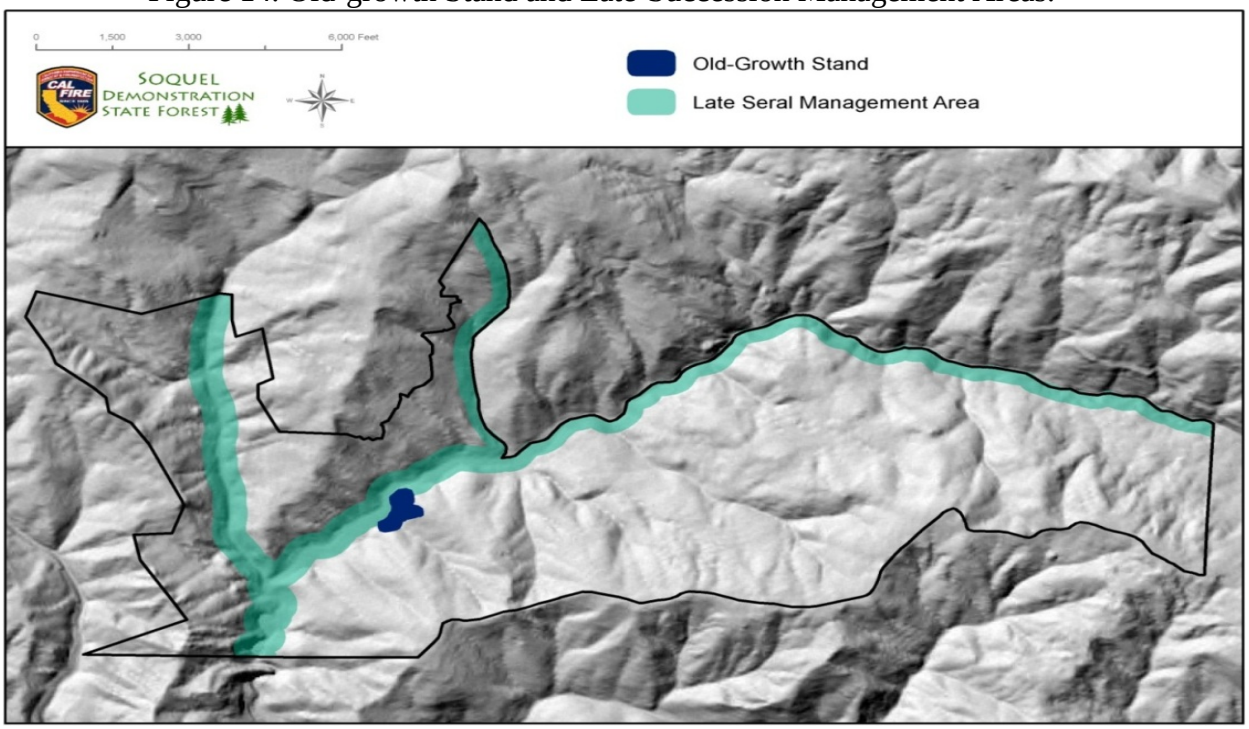
include harvest methods which are aesthetically acceptable both from a distance and close-up, marking treatment boundaries so that they have minimal visual impact from roads or trails, and providing for habitat improvement through silvicultural prescriptions. These and other examples may be elements of demonstration programs directly related to timber harvest.

OLD-GROWTH AND LATE-SUCCESSION MANAGEMENT

OLD GROWTH

Existing old-growth redwood trees in the Forest have been excluded from all future timber harvesting, as mandated by SDSF's authorizing legislation AB 1965. Figure 14 shows that the only stand of old-growth trees is located in the Badger Spring area. There is also a small group of old-growth trees located near Sulphur Springs. Individual old-growth conifer trees are identified, marked for preservation and protection during timber harvest preparations and entered into the Forest-wide old-growth tree database. Individual tree characteristics, listed in Table 7, helps foresters to identify these old-growth trees in the Forest. (Table 7 compares tree characteristics for old growth against those of young growth.) No individual characteristic, including age, is used to make a classification. Instead, combinations of these characteristics are used to determine if trees are classified as old growth or young growth.

Figure 14. Old-growth Stand and Late-Succession Management Areas.



LATE SUCCESSION

Late-succession management areas will be administered to promote the development of

functional old-growth habitat characteristics through infrequent, low-intensity timber management activities. These characteristics include multi-level canopy structure which provides vertical and horizontal diversity, stand-age diversity, large trees, snags, down logs, and other woody debris. Recruitment and retention of these characteristics, which provide important habitat elements for fish and wildlife species, will be attained through silvicultural prescriptions. For example, trees with crowns that extend over stream channels will not be harvested unless a qualified hydrologist or wildlife biologist recommends removal of such trees to enhance riparian habitat or hydrologic function. These trees may also be removed when recommended by a Certified Engineering Geologist to help stabilize active slides. CWHR classifications will be used to assess and maintain the specific wildlife habitat characteristics of these areas in SDSF.

Table 7. Individual redwood and Douglas-fir tree characteristics.

YOUNG GROWTH	OLD GROWTH
Abundant branches or knots in the lower 1/3 of the bole (tree trunk).	Lower third of the bole is relatively free of branches or knot indicators.
Branches are small, 4 inches and under.	Large branches, many greater than 4 inches in diameter
The tops of the crown are usually pointed and the branches are usually upturned.	Tops of crown are rounded or flat. Branches may be downturned.
Bark is typical of younger trees as described in dendrology books (shallow bark furrows).	Bark is typical of older mature trees as described in dendrology books (deep bark furrows, bark between furrows often plate-like).
Growth is generally fast, as indicated by large annual rings - usually less than 10 annual rings per inch.	Slow current growth as indicated by a long period of narrow annual rings - usually 15 or more annual rings per inch.
Excessive taper in open grown trees.	Very little taper, even in open grown trees.
Few fire scars or superficial fire scars and burned bark.	Large old fire scars, burned bark and goose pens common.
Tree age less than 175 years.	Tree age 175 years or greater.

Like areas of old growth, sections in the Forest designated for late-succession management have been identified and mapped (Figure 14). These areas make up 15 percent of the overall

Forest, and correspond to a width of 300 feet on each side of the East Branch of Soquel Creek, Amaya Creek, and Fern Gulch within SDSF boundaries (all Class I watercourses). Timber harvesting in these areas conforms to the following guidelines, as well as the Anadromous Salmonid Protection (ASP) Rules approved by the State Board of Forestry and Fire Protection in 2009:

* At least 75% total canopy in multiple layers retained with 80% post - harvest overstory canopy from 30 to 100 feet from the watercourse transition line (WTL).

* At least 25% canopy in trees at least 24 inches diameter at breast height (dbh) retained.

* All woody riparian (i.e., hydrophytic) vegetation retained except where riparian function would be enhanced by removing such vegetation.

* Large snags (i.e., standing dead trees at least 20 inches dbh and 15 feet tall) or live wildlife trees (i.e., trees that support bird nests or have cavities or large limbs that make them valuable for nesting birds) will be recruited (created from existing healthy trees) or retained with the goal of reaching an average density of at least five per acre.

* At selected locations where conifers are lacking and would not compete with riparian vegetation, Douglas-fir and redwood may be planted to promote long-term recruitment of large woody debris in streams.

* Downed logs at least 24 inches in diameter and 30 feet long will be retained with the goal of reaching an average density of at least two per acre, and total coarse, woody debris will be retained at an average density of at least 10 tons per acre.

* No harvest within the Core Zone or first 30 feet from the watercourse transition line (WTL).

* A post-harvest stand that retains the 13 largest conifer trees (live or dead) on each acre that encompasses the Core and Inner Zones.

* Large trees retained are to be those most conducive to recruitment to the watercourse channel.

* Additionally, harvesting is prohibited in channel migration zones and additional protection measures are mandated where there are flood prone areas (see 14 CCR 916.9 (f) in the California Forest Practice Rules).

These guidelines will be updated in the future as needed to reflect rule changes for the

protection of anadromous salmonid species.

Site disturbance during harvesting operations in late-succession management areas will be kept to a minimum by restricting tractor use and cable-yarding corridors to predesignated trails. Furthermore, all trees to be harvested and all wildlife trees and downed logs to be retained will be marked. A Professional Geologist and a qualified hydrologist will also be utilized to review operations during timber harvest planning.

Areas along the creeks were chosen as late-succession areas for a number of reasons, including protection of sensitive riparian zones, fisheries resources, and existing Watercourse and Lake Protection Zones (WLPZ) rule requirements. Furthermore, these areas provide habitat corridors and buffers between stream channels and nearby harvested areas. Corridors are important for wildlife movement and survival, providing a valuable element to the landscape pattern.

HARVEST SYSTEMS

The terrain where logging activities are to occur will be the key factor in determining whether ground skidding, cable logging, or aerial harvest systems are used. The erosion hazard, slope angle, slope stability, and distance to drainages will also be carefully evaluated in the selection of harvest systems. Additional factors include access, public safety, aesthetics, timing, noise, environmental mitigation, economic conditions, research, and demonstration aspects. The appropriate harvest system for each timber sale will be identified and utilized based on the above considerations. Refinements on the harvest systems used will be made as necessary to accomplish harvesting in an economical, efficient, and environmentally sound manner.

SYSTEMS FOR USE IN SDSF

Ground skidding logging systems, methods which pull logs on the ground to landings (loading areas), consist of tractor, rubber tire skidder, and horse logging. Horse logging, limited to gentle slopes and modest sized trees, can be used to minimize soil disturbance, damage to residual trees in dense stands, or for demonstrative purposes. Tractors and rubber tire skidders are generally used where slopes average less than 35 percent and on steeper slopes after evaluations of slope stability and erosion hazard potential are completed. Operations are contingent upon the ability to mitigate any impacts to negligible proportions. Tracked equipment with an attached, open ended holding container, called a forwarder, is utilized for moving split firewood to a road or landing for loading into a truck.

In SDSF, ground skidding equipment will be restricted to the minimum size capable of moving the harvested timber. Skid trail systems (temporary trails used by ground skidding equipment) will be designed so that existing skid trails are utilized where appropriate. All new and rehabilitated trails will be predesignated. A Certified Engineering Geologist (CEG) will participate in the preparation of all timber harvesting plans. CEGs will review the locations of all proposed roads, skid trails, and landings on unstable soils, unstable areas, and

areas where the California Forest Practice Rules require that skid trails be designated before the start of timber operations.

Skyline logging, commonly referred to as cable logging, uses cables to fully or partially suspend logs off the ground while transporting them to designated landings. The cables are attached to a machine, called a yarder, which is equipped with multiple winches and a tower for pulling the cables. A wide range of cable systems are available for logging both large and small timber. In SDSF, cable yarding will generally be used on steep slopes, near drainages, or where road construction is difficult.

Aerial harvest systems incorporate the use of helicopters to move logs from one area to another. These systems are beneficial when the erosion hazard or slope instability are high or when access to an area is limited. In SDSF, aerial systems will be considered primarily for demonstrative purposes and where cable yarding is not possible. Helicopter timber drop-off and landing areas will be located at least 0.5 mile from the nearest occupied dwellings.

A preliminary logging plan for SDSF designated proposed tractor and cable yarding areas, existing and planned roads, and old growth areas. Based on this plan, approximately 1,700 acres are suitable for yarding by tractors and 900 acres are suitable for yarding by cable yarders or helicopters.

HARVEST SYSTEMS AND COMPATIBILITY

Harvesting operations will be planned and implemented to minimize conflicts with neighbors and visitors where possible. To accomplish this, road and skid trail construction will be designed with potential users in mind. For example, specific logging trails can be designed to serve as future recreation trails where appropriate. Certain logging trails may be closed, however, following harvesting activities where public access is inappropriate (e.g., research or sensitive areas, or where trespass across private property would occur). New roads and skid trails will be carefully located to minimize visual impacts. Additionally, the size and duration of area closures and traffic diversions will be evaluated for each timber sale.

HARVEST PLANNING

HARVEST LEVEL

Short Term

SDSF's annual harvest level for the planning period from 2010 to 2020 will average between 800,000 and 900,000 board feet (approximately 30 to 35 percent of annual Forest-wide growth). This harvest level is equal to 8.6 million board feet per decade and is consistent with AB 1965 in that it provides for timber management demonstrations and promises an intensively managed research forest.

So far during planning period one (2010 to 2020) in year 2013, 3.8 million board feet have been harvested on SDSF. This harvest rate is substantially lower than SDSF's current conifer growth rate of 2.6 million board feet per year and is less than one percent of the standing

conifer inventory. It is expected that a timber harvest of 1.5 to 2 million board feet will occur every other year starting in 2014.

Long Term

The projected harvest levels for the first decade (2010 – 2020) are approximately one-third of current growth. If future harvest continues at this level, the forest will develop denser stands with bigger trees and more closed canopy over time. The harvest level is projected to gradually increase as the Forest inventory and growth increases. It is anticipated that the funds needed for the maintenance and operation of SDSF, reasonable capital costs and other expenses incurred in fulfilling the objectives of PRC sections 4660 – 4664 on SDSF will only be fulfilled once long term harvest levels are achieved.

Forest stocking and growth will be reevaluated in the second decade (2020 to 2030) when a new Forest inventory is conducted and updated data are used to project future conditions once again. The harvest level on SDSF will be consistent with the Management Goal in Chapter 2 to "Demonstrate sustained-yield timber harvest practices through harvest operations that balance harvest rates with growth over time and are compatible with rural land use in Santa Cruz County, while promoting recreation opportunities, forest health, watershed protection, wildlife, and fisheries values as well as aesthetic enjoyment."

Sustained yield production is achieved by balancing growth and harvest over time, maintaining a timber inventory capable of producing the long-term sustained yield (LTSY) (i.e., the harvest level projected to be sustainable after 100 years), and having the projected annual harvest level for all future rolling ten-year periods not exceed the LTSY. These results were established by projecting stocking conditions, growth, and harvest levels for the planning area over a 100-year period based on the best available information and accepted principles of forest management and statistics. During the development of the 1998 General Forest Management Plan for SDSF, a compromise was made to limit harvest levels at SDSF to no more than 50-60 percent of forest-wide growth regardless of LTSY or revenue needs. There was a fear that SDSF would be used to generate much needed funds for California and that the revenue from timber harvesting would not be used consistent with fulfilling the objectives of PRC Sections 4660-4664. Since SDSF was established, the total harvested volume has been 5,986,000 board feet over a period of 23 years. This amount of volume is accumulated in growth at SDSF in just over two years.

To evaluate timber production capabilities the land area within SDSF was grouped according to its availability for timber harvesting: unavailable (e.g., inoperable areas, old-growth protection areas, and predominantly hardwood areas); limited availability (e.g., late-succession management areas, recreation sites, and unstable areas); and fully available. As a result, 60 percent of SDSF (1,609 acres) is fully available for timber production, 30 percent (804 acres) has limited availability, and 10 percent (268 acres) is unavailable (Table 8). All long-term sustained yield values are based on the full and limited availability acres only. Unavailable acres are not included in the analysis. Figures 15 and 16 illustrate the inventory, growth and harvest rates projected over ten planning periods generated from this analysis based on the 2006 timber inventory data and current constraints on the harvest level.

In future analysis and planning efforts, the short and long term harvest levels will be reevaluated based on the best available information at that time. The level of timber harvesting shall not exceed LTSY and on a cumulative basis shall be limited to the level of timber harvesting necessary to provide the funds needed for the maintenance and operation expenses of SDSF, reasonable capital costs, and other expenses incurred in fulfilling the objectives of PRC Sections 4660-4664 on SDSF.

Table 8. SDSF Forest Land Availability.

Timber Capable	**Condition Class**	**Acres**	Percent of Ownership
	Full Availability	1,609	60
	Limited Availability	804	30
	Unavailable	268	9.9
	Subtotal	**2,677**	99.9
Non-Timber Capable	Non-timber	4	0.1
	Ownership Total	**2,681**	100

Table 9. Projected SDSF Forest-wide (full and limited availability) Average Annual Inventory, Harvest and Growth by Planning Period.

Period	Year	Inventory MMBF (1)	Inventory per Acre MBF(2)	Harvest per Year MMBF(1)	Growth per Year MMBF(1)
1	2010-2020	112	46.2	0.866	2.25
2	2020-2030	125	51.9	1.03	2.37
3	2030-2040	139	57.5	1.18	2.65
4	2040-2050	153	63.6	1.45	2.91
5	2050-2060	168	69.6	1.49	3.00
6	2060-2070	183	75.9	1.50	3.10
7	2070-2080	199	82.5	1.55	3.15
8	2080-2090	215	89.0	1.57	3.23
9	2090-2100	232	96.0	1.60	3.28
10	2100-2110	248	102.9	1.60	3.34

1) MMBF = million board feet 2) MBF = thousand board feet

Figure 15. SDSF Projected Inventory by Planning Period.

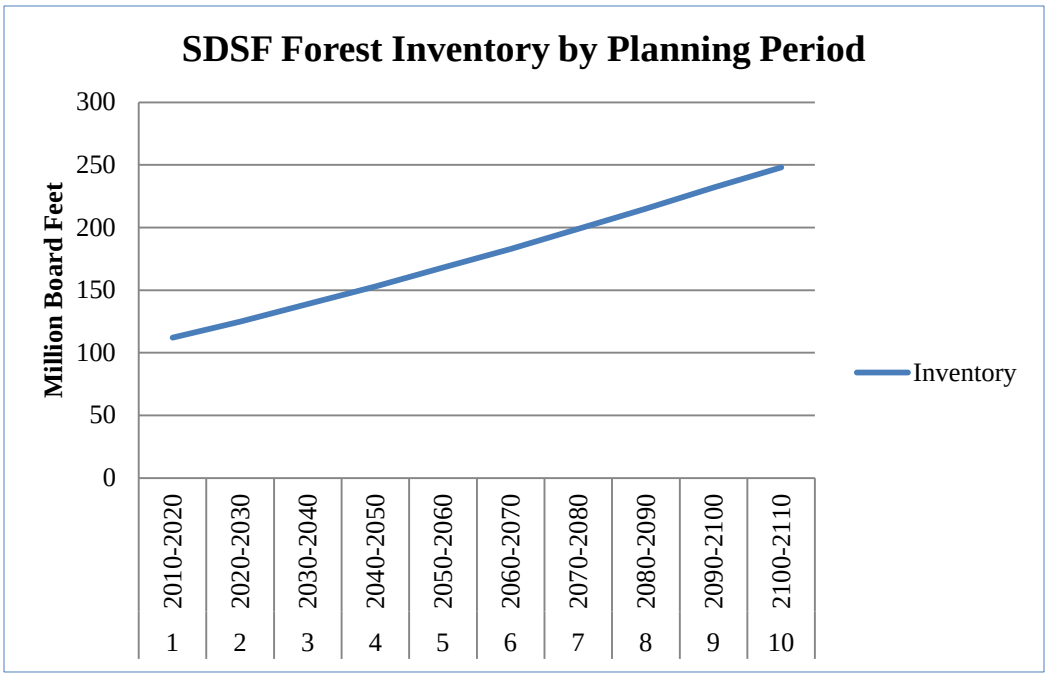
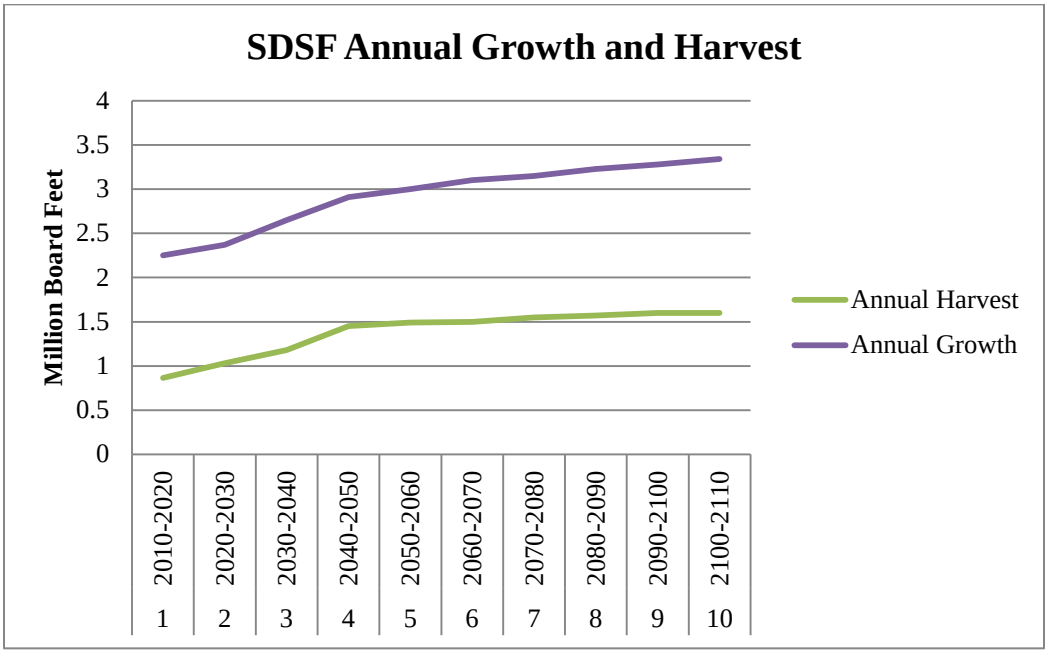


Figure 16. SDSF Projected Annual Growth and Harvest.



TIMBER SALE PROCESS

An important demonstration for SDSF is to support a viable local forest products industry. A local forest products industry is essential to maintain managed, working forests in the region. Financially viable managed forests in turn are an important tool to maintain large contiguous areas of wildlands in the Santa Cruz Mountains and to avoid land conversion and development pressures.

SDSF staff will implement a timber sale every year or every other year. The scarcity of sawmills in the region reflects the tenuous and sometimes unpredictable nature of timber supply in the Santa Cruz Mountains. A predictable and consistent supply of raw materials from SDSF is important in order to contribute to the viability of these sawmills and to ensure their continued existence.

Each plan will specify, at a minimum, the area and volume to be harvested, logging and silvicultural methods to be used, and restoration and protection measures necessary to address environmental concerns. All potential harvests will be evaluated by CAL FIRE Forest Practice staff and will be available for public review.

Once a timber sale has been approved by the CAL FIRE Director, a minimum bid will be established for the sale. The timber designated for harvest will then be sold to the highest bidder. The timber purchaser will enter into a contract with the State which specifies all requirements in detail, including the operation and payment schedule, adherence to applicable laws, and any additional improvements or demonstrations. SDSF staff will administer the sale, assuring that the contractor abides by the contract. Furthermore, CAL FIRE Forest Practice Inspectors from the San Mateo-Santa Cruz Unit and resource professionals from the other Review Team agencies will conduct a Pre-Harvest Inspection and periodically inspect the operation during and after logging. Additionally, a Waiver from a Waste Discharge Requirement will be obtained from the Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board prior to the commencement of timber operations as required.

The timber sale process will be administered through the CAL FIRE Class III permit system for major timber sales. Periodically, small timber sales (less than 100,000 board feet) may be offered for demonstration or research purposes. These harvests would require a Class I minor timber sale permit. Any conifers removed in minor sales or lost through catastrophe (earthquake, wind, fire, flood, or pest infestation) must also be applied to the designated harvest level. In the event of a major catastrophe, salvage logging would occur and the annual harvest level would be recalculated.

It is generally accepted that winter timber harvesting will not occur at SDSF. This means that no heavy equipment operations or log trucking will occur during the winter period, beginning October 15 and ending May 1. Certain activities will require a winter operations plan to be included in a THP. The activities that may occur in the winter period are lopping of slash, falling of timber outside of the stream protection zones during dry periods, tree planting, erosion control maintenance, and firewood cutting and splitting.

TIMBER OPERATIONS MONITORING

To avoid adverse impacts on water quality and fisheries resulting from the discharge of sediment to watercourses attributable to timber operations, SDSF staff will monitor all timber operations (including all harvesting areas and new roads, skid trails, and landings) annually for five to seven years following completion of the operations. Occurrences of substantial surface erosion (e.g., gullies) or mass wasting (e.g., landslides or slumps) resulting from the operations will be identified and described by a Registered Professional Forester. Each substantial gully or landslide will be evaluated to determine its cause, and stabilization measures will be identified that will be most feasible and effective. Such measures will be implemented within 90 days from the date when the subject site is identified, unless due cause for delay is explained and a reasonable alternative schedule for implementation is proposed by the Forest Manager.

Appropriate mitigation measures to be incorporated into future timber operations will be described and specified in future timber harvesting plans to avoid a recurrence of the observed erosion or mass wasting events (i.e., adaptive management).

TIMBER MARKETS

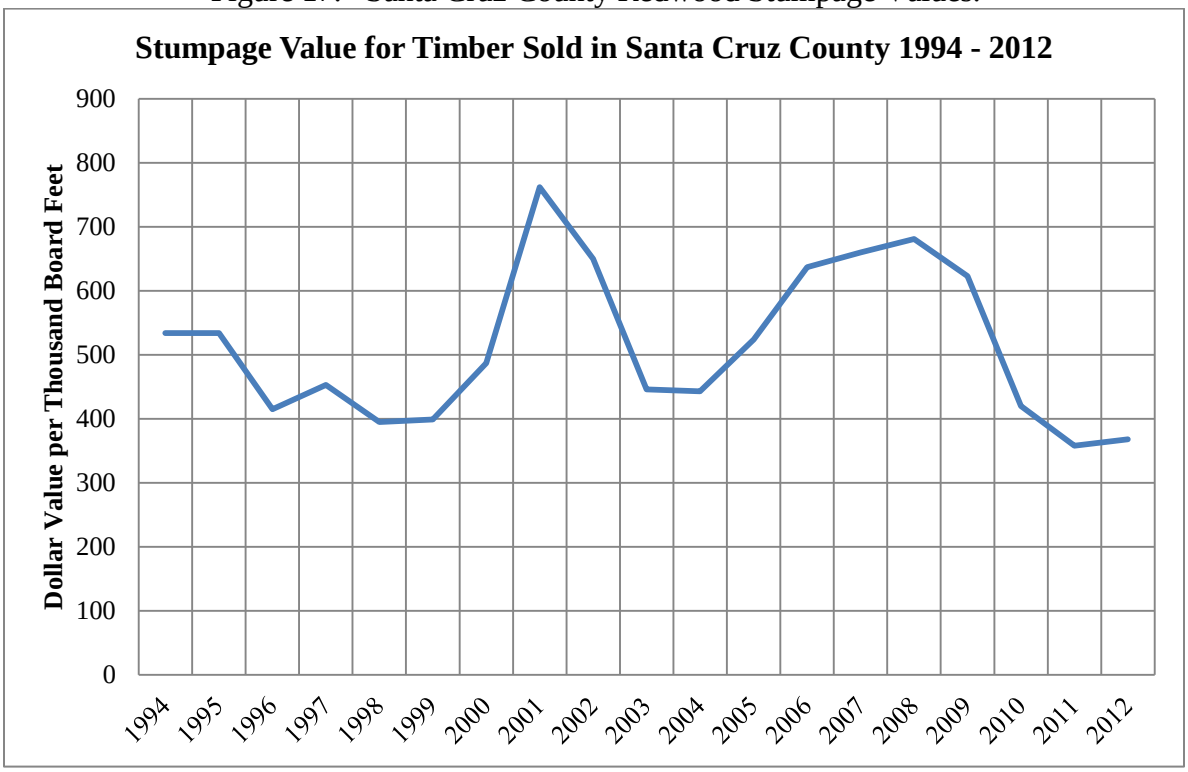
The local timber market is largely influenced by the proximity of sawmills and economic conditions. The closest large sawmill to SDSF is the Big Creek Lumber Company mill, located 17 miles north of Santa Cruz near Davenport. The next closest sawmill is Redwood Empire Sawmills in Cloverdale, 165 miles north of Santa Cruz on Highway 101.

The timber market has historically undergone fluctuations as a consequence of economic conditions. Figure 17 indicates dramatic changes in redwood stumpage prices during the time period 1994 to 2012 (California State Board of Equalization, 2012).

Stumpage prices reflect the value of logs delivered to the mill less the costs of logging, hauling, and cleanup. In the 1990s, stumpage prices increased significantly and have widely fluctuated since then. Factors contributing to the rise in the 1990s included a decline in federal timber sales, a reduction of available timber elsewhere, increased forest regulations, and the protection of threatened and endangered species. Starting in 2008, the demand for forest products declined with the economic recession and decreased markets for lumber related to the housing market. These factors, along with the cyclical nature of the timber market, are expected to continue to influence market activity.

Timber values for SDSF are not expected to be equal to general redwood/Douglas-fir prices. Bidding competition for SDSF sales will generally be lower because of the scarcity of sawmills in the region. Harvesting operations will usually be more expensive because of the amount of rehabilitation and restoration work planned. For example, existing undersized road culverts will be replaced, existing roads will be reshaped and surfaced to reduce erosion and additional fire hazard reduction work will be performed. These revenue-reducing activities will be added to the cost of harvesting.

Figure 17. Santa Cruz County Redwood Stumpage Values.



HARDWOOD MANAGEMENT

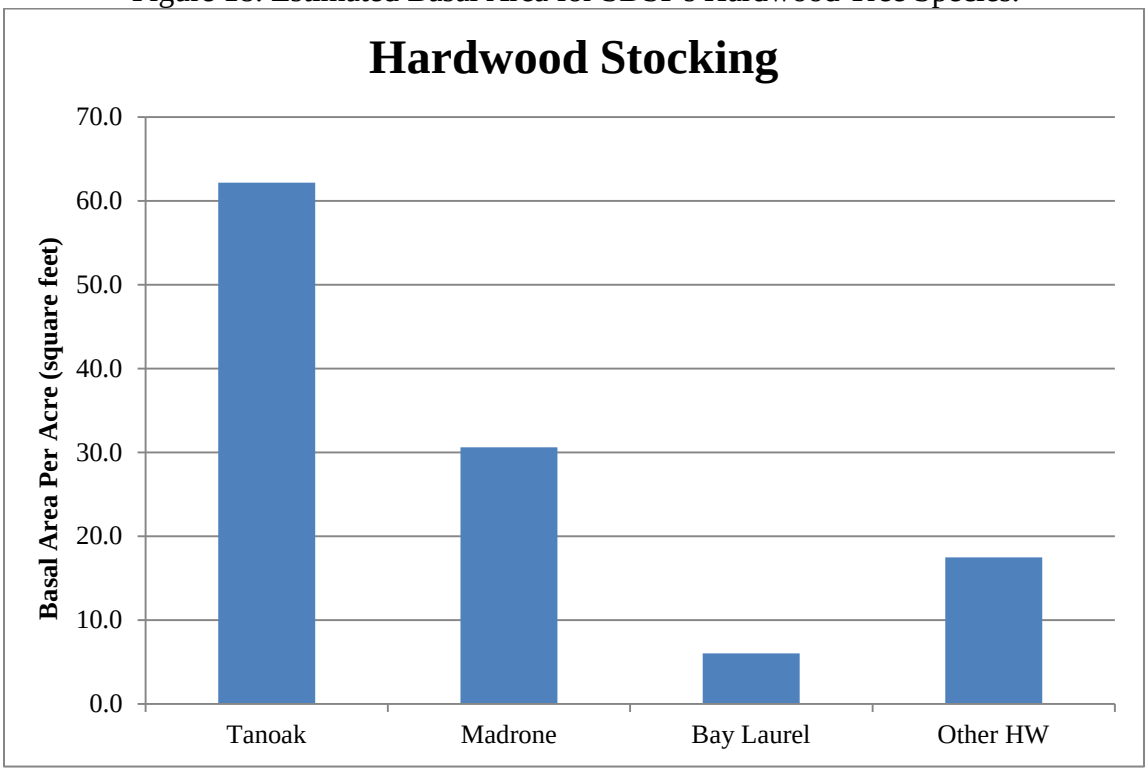
The 2006 timber inventory estimated hardwood basal area to be 116 square feet per acre. Figure 18 represents the hardwood basal area by the three most common species and a grouping of lesser occurring species (live oak, willow, alder, and bigleaf maple). As the graph indicates, tanoak is the most common hardwood species present. Hardwoods are a significant component of SDSF and, on average, comprise 40 percent of the basal area. Since the 2006 inventory however, dramatic visual indications of a shift in this composition are evident. Many areas where madrone and tanoak occurred in greater abundance than bay-laurel have seen significant mortality in the tanoak and madrone from several pathogens that affect these species and not the bay-laurel. Various experiments and demonstrations will focus on improving the health of these stands and reestablishing a diversity of species.

Hardwood stands will be evaluated during wildlife and timber management planning. The Forest type map discussed in the Conifer Volume Inventory section classifies hardwoods as well as conifers in SDSF. Areas that have always been hardwood will remain so and will be examined for wildlife habitat enhancement and research opportunities. Approximately 100 acres of SDSF timberlands that naturally support conifers but, as a result of past logging and other management, currently support pure or predominantly hardwood stands will gradually be harvested and reforested where appropriate by planting redwood and Douglas-fir

seedlings. These stands are widely distributed throughout the Forest in units one-quarter to one acre in size. An analysis of potential biotic and wildlife habitat impacts will occur prior to all hardwood conversion. Any individual openings will not exceed 0.5 acres. These areas will be treated by planting group openings or by selectively removing a portion of the canopy and interplanting with conifer. Focusing on areas along the edges of conifer stands has proven the most successful in other areas of the Santa Cruz Mountains. Experimentation with differing levels of canopy reduction as well as prescribed burning in these areas may be pursued as a demonstration.

Another aspect of hardwood management is to examine and experiment with alternative uses for hardwoods. The goal is to efficiently utilize more raw material, targeting portable sawmill owners, timber operators, and private property owners in the process. Some items that can be made from hardwood lumber include furniture, paneling, flooring, and decking. Hardwoods can also be utilized as fuelwood and chips. SDSF will research and demonstrate the management and use of hardwoods as a timber resource.

Figure 18. Estimated Basal Area for SDSF's Hardwood Tree Species.



DEMONSTRATION AND RESEARCH PROGRAMS

SDSF's demonstration and research programs will integrate all facets of timber management consistent with PRC Sections 4660-4664 and subject to the limitations of this management plan. Each timber sale will serve as a demonstration but also may contain a research

component. Research projects will evaluate the applicability, practicality, and effectiveness of various strategies of forest and watershed management. Timber management demonstrations will include planning and operational projects as well as tours showing the risks and benefits of timber harvesting. Additional information on projects can be found in the Demonstration and Education and Research Chapters.

Findings of research and demonstration projects will be available to the general public, small private landowners, researchers, and the forest products industry. Information will be distributed through research publications, direct mailing, libraries, and posting on the internet (see http://www.fire.ca.gov/resource_mgt_stateforests_publications.php).

SDSF can best serve the general public by providing information and experiences which enhance understanding of forest management principles and good land stewardship. The best way to provide learning opportunities is through exposure to forest management activities. Demonstration subjects might include the complexities of land management, trade-offs involved with timber harvesting, and the extent of wood products utilized by consumers. With this information, the public can make their own informed decisions regarding the effects of forest management on the environment.

Small private landowners can gather useful information and learn to plan more efficiently by viewing land management alternatives. Visiting project sites and observing results is an effective way to understand management techniques and how these might apply to private land. Of most benefit will be practical, directed projects that clearly demonstrate timber management, natural resource enhancement techniques, and solutions to specific problems.

Timber operators and industrial land managers will have the opportunity to view various harvesting and environmental protection techniques. Demonstration and research project ideas will be solicited from this group. Possible projects may include evaluating methods to enhance forest health and regeneration, testing new harvest and management techniques, and solving operational problems.

MINOR FOREST PRODUCTS

The primary minor forest product that will be sold from the Forest is fuelwood. Fuelwood, primarily from hardwood tree species, will be available on an intermittent basis, usually as the result of other management activities. These activities may include road work, fuel break construction or maintenance, by-products of timber sales, and wildlife habitat improvement projects.

Additional forest products may be sold as they become available. These include salvage sawlogs, redwood split salvage, cull logs, roots and stumps, posts, boughs and other greens. As with the hardwood management program, the use of these products promotes utilization of raw materials that might otherwise accumulate and present safety or fire hazards.

THE FOLLOWING PUBLIC COMMENTS WERE RECEIVED DURING REVIEW OF THE 1998 GENERAL FOREST MANAGEMENT PLAN

Comments and concerns regarding SDSF's timber management program have been very detailed and encompass a variety of subjects. Since it is impossible to address every comment directly, five broad topics of concern which cover most comments have been identified.

The first and probably most important concern to neighbors and other users of SDSF involves disturbance caused by logging activities. Logging truck traffic on mountain roads, reduced access to the Forest, alteration of the forest viewshed, and noise are sources of apprehension for many individuals. As stated in the management guidelines below, SDSF will strive to reduce possible impacts to forest neighbors and users during all forest management activities.

Another concern that has generated many comments deals with the possibility of negative impacts on Forest wildlife. Comments generally focus on the effects of timber harvesting on wildlife habitat, including concern for streams and adjacent riparian areas. SDSF plans to evaluate and monitor the response of various plant and animal species to forest management activities. Results of studies may include strategies to improve adverse conditions, enhance mediocre areas, or maintain exceptional situations.

The third area of attention deals with revenue from State Forest harvests. Interested individuals have expressed an opinion that SDSF should only harvest enough to cover basic expenses and that revenue should only be used for these expenses. CAL FIRE recognizes that PRC Sections 4660-4664 limits the level of harvests on a cumulative basis to that needed for the maintenance and operation of SDSF, reasonable capital costs, and other expenses incurred in fulfilling the objectives of PRC Sections 4660-4664 on SDSF. CAL FIRE must also comply with California Forest Practice Act and Rules and Board of Forestry and Fire Protection policy. The Department will not attempt to accurately estimate revenues over any specific time period. As revenues increase over time, the Department will request expenditure augmentations through the normal budget process. Final state forest allocations ultimately rest with the Legislature.

Concern for the natural instability of the Soquel Creek watershed and excessive soil loss is also prevalent. Logging activities in the Forest will adhere to California Forest Practice Act and Rules which limit road and skid trail construction. These regulations require site-specific mitigation as necessary to reduce erosion to minimum levels. Additionally, adherence to the Anadromous Salmonid Protection Rules, environmentally sound logging practices, input from Professional Geologists for all timber sales, and experimental research will be used to minimize damage to this sensitive area.

Finally, neighbors of SDSF would like to see local loggers, trucking companies, and mills perform the felling, hauling, and milling of products from the Forest's timber sales. While this may be ideal, the bid process cannot be limited to local businesses. In some cases, the

highest bidder will likely be local, keeping the work and revenue in Santa Cruz County.

MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

1. Create and maintain a mosaic with a range of seral stages across the Forest that changes over time. Optimize the Forest's attraction as a working forest and research destination to best meet the multiple use mandate.

2. Maintain and enhance a healthy forest ecosystem. This includes the monitoring of basic resources and requires management activities that ensure forest vigor. The Forest will be periodically surveyed on an informal basis for general health, with emphasis on disease and insect activity, tree growth and vigor, and soil stability. Other monitoring activities, such as those developed for fisheries and wildlife, will contribute additional information on the health of individual resources within the ecosystem.

3. Protect and monitor the watershed, soil, fisheries, and wildlife resources during all timber harvesting activity. The fundamental goal is to minimize impacts to these resources through planning and mitigation developed on a site specific basis. Harvesting operations will be planned to occur in an orderly fashion across the plan area and will be completed from the back to the front to minimize the need to re-open landings, skid trails and roads one year to the next. Protection measures may include selecting low impact harvest methods, avoiding sensitive areas, monitoring for the introduction of invasive exotic plants and conserving or improving resource integrity. Timber harvesting will not occur during the period of winter operations (October 15 through May 1), the period prescribed in the ASP Forest Practice Rules, except as noted in the Timber Sale Process section.

4. Design timber management activities based on landscape perspectives. Components to consider will include horizontal and vertical forest structure, vegetation density, edge effect, corridor size, and biological diversity.

5. Timber sales will have demonstrational value and include experimental and educational aspects whenever possible. This may include pre-harvest and post-harvest activities as well as actual harvest procedures.

6. Consider neighbor and visitor concerns during all timber harvesting activities. SDSF will strive to reduce excessive noise, visual impacts, and transport activity. Logging methods and haul routes that facilitate reduced disturbance will be evaluated on a site-specific basis and used as appropriate.

7. Demonstrate timber management compatibility and integration with recreation. Whenever possible, design timber sales to minimize conflicts with recreational use and improve recreation facilities such as roads and trails. Additionally, safe recreational behavior during logging activities will be encouraged through signs,

direction from SDSF staff, and alternative routes.

8. Monitor all timber operations annually for five to seven years following completion of the logging operations. Any substantial surface erosion or mass wasting found will be identified and described by a Registered Professional Forester and evaluated to determine its cause. Stabilization measures that will be most feasible and cost effective will be identified and implemented within 90 days (see Appendix C). Each timber harvesting operation will include sediment source remediation. High-priority remediation sites will be considered when selecting areas for upcoming harvests. In some cases, remediation at locations other than timber harvest areas could constitute offsite mitigation for the watershed impacts of harvesting.

PLANNED ACTIONS

1. Harvest between 800,000 and 900,000 board feet per year for the period from 2010 to 2020. This is estimated to be approximately 30-35 percent of Forest-wide growth.

2. Protect all old-growth redwood and old-growth Douglas-fir trees in the Forest. Maintain and update the old-growth tree data base.

3. Promote the development of functional old-growth habitat characteristics in late-succession management areas within 300 feet of the East Branch of Soquel Creek, Amaya Creek, and Fern Gulch. Follow the Anadromous Salmonid Protection Rules for protection of Class I, II, and III watercourses to enhance riparian functions and to help recover state and federally listed fish species.

4. Identify anticipated harvest areas for the planning period up to 2020 and develop a Management Unit Map. Evaluate all possible harvesting and silvicultural methods, new road construction needs, and compatibility with other forest uses for each area under consideration. Planning for future harvests will include consideration of potential impacts to smaller watersheds and their future management to allow for well-designed monitoring of potential impacts on water quality.

5. Refine a forest type map which includes tree species, CWHR classifications, forest structure, and vegetation density. As resources permit, continue to develop and maintain a Geographic Information System (GIS) database which will eventually include information on soil characteristics, streams, topography, research sites, roads, trails, facilities, and other improvements.

6. Reinventory the Forest on a regular schedule, using either a temporary plot system or by installing a continuous forest inventory system of permanently monumented monitoring plots, to be remeasured at regular intervals. The next inventory will occur between 2016 and 2021.

7. Within each new project area, whether it be a THP or other experiment or

demonstration, hardwood stands will be considered for management. Some areas of hardwood will be managed by single tree selection harvesting or group selections. These areas will be planted with conifers as appropriate. Hardwood trees with particular wildlife value will be retained. Experimental treatments will also be demonstrated (i.e., reduction of bay-laurel in stands with extreme oak and madrone mortality).

8. Monitor timber operations areas for infestations of invasive, exotic species. Eradicate new populations prior to them becoming established and producing a seed bank.

CHAPTER 10: RESEARCH

INTRODUCTION

It is the State Board of Forestry and Fire Protection's policy for all State Forests to conduct innovative research in forest management. The purpose of such research is to provide resource management information to the general public, small forest landowners, and the forest products industry. Research opportunities in SDSF are numerous, offering small or large, general or specific, and experimental subjects. Individuals conducting research may represent private organizations, including consulting firms and environmental protection groups, or public agencies, such as institutions of learning or resource-based departments.

A plan to identify specific subjects of concern and research priorities for SDSF needs to be formulated so that continuous and long-range studies can commence. Forest staff will investigate possibilities and rely heavily on what the public, CAL FIRE officials, and resource professionals would like to see analyzed.

COMPLETED PROJECTS

Several research projects and surveys, summarized below, have been completed for resources within SDSF. Procedures and results of each study are outlined in their respective chapters with the exception of the Geologic Survey, which is covered in the Property Description Chapter.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL STUDIES

A complete surface field survey for archaeological and historical sites was conducted in 1991 by Dr. Brian Dillon. Dr. Dillon is a consulting archaeologist affiliated with California State University at Northridge. Sites found during this study will be protected for cultural, research, and educational purposes. Additional surveys for archaeological and historical sites have been completed for timber harvest plans, road and trail construction sites, and other projects. Several historic artifacts and archaeological sites have been recorded by CAL FIRE staff and protected.

A cultural resources study of the six-acre Badger Spring Picnic Area was completed in 2011 by Patricia Paramoure, a Master's student at Sonoma State University.

BIOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT

An inventory and assessment of SDSF's biota was completed by biologists from California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo, in 1992. The survey resulted in lists of all plants and animals seen, heard, or tracked in the Forest (refer to Appendix B for species lists). The study, which concentrated on special status

species, was under the direction of Professors V.L. Holland and Mike Hanson.

Several bird surveys were conducted by wildlife biologist David Suddjian, including raptor surveys for the Long Ridge THP in 1995, the Amaya THP in 1998, the Fern Gulch THP in 2001, 2005 and 2006, and a Marbled Murrelet survey in 2003-2004. After ten snags were created in Douglas-fir trees as part of the Long Ridge THP in 1995, Mr. Suddjian published "A Tale of Ten Snags" article in the September/October 2001 issue of the Santa Cruz Bird Club Newsletter and also presented a poster, along with Forest Manager Thomas Sutfin, at the Redwood Science Symposium, March 15-17, 2004 in Rohnert Park. After monitoring the post-harvest bird occupancy in these snags, he found that increased bird populations, new tree cavities, active nests and foraging evidence suggested that the snag management program was successful.

In 2011, Mr. Suddjian completed a report on Foothill Yellow-legged Frogs at Soquel Creek, Amaya Creek, and Fern Gulch. Thomas Sutfin, former SDSF Forest Manager, reported his frog observations along Soquel Creek from 1996 – 2008.

Raptor surveys of the Fern Gulch and Rim THP areas were completed by RPF Matt Greene in 2011 and 2012. Two new species were observed (wild turkey and pileated woodpecker); they have been added to the end of the Birds list under "Fauna of SDSF" in Appendix B.

A botanical survey of the Fern Gulch area was completed in 2002 and updated in 2010 by Tim Hyland and Dylan Neubauer. Mr. Neubauer completed a botanical survey of the Comstock Mill THP area in 2013. Lists of the species they observed have been added to the end of the "Flora of SDSF" list in Appendix B.

A study of blood-borne disease in SDSF was started in 2009 under Professor Janet Foley at the University of California Davis School of Veterinary Medicine, and continues currently. The study investigates blood-borne diseases including Lyme disease and anaplasmosis by surveying their hosts, which include ticks and small mammals.

A herpetological survey, started in 2010, continues currently with the help of volunteers under the North American Field Herping Association (NAFHA). The purpose of the survey is to verify and photo voucher all varieties of reptiles and amphibians existing in SDSF. The list of amphibians and reptiles that have been observed are in "Fauna of SDSF" in Appendix B.

Researchers from the Santa Cruz Mountain Puma Project through the University of California at Santa Cruz have been studying mountain lions in SDSF since 2009 using telemetry collars to collect continuous movement and location data. This study, led by ecologists Dr. Chris Wilmers and Paul Houghtaling, seeks to determine the success rate, effort and community-level consequences of predation, to understand

cougar habitat requirements, and to provide guidance on movement corridors for lions within and between the mountain ranges on the central California coast. More information may be found at http://wildlife.ucsc.edu/.

GEOLOGIC SURVEYS

An extensive geologic survey of SDSF involved detailed mapping of geologic features and areas damaged during the Loma Prieta earthquake. This analysis was conducted in 1992 by Michael Manson and Julie Sowma-Bawcom of the California Division of Mines and Geology (renamed California Geological Survey). Mapped information includes geologic characteristics, landslides, stream orders, and areas where mitigation work can be done. Additional geologic surveys have been completed for timber harvest plans, road and trail construction sites, and other projects.

RECREATION STUDY AND PLAN

A recreation survey to determine Forest recreational users' views and use patterns was sent to the neighbors of the Forest and the local mountain community in 1992. Copies of the survey were also distributed in the State Forest and in The Forest of Nisene Marks State Park. Results of the study have been a primary source of public input into the forest management planning process. The principal investigators for the study were Marcia McNally and Randy Hester from the University of California, Berkeley. The Recreation Study Final Report by McNally and Hester was completed in 1993. The Draft Education and Recreation Master Plan was completed in 1996 (University of California, 1996).

EDUCATION

Researchers from the University of California at Berkeley, led by Nova Blazej, completed the Education Study in 1997. It was intended to inform the development of the SDSF Education and Recreation Plan and to be used by SDSF education coordinators and volunteer coordinators as a planning tool for developing forest education programs. Five basic themes were identified to shape the framework of SDSF education programs: forest history, ecological processes, forest management, regional connections and the spirit of the Forest.

Three significant and detailed studies regarding the proposed SDSF Forestry Education Center (FEC) were completed under the leadership of Barbara Butler from the University of California at Berkeley in 2001. The first consisted of a series of interviews with decision makers in the Monterey Bay Area regarding the possible role and educational niche of the SDSF FEC (Butler et al., 2001).

The second was an in-depth analysis of ten environmental education centers in California to determine what kinds of facilities exist locally and beyond, and to

identify a range of potential facilities and their function for the proposed FEC (Butler et al., 2001).

The third and final study incorporated the findings of the two prior studies to design possible facilities and create a site plan for the proposed SDSF FEC (Butler and Hester, 2001). See the FEC section of the Demonstration and Education Chapter for additional information.

TIMBER INVENTORY AND GROWTH/SUSTAINED-YIELD ANALYSIS

The first forest-wide timber inventory and supplemental growth analysis were conducted to determine the current conditions of forest volume and vigor. The timber inventory, completed in 1991 by SDSF staff, surveyed both conifers and hardwoods on a ten percent sample of the Forest. The growth study used a portion of the plots established by the timber inventory but assessed the current growth rates of conifers only.

The second forest-wide forest resources inventory was completed in 2006. This forest inventory surveyed all tree species, conifers and hardwoods on a two percent sample of the Forest. The inventory data were used as input to the FORSEE growth model, which along with harvest scheduling software, projected the growth and development of the Forest over a 100-year planning interval. This analysis formed the basis for determining sustainable harvest levels in the next five to ten years that are also achievable in the long term without degrading the productivity of soils and the ecosystem. The results of this analysis are documented in the Option A Plan (CAL FIRE, 2010).

In 2011 Mike Papa, a Forestry Science master's student from California Polytechnic State University at San Luis Obispo, completed his thesis titled "Effects of Silviculture Management on Coast Redwood Forest Composition, Density, and Structure in Santa Cruz and San Mateo Counties". Papa's research included data from the Amaya and Longridge THPs at SDSF to examine forest restoration management.

WATERSHED ASSESSMENT

Dr. Brook Kraeger, a consulting hydrologist and neighbor of SDSF, completed a summary report on stream flow and rainfall data from gauges in the Soquel Creek Watershed in 1992. Dr. Kraeger has recorded rainfall and streamflow data on a 159-acre tributary to Soquel Creek in the Forest since the late 1990s. The intent of this long-term monitoring is to evaluate hydrologic modeling and to examine the impact of timber harvesting on the hydrologic process. This work is also supported by a Campbell Scientific CR1000 weather station that was established at the lower helipad in 2013.

In 1993, a comprehensive cumulative watershed effects analysis for the East Branch

of Soquel Creek watershed was completed by CAL FIRE Hydrologist Pete Cafferata (Cafferata and Poole, 1993). Chris Poole, a student intern from the University of California, Santa Cruz, and Forest staff assisted with data collection. Several subsequent watershed studies and surveys have been done by CDFW, the Resource Conservation District of Santa Cruz County, the National Marine Fisheries Service, Natural Resources Conservation Service, and others. Information from this research guides management activities to maintain or enhance the watershed integrity. See the Watershed Assessment Chapter for additional information.

A study on the movement of large woody debris in Soquel Creek was completed in 2003 (Lassettre and Kondolf, 2003).

FISHERIES ASSESSMENTS

One formal and comprehensive aquatic habitat survey was conducted on SDSF in 1994 (Berlekamp, 1994). A draft fisheries management plan was developed by Forestry Aide Bronwen Berlekamp and former Forest Manager Thomas Sutfin in 1995.

A macroinvertebrate sampling study performed by SDSF staff was conducted in October of 1995. DFG analyzed the collected samples and provided results of their findings in May 1996.

Annual fish population surveys were conducted on SDSF in cooperation with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife from 1993 to 2001 at four separate sites. From 2002 until the present, SDSF has continued these annual surveys in cooperation with the NOAA Southwest Fisheries Science Center (Sogard et al., 2009). NOAA Fisheries added a fifth site, increased the monitoring frequency, and incorporated additional research components. These Steelhead Trout Population Survey Reports have been completed every year to the present, with the exception of the year 2000.

Habitat typing for the Forest's five electrofishing stations has been conducted periodically since 1997.

In-stream temperature monitoring has been conducted annually at seven sites since 1997.

FOREST HEALTH

Since the beginning of the Sudden Oak Death (*Phytophthora ramorum*) outbreak in the Santa Cruz Mountains in the late 1990s, SDSF staff has worked closely with U.C. Cooperative Extension specialists and researchers from the U.C. Berkeley Forest Pathology and Mycology Laboratory lead by Dr. Matteo Garbelotto. Several Sudden Oak Death (SOD) studies have been completed over the years on SDSF including early work on various treatment options using direct chemical control with

phosphonates and evaluations of the role of bay-laurel as a SOD vector. In 2001, a transect/plot system was established for long-term monitoring of the occurrence and spread of SOD over time.

A biological control study of California bay-laurel resprouts began in 2013 by Dr. Marianne Elliott from Washington State University to test new strategies for managing the spread of SOD. The aim of the study is to develop and evaluate the effectiveness of treatment and eradication strategies to suppress bay-laurel resprouts which can harbor SOD.

ATMOSPHERIC STUDY

Researchers from the University of North Texas, Department of Geography, led by Dr. Alexandra Ponette-Gonzalez, began a study in 2012 to estimate atmospheric deposition into the Santa Cruz mountains using through-fall measurements and air-borne LiDAR. Rainwater was collected in a rain gauge and throughfall was collected in open funnel collectors in grasslands and forest stands of Douglas-fir to measure variation of chemical levels for future deposition modeling.

RESEARCH PRIORITIES

Subjects for research will include all ecosystems in the Forest. Studies will concentrate on all components of resource management, including protection, management, and public use. Current research priorities are listed below; as forest management techniques evolve, precedence will adjust accordingly.

WATERSHED MANAGEMENT

* Monitor the effects of forest management activities on the resources of the East Branch of Soquel Creek watershed within SDSF.
* Investigate stream enhancement and rehabilitation techniques.
* Investigate and document effective techniques to minimize erosion and stream sedimentation caused by logging, road building, and recreational use.
* Monitor stream discharge and precipitation in small headwater basins.

TIMBER MANAGEMENT AND FOREST HEALTH

* Investigate optimal spacing requirements for growth and regeneration.
* Study hardwood management and Sudden Oak Death.
* Study old-growth redwood forest communities and ways to achieve late-succession stand characteristics over time.
* Investigate logging techniques which minimize visual, auditory, and environmental impacts.
* Investigate silvicultural methods with varied harvest levels and cutting cycles.

FISHERIES AND WILDLIFE

* Assess the current condition of the fisheries resources within SDSF and document long-term trends.
* Study methods to improve steelhead and coho rearing habitat conditions.
* Investigate methods to improve wildlife habitat and provide for healthy biodiversity.

RECREATIONAL USE

* Monitor environmental impacts of visitors to the Forest.
* Study the reactions and responses of recreational users and neighbors to all forest management activities.

THE FOLLOWING PUBLIC COMMENTS WERE RECEIVED DURING REVIEW OF THE 1998 GENERAL FOREST MANAGEMENT PLAN

The general public's wishes regarding research include desire to be kept informed of SDSF's research plans and actions, both presently and in the future. Specifically, curiosity relating to research subjects, objectives, and investigators (and their affiliation) has been prevalent. To satisfy this concern, SDSF plans to announce current research projects through publications such as the Mountain Network News and other local newspapers. Additionally, newsletters containing information on present activities will be posted on signboards throughout the Forest.

Other public comments have suggested that information derived from research studies should be used to formulate forest management policy and actions. Gaining information which will aid in the management of SDSF is essentially the purpose of research projects; the Forest staff intends to put to use relevant information obtained through research.

A final category of public interest involves the availability of study results. Individuals have expressed that research findings be made available as conclusions that may be applicable to their own lands. As stated in the management guidelines below, results will be available through public libraries, natural resource journals, CAL FIRE publications, the CAL FIRE web site, and direct mailing.

MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

1. Actively design and carry out continuing scientific studies which refine and improve upon existing state of the art forest land management techniques.

2. Coordinate research projects with other State Forests and local, state, and federal public agencies. Additionally, research opportunities have been and will continue to be provided for universities, industry professionals, and private interest groups.

Research may be formal or informal, depending on the party conducting the study and available funding.

3. Assure dissemination of research results in a timely and professional manner. Information gained from studies will be made available to local, state, and federal public agencies as well as resource professionals, forest neighbors, and other interested individuals. Reports may be made available through direct mailing, newsletter articles, public libraries, professional natural resource journals, and the CAL FIRE web site.

PLANNED ACTIONS

1. Create a list of priority research needs, identify proper audiences, and define techniques to distribute information effectively and in a timely manner. Encourage innovative research in forest management, resource protection, and recreation. Investigate previous research to determine the extent of what has already been completed in the area as well as topics lacking in information.

2. Serve as an outdoor laboratory for CAL FIRE research projects and encourage investigations by other agencies and educational institutions. Use study results to improve forest practices both in the Forest and statewide.

CHAPTER 11: RECREATION

INTRODUCTION

The legislation creating State Forests (Public Resources Code 4631-4664) and Board of Forestry and Fire Protection policy both state that recreation is to be an integral part of the Demonstration State Forest Program. In addition, SDSF's enabling legislation, AB 1965, states that public enjoyment and open access are to be provided. SDSF's recreational management goal is to provide for uses that are compatible and integrated with resource protection, public education, and forest management while following the guidelines of AB 1965 and Board policy.

Prior to state acquisition of SDSF in 1988, the property was privately owned and used primarily by the owners, their guests, neighbors bordering the property, and frequent trespassers. Users consisted of equestrians, motorcycle riders, four-wheel drive enthusiasts, hunters, target shooters, and a limited number of hikers, mountain bikers, and campers.

Since the establishment of SDSF, recreational use of the Forest has changed. The primary groups who utilize the Forest are (in order of use) mountain bikers, hikers and walkers, and equestrians. The majority of recreational users at SDSF come for the mountain biking. SDSF offers a unique experience with several miles of single-track trails and a lengthy downhill decent from the ridge to Hihn's Mill Road. Other recreational users include picnickers, mushroom gatherers, bird watchers, trail runners, dog walkers, environmental organization members, dog search and rescue training personnel, geo-caching individuals, and people coming to enjoy the forest environment.

RULES, REGULATIONS AND POLICIES

Public access is allowed during daylight hours. Campfires, fishing, hunting, commercial events, and the use of firearms and motor vehicles are generally not allowed.

Current forest regulations prohibit all recreational motor vehicle use. The primary grounds for this regulation are lack of infrastructure (parking areas, barricades to prohibit vehicles driving onto sensitive areas), lack of SDSF personnel to provide patrol, and security and maintenance costs associated with increased traffic on unimproved roads. Other reasons include resource protection, safety, and fire prevention.

ILLEGAL ACTIVITIES

The enforcement of regulations has decreased the number of motorcyclists to a few violators, and four-wheel drive use is now almost non-existent.

In the past illegal shooting at Rattlesnake Gulch, private property across Highland Way from the Forest, was a detriment to Forest visitors. Gunfire could be heard throughout the Forest and many users found this unnerving. Additionally, the noise and danger of gunfire reduced the quality of forest visitor experiences. Since then, this problem has been solved and is no longer an issue.

Vehicles parked along Highland Way and occasionally in the parking area have been burglarized. Recreation users are warned to not leave valuable in their vehicle and especially not in plain sight. Users are encouraged to use the 911 system to report illegal activities and activate law enforcement response as needed.

Illegal parties at the Highland Way parking lot have been an ongoing problem. CAL FIRE law enforcement, Santa Cruz County Sheriff's deputies and State Parks Rangers have worked together to respond to these parties and have been effective in deterring them through a coordinated effort. Unfortunately, the effects of law enforcement action on illegal party organizers do not deter them indefinitely. Illegal parties pop up in new locations and back in old locations after a period of time. Additional security measures have been employed to prevent these illegal parties and are coordinated through law enforcement officers. Neighbors are encouraged to use the 911 system to report this activity and to activate a law enforcement response.

Other illegal activities that have been ongoing involve illegal harvesting of trees (particularly along property boundaries), illegal trail building, and dumping of trash on the Forest. All of these activities are investigated and responded to by SDSF staff in coordination with law enforcement.

RECREATION STUDY AND PLAN

To gain a better idea of current and future recreational users, their views, and related issues, SDSF implemented a recreation study which obtained information from the community and current users. The study, titled Soquel Demonstration State Forest Recreation Study Final Report (McNally and Hester, 1993), was intended to be the primary source of citizen involvement in the recreational planning process and designed to develop recreational and forest management strategies for SDSF. The results provided baseline information about existing and potential recreational users that will be utilized as more detailed recreation planning occurs.

The recreation study involved mailing questionnaires to all individuals who share a boundary with the Forest or live nearby. Additionally, different user groups who frequent the Forest were asked to fill out surveys while visiting SDSF. Information about the Recreation Study and the questionnaire were also published in the Mountain Network News, the Summit community's local newspaper. Of the 6,600 individual questionnaires distributed, 800 were returned. Several common themes or issues of concern were determined through this process and are discussed in this chapter.

The draft Education and Recreation Master Plan was completed in 1996. Consistent with this plan, several actions have been completed. A campground has been developed and is used on a limited basis by researchers, educational groups and personnel working on projects in the Forest. Interpretive sign boards have been placed in project areas, new trails have been developed, trail maintenance occurs on a regular basis, a portable toilet has been made available, picnic tables have been added and additional signage has been placed.

The study and plan that were prepared in the 1990s were predicated on securing new and better access on the west end of the Forest. Both plans describe the lack of adequate public access as the biggest challenge to overcome in managing recreation and education programs. As new access continues to be evaluated and negotiated, several new issues related to recreation have developed. In the 20 years since the Recreation Study was completed, new partnerships have developed, recreational activities have changed considerably, and best management practices have evolved. For example, advancements in battery technology has led to the development of electric-assist mountain bikes which look and perform similarly to non-motorized mountain bikes, blurring the lines of what is defined as a motorcycle. Also, the development of high-powered LED light systems has brought illegal night-time recreational use to many nearby trail systems. Management strategies will be reviewed in light of these changes.

PARTNERSHIPS

SDSF staff has fostered the development of groups to support recreation and education goals and to conduct trail patrols. Three groups have partnered with CALFIRE in this way and dedicated volunteers donate hundreds of hours of labor annually.

The Stewards of Soquel Forest is a non-profit organization founded in 2000 that assists with the recreation and education goals of SDSF. The Stewards coordinate volunteers for trail maintenance work and lead trail work days every year. They also assist with other projects such as steelhead trout monitoring, and public demonstration and education events.

A local chapter of the International Mountain Bicycling Association (IMBA), Silicon Valley Mountain Bikers (formerly named Responsible Organized Mountain Pedalers), has sponsored educational events and organized volunteers to do trail patrol at SDSF through the National Mountain Bike Patrol program.

Another local IMBA chapter, Mountain Bikers of Santa Cruz, has taken a leadership role in developing a plan for a new trail on the Forest. They have partnered with the Stewards of Soquel Forest and developed a trail crew leader training program to build a cadre of volunteer crew leaders to help build the new trail. They are leading a fundraising effort and donating their staff time to train, plan and implement the trail building effort.

The relationships with these organizations have been valuable to SDSF, allowing growth and improvements in the trail system and facilitating recreational use while minimizing

CALFIRE staff time and reducing costs of managing the trail system. Through improved communication and by working together, trail issues and recreational user issues are continually being resolved.

REGIONAL CONTEXT

SDSF's location is centered between the population centers of the Silicon Valley and the greater Santa Cruz metropolitan area, which provides for day use by many outdoor enthusiasts. SDSF is also a key link in a contiguous greenbelt between Los Gatos and Soquel which has been identified as an important region within the Land Trust of Santa Cruz County's Conservation Blueprint Initiative (2011).

SDSF's recreational opportunities exist alongside and are connected with those provided by other nearby trail systems and facilities, some of which are described below.

THE FOREST OF NISENE MARKS STATE PARK (TFNMSP)

Sharing a common boundary with TFNMSP is positive and offers prime recreational opportunities for both facilities. Recreationists, particularly mountain bikers and hikers, regularly use both facilities in one outing. Reaching the summit of Santa Rosalia Mountain and the entrance to SDSF by way of Aptos Creek Fire Road is a significant athletic feat requiring over 2500 feet of elevation gain.

Some people think the Forest is part of TFNMSP. Management staffs of both facilities have a good working relationship with one another; they meet regularly to share information and solve common problems, strengthening their relationship. As a result of this alliance, the new State Park map has been updated to include SDSF and to reflect the connections of the Ridge Trail in SDSF with the Aptos Creek Fire Road located on TFNMSP.

SIERRA AZUL & UVAS OPEN SPACE PRESERVES

The Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District is planning public access to the Rattlesnake Gulch parcel of the Sierra Azul Open Space Preserve, potentially with a hike-in campground on a knoll overlooking SDSF. The Open Space Master Plan is still being developed and revised with ongoing public comment.

The Santa Clara County Open Space Authority has acquired land to the east of Rattlesnake Gulch which connects to Santa Clara County's Uvas Canyon County Park. Additional acquisitions are being pursued by the OSA in this region.

BAY AREA RIDGE TRAIL

Through the development of additional public access in Sierra Azul there is a potential for a link from SDSF to the Bay Area Ridge Trail, which is the longest recreational trail in the region. When completed, the Bay Area Ridge Trail will connect Sierra Azul Open Space

Preserve to Mt. Madonna County Park. A potential trail connection from SDSF to the Bay Area Ridge Trail would likely bring additional visitors to the Forest, who may make use of the Hihn's Mill Road parking area or roadside parking along Highland Way.

BAY TO BAY TRAIL

Public support for a long distance regional trail connecting the San Francisco Bay to the Monterey Bay began to develop in 2001. This trail concept is a route from the Bay Trail in Alviso, up along the Guadalupe River Trail in San Jose, through Sierra Azul Open Space Preserve, crossing the Bay Area Ridge Trail near its highest point, then down into SDSF to TFNMSP, and ending at New Brighton State Beach.

CAMP LOMA

Camp Loma is a recreational facility operated by Santa Cruz County Youth Activities. Facilities include a large covered dining area, commercial-style kitchen, lawns, pool, showers, campsites and other amenities. It is available for rental and several groups have made use of the facilities to support events on SDSF.

ADAMS RANCH CONSERVATION EASEMENT

The Land Trust of Santa Cruz County owns a conservation easement over a parcel between Longridge Road and Adams Road, which includes an existing trail and language which provides for its eventual connection to the Fern Gulch area of SDSF. Other landowners in this neighborhood have expressed interest in providing easements to improve connectivity to SDSF.

PEDESTRIAN & CYCLING ROUTES

A roadside pathway along Summit Road between Highway 17 and Soquel-San Jose Road provides a separated environment for pedestrians and cyclists of the surrounding community. Soquel-San Jose Road has recently been designated as a cycling route by Santa Cruz County. "Sharrows" have been painted on the roadway and signs installed to encourage safe sharing of the road. Both of these facilities have the potential to bring recreational users to SDSF in an auto-free manner should trail connections to the Forest be completed.

NEIGHBORING COMMUNITIES

Neighbors of the Forest have a range of opinions and concerns regarding recreational use. Some neighbors who live nearby want to assure they can continue to access, or to gain access to the Forest directly from their neighborhood without encouraging general public use of narrow local roads. Alternative access points would require careful planning and management to address concerns.

Some neighbors are concerned that recreation and timber harvesting will disrupt their quality

of life in the mountain community. They are worried that too many people will come from the larger metropolitan areas and impact their roads, increase fire danger, and vandalize property. Some individuals have expressed concern regarding excessive noise and their views being destroyed by timber harvesting.

Some trespassing through private property to enter and leave the Forest has been reported. Forest patrols continue and citations to trespassers have been issued. Publishers of trail guides have been contacted to correct errors and to promote an accurate depiction of public access routes. SDSF maps provided to the public do not show private roads adjacent to the Forest.

Every effort is made to consider the impact of proposed management activities on surrounding neighbors. SDSF works with the community to aid in their understanding of SDSF as public land with certain legislated mandates that include education, public use, and timber management.

Public meetings and tours are conducted to discuss SDSF mandates and hear public concerns. Access issues are being investigated, and detailed recreation and timber management planning have been completed. Motor vehicle use within the Forest is restricted, limiting the types and levels of recreational use.

PUBLIC ACCESS AND STAGING AREAS

Public access into the Forest continues to be a significant challenge. At this time, only one remote, legal access point provides a staging area with parking. This entry, the main entrance to SDSF, consists of an easement across private property and is subject to winter closures due to continuing landslides on Highland Way. Furthermore, those who do not use trails (e.g., physically challenged individuals) are limited to using the edge of the Forest because there is no public access by motor vehicles into the internal areas of SDSF.

Providing alternative access requires a complete analysis of access needs and an assessment of land available for easement or acquisition. Accommodating non-trail users should be a consideration in future recreation and education planning. Developing an access plan to address this issue is a high priority.

EXISTING FACILITIES

SIGNS AND MAPS

Directional signs with mileage have been installed at all trail intersections and at the entrance to the Forest. Large signs at each entrance have also been placed listing forest rules and regulations that are enforced. Sign boards are located at three locations on SDSF: the Highland Way entrance, Badger Spring, and the Ridge Trail entrance from The Forest of Nisene Marks State Park. The sign boards display large Forest maps and are updated periodically with educational materials, announcements, and public notices regarding rules

and closures. Free brochures which include maps are also provided.

MULTI-USE ROAD AND TRAIL SYSTEM

The trail system of SDSF consists mostly of old logging roads that have been reopened, along with some single-track trail segments (Figure 19). Currently, a few of the trails are not completely contained within the State Forest where they meander along the Forest boundary. Some trails lead from the State Forest to the State Park and others end at private land.

Loop trails keep visitors inside the Forest and direct them back through the State Park or to Highland Way, instead of onto private property. Most visitors use the interconnected trail system on the south side of the creek, typically descending the Ridge Trail and climbing Hihn's Mill Road and connecting between the two using the single-track trails to loop between them. This natural circulation pattern results in many trails being used in a de-facto one-way direction.

Trails are shared by all recreational users, except for one half-mile of Ridge Trail between Corral Trail and TFNMSP. Horses are not allowed on this upper section to keep them from entering the Park, as they are not permitted due to deed restrictions.

SDSF does not suffer the problems and conflicts experienced on other public lands that allow hiking, horseback riding, and mountain biking on the same trails. The remoteness of the entrance road, the length of Hihn's Mill Road that must be traversed before reaching the first trail junction and the steep and rough conditions of the single-track trails seem to filter out casual trail users who seek short and easy trail experiences. Consequently, most of the Forest users are more experienced and adventurous than typical park visitors. The main trails along the southern portion of the Forest are used extensively by mountain bikers, while the spur trails on the north and western side of Soquel Creek are used much less, mainly by neighbors of SDSF.

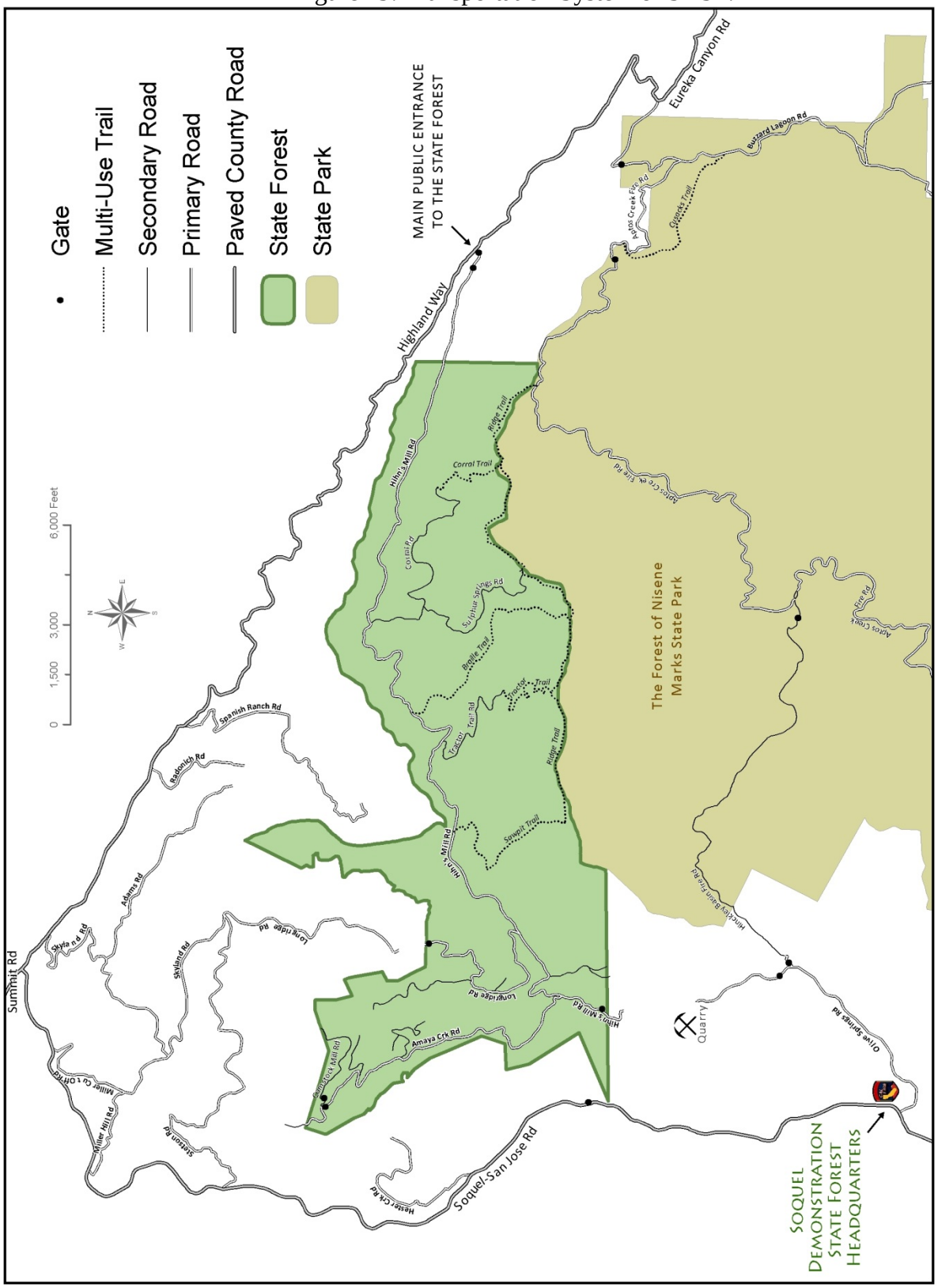
Forest staff have worked to effectively manage the trail system and to monitor the satisfaction of all user groups. Forest trails are open to all user groups and trail etiquette is stressed to Forest visitors. A Trail Use and Safety Guide has been developed to foster cooperative use and reduce trespass problems.

ROAD AND TRAIL DESCRIPTIONS

Hihn's Mill Road – 5.6 miles

Hihn's Mill Road is the main road through the Forest, used by nearly all recreational visitors as well as SDSF staff, emergency vehicles, timber operators, researchers and others. This rocked, all-season road traverses the length of the Forest. From Highland Way it crosses Soquel Creek at a bridge, passes through the main parking lot and staging area, and traverses private property for a half mile before entering SDSF at the eastern boundary. It descends over 1000 feet in elevation for 4 miles, passing the

Figure 19. Transportation System of SDSF.



bottom of each of the single-track trails before crossing Soquel Creek again. From the lower bridge it then climbs up past the intersection of Amaya Creek Road, and continues to the gate at Olive Springs Quarry. Public use is restricted by an administrative closure past Amaya Creek Road to limit trespass into the hazardous mining area.

Ridge Trail - 3.3 miles

Ridge Trail leads from TFNMSP at the southeast corner of the State Forest and follows Santa Rosalia Ridge to Sawpit Trail. It meanders along the common boundary between the State Forest and TFNMSP. This trail is the only other authorized public access route to the Forest aside from the main entrance at Highland Way.

Corral Road/Trail - 1.7 miles

Corral Trail starts at Sulphur Springs Trail and connects with Ridge Trail toward the southeast end of the Forest. It is named for an old corral, less than half way up the trail that was used by the Sulphur Springs Resort to house their livestock. The top 0.3 miles consists of a single-track trail.

Sulphur Springs Road - 1.5 miles

This trail is a road that starts on Hihn's Mill Road and goes up to Ridge Trail. It was constructed in the 1870s to access the Sulphur Springs Resort. The trail passes remnant cold springs, but all of the old resort buildings have been destroyed or removed. This route also serves as an emergency vehicular access to the lower helipad near Hihn’s Mill Road and the upper helipad on Santa Rosalia Ridge.

Braille Trail – 1.5 miles

This is the most recently developed trail in the Forest. Connecting Hihn’s Mill Road with Ridge Trail, Braille Trail is a good example of the extraordinary relationship that has grown between SDSF staff and the public. This trail began as an unsanctioned trail in the late 1990’s. It was originally constructed by mountain bikers at night where they found their way “by Braille”. Its route and construction methods were found to cause adverse impacts to water quality and unnecessary risks to public safety. Public support for correcting the inappropriate trail features led to an alliance between SDSF and recreational trail advocates and began formation of the Stewards of Soquel Forest. A compromise solution led to the challenging but environmentally sustainable trail alignment in place today that is now a sanctioned trail. Many of the volunteers involved in realigning Braille Trail have continued their association with SDSF to construct and maintain highly desirable and environmentally considerate trails.

Tractor Road/Trail - 1.5 miles

This trail was constructed in 1934 when logging methods changed from steam donkey to crawler tractor. It was the first logging road developed to access the slopes of

Santa Rosalia Ridge. It starts at Hihn's Mill Road and ends at Ridge Trail.

Flow Trail (planned) - 4.5 miles

In 2013 a planning effort began to develop a new type of trail called a flow trail at SDSF, following the reopening of Tractor Trail previously used as a logging road during the Rim THP. This effort is sponsored by the Mountain Bikers of Santa Cruz. They have provided funding and expertise for planning and implementation. The flow trail is designed to be used by any skill-level bicyclist and emphasizes a low gradient with grade reversals that utilize the rider's momentum to minimize pedaling and braking. Since all the other single-track trails at SDSF are more appropriate for highly skilled, experienced bicyclists, the new flow trail will allow for a more diverse recreational experience. This trail will be appropriate for families with children and beginner mountain bikers.

Sawpit Trail - 1.2 miles

This trail starts at Hihn's Mill Road and connects with Ridge Trail. It is located one-half mile east of the picnic area at Badger Spring. There is a sawpit along the trail that was used before the turn of the century for cutting logs into lumber.

Longridge Road - 1.5 miles

This trail is a road that starts on Hihn's Mill Road and travels to the county's Longridge Road. The last 0.1 mile is on private property. This trail is primarily used by neighbors.

Amaya Basin Road – 0.7 mile

This trail is a road that begins midway along Longridge Road and extends along the eastern side of Amaya Creek. It ends at a landing last used for the Longridge THP.

Fern Gulch Spur – 0.2 mile

This trail is a logging road constructed in 2011 for the Fern Gulch THP and ends at a landing used for those harvest operations.

Amaya Creek Road – 2.0 miles

This road starts on Hihn's Mill Road, about 0.5 mile west of the bridge over Soquel Creek. It climbs up to the ridge separating Amaya Creek from Hester Creek and intersects with Comstock Mill Road near the Forest boundary.

Amaya Pond Trail – 0.5 mile

This trail is a road that starts about half way along Amaya Creek Road. It passes near Amaya Pond, and then descends down in a sinuous manner towards Amaya Creek, ending at a landing.

Amaya Bridge Trail (planned)

In 2003 planning began for this trail that would connect Amaya Pond Trail with Longridge Spur Trail, providing a loop on the north side of the Forest. Complex

issues arose in designing the bridge needed to cross Amaya Creek and planning was put on hold until more resources could be provided.

Comstock Mill Road 0.7 mile

Public use of Comstock Mill Road is currently restricted to prevent trespass onto private property.

High Bridge Spur Trail (inactive) - 0.3 mile

This trail is the original route of Hihn's Mill Road into the Forest. The bridge was lost to fire in the 1970's but the road prism remains and was re-established as a logging road with temporary bridges for the neighboring CHY Olive Springs THP. This route is in the area closed administratively to prevent trespass at Olive Springs Quarry.

OTHER FACILITIES

Picnic Areas

The Badger Spring picnic site was the first such area in the Forest and was established long before the State assumed management. This area is very scenic, but relatively remote. Badger Spring is located along Hihn's Mill Road in the alluvial flats of the East Branch of Soquel Creek. The site has several picnic tables and a few hitching posts for horses. On the opposite side of the road is the Forest's ten-acre old-growth redwood grove.

Other picnic area locations are the Forest entrance, Sulphur Springs, the lower helipad area and on Ridge Trail between Braille Trail and Tractor Trail.

Portable Toilet

There is one portable toilet in the Forest, provided and maintained by a generous donation from a mountain bike manufacturer. It is located by the eastern property gate on Hihn's Mill Road, near the Forest entrance.

Parking Area

There is one parking area located between the two gates at the Highland entrance. This area is not in SDSF, but the State has a public-use easement with the owners, Roger and Michelle Burch. The parking area has been rocked and is generally accessible to the public year round. Work done in or around the parking area to maintain erosion control, reduce fire hazard, post new signage or change access through the common gates is coordinated with Burch family representatives. Recent upgrades include additional rocking, installation of new signage, redecking of the bridge over Soquel Creek and the installation of a steel gate on the bridge that replaces the old chain gate. SDSF staff will continue to coordinate with the Burch family representatives to determine the need to close the parking area due to a range of issues including saturated soil, illegal parties, high fire danger or timber operations.

Campground

There is one campground that is used by special permit on a limited basis by educational groups, researchers and personnel working on projects on the Forest.

RECREATION PROGRAMS

ORGANIZED EVENTS

Organized events are allowed through a fee-based Special Use Permit. Special Use Permits may allow uses which are otherwise restricted, such as use of motor vehicles and camping. These events are limited to the number that can be managed by the SDSF staff and are evaluated on a case by case basis.

FORESTRY EDUCATION

There is an encouraging level of interest in the Forest's educational potential. Local teachers are interested in bringing classes out to the Forest and local residents like the idea of educating the general public about the environment. Additional Forestry Education programs and interpretive information should be provided for recreational users. Outreach programs have been initiated with local schools and natural history organizations. Interpretive signs have been installed on the Forest. SDSF staff members offer verbal educational information to the public, both in the office and in the field.

FUTURE RECREATION

Additional opportunities are available to provide a more diverse recreational experience at SDSF. This includes the potential development of new facilities such as a Forestry Education Center and new uses such as an ADA-accessible trail, an interpretive trail, or possibly a disc golf course. Members of the public have expressed a desire for these types of opportunities at SDSF, as well as a larger and more interconnected trail system. Each of these possibilities needs further investigation and planning in order to evaluate the feasibility and compatibility with the goals and mandates of SDSF.

As progress is made toward securing new access for a Forestry Education Center and new facilities, a recreation and trails plan should be developed. The new recreation and trails plan will require careful consideration as to how changes in access and use patterns will affect the other areas of SDSF's mission, such as education, research, watershed protection, and demonstration of sustainable forestry.

SDSF is one of the few publicly-owned lands in Santa Cruz County that has the ability to provide a public hunting opportunity and may elect to do so in the future in conjunction with CDFW. Given existing constraints of access to the Forest, limited availability of CDFW and CAL FIRE staff time, the Santa Cruz County 'no shoot' zone, and multiple uses occurring on the Forest, a pilot program may initially be implemented to determine long-term feasibility of

a hunting program. Game species may include, but not be limited to, deer, wild pig, band-tailed pigeon, California quail, and/or wild turkey. SDSF staff will work with local CDFW wildlife biologists and statewide program staff as necessary to determine appropriate levels of harvest in order to maintain population viability and to schedule special hunt events. Any hunting program which may be established for a particular species will be consistent with the appropriate CDFW statewide Environmental Impact Report or equivalent Strategic Plan developed by CDFW and will comply with all State and Federal laws pertaining to sport hunting.

THE FOLLOWING PUBLIC COMMENTS WERE RECEIVED DURING REVIEW OF THE 1998 GENERAL FOREST MANAGEMENT PLAN

Many comments and opinions were gathered during the Recreation Study. Appendix A of the study's final report contains all of the results of the questionnaire as well as comments and concerns of users and neighbors. For detailed comments, refer to Soquel Demonstration State Forest Recreation Study Final Report (McNally and Hester, 1993).

MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

1. Public safety and protection of the natural resources of the Forest will be emphasized in all patrol and management planning activities. Violators of Forest regulations will be cited.

2. Certain activities may be prohibited, and certain areas administratively closed by order of the Forest Manager. Such restrictions will be posted at all entrances and sign boards on the Forest. Special Use Permits may be granted at the discretion of the Forest Manager to allow otherwise unauthorized uses on a case-by-case basis. Restricted activities include use of recreational motor vehicles, camping, fires, entering closed areas, gathering mushrooms without a permit, use after sunset and before sunrise, large public gatherings, organized races, commercial events, shooting, hunting and fishing (per CDFW Regulations).

3. In accordance with Board of Forestry and Fire Protection policy, recreational facilities will be maintained with minimal development, preserving the rustic and informal characteristics of the Forest. Periodic assessments will be made to ensure that facilities meet users' needs while remaining as natural as possible.

4. Regular maintenance will be provided to ensure the upkeep and safe conditions of all existing facilities, including picnic tables, signboards, parking areas, and trails. Periodic inspection and maintenance of recreational facilities will be performed by Forest staff, Ben Lomond Conservation Camp crews, and volunteers.

5. Recreation will be coordinated to achieve integration and compatibility with timber management, resource protection, demonstration and education, and the neighboring

community. Demonstrations will show how recreation and timber harvesting, two seemingly conflicting management objectives, can be integrated. Forestry education will be an integral part of the recreation experience. Interpretive resources will explain the basics of forest management, current research on the Forest, and the need to protect sensitive resources. In addition, visitors will be directed away from private property through circulation patterns (loop trails), use of proper signage (directional, regulation, no trespassing), and keeping Forest attractions away from private property boundaries.

6. SDSF will be managed to provide positive experiences for all recreational users. Proper trail etiquette between mountain bikers, equestrians, and hikers will be encouraged through signs, educational information, and patrol by staff and volunteers.

7. Management will strive to minimize recreational development and recreational use impacts in ecologically sensitive areas such as riparian zones. Any recreational improvements in riparian areas will be based on careful site-specific evaluations.

PLANNED ACTIONS

1. Record and compile descriptions of all reported violations or nuisances caused by public users at SDSF or on adjacent ownerships including, but not limited to, trespass, vandalism, littering, and noise. Implement restrictions on public use if needed.

2. Conduct ongoing patrols of riparian areas including those with existing facilities to enforce prohibitions on vandalism and other damage to riparian habitat related to public use. Implement restrictions on public use if needed.

3. Evaluate and grant requests for recreational Special Use Permits on a case-by-case basis.

4. Compile annual estimates of public use of SDSF in user days, using patroller reports, surveys, trail counters, and other information.

5. Continue to support, and work to expand volunteer programs to enhance recreation, interpretation and patrol.

6. Provide input to neighboring land managers to facilitate interconnected trail systems and regional trail development.

7. Develop an access plan, and acquire land or easements necessary to provide better public access to the Forest via Soquel-San Jose Road.

8. Evaluate the need for a new Recreation and Trails Master Plan for SDSF to improve the trail network and recreation opportunities in the Forest.

CHAPTER 12: RESOURCE PROTECTION

FIRE PROTECTION

The CAL FIRE San Mateo-Santa Cruz Unit Chief is responsible for fire protection in the State Forest. The Forest Manager, the Unit's Operations Division Chief for Santa Cruz County, and the local CAL FIRE Battalion Chief will work together to ensure an adequate fire protection program is in place for SDSF. In addition, the Forest staff will work with other agencies as needed to provide fire protection for the Forest.

FIRE HISTORY

The fire return interval for the area that is now SDSF in the era before fire suppression was roughly ten to twenty years. These fires were caused by lightning or set by Native Americans to manage vegetation.

A fire that occurred in 1903 spread from the east to Santa Rosalia Ridge down to the Sulphur Springs area (Powell, n.d. pg. 161). Another fire started in 1922 in Hinckley Creek and spread to Soquel Creek, burning a total of 7,000 acres.

A 50-year fire history (1929-1979) of the Santa Cruz Mountains was compiled by Jason Greenlee in 1981. The area which is now SDSF was included in the study, and the following fires occurred during that 50-year period:

1933	-	240 acres burned in the Amaya Creek drainage.
1936	-	54 acres burned along Santa Rosalia Ridge between Tractor Trail and Sawpit Trail.
1936	-	118 acres burned in the Hinckley Creek basin, with approximately 25 acres in the Forest, along the ridgeline at the top of Sulphur Springs Trail.
1938	-	87 acres burned along the upper portion of Sulphur Springs Trail.
1957	-	168 acres burned from Highland Way to Hihn's Mill Road, just east of Ashbury Gulch. Approximately 50 acres were in the Forest.

The exact causes of these fires are not known, but it is believed that logging practices of the past, coupled with high risk machinery and equipment, caused most of them. Phil Mason, a long-time local resident, remembers that the 1933 fire was caused by a steam donkey engine that caught fire, burning the Amaya Creek drainage.

Modern logging methods and equipment are much safer from a fire perspective, and the risk of fire has been greatly reduced. This is evident from the lack of fires in the Forest during the last 30 years. The only known recent fire occurred in 1970 when the High Bridge, at the southwest edge of the Forest, was set on fire.

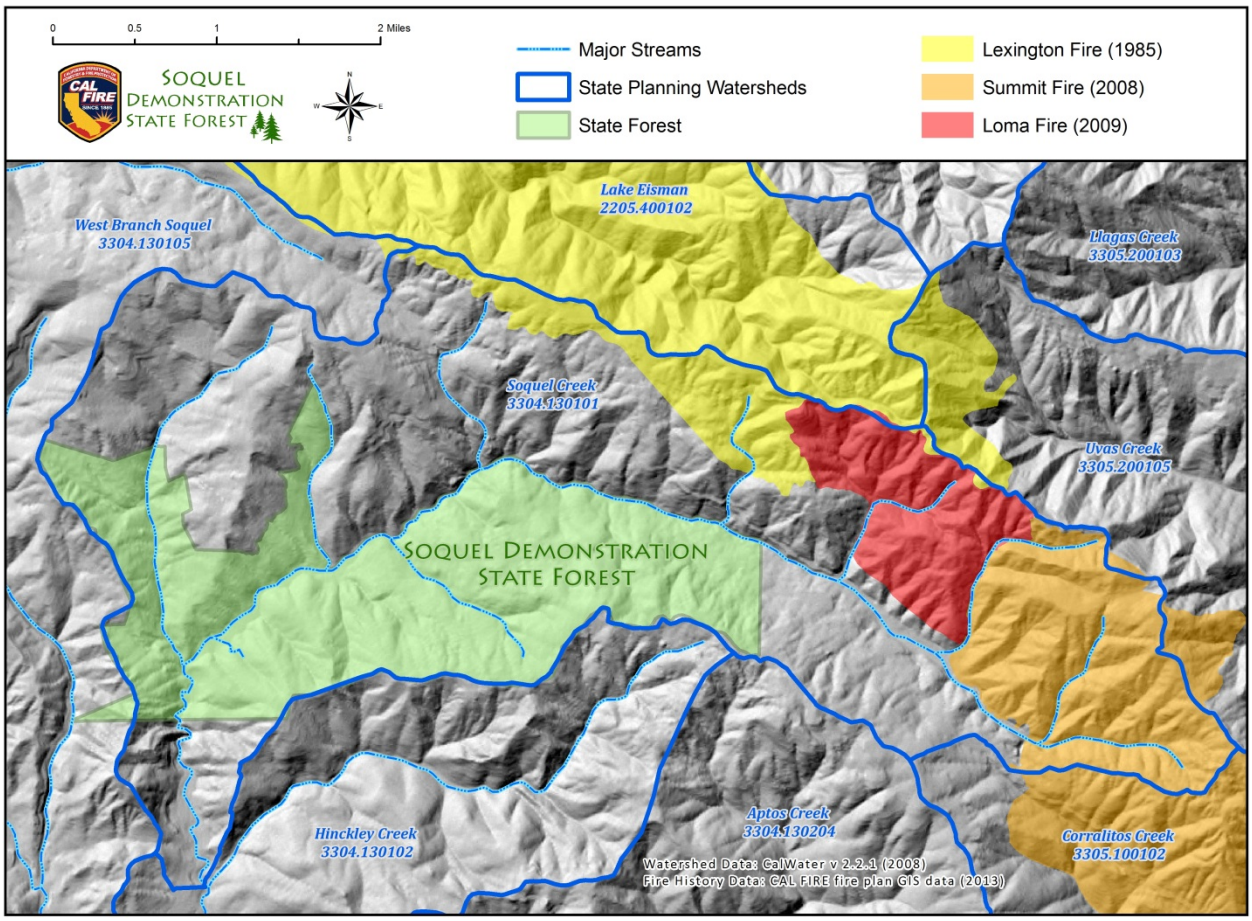
Recent large fires in the area (Figure 20) include the Lexington Fire in July, 1985; the Summit Fire in May, 2008; and the Loma Fire in October, 2009. Though not in the State Forest, the Lexington Fire's impact to the Summit mountain community was severe enough to mention here. An arsonist started the fire which burned 13,800 acres in the Los Gatos Creek Drainage (600 acres were in Santa Cruz County). Forty-five hundred people were evacuated from their homes, including residents of the Summit area. In the end, 44 structures were destroyed, including houses and outbuildings.

The Summit Fire burned 4,270 acres in the upper portion of the Soquel and Corralitos Creek watersheds from May 22–27, 2008. In total, 1,130 acres burned in the Soquel Creek watershed (34 percent high burn severity, 43 percent moderate, 20 percent low, and three percent unchanged). Thirty-five residences and 64 outbuildings were destroyed.

The Loma Fire burned 485 acres within the Soquel Creek watershed between October 25 and November 2, 2009. One trailer and two outbuildings were destroyed. The fire started on Loma Prieta Ridge and was pushed southwest by strong northeast winds. The fire slowed when it entered the 2008 Summit Fire boundary. Activity also slowed in unburned forested areas, due to higher humidity and higher fuel moisture. Existing roads provided access and control lines to aid the fire-fighting effort. The Summit Fire and the Loma Fire had very similar effects where portions of each area experienced significant damage and mortality to the understory herbaceous and shrub layers, particularly at higher elevations. The majority of the overstory canopy survived intact. Isolated pockets of mature trees, including hardwoods, redwoods, and Douglas-fir, were damaged or killed. Knobcone pine and chaparral in the upper portion of the watershed burned with high intensity and suffered significant mortality. Both fires burned through a number of swales and watercourses, but higher humidity and fuel moisture levels in these areas kept the intensity of the burn relatively low.

The largest recent fire in the Santa Cruz Mountains was the 2009 Lockheed Fire, which burned 7,819 acres, mainly in the Scotts Creek watershed (CAL FIRE, 2009). While located approximately 12 miles to the west of SDSF, this fire exhibited a similar pattern to the Summit Fire, burning in the chaparral and knobcone pine-covered portions of the burn area near ridges with considerably higher intensity than in the redwood stands located lower on slope near watercourses. Loganbill (2013) reported that the first winter’s rainfall after the fire did not produce increased stormflow sediment and event sediment loads, likely due to the fact that near-stream sediment contribution was minimal, and the majority of hillslope-derived sources were not hydrologically connected.

Figure 20. Recent Fire History.



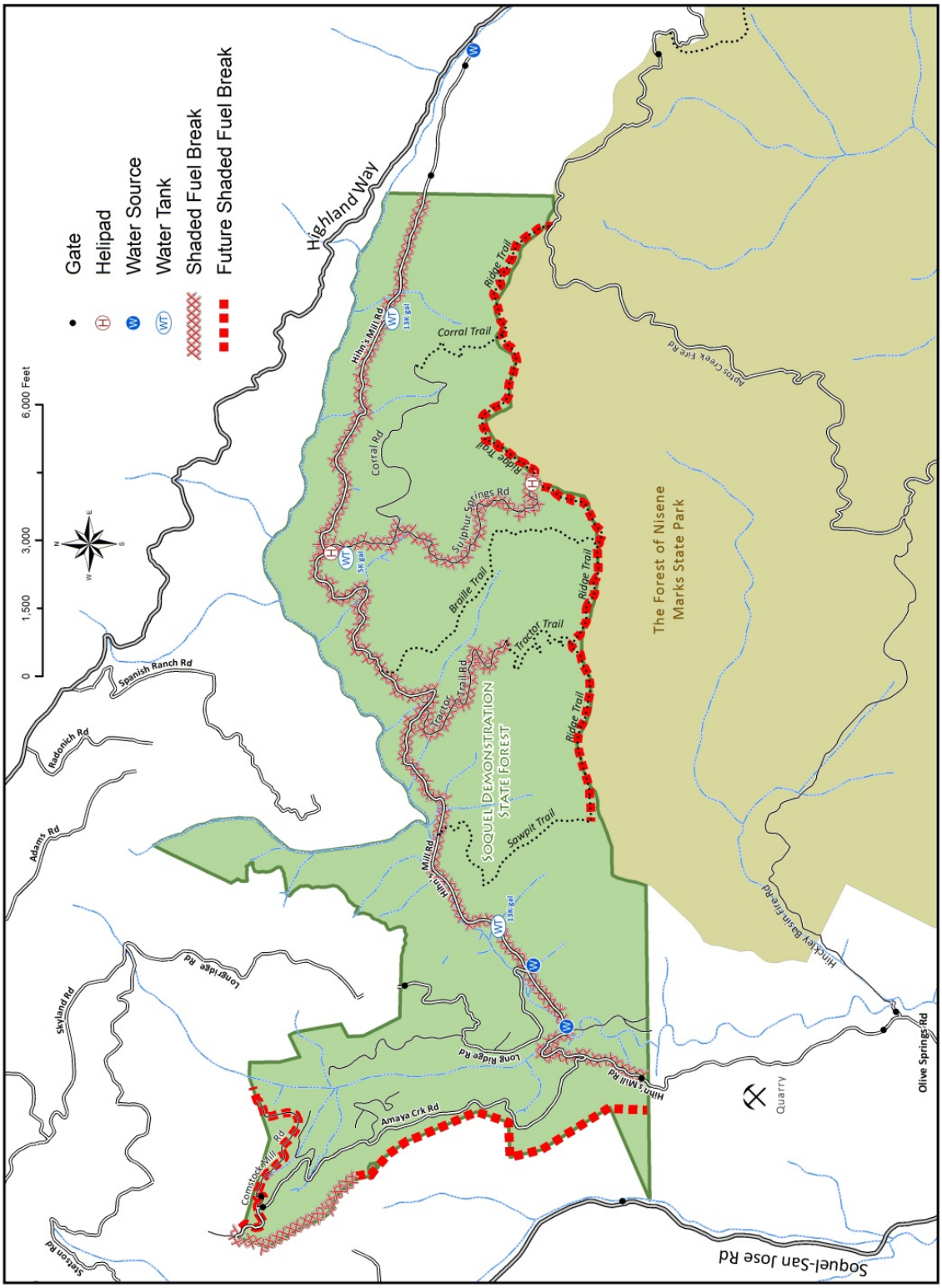
PRE-SUPPRESSION

Pre-suppression is defined as fire protection activities performed before fire occurrence to ensure reduced fire intensity and effective fire suppression. Pre-suppression plans discuss site-specific ways to minimize loss and to reduce hazard and risk. The current pre-suppression plan for SDSF will be updated by the local CAL FIRE Battalion Chief with assistance from the Forest Manager. The more comprehensive plan will include the definition and assessment of high risk and hazard areas within the watershed boundaries, maps of fire defense improvements, prevention techniques, and an evaluation of available resources. State Forest staff continue to work on these activities along with Unit fire protection personnel.

Fire Defense Improvements

Fire defense improvements will be strategically located to protect forest land and neighboring properties. Improvements in the State Forest include three water tanks, shaded fuel breaks, and two helipad locations (Figure 21). In addition, appropriate signing, fire hazard reduction, and adequate access to roads and trails will be added or maintained.

Figure 21. Fire Defense Improvements.



Fire hazard and prevention information, as well as Forest regulations, will be posted on all information boards. The parking area, information boards, and picnic areas will be treated to

reduce fire hazards for safety and demonstration purposes. The major roads and trails in the Forest are maintained to provide access for fire protection purposes.

Shaded fuelbreaks protect high value areas such as forest land, historical sites, and neighboring property. Typically, they are areas 100 to 300 feet wide where vegetation and other forest fuels have been decreased in order to reduce the rate of spread of an advancing fire. Less wide shaded fuel breaks are also beneficial. Within SDSF, all main roads and prominent ridgelines will be treated as shaded fuelbreaks. Within these shaded fuelbreaks, dead trees and ladder fuels (shrubs and lower tree limbs) are removed and the overstory canopy is thinned to a level where shade will still retard the growth of new ground fuels. The understory is modified so that a low-growing ground cover is retained within the fuelbreak to provide fuels to start a backfire. Whenever possible, fuelbreaks should visually merge with the surrounding landscape, conforming to the natural features of the area. Periodic maintenance is needed to maintain fuelbreak specifications.

Shaded fuelbreaks in SDSF are being constructed, with the help of crews from Ben Lomond Conservation Camp, along ridges and high use roads and trails. This is to provide safe locations for fire control lines and backfiring; ridgelines are commonly used as control points. Shaded fuelbreaks and roads also aid in the compartmentalization of the property in order to contain a wildfire to its smallest size possible given existing infrastructure. This will minimize the need to install additional fuelbreaks with bulldozers in the event of a wildfire.

Regulations

Restrictions are in effect for hunting and shooting, smoking, and fires within the Forest. Fires are not permitted anywhere in the Forest, including parking areas. A possible exception to these regulations would be campfires in the permit-only group campground (to be considered on a case-by-case basis). Hunting and shooting are administratively prohibited in the Forest, although hunting may be allowed in the future consistent with a program specifically designed by CDFW for SDSF (See Recreation Chapter).

The periods of extreme fire danger for SDSF usually occur from July through October though these periods may be extended by severe weather. During these periods, SDSF will follow the Unit's Red Flag Alert Plan. This is consistent with the plan The Forest of Nisene Marks State Park follows during extreme fire danger conditions. The Forest Manager will coordinate with the Unit Operations Division Chief to determine necessary actions to be employed. The steps include increasing patrols of the Forest, posting red flag alert signs, providing more fire prevention information and awareness of current conditions to Forest visitors, and reducing the number of visitors in the Forest by posting the area as closed.

Education

SDSF staff will coordinate with the Unit Fire Prevention staff for educational purposes. Educational information will be used to reduce the number of human-caused fires within the State Forest. Target groups will include neighbors, visitors, school groups, and local organizations. In general, neighboring property owners pose a risk of human-caused wildland fires to the Forest. They will be encouraged to meet with Burrell and Soquel Forest

Fire Station personnel for information on CAL FIRE's Fire Prevention Program in order to minimize the risk of wildfire.

Signs will be posted on all information boards alerting Forest visitors to the dangers of fire and ways they can minimize these dangers. Dangerous Fire Area signs will be posted when appropriate. During regular patrols, visitors will be informed of fire hazards and prevention methods.

School groups and local organizations will be referred to Fire Prevention staff or local fire stations for fire safety information and presentations. Groups visiting the Forest for education programs will be informed of fire safety, hazards, and prevention techniques. Education programs will also cover the ecological role of fire in the environment and the importance of fire in maintaining biodiversity.

Enforcement

Forest patrol is an important part of fire protection and prevention. SDSF staff will coordinate with the Unit Fire Prevention staff for patrol purposes. Patrols will include public contact, fire detection, and patrol of roads and trails during the fire season. CAL FIRE personnel will be utilized for weekend patrols and major holidays, especially during periods of high fire danger. CAL FIRE peace officers will either provide direct supervision or lead these activities. Additional patrols may be conducted by volunteers as deemed appropriate and safe by CAL FIRE. SDSF staff foresters will also enforce fire-related California Forest Practice Rules at active logging sites on the Forest.

Fire suppression cost recovery will be pursued for damages resulting from deliberate and negligent acts of Forest users. Active investigations will be used to locate responsible parties and recover maximum legal damages.

SUPPRESSION

Suppression tactics are based on information from and implementation of the pre-suppression plan. SDSF staff can support initial attack fire control personnel by providing local expertise regarding current road conditions, fuelbreaks to be utilized for compartmentalization of the fire, vegetation conditions, and cultural resources. The staff may also evacuate visitors, close the fire area, perform law enforcement tasks, provide access through gates, provide information on the location of water tanks, helipads and water drafting sites and assist with media information as appropriate.

Detection

Detection strategies include daily patrols, searching for evidence of fires, and CAL FIRE air flights during extreme fire danger periods or after lightning storms. Also, the Unit's Emergency Command Center will check the Automatic Lightning Detection System (ALDS) for possible strikes in the Forest.

Communication

As part of communication, SDSF will maintain an adequate radio system and stay in close contact with local CAL FIRE forest fire stations (Burrell, Soquel, and Corralitos). Local CAL FIRE fire control personnel will become familiar with the Forest, its road and trail systems, water sources, and landmarks (for use as reference points) and be advised of any changes that occur.

CAL FIRE's resource tracking system, Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD), will be used to dispatch the appropriate personnel and equipment to any fires on SDSF. The State Forest is a defined response area within CAD. The staff will inform the Emergency Command Center of any changes or updates to the CAD database, including information on roads, access points, and fire defense improvements.

POST-SUPPRESSION

Post-suppression activities include the evaluation of pre-suppression information, suppression actions, and fire line suppression repair. Fire suppression repair involves actions needed to repair damage caused by suppression activities. Common suppression repair activities include fireline erosion control, watercourse crossing repair, slash treatment, road repair and drainage improvements, gate and fence repair, waterline repair, mapping of hazard trees, etc. Rehabilitation involves erosion control and other restoration activities not directly caused by fire suppression activities. Unit personnel will evaluate post-suppression activities on an individual fire basis.

To minimize increases in wildfire risks resulting from increased public use of the Forest, the staff will record and compile descriptions and locations of all wildfires occurring at SDSF. This information will be evaluated annually. If an increase in wildfire frequency occurs, appropriate measures will be implemented as needed to reduce wildfire risk.

PRESCRIBED FIRE

Prescribed fire is the controlled use of fire under specific weather and fuel moisture conditions within a predetermined area. Fire, under these conditions, produces the intensity of heat and rate of spread required to accomplish specific management objectives. These objectives could include fire hazard reduction, silvicultural research, and ecosystem enhancement.

A prescribed fire program that involves these objectives will be evaluated for SDSF. A risk and benefit assessment will be the first step in the evaluation. The greatest risk is the loss of fire control and resulting damage that may occur. Benefits include a reduction in fuel load, removal of exotic plant species, and improvements to vegetation and wildlife habitats. A prescribed fire program must consider the mountain community's concerns and address them effectively. An established prescribed fire program provides research opportunities for both resource management and fire behavior purposes.

If a prescribed fire program is established in SDSF, fuel loads and types will be sampled and

mapped, and burning prescriptions will be developed for the different vegetation types found in the Forest. A weather station was established at the lower helipad in 2013 to foster this program and other management and research activities.

THE FOLLOWING PUBLIC COMMENTS WERE RECEIVED DURING REVIEW OF THE 1998 GENERAL FOREST MANAGEMENT PLAN

On April 29, 1993, SDSF held a workshop designed to gather information, comments, and concerns from the public. Based on the comments received, there are four major issues concerning fire protection and SDSF.

The first issue involves concern about logging equipment and its potential to cause fires. As stated earlier in this chapter, modern logging methods and equipment are much safer and less likely to generate fires than historic logging practices. Additionally, logging contractors are required by law to develop a fire protection plan for each THP and to follow the state's Forest Practice Rules regarding fire protection. During harvest activities in SDSF, periodic inspections will be performed by both CAL FIRE Forest Practice Officers and Forest staff.

The risk of fire as a result of recreational use is also a concern. Individuals commented on issues such as limiting the number of people allowed in the Forest during periods of high fire danger and the prohibition of fires and camping at all times. Forest policy is to inform users of fire danger and to discourage activities that may result in increased fire risk. Similarly, camping, hunting and shooting, and publicly owned motor vehicles are prohibited in SDSF though camping may occur by special permit and hunting may be allowed in the future (see the Recreation Chapter).

The third issue raised at the workshop concerns the use of prescribed fire in SDSF. Comments about the consequences of both using and refraining from prescribed burning were received. As mentioned above, a risk and benefit analysis will be completed and analyzed before any decisions are made in this area. Lastly, comments regarding fire defense improvements vary from concern about how improvements may change the character of SDSF to suggestions for road accessibility. Currently, roads in the Forest are kept clear of combustible vegetation by Ben Lomond Conservation Camp crews and Forest staff. Likewise, the condition of roadbeds are examined periodically and maintained as needed. Though fire defense improvements may change the appearance of some areas, their presence is needed in order to allow timely and effective response should a fire occur.

PLANNED ACTIONS

1. Coordinate with the Unit Battalion Chief and other fire control personnel to update the pre-suppression plan for SDSF.

2. Continue to identify fire defense improvements and continue their construction. Include the Unit Fire Protection staff in these decisions.

3. Provide patrols to enforce fire prevention policies, coordinating with the Fire Prevention staff as needed. Forest staff and volunteers will patrol SDSF on weekends and holidays, especially during periods of high fire danger. The Forest will be closed to public use when fire risks become excessive.

4. Conduct fire prevention education for neighbors and Forest visitors utilizing SDSF and fire prevention staff members.

5. Work with the Department of Parks and Recreation personnel from The Forest of Nisene Marks State Park to ensure effective fire protection along Santa Rosalia Ridge.

6. Record and compile descriptions/locations of all wildfires occurring at SDSF including ambient weather and fire hazard conditions, ignition source, area and vegetation types burned, and estimated damage. Implement appropriate measures as needed to reduce wildfire risks.

7. Evaluate the needs and feasibility of a prescribed burn program.

FOREST PEST MANAGEMENT

Forest pests, such as insects, diseases, and vertebrates, have long been established in California's native timberlands. Populations of pests are dynamic and fluctuate in response to climatic and environmental changes such as drought, forest overstocking and windthrow, fire, and other site disturbances. The actual or potential effects of pests may reduce or threaten to reduce anticipated tree growth, species composition, or forest stocking. At the same time, other forest resources, such as wildlife habitat, may be impacted. Integrated forest pest management provides a means to address these issues.

The intent of integrated pest management (IPM) is to prevent or restrain forest pest problems using population suppression and the minimization of factors that predispose trees to infestation. IPM makes use of the benefits of cultural, mechanical, chemical, semiochemical (i.e., synthetic pheromone), and biological pest management alternatives.

Pests known to have caused tree mortality within or adjacent to SDSF are listed in Table 10. There may be other pests of local tree species that are seldom detected or reported, or are of minor significance. State Forest staff will continue to monitor the Forest for early signs of forest pests or conditions that may lead to infestation.

Monitoring is an essential part of detecting early signs of forest pests or scenarios that may lead to infestation. Part of pest monitoring in SDSF will involve forest health surveys to detect pest damage or infestations in standing trees, slash, windthrow, down woody debris, or stumps. SDSF will also assist the pest monitoring program of the California Department of Food and Agriculture by deploying and inspecting gypsy moth traps in high use areas of the Forest. Other efforts to reduce pest damage or predisposition will include:

* The minimization of injuries to residual trees during forest management activities.

* Reuse of old tractor roads or recreational trails where available to reduce soil compaction.

* Retention of a diverse species composition in or adjacent to stands following forest management activities and within or near future regeneration units.

Table 10. Forest Pests of the Soquel Creek Watershed.

PEST	HOST
Fungal Diseases	
Black stain root disease	Douglas-fir
Armillaria root disease	Douglas-fir, oaks, tanoak
Madrone canker	Madrone
Sudden Oak Death	Primary hosts on SDSF are California bay-laurel and tanoak
Insects	
Flatheaded fir borer	Douglas-fir
Douglas-fir beetle	Douglas-fir
Redwood bark beetle	Coast redwood
Western oak bark beetle	Oaks, tanoak
California oakmoth	Oaks, tanoak
Mammals	
Tree squirrels	Coast redwood

* Avoidance of non-native tree species which may be predisposed to pests with few local pest predators and parasites.

* Use of CAL FIRE or other forest pest management specialists to train SDSF staff in forest pest recognition and management.

SUDDEN OAK DEATH (SOD):

Sudden oak death is a disease effecting several species of plants. It is caused by a water mold, *Phytophthora ramorum*, and is related to other *Phytophthora* species that cause potato blight and Port Orford cedar root disease. Sudden Oak Death kills some species and individual plants rapidly. Other species may die back slowly, develop spots on the leaves and stems, or show almost no effects. Susceptible plants include members of the "red" oak group - coast and canyon live, black and Shreve oaks; as well as tanbark oak, California bay-laurel, rhododendron, and many other native and non-native species.

The disease was first found around Mt. Tamalpais in Marin county in 1995. It may have been imported to California from Europe on nursery shipments of rhododendrons. Rapid expansion of the number of dead and diseased trees and the geographical area affected occurred after wet winters and springs in the late 1990s and again from 2004 through 2006. The disease is now confirmed to occur in California throughout the San Francisco Bay Area, and in coastal counties from Monterey to Humboldt. For more information on SOD, please see http://www.suddenoakdeath.org/.

The disease is well-established at SDSF and in surrounding areas, and effects tanoaks, coast live oaks, and other susceptible species throughout the Forest. The death of trees in SOD disease centers has created openings in areas formerly dominated by tanoaks. Research conducted as SDSF and elsewhere indicates that over time tanoaks will no longer be a dominant species in the overstory in these locations. Douglas-fir and bay-laurel trees are likely to become the dominant overstory species in these areas in the future.

SDSF is within the declared SOD Zone of Infestation (ZOI) established by the California State Board of Forestry and Fire Protection and is within the "Regulated Area" for SOD as designated by the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA). The ZOI and Regulated Area are identical and cover all portions of the 14 infested counties identified in the California Department of Food and Agriculture Section 3700: Oak Mortality Disease Control.

Federal regulations from the USDA-APHIS, and state regulations from CDFA address SOD concerns. CDFA regulations that limit the movement of host materials apply to forest management activities on SDSF including timber harvest, timber stand improvement activities, and harvest of minor forest products. Under the state regulation, host material cannot be transported from the Regulated Area unless accompanied by a compliance agreement. Wherever a ZOI applies, the Forest Practice Rules [14 CCR 917.9(a)] require that mitigations be included in Timber Harvesting Plans (THPs) to prevent the spread of the infestation. A federal quarantine for *P. ramorum* was issued as an interim rule by USDA – APHIS, with the most recent rule dated February, 2007. For more information on the Federal rule see http://nature.berkeley.edu/comtf/pdf/APHIS-2005-0102-0001.pdf.

SOD is known to occur at SDSF, and host material that is likely to be transported may consist of logs from host species produced as part of a harvest plan and minor forest products such as salvage sawlogs, firewood, and greenery.

SOD can spread via host material. Therefore, plants, plant parts, unprocessed wood and wood products, and other products of the above mentioned hosts cannot be moved from counties infested with SOD without authorization by the County Agricultural Commissioner or CAL FIRE's and USDA Forest Service's harvest document approval process. The term "harvest document" refers to any document filed with the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection that authorizes the removal of forest products for commercial purposes. See http://pi.CDFA.ca.gov/pqm/manual/htm/455.htm for California Department of Food and Agriculture's regulations regarding commodities covered and restrictions of their movement.

Firewood sales

On State Forest lands, where the public is required to have a permit to collect firewood, CAL FIRE uses this public contact to educate the person(s) about SOD by providing a Pest Alert or other information on SOD along with the firewood permit. A provision is added to the permit explaining the current regulations and that compliance is required.

Hazard Reduction for SOD

Severely diseased or dying oaks and tanoaks with stem infections are often attacked by bark beetles (western oak bark beetle and ambrosia beetles) and infected with decay fungi such as *Hypoxylon* spp. Trees with these secondary insect attacks and decay fungi may be structurally weakened and will be removed if adjacent to roads, trails, or other high-use areas.

In addition, trees killed by SOD may lead to increased surface and crown fuels, thus potentially influencing fire behavior. In addition to addressing public safety issues, removal of dead and dying trees should also lessen fire intensity and reduce the risk of crown fires near disease centers.

PITCH CANKER

SDSF staff will incorporate the most current best management practices as identified by the California Pitch Canker Task Force for controlling the distribution and spread of Pitch Canker. Very few pine trees exist at SDSF.

TREE SQUIRRELS

Tree squirrels may damage sapling redwoods by stripping the bark from upper stems. This causes partial or complete girdling, leading to either top kill or sapwood decay. As damage from squirrels is associated with dense second growth redwood stands, thinning is the only recommended management action. Where trees are more widely spaced, squirrel damage will generally be reduced.

PLANNED ACTIONS

1. Continually monitor the Forest for signs of pests and notify the CAL FIRE Forest Pest Management Specialist of any findings. Take action as needed to minimize or eliminate any problems.

2. Thin dense stands of trees where necessary to maintain healthy growing conditions.

3. Provide applied forest pest research opportunities to interested agencies, institutions, or organizations.

4. Coordinate with Santa Cruz County in the detection of and protection against gypsy moths or other introduced pests.

5. Continue to remove dying and dead trees adjacent to high-use roads, trails and other facilities.

CHAPTER 13: ARCHAEOLOGY

HISTORY OF SDSF AREA

Until the early 1990s the archaeology of the Central Coast was not well understood due to the scarcity of studies. Many of the most serious gaps in our understanding of the cultural and environmental diversity of the Central Coast have now been filled. SDSF is located within the ethnographic territory of Native people who spoke a dialect of the Costanoan (now also known as Ohlone) family of languages. Although native people speaking various Costanoan languages occupied the South Coast Ranges between San Pablo Bay and Monterey prior to the arrival of Europeans, "Costanoans" [from the Spanish *costanos*, "coast people"] were neither a single ethnic group nor a political entity (Levy, 1978). Rather, Costanoan is a linguistic term designating a family of eight languages. One of these, Awaswas, was the language spoken by people living along the coast between Davenport and Aptos.

Although the Spanish sailed along the Central Coast as early as 1542, the Portola overland expedition in 1769 initiated long term contact. At that time most of this portion of the coast was occupied by a large number of small, autonomous tribelets (Kroeber, 1925). The native population was decimated during the Spanish, and later, American invasions of their territory. Early explorers, priests and settlers, and later ethnographers documented at least some aspects of Ohlone worldview and material culture. The documentation from these early contacts is very incomplete. Systematic anthropological description of the native people and their culture was not initiated until early in the twentieth century following at least 150 years of drastic population decline (Jones et al., 2007).

Utilization of the area now SDSF since 1542 is better understood, with a body of historical records and documents to supplement the archaeological record. In Santa Cruz County four chronological subdivisions have been defined for the Historic Period: Protohistoric (1542-1769), Spanish Colonial (1769-1822), Mexican (1822-1848) and Anglo-American (1848-present). Historic-era sites on SDSF span from the Mexican Period (1822-1848) to the Anglo-American Period (1848-present). Please see the "History of Ownership" section of Chapter 3 and "SDSF Facilities" section of Chapter 14 for a summary of the history of SDSF and neighboring properties. For a detailed account of the archaeology and history of SDSF see Dillon (1992).

ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESEARCH

An archaeological and historical field survey of SDSF was conducted during the summer of 1991. The chief investigator was Dr. Brian Dillon, a consulting archaeologist associated with the California State University at Northridge. In March of 1992, an archaeological and historical report was generated from the survey. In addition to study results, this report also includes information from archival records research and extensive oral history interviews. During the survey, Dr. Dillon and his crew discovered six archaeological sites within the State Forest boundaries: two prehistoric and three historic sites, as well as one site with both prehistoric and

historic features. Additional studies covering SDSF history and archaeology have identified many additional sites that are documented in Confidential Archaeological Addendums to THPs and archived with the Northwest Information Center.

The significance of each site was determined by its archaeological and historical value, as outlined in state and federal guidelines. Significance, as defined by these guidelines, is based on uniqueness and preservation, with both considered in the determination of a site's value. Uniqueness refers to how many other similar features exist (on other sites), while preservation refers to the condition of the features remaining on the site. A site is not considered significant if it, although unique, has been completely destroyed, as there is nothing left to protect or study.

A confidentiality policy exists which limits public disclosure of sensitive archaeological and historical resources. Consequently, site locations in SDSF with moderate to high levels of significance will not be revealed to the general public. The confidentiality policy protects the resources from artifact collection, site excavation, and vandalism. The policy was approved by the State Historical Resources Commission under authority of Public Resources Code Section 5020.4 (c).

Since 1991, several additional archaeological surveys have been conducted on SDSF. As a result of these surveys and the initial one conducted by Dr. Dillon, approximately 30 percent of the Forest has been examined at least once for archaeological resources. Surveys conducted since 1991 have resulted in the identification and recording of numerous additional prehistoric and historic-era sites.

PREHISTORIC SITES

The prehistoric era is believed to have begun on the central coast about 4,000 years ago. The most active times were during the Late Prehistoric Period, 1000 - 1600 AD, when hundreds of sites were established. The prehistoric sites found in SDSF are from this Late Prehistoric Period. Prehistoric sites found on SDSF include the following constituents: bedrock mortars (some including cupules and petroglyphs); portable size mortars; large lithic tools including manos, metates, a pestle and cooking stones; small lithic tools and debitage consisting of non-native rock types including chert; small stone manuports of unknown purpose; and midden soils.

HISTORIC SITES

The Historic Period began along the central coast in 1769 and continues to the present day. The historic sites found in SDSF span from the Mexican Period, 1822 - 1848, to the Anglo-American Period, 1848 to present. The most recent site in the Forest, however, dates back to World War II.

Historic sites found on SDSF include the following features and artifacts: Depression-era split products manufacturing sites; logging-related equipment and materials such as 55-gallon drums, steel snatch-bocks, wire rope/cable of various diameters and style, crosscut saws, oiler jugs, and related items; logging-related features such as modified stumps, cable roads, and skid roads; sawmill-related equipment and materials and a sawpit; a livestock corral made from redwood

pickets; scrapped automobiles and parts; segments of wagon roads constructed between 1857 and 1870; several segments of old fence comprised of mostly split redwood posts and fragments of rusted barbed wire; a variety of components from a steam donkey and the log skids which it was mounted upon; single-family wood-framed residences and various associated landscape features built between 1936 and 1959; remains of other structures of unknown age and purpose; and discarded cans, bottles and miscellaneous debris.

All of the sites and isolates described above were documented with records prepared in accordance with California Office of Historic Preservation (OHP) guidelines (CDPR 1995).

THE FOLLOWING PUBLIC COMMENTS WERE RECEIVED DURING REVIEW OF THE 1998 GENERAL FOREST MANAGEMENT PLAN

Following completion of the archaeological study in SDSF, members of the public expressed a desire to learn about Dr. Dillon's discoveries and their significance. Individuals were interested in research or other studies that might result from the findings as well as seeing the archaeological sites. Eventually, all sites of moderate and high significance will be more thoroughly evaluated and, depending on the results, may be available for public viewing.

MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

1. Heritage resources on SDSF will be protected, especially during planning and management activities including timber harvesting, recreation, and forestry education.

2. Sites determined eligible and/or listed on the California Register of Historical Resources will be preserved and kept confidential, as per applicable state statute and regulation . If, after thorough and careful study, it is determined that certain sites can endure limited public use, they may be made accessible to the community. Such determinations shall be made in consultation with the California State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) and the CAL FIRE Northern Region-Coast Area Archaeologist (or CAL FIRE State Forests Archaeologist).

3. Educational opportunities, including the display of resilient historic features, will be incorporated into SDSF's Demonstration and Forestry Education programs.

PLANNED ACTIONS

1. Provide the opportunity for scientific study and research on all archaeological and historical resources. Researchers working with significant sites will be expected to uphold all confidentiality policies and will conduct work only after a specific research design has been reviewed and approved by CAL FIRE Archaeology staff.

2. Identify and catalog additional historic information including maps, photographs, written documents, interviews, existing archaeological collections and archival materials.

3. Monitor and periodically inspect heritage resources on SDSF to ensure that existing policies are affording effective protection to those resources (cf. Executive Order W-26-92; PRC Sections 5020 through 5024).

CHAPTER 14: ROADS AND OTHER IMPROVEMENTS

SDSF FACILITIES

The first development of roads within SDSF can be traced back to the mid-nineteenth century. According to local historian Ron Powell (Rancho de Palo de Yesca: the Shoquel Augmentation Rancho, n.d.), the Santa Cruz Gap Turnpike (an arterial between Santa Cruz and the Santa Clara valley) was completed in May of 1856. This road included parts of what are now Hihn's Mill Road, Longridge Road, and Spanish Ranch Road. Further development of roads occurred when Frederick A. Hihn acquired the SDSF property in 1863.

In the 1870's, Hihn built Sulphur Springs Road to reach his Sulphur Springs Resort as well as a private road for logging and mill access. These roads, along with segments of the Santa Cruz Gap Turnpike, created what is now known as Hihn's Mill Road. This route extends from the Olive Springs Quarry to the parking area off Highland Way. Additionally, logging by Jared and Seth Comstock in 1878 led to the construction of Comstock Mill Road and portions of Robinwood Lane.

The remainder of the roads in SDSF were constructed by the three timber companies that owned the property after Hihn. This later road construction started with the Monterey Bay Redwood Company in 1924, continued through the CHY Company ownership in the 1960s and 1970s, and ended with the Pelican Timber Company in the 1980s. Figure 19 (see Recreation Chapter) shows the locations of all existing Forest and access roads.

The only portion of SDSF that does not contain roads is the area south of Badger Spring to Santa Rosalia Ridge. This area is bordered by Sawpit Trail (see the Recreation Chapter for information on trails) on the east, the East Branch of Soquel Creek on the northwest, and the Forest boundary on the south. Steam donkeys were used to log this section prior to the introduction of crawler tractors, so no major roads or trails were built. Scars on the slopes above Badger Spring are still evident from this type of logging.

The only bridges associated with SDSF cross the East Branch at the Highland Way entrance and a short distance downstream from the confluence with Amaya Creek on Hihn’s Mill Road. The Highland Way bridge is a narrow nine-foot wide rail flatcar bridge supported by earthen abutments. Future plans call for replacing this bridge with a wider structure. This bridge and the nearby parking area are located on the Burch property. The second bridge, Hihn’s Bridge, is a 90-foot-long rail flatcar bridge installed by CAL FIRE in 1999. Hihn’s Bridge was built as part of the contract with the timber purchaser for the Amaya THP #1-98-027 SCR. Plans for the Hihn’s Bridge were part of the THP and additional reports and plans are stored at the SDSF office. The load rating for this bridge as determined by the California Department of Transportation is MS-18 or HS-20. The point load capacity is 200,000 to 240,000 pounds. At the time the bridge was built it cost about $120,000. Future plans include a permanent, year-round crossing of the East Branch of Soquel Creek at Longridge Road.

LEGAL ACCESS

When the State acquired the major portion of the Pelican Timber Company's holdings along the East Branch in 1988 (refer to the Administration Chapter for details), the property had limited accessibility from county roads. The Forest is surrounded by private property on three sides and The Forest of Nisene Marks State Park (largely undeveloped) to the south. To ensure access, two deeded right-of-ways through private property were granted at the time of acquisition, providing for both administrative and public access.

The first right-of-way is through the Burch property to the east of SDSF. This route includes 0.7 miles of Hihn's Mill Road out to Highland Way, and provides the only public vehicular access to SDSF (public vehicles are not allowed in the Forest but can drive to and park in a designated area just off of Highland Way). The second right-of-way is through the CHY Company property to the southwest of SDSF and includes one mile of Hihn's Mill Road from the Forest boundary to the Olive Springs Quarry. Olive Springs Road, which connects with the major arterial of Soquel-San Jose Road, can then be accessed through the quarry for administrative purposes only.

DRIVABLE ROADS

All drivable roads in SDSF have been evaluated for safety and stability and are open to varying degrees of seasonal administrative vehicular use. A number of old logging roads and constructed skid trails in the Forest need to be accurately mapped and to have their suitability for reuse determined. Table 11 is a summary of the drivable roads in SDSF, with information on the road name, length, and location.

PUBLIC ACCESS ROADS

County roads leading to SDSF access points include Olive Springs Road, Highland Way, and Eureka Canyon Road. Olive Springs Road provides reliable year-round administrative access through the Olive Springs Quarry. As mentioned above, this road connects with Hihn's Mill Road at the southwestern edge of the Forest. This route from the quarry has a rock surface and is generally open.

Highland Way, which is east of Soquel-San Jose Road, leads to the eastern portion of SDSF and, as previously mentioned, provides the only public vehicular access. Highland Way has been unreliable during winters, however, due to landslide closures. Eureka Canyon Road, which winds through the mountains from Corralitos, provides a longer alternate route to the Highland Way entrance. Eureka Canyon Road is typically used when closures block Highland Way but it is also subject to slides. The Aptos Creek Fire Road, located within The Forest of Nisene Marks State Park, provides administrative access as well as a public entrance (by foot or bicycle) at the east end of Ridge Trail.

ROAD BUILDING AND MAINTENANCE

Road building and maintenance are critical elements of forest management. Forest roads are usually the largest source of management-related sediment and they provide the means to recreate, harvest timber, access emergency situations, maintain facilities, and patrol the Forest. Therefore, they should be in the best possible condition at all times. Culverts, bridges, ford crossings, water bars, rolling dips, and drainage ditches (structures which divert water away from or off of roads) need to be regularly inspected and repaired as necessary.

Table 11. Drivable Road Segments of SDSF.

ROAD NAME	LENGTH	LOCATION
Hihn's Mill Road	7.0 miles	Highland Way to Olive Springs Road
Amaya Creek Road	2.0 miles	Hihn's Mill Road to Comstock Mill Road
Comstock Mill Road	0.7 miles	Robinwood Lane to private property
Sulphur Springs Road	1.5 miles	Hihn's Mill Road to Ridge Trail
Corral Trail	1.2 miles	Sulphur Springs Road to the end of roaded portion of Corral Trail
Tractor Trail	1.3 miles	Hihn's Mill Road to end of roaded portion of Tractor Trail
Longridge Road	1.5 miles	Hihn's Mill Road to private property
Amaya Basin Road	0.7 miles	
Amaya Pond Road	0.5 miles	
Amaya Spillway Road	0.1 miles	
Lower Helipad Road	0.1 miles	
Shortridge Road	0.1 miles	

Winter inspection is crucial as the majority of water and soil movement occurs during the rainy season. New roads or skid trails will not be constructed or old roads or skid trails rehabilitated without thorough evaluations of topography, intended use, soil stability, drainage capabilities, and construction costs.

There are approximately 19 miles of existing or abandoned roads within SDSF. According

to the analysis done for the EIR, about 22 miles of new roads are needed to complete the Forest road network and approximately 15 miles of road will eventually be abandoned. The existing road density is about 4.6 miles per square mile.

California Forest Practice Rules specific to road building and maintenance will be applied during all forest management activities. This will be particularly emphasized during timber harvesting operations. These regulations, along with other site-specific strategies, will help minimize erosion and sediment delivery to watercourses, visual disturbance, and road construction/maintenance needs. Generally, all construction or rehabilitation of roads will include outsloping of road surfaces, rolling dips, and limited use of inside ditches to minimize hydrologic connectivity to stream channels. A road management plan will be developed which includes information from the 2003 Pacific Watershed Associates road inventory, which identified 82 sites with significant sediment delivery potential to watercourse channels.

THE FOLLOWING PUBLIC COMMENTS WERE RECEIVED DURING REVIEW OF THE 1998 GENERAL FOREST MANAGEMENT PLAN

Since the roads of SDSF will not be available for motorized use by the public, comments regarding them have been minimal. The issue of Forest access, however, is another matter. While most of the access concerns described in the Administration Chapter relate to the lack of public entrances, the inadequacy of existing public entrances is a problem as well. Individuals have expressed that the entrances are not only remote, but also difficult to maneuver in some cases. This is particularly true of equestrians who trailer their horses to the Highland Way parking area. As detailed in the Administration Chapter and Management Guideline Number 1 below, SDSF is actively seeking new legal access points. New entrance areas will be designed so that multiple uses can be accommodated.

Another concern is that excessive road building will take place in the Forest. Though SDSF does not have a detailed road construction plan, California Forest Practice Rules place restrictions on the amount and types of roads that can be built in forested areas. It is the intent of the Forest to adhere to these regulations in addition to the examination of all projects and possible impacts on a site-specific basis.

MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

1. Work with neighboring ownerships to maintain and improve access to the Forest. Continue working with the Olive Springs Quarry and the County of Santa Cruz to ensure that both ends of Hihn's Mill Road remain open.

2. All roads and other improvements shall be monitored and maintained in good condition. This will provide for safety and help prevent surface and mass erosion. Ben Lomond Conservation Camp and California Conservation Corps crews, CAL FIRE heavy fire equipment operators, and volunteers will help with road maintenance and repair, as appropriate.

3. New roads and other improvements will be developed as needed for access, resource protection, and forest management activities. High standards and compliance with California Forest Practice Rules for new logging road construction and existing road rehabilitation to minimize soil damage will be emphasized. Roads located within or near unstable areas will be designed with the assistance of CEG staff from the California Geological Survey. New construction and maintenance methods will be researched and incorporated to demonstrate their effectiveness. Methods to manage portions of the Forest without the use or construction of new roads will be investigated and may provide additional opportunities for research and demonstration.

4. Roads that are not needed to provide access, or are at high risk for sediment production, or are difficult to maintain and monitor will be abandoned.

5. Design watercourse crossings to reduce sediment inputs from vehicle use, bicyclists, and equestrians on roads and install foot bridges at stream crossings on trails.

6. Close the Highland Way parking area and Forest roads during periods of heavy precipitation and soil saturation when sediment delivery to a watercourse is a risk.

PLANNED ACTIONS

1. Determine the best approach for a road management plan and develop a plan for SDSF. This plan will include the inventory, assessment, and risk-rating of Forest roads that was completed as part of the Santa Cruz County Resource Conservation District's Soquel Creek watershed assessment (PWA, 2003).

2. Road conditions will be continually assessed to determine which segments are no longer suitable for use.

3. Investigate and, if possible, acquire additional administrative and public access to SDSF. Alternative funding sources will be examined for these acquisitions as well as for construction and maintenance. (Refer to the Administration Chapter for more information on access issues.)

4. Continue to upgrade Hihn's Mill Road and the Highland Way entrance parking area for all-season use. This includes road rocking and replacing culverts at risk of failure with larger culverts. Coordinate work at the Highland Way parking area and along the Burch property right-of-way with the landowner representatives. Upgrade Longridge, Amaya Creek, and Sulphur Springs Roads for improved emergency access.

5. Widen and provide permanent abutments to the Highland Way entrance bridge in cooperation with Burch/Redwood Empire. Maintain trash racks above the inflow to culverts in the Forest. An inventory, assessment and risk-rating of culverts was

completed as part of the Santa Cruz County Resource Conservation District's Soquel Creek watershed assessment (PWA, 2003). Continue to upgrade and remediate watercourse crossings identified in the PWA report.

6. Continue to implement the mile-post identification system for roads and trails to facilitate management and emergency response. Maintain the gate identification system. Continue to build upon the GIS layers and maps of roads and gates to be utilized in computer-aided dispatching for emergencies.

7. Obtain review of the location of all roads, landings, and skid trails on unstable areas by a Certified Engineering Geologist.

8. Implement the Streambank Failure/Hihn's Mill Road repair project along the portion of Hihn's Mill Road east of Hihn's Bridge using a fish friendly design.

9. Install a permanent, year-round crossing of Soquel Creek at Longridge Road.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: TEXT OF ASSEMBLY BILL 1965

ASSEMBLY BILL NO. 1965

CHAPTER 1338

An act to add Article 4 (commencing with Section 4660) to Chapter 9 of Division 4 of the Public Resources Code, relating to state forests.

(Approved by Governor September 29, 1987.
Filed with Secretary of State September 29, 1987.)

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 1965, Farr. Soquel Demonstration State Forest.

Under existing law, the Department of Forestry and Fire Protection is authorized to engage in the management, protection, and restoration of state forests in accordance with plans approved by the State Board of Forestry and Fire Protection.

This bill would declare it the policy of the state to establish the Soquel Demonstration State Forest in Santa Cruz County. The department would be responsible for the development and establishment of the state forest and for maintenance and operations. The bill would authorize the department to permit a limited amount of commercial timber operations within the forest in order to provide funds for its maintenance and operation. The bill would require the department, in conjunction with a specified advisory committee, to adopt a general plan for the park by January 1, 1989, and would require the general plan to be approved by the advisory committee prior to adoption by the department.

The department's duties and authority under the bill would only arise if the state acquires the property comprising the demonstration forest.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

SECTION 1. Article 4 (commencing with Section 4660) is added to Chapter 9 of Division 4 of the Public Resources Code, to read:

ARTICLE 4. SOQUEL DEMONSTRATION STATE FOREST

4660. It is hereby declared to be the policy of the state to establish and preserve an intensively managed, multifaceted research forest which is representative of forest activities as a living forest in Santa Cruz County within northern California's coastal redwood belt. The coast redwoods, as the dominant tree species in this area, are a valuable natural resource and are unique in North America for their beauty, abundance, diversity, and public accessibility, and

their extreme beauty and economic value requires special measures for their protection for the use, enjoyment, and education of the public.

It is the intent of the Legislature, in establishing the Soquel Demonstration State Forest, to provide an environment that will do all of the following:

(a) Provide watershed protection for local communities and base-line monitoring and studies of the hazards, risks, and benefits of forest operations and watersheds to urban areas.

(b) Provide public education and examples illustrating compatible rural land uses, including sustained yield timber production, as well as the historic development of timbering and forestry machinery, within the context of local community protection and nearby pressures.

(c) Provide a resource for the public, environmental groups, elected officials, environmental planners, the educational community, and the media as an open environment for the inspection and study of environmental education, forestry practices, and effects thereof.

(d) Protect old growth redwood trees.

4661. The department may permit a limited amount of commercial timber operations on the property within the Soquel Demonstration State Forest in order to provide funds for the maintenance and operation of the state forest and to allow fulfillment of the objectives of Section 4660. Income from the state forest property shall sustain all costs of operation and provide income for research and educational purposes.

4662. The department is responsible for the development and establishing of the Soquel Demonstration State Forest and for ongoing maintenance and operations. The director shall appoint an advisory committee to assist the department in planning future management of the forest. The advisory committee shall include representatives of the Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors, the Department of Parks and Recreation, the Board of Forestry and Fire Protection, the Forest of Nisene Marks Advisory Committee, and the Department of Fish and Game.

4663. The department, in coordination with the advisory committee, shall adopt by January 1, 1989, a general plan for the state forest which reflects the long-range development and management plans to provide for the optimum use and enjoyment of the living forest, as provided in Section 4660, as well as the protection of its quality and the watershed within the Santa Cruz area. The general plan shall be approved by the advisory committee prior to adoption by the department.

4664. The duties and authority of the department pursuant to this article shall only arise if the state acquires the property comprising the Soquel Demonstration State Forest.

APPENDIX B: SPECIES LISTS FOR SDSF

FAUNA OF SDSF

From Preliminary Biological Assessment of Soquel Demonstration State Forest, Santa Cruz County, California (Holland et al., 1992) and David Suddjian, Biological Consultant.

SCIENTIFIC NAME	COMMON NAME
FISH	
Lampetra tridentata	Pacific lamprey
Oncorhynchus mykiss iridius	steelhead trout
Oncorhynchus mykiss	rainbow trout
Gasterosteus aculeatus	northern threespine stickleback
Cottus asper	prickly sculpin
Catosstomus occidentalis	Sacramento sucker

AMPHIBIANS

Lawrence Erickson, herpetologist and CAL FIRE Fire Captain, updated the nomenclature for amphibian and reptile species previously observed. He also conducted on-going surveys, resulting in observations of some new species on the Forest.

Taricha torosa torosa	California newt, coast range newt
Taricha granulosa granulosa	rough-skinned newt
Dicamptodon ensatus	Pacific giant salamander, California giant salamander
Batrachoseps attenuatus	California slender salamander
Ensatina eschscholtzii xanthoptica	yellow-eyed ensatina
Aneides flavipunctatus niger	Santa Cruz black salamander
Aneides lugubris	arboreal salamander
Bufo boreas halophilus	California toad, western toad
Pseudacris sierra	Sierran tree frog, Pacific chorus frog
Rana boylii	foothill yellow-legged frog
Rana draytonii	California red-legged frog

REPTILES

Actinomys marmorata pallida	western pond turtle, southern Pacific pond turtle
Sceloporus occidentalis boucurtii	western fence lizard, coast range fence lizard
Plestiodon skiltonianusskiltonianus	Skilton's skink, western skink
Elgaria coerulea coerulea	northern alligator lizard, San Francisco alligator

	lizard
Elgaria multicaranata multicaranata	southern alligator lizard, California alligator lizard
Charina bottae	northern rubber boa
Diadophis punctatus amabilis	Pacific ring-necked snake
Contia tenuis	sharp-tailed snake
Pituophis catenifer catenifer	Pacific gopher snake
Lampropeltis getula californiae	California kingsnake
Lampropeltis zonata multifasciata	California mountain kingsnake, coast mountain kingsnake
Thamnophis sirtalis infernalis	California red-sided garter snake, red-spotted garter snake
Thamnophis elegans terrestris	western terrestrial garter snake, coast garter snake
Thamnophis atratus atratus	Santa Cruz garter snake
Coluber constrictus flaviventris	western yellow-bellied racer, western racer
Crotalus oreganus oreganus	northern Pacific rattlesnake, western rattlesnake

BIRDS

Ardea herodias	great blue heron
Butorides virescens	green heron
Aix sponsa	wood duck
Mergus merganser	common merganser
Anas platyrhynchos	mallard
Cathartes aura	turkey vulture
Pandion haliaetus	osprey
Accipiter striatus	sharp-shinned hawk
Accipiter cooperii	Cooper's hawk
Buteo jamaicensis	red-tailed hawk
Buteo lineatus	red-shouldered hawk
Aquila chrysaetos	golden eagle
Falco columbarius	merlin
Callipepla californica	California quail
Actitis macularia	spotted sandpiper
Patagioenas fasciata	band-tailed pigeon
Zenaida macroura	mourning dove
Megascops kennicottii	western screech owl
Bubo virginianus	great horned owl
Glaucidium gnoma	northern pygmy-owl
Asio otus	long-eared owl
Aegolius acadicus	northern saw-whet owl
Calypte anna	Anna's hummingbird
Selasphorus rufus	rufous hummingbird
Selasphorus sasin	Allen's hummingbird
Megaderyle alcyon	belted kingfisher
Melanerpes formicivorus	acorn woodpecker

Sphyrapicus ruber	red-breasted sapsucker
Picoides pubescens	downy woodpecker
Picoides villosus	hairy woodpecker
Colaptes auratus	northern flicker
Empidonax difficilis	Pacific-slope flycatcher
Sayornis nigricans	black phoebe
Myiarchus cinerascens	ash-throated flycatcher
Contopus cooperi	olive-sided flycatcher
Contopus sordidulus	western wood-peewee
Cypseloides niger	black swift
Chaetura vauxi	Vaux's swift
Tachycineta thalssina	violet-green swallow
Stelgidopteryx serripennis	northern rough-winged swallow
Hirundo pyrrhonota	cliff swallow
Corvus corax	common raven
Cyanocitta stelleri	Steller's jay
Aphelocoma californica	western scrub-jay
Poceile rufescens	chestnut-backed chickadee
Baeolofus inornatus	oak titmouse
Psaltriparus minimus	bushtit
Certhia americana	brown creeper
Sitta pygmaea	pygmy nuthatch
Troglodytespacificus	Pacific wren
Thryomanes bewickii	Bewick's wren
Chamaea fasciata	wrentit
Cinclus mexicanus	American dipper
Regulus calendula	ruby-crowned kinglet
Regulus satrapa	golden-crowned kinglet
Polioptila caerulea	blue-gray gnatcatcher
Toxostoma redivivum	California thrasher
Catharus ustulatus	Swainson's thrush
Catharus guttatus	hermit thrush
Turdus migratorius	American robin
Ixoreus naevius	varied thrush
Bombycilla cedrorum	cedar waxwing
Sturnus vulgaris	European starling
Vireo cassinii	Cassin’s vireo
Vireo huttoni	Hutton's vireo
Vireo gilvus	warbling vireo
Setophaga coronata	yellow-rumped warbler
Setophaga townsendi	Townsend's warbler
Dendroica occidentalis	hermit warbler
Setophaga nigrescens	black-throated gray warbler
Setophaga petechia	yellow warbler
Oreothlypis celata	orange-crowned warbler

Oreothlypis ruficapilla	Nashville warbler
Geothlypis tolmiei	MacGillivray's warbler
Cardellina pusilla	Wilson's warbler
Piranga ludoviciana	western tanager
Passerella iliaca	fox sparrow
Melospiza melodia	song sparrow
Melospiza lincolnii	Lincoln's sparrow
Zonotrichia atricapilla	golden-crowned sparrow
Zonotrichia leucophrys	white-crowned sparrow
Pipilo maculatus	spotted towhee
Melozone crissalis	California towhee
Junco hyemalis	dark-eyed junco
Pheucticus melanocephalus	black-headed grosbeak
Loxia curvirostra	red crossbill
Haemorhous purpureus	purple finch
Coccothraustes vespertinus	evening grosbeak
Spinus tristis	American goldfinch
Spinus psaltria	lesser goldfinch
Spinus pinus	pine siskin

The following additional bird observations were reported by Matt Greene in his 2012 reports on "Raptor Surveys for Fern Gulch THP" and "Rim THP Raptor Survey". These reports also confirmed sightings of many of the species observed previously.

SCIENTIFIC NAME	COMMON NAME
Meleagris gallopavo	wild turkey
Dryocopus pileatus	pileated woodpecker

MAMMALS

Didelphis virginiana	opossum
Sorex trowbridgii	Trowbridge's shrew
Neurotrichus gibbsii	shrew-mole
Scapanus latimanus	broad-footed mole
Myotis lucifugus	little brown myotis
Myotis evotis	long-eared myotis
Myotis volans	long-legged myotis
Myotis californicus	California myotis
Lasionycteris noctivagans	silver-haired bat
Lasiurus cinereus	hoary bat
Pipistrellus hesperus	western pipistrelle
Eptesicus fuscus	big brown bat
Sylvilagus bachmani	brush rabbit
Neotamias merriami	Merriam's chipmunk
Sciurus griseus	western gray squirrel
Thomomys bottae	Botta's pocket gopher
Chaetodipus californicus	California pocket mouse
Reithrodontomys megalotis	western harvest mouse
Peromyscus truei	pinyon mouse
Peromyscus californicus	California mouse
Peromyscus maniculatus	deer mouse
Neotoma fuscipes	dusky-footed woodrat
Urocyon cinereoargenteus	gray fox
Procyon lotor	raccoon
Mustela frenata	long-tailed weasel
Mephitis mephitis	striped skunk
Canis latrans	coyote
Puma concolor	mountain lion
Lynx rufus	bobcat
Sus scrofa	feral pig
Odocoileus hemionus	black-tailed deer

FLORA OF SDSF

From Preliminary Biological Assessment of Soquel Demonstration State Forest, Santa Cruz County, California (Holland et al., 1992) and Randy Morgan; the report for the "botanical survey for the Fern Gulch THP", submitted by Tim Hyland on May 2, 2010; and the report for the botanical survey for the Comstock Mill THP, submitted by Dylan Neubauer on May 14, 2013.
***** non-native
** most invasive

Acer macrophyllum	bigleaf maple
Acer negundo	California boxelder
Achillea millefolium	yarrow
Acmispon americanus	Spanish clover
Acmispon americanus var. *a.*	Spanish trefoil
Acmispon glaber var. *g.*	deerweed
Acmispon heermannii var. *orbicularis*	Heermann's trefoil
Acmispon parviflorus	small-flowered trefoil
Adenocaulon bicolor	trail plant
Adenostema fasiculatum	chamise
Adenostoma fasciculatum var. *f.*	chamise
Adiantum aleuticum	five-finger fern
Adiantum jordanii	California maidenhair
Aesculus californica	California buckeye
***Ageratina adenophora*	eupatorium
Agoseris grandiflora	large-flowered Agoseris
Agrostis avenacea	Pacific bentgrass
Agrostis hallii	Hall's bentgrass
Agrostis stolonifera	western bentgrass
Agrostis pallens	leafy bentgrass
**Aira caryophyllea*	silvery hairgrass
Allium unifolium	one-leaved onion
Allophyllum divaricatum	straggling gilia
Alnus rhombifolia	white alder
Alnus rubra	red alder
Amsinckia intermedia	common fiddleneck
**Anagallis arvensis*	scarlet pimpernel
Anaphalus margaritacea	pearly everlasting
Anisocarpus madioides	woodland Madia
**Anthemis cotula*	mayweed
Anthriscus caucalis	knotted hedge parsley
Anthoxanthum occidentale	vanilla grass
Aquilegia formosa	northwest crimson columbine
Aralia californica	California spikenard
Arbutus menziesii	madrone

Arctostaphylos andersonii	Santa Cruz mountain manzanita
Arctostaphylos crustacea	brittle-leaved manzanita
Arctostaphylos crustacea subsp. *crinita*	crinite manzanita
Arctostaphylos sp.	manzanita
Arctostaphylos tomentosa ssp. *crinita*	brittle-leaved manzanita
Artemisia douglasiana	mugwort
Asarum caudatum	wild ginger
Asyneuma prenanthoides	bellflower
Athyrium filix-femina var. *cyclosorum*	lady fern
**Avena fatua*	common wild oats
Baccharis glutinosa	marsh baccharis
Baccharis pilularis ssp. *Consanguinea*	coyote brush
Barbarea sp.	wintercress
Boisduvalia densiflora	dense-flowered Boisduvalia
Boykinia occidentalis	coast Boykinia
**Brassica nigra*	black mustard
**Briza maxima*	rattlesnake grass
Briza minor	little quaking grass
Brodiaea elegans	harvest brodiaea
Bromus carinatus	California brome
Bromus carinatus var. *c.*	California brome
**Bromus diandrus*	ripgut brome
**Bromus hordeaceus*	soft chess brome
Bromus laevipes	woodland brome
**Bromus madritensis*	red brome
Bromus vulgaris	woodland brome
Calamagrostis rubescens	wild morning glory
Calandrinia breweri	Brewer's redmaids
Callitriche marginata	California water starwort
Calochortus albus	fairy lantern
Calystegia occidentalis	pine grass
**Calystegia occidentalis*	coast morning glory
Calystegia purpurata subsp. *p.*	western morning glory
Cardamine californica	milkmaids
Cardamine oligosperma	few-seeded bittercress
***Carduus pycnocephalus* subsp. *p.*	Italian thistle
**Carduus pycnocephalus*	Italian thistle
**Carduus tenuiflorus*	slender-flowered thistle
Carex barbarae	Santa Barbara sedge
Carex bolanderi	Bolander's sedge
Carex globosa	round-fruited sedge
Carex harfordii	Harford’s sedge
Carex tumulicola	foothill sedge
Ceanothus cuneatus	buck brush
Ceanothus papillosus	warty-leaved ceanothus

Ceanothus thyrsiflorus	blue brush
Ceanothus thyrsiflorus var. *t.*	blue-blossom
* *Cedrus deodara*	Deodar cedar
**Centaurea melitensis*	tocalote
**Centaurea solstitialis*	yellow star thistle
Cerastium glomeratum	mouse-eared chickweed
Chlorogalum pomeridianum	soap plant
Chlorogalum pomeridianum var. *p.*	soap plant
Cirsium brevistylum	Indian thistle
**Cirsium vulgare*	bull thistle
Clarkia purpurea ssp. *viminea*	large godetia
Claytonia parviflora subsp. *p.*	small-flowered claytonia
Claytonia perfoliata	miners' lettuce
Clinopodium douglasii	yerba buena
Clintonia andrewsiana	red clintonia
Collomia heterophylla	varied-leaved Collomia
**Conium maculatum*	poison hemlock
Convolvulus arvensis	bindweed
Corallorhiza maculate var. *occidentalis*	unspotted spotted coralroot
**Cordyline* sp.	cordyline
Cornus sericia ssp. californica	western red or creek dogwood
Cornus sericia ssp. *sericia*	red osier dogwood
**Cortaderia jubata*	pampas grass
Corylus cornuta	California hazel
Corylus cornuta var.*californica*	California hazel
**Cotoneaster pannosus*	silverleaf cotoneaster
Cryptantha micromeres	minute-flowered cryptantha
Cynoglossum grande	hound's-tongue
**Cynosurus echinatus*	dog's-tail grass
Cyperus eragrostis	tall cyperus
**Cytisus scoparius*	Scotch broom
**Dactylis glomerata*	orchard grass
Danthonia californica	California oat grass
Deschampsia elongata	slender hairgrass
Dichelostemma pulchellum	blue dicks
**Dichondra micrantha*	Asian pony's foot
Drymocallis glandulosa	cinquefoil
Dryopteris arguta	coastal wood fern
Ehrharta erecta	panic veldt grass
Elymus glaucus	western ryegrass
Elymus glaucus subsp. *g.*	blue wildrye
Epilobium brachycarpum	annual willowherb
Epilobium ciliatum ssp.*ciliatum*	California willow herb
Epilobium ciliatum subsp.*watsonii*	Watson's willow herb
Epipactis helleborine	eastern orchid

Equisetum hiemale	scouring rush
Equisetum hyemale ssp.*affine*	common scouring rush
Equisetum talmateia ssp. *Braunii*	giant horse tail
Equisetum telmatiea	horsetail
Ericameria arborescens	golden fleece
Erigeron canadensis	horseweed
**Erigeron sumatrensis*	wide-leave horseweed
Eriodictyon californicum	California mountain balm
Eriophyllum confertiflorum var. *c.*	golden yarrow
**Euphorbia peplus*	petty spurge
Eurybia radulina	broad-leaved wood aster
Festuca arundinacea	tall fescue
Festuca bromoide	six-weeks fescue
Festuca californica	California fescue
Festuca myuros	rattail fescue
Festuca occidentalis	western fescue
Festuca perennis	annual rye grass
Festuca rubra	red fescue
Festuca subuliflora	crinkle-awned fescue
**Filago gallica*	daggerleaf cottonrose
Fragaria vesca	California strawberry
Frangula californica	California coffeeberry
Frangula californica subsp. *c.*	California coffeeberry
Fritillariaaffinis var.affinis	checker lily
**Galium aparine*	goosegrass
Galium californicum	California bedstraw
Galium californicum subsp. *c.*	California bedstraw
**Galium murale*	tiny bedstraw
**Galium parisiense*	Parisian bedstraw
Galium porrigens	climbing bedstraw
Galium triflorum	trifid bedstraw
Gamochaeta ustulata	California everlasting
**Gastridium phleoides*	nitgrass
**Genista monspessulana*	French broom
Geranium dissectum	cut-leaved geranium
Geranium molle	dove's-foot geranium
Gnaphalium luteo-album	weedy cudweed
Gnaphalium purpureum	purple cudweed
Gnaphalium ramossisimum	pink everlasting
**Hedera helix*	English ivy
Helenium puberulum	sneezeweed
Heracleum maximum	cow parsnip
Heteromeles arbutifolia	toyon
Heuchera micrantha	small-flowered heuchera
Hieracium albiflorum	white-flowered hawkweed

Hierochloe occidentalis	vanilla grass
Hirschfeldia incana	perennial mustard
**Holcus lanatus*	velvet grass
Holodiscus discolor	cream bush
Holta macrostachya	leather root
Hordeum brachyantherum subsp. *b.*	California barley
**Hordeum murinum* ssp.*leporinum*	foxtail barley
**Hypericum calycinum*	St. John's wort
**Hypochaeris glabra*	smooth cat's-ear
**Hypochoeris radicata*	hairy cat's ear
Iris ferneldii	Santa Cruz Mountain iris
Iris macrosiphon	ground iris
Juglans sp.	walnut
Juncus bufonius	toad rush
Juncus effusus var. *brunneus*	bog rush
Juncus effusus var. *pacificus*	Pacific rush
Juncus patens	common rush
Juncus xiphioides	iris-leaved rush
**Lathyrus latifolius*	perennial sweet pea
Lathyrus vestitus	common Pacific pea
Lathyrus vestitus var.*vestitus*	wood-pea
**Lepidium strictum*	wayside pepper grass
**Linum bienne*	small-flowered flax
Logfia filaginoides	California Filago
Lonicera hispidula	hairy honeysuckle
Lotus eriophorus	wooly trefoil
Lotus scoparius	deerweed
Lupinus albifrons	bush lupine
Lupinus latifolius	broad-leaved lupine
Lupinus latifolius var. *l.*	broad-leaved lupine
Lupinus nanus	sky lupine
Luzula comosa var. *c.*	common wood rush
Luzula multiflora	wood rush
Madia elegans	common Madia
Madia gracilis	slender tarweed
**Madia sativa*	coast tarweed
Maianthemum racemosum	western Solomon's seal
Maianthemum stellatum	slender Solomon's seal
**Marah fabaceus*	wild cucumber
**Matricaria discoidea*	pineapple weed
**Medicago polymorpha*	bur clover
Melica imperfecta	small-flowered melic grass
Melica subulata	Alaska onion grass
Melica torreyana	Torrey's melic grass
**Melilotus albus*	white sweetclover

*Melilotus indicus	yellow sweetclover
*Melissa officinalis	lemon balm
Mimulus aurantiacus	sticky monkeyflower
Mimulus aurantiacus var. *a.*	sticky monkeyflower
Mimulus cardinalis	scarlet monkeyflower
Mimulus guttatus	common monkeyflower
Morella californica	wax myrtle
*Myosotis latifolia	forget-me-not
* *Nasturtiumofficinale*	watercress
Navarretia squarrosa	skunkweed
Nemophila parviflora	small-flowered Nemophila
Nemophila parviflora var. *p.*	small-flowered nemophila
Nemophila pedunculata	meadow nemophila
Notholithocarpus densiflora	tanoak
Oemeria cerasiformis	oso berry
Osmorhiza berteroi	sweet cicely
Oxalis albicans	hairy wood sorrel
Oxalis oregana	redwood sorrel
Oxalis pes-caprae	sour grass
Oxalis pilosa	hairy wood sorrel
Pellaea andromedifolia	coffee fern
Pentagramma triangularis ssp.*triangularis*	goldenback fern
Persicaria punctate	smartweed
Petasites frigidus var. *palmatus*	coltsfoot
Phalaris californica	California canary grass
Pinus attenuta	knobcone pine
**Pinus coulteri*	Coulter pine
**Pinus pinea*	Italian stone pine
**Pinus radiata*	Monterey pine
Piperia elongata	rein orchid
Pityrogramma traingularis ssp. *Triangularis*	gold-backed fern
Plantago lanceolata	English plantain
Plantanus racemosa	California sycamore
Poa howellii	Howell's bluegrass
Polygala californica	California milkwort
Polypodium californicum	California polypody
Polypodium calirhiza	polypody
Polypogon interruptus	beard grass
Polypogon monspeliensis	rabbitsfoot grass
Polypogon viridis	water beard grass
Polystichum dudleyi	Dudley's shield fern
Polystichum munitum	western sword fern
Populus trichocarpa	black cottonwood
Potentilla glandulosa	sticky potentilla

Prosartes hookeri	Hooker's fairy bells
Pseudognaphalium californicum	California everlasting
Psudeognaphalium luteoalbum	weedy cudweed
Pseudognaphalium sp.	everlasting
Pseudognaphalium ramossisimum	pink everlasting
Pseudognaphalium stramineum	cotton-batting plant
Pseudotsuga menziesii	Douglas-fir
Psilocarphus tenellus	slender woolly marbles
Pteridium aquilinum	bracken fern
Pteridium aquilinum var.*pubescens*	bracken fern
Quercus agrifolia	coast live oak
Quercus agrifolia var. *a.*	coast live oak
Quercus agrifolia x kelloggii	hybrid oak
Quercus kelloggii	black oak
Quercus parvula var. *shrevei*	Shreve oak
Quercus parvula var.*shrevei* x *kelloggii*	hybrid oak
Quercus wislizenii	interior live oak
Ranunculus muricatus	prickle-fruited ranunculus
Ribes menziesii	canyon gooseberry
Ribes menziesii var.*senile*	Santa Cruz gooseberry
Ribes sanguineum var. *glutinosum*	flowering current
Rorippa palustris	yellow cress
Rosa californica	Caifornia wild rose
Rosa gymnocarpa	wood rose
Rosa spithamea	ground rose
Rubus leucodermis	western raspberry
Rubus parviflorus	thimble berry
Rubus ursinus	California blackberry
**Rumex acetosella*	sour dock or sheep sorrel
**Rumex conglomeratus*	clustered dock
Rumex salicifolius	willow dock
Rupertia physodes	Rupert’s scurf-pea
Sagina apetala	sticky pearlwort
Salix lasiandra	yellow willow
Salix lasiolepis	sandbar willow
Salix sitchensis	velvet willow
Sambucus nigra ssp.*caerulea*	elderberry
Sanicula crassicaulis	Pacific sanicle
Scirpus microcarpus	panicled bulrush
Scoliopus bigelovii	California fetid adder's tongue
Scrophularia californica	California figwort
**Senecio glomeratus*	fireweed
Senecio minimus	toothed fireweed
Sequoia sempervirens	coast redwood
Silene gallica	windmill pink

*Silybum marianum	milk thistle
Sisyrinchium bellum	blue-eyed grass
Solanum umbelliferum	blue witch
Soliva sessilis	common soliva
*Sonchus asper	prickly sow thistle
Sonchus asper subsp. *a.*	prickly sow thistle
*Sonchus oleraceus	common sow thistle
Spergularia sp.	sand spurry
Stachys ajugoides var. *rigida*	rigid hedge nettle
Stachys bullata	hedge nettle
Stachys chammisonis	swamp hedge-netle
Stachys rigida	hedge nettle
Stachys rigida var. *quercetorum*	rigid hedge nettle
*Stellaria media	common chickweed
Stipa pulchra	purple needlegrass
Symphoricarpos albus	tall snowberry
Symphoricarpos albus var.*laevigatus*	snowberry
Symphoricarpos mollis	snowberry
Symphotrichum chilense	common California sister
*Torilis arvensis	hedge parsley
*Torilis nodosa	knotted hedge parsley
Toxocodendron diversilobum	poison oak
Toxicoscordion fremontii	Fremont's star lily
Trientalis latifolia	Pacific starflower
*Trifolium angustifolium	narrow-leaved clover
Trifolium bididum var.*decipiens*	pinole clover
Trifolium dubium	shamrock
Trifolium gracilentum	pin-point clover
*Trifolium hirtum	rose clover
Trifolium microcephalum	small-headed clover
Trifolium obtusiflorum	creek clover
Trifolium repens	white clover
Trifolium variegatum var. *v.*	white-tipped clover
Trifolium wildenovii	tomcat clover
Trillium ovatum	coast trillium
Triodanis biflora	Venus's looking glass
Trisetum canescens	tall trisetum
Trisetum sp.	trisetum
Triteleia laxa	Ithuriel's spear
Typha latifolia	broad-leaved cattail
Umbellularia californica	California bay-laurel
Urtica dioica ssp.*holosericea*	stinging nettle
Urtica urens	dwarf nettle
Vaccinium ovatum	huckleberry
Vancouveria planipetala	inside-out flower

Verbena lasiostachys	western verbena
Verbena lasiostachys var.*lasiostachys*	verbena
Veronica americana	American speedwell
Veronica arvensis	common speedwell
Veronica peregrina	purslane speedwell
Veronica persica	Persian speedwell
Vicia disperma	two-seeded vetch
**Vicia sativa*	common vetch
Vicia sativa subsp. *nigra*	narrow-leaved vetch
Vicia sp.	wild cucumber
**Vinca major*	periwinkle
Viola ocellata	two-eyed violet
Viola pedunculata	Johnny jump-up
Viola sempervirens	redwood violet
Whipplea modesta	yerba de selva
Woodwardia fimbriata	western chain fern

FUNGI OF SDSF

From personal communication with Nathan Wilson of the Fungus Federation of Santa Cruz.

SCIENTIFIC NAME	COMMON NAME
Agricus hondensis	felt-ringed Agricus
Amanita gemata	gemmed Amanita
Amanita pantherina	panther Amanita
Amanita phalloides	death cap
Amanita vaginata	grisette
Armillaria mellea	honey mushroom
Auriscalpium vulgare	
Boletus edulis	king bolete
Calodera viscosa	yellow tuning fork
Camarophyllus borealis	snowy waxy cap
Camarophyllus russocoriaceus	cedar waxy cap
Cantherellus californicus	chanterelle
Cantharellus cibarius	
Caulorhiza umbonata	redwood rooter
Clitocybe deceptiva	anise mushroom
Clitocybe nebularis	cloudy Clitocybe
Coprinus micaceus	mica cap
Cortinarius sp.	Cortinarius
Cortinarius varius	Cortinarius
Craterellus cornucopioides	horn of plenty
Crucibulum laeve	white-egg bird’s nest
Entoloma sp.	

Fistulina hepatica	beefsteak polypore
Fomitopsis cajanderi	
Fomitopsis pinicola	red-belted conk
Galerina sp.	
Gomphidius subrosea	rosy Gomphidius
Gymnopilus sapineus	common Gymnopilus
Gyromitra infula	hooded false morel
Hebeloma crustuliniforme	poison pie
Helvella compressa	
Helvella lacunosa	fluted black elfin saddle
Helvella maculata	
Hemimycena sp.	
Heterotextus alpinus	
Hygrocybe acutoconica	a cute conic waxy cap
Hygrocybe coccinea	righteous red waxy cap
Hygrocybe conica	witch's hat
Hygrocybe flavescens	golden waxy cap
Hygrocybe punicea	scarlet waxy cap
Inocybe citrifolia	
Inocybe fastigiata	corn silk Inocybe
Lactarius argillaceifolius	vulgar milk cap
Lactarius chrysorheus	yellow-staining milk cap
Lactarius fragilis	candy cap
Lactarius rubrilacteus	bleeding milk cap
Lenzites betulina	gilled polypore
Leotia lubrica	
Leptonia parva	blue-black Leptonia
Naematoloma fasciculare	sulfur tuft
Paxillus involutus	poison pax
Phylloporus rhodoxanthus	gilled bolete
Pleurocybella porrigens	angel wings
Pleurotus ostreatus	oyster mushroom
Pluteus cervinus	deer mushroom
Psathyrella longipes	
Pseudohydrum geltinosum	jelly tooth
Ramaria sp.	Ramaria
Ramaria gelatinosa	jellied-base coral
Ramaria stricta	straight-branched coral
Russula brevipes	short-stemmed Russula
Russula cremoricolor	creamy Russula
Russula silvicola	emetic Russula
Stereum hirsutum	hairy Stereum
Trametes versicolor	turkey tail
Verpa conica	thimble morel

Identified repair projects will be implemented as staffing and budget limitations allow. To finance their construction, these projects will be generally incorporated into the timber harvest planning process.

WATERSHED MONITORING

TIMBER OPERATIONS

To avoid adverse impacts on water quality and fisheries resulting from the discharge of sediment to watercourses attributable to timber operations, SDSF staff will monitor all timber operations (including all harvesting areas and new roads, skid trails, and landings) annually for five to seven years following completion of the operations. Occurrences of substantial surface erosion (i.e., gullies) or mass wasting (i.e., landslides or slumps) resulting from the operations will be identified and described by a Registered Professional Forester (RPF).

Each substantial gully or landslide will be evaluated to determine its cause and identify stabilization measures that would be most feasible, effective, and cost effective. Such measures will be implemented within 90 days from the date when the subject site is identified, unless due cause for delay is explained and a reasonable alternative schedule for implementation is proposed by the SDSF Forest Manager. If, based on the judgment of a Certified Engineering Geologist (CEG), no stabilization measures are feasible or reasonable to apply to the subject site, feasible offsite watershed remediation measures will be implemented as recommended by the CEG in conjunction with the next timber operation conducted at SDSF.

The SDSF Forest Manager will describe appropriate mitigation measures to be incorporated into future timber operations and specified in future timber harvesting plans (THPs) to avoid a recurrence of the observed erosion or mass wasting events.

ROADS

An inventory that delineated, described, and risk-rated forest roads at SDSF was completed as part of the Santa Cruz County Resource Conservation District's Soquel Creek watershed assessment (Pacific Watershed Associates, 2003). This assessment included identification, prioritization, and design of feasible projects to remediate sediment-discharge risks associated with each high- and extreme-risk road segment and estimated the cost effectiveness (in dollars per cubic yard of sediment) of each such project. Such projects include recontouring of roads and/or installation of improved drainage structures.

SDSF staff will conduct forensic monitoring of roads during and/or following most large storms. Any repair needs will be addressed as quickly as possible within the constraints of funding, and legal and regulatory requirements.

CULVERTS

SDSF staff evaluated the culverts along all Forest roads to determine where trash racks were necessary and appropriate. Steel T-posts were installed above each culvert where a need was determined. This work was completed prior to December 31, 1998. Each culvert is inspected annually and after large storm events (defined as producing rainfall of about 2 inches in 24 hours), and cleaned as needed. An inventory to delineate, describe, and risk-rate culverts at SDSF was completed as part of the Santa Cruz County Resource Conservation District's Soquel Creek watershed assessment (Pacific Watershed Associates, 2003). This information was compiled into a database to be maintained on an ongoing basis. The risk rating was based on standard engineering criteria for adequate culvert sizing, including effective culvert diameter, extent of watershed area, and estimated discharge of a storm with a 100-year recurrence interval.

The inventory included identification, prioritization, and design of feasible projects to reduce the risk of failure of high- or extreme-risk culverts, and estimated the cost-effectiveness (in dollars per cubic yard of sediment) of each such project. Potential projects include replacement of existing culverts with more reliable drainage structures (e.g., rocked dips) or larger culverts.

SDSF staff will conduct forensic monitoring of drainage structures during and/or following most large storms. Any repairs needs will be addressed as quickly as possible within the constraints of funding and legal and regulatory requirements.

ACTIVE LANDSLIDES AND SEDIMENT STORES

CAL FIRE, in conjunction with a CEG, will continue to inventory, delineate, describe and risk-rate active landslides and substantial unconsolidated concentrations of sediment and debris at SDSF. This information will be compiled into a database to be maintained on an ongoing basis, with new landslides added as they occur. Unconsolidated concentrations of sediment and debris and active landslides identified by Manson and Sowma-Bawcom (1992) will be included in the database. The description and risk-rating of segments will focus on conditions affecting the likelihood that runoff or seismic activity will cause mass movement resulting in sediment discharge to a watercourse.

CAL FIRE, in conjunction with a CEG, will continue to identify and design feasible projects to reduce the risk of failure of high- or extreme-risk landslides and sediment/debris accumulations, and estimate the cost-effectiveness (in dollars per cubic yard of sediment) of each such project. Landslide risk-reduction projects could include installation of drainage structures on roads above landslides to reduce the discharge of concentrated runoff onto the landslide, or armoring or buttressing of landslide toes. Sediment/debris accumulation risk-reduction projects could include recontouring or removal of material to reestablish original watercourses, bucking of logs in debris piles, and using the logs to armor eroding bank faces, or revegetation.

In 2004, the California Geological Survey submitted an Engineering Geologic Report for the portion of Fern Gulch that was included in the Fern Gulch timber sale. This report includes a detailed landslide map that assisted with timber sale development.

AMAYA BASIN

The California Geological Survey compiled a map of landslides triggered by the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake for Soquel Demonstration State Forest (Bedrossian, 1989). This map was focused on earthquake-triggered landslides and does not identify other unstable areas. Additional reconnaissance-level slope stability mapping, which includes descriptions of the geology and geomorphologic features related to slope stability was prepared by Manson and Sowma-Bawcom (1992), including all of the Amaya Creek and Fern Gulch watersheds. This mapping was based upon aerial photographic interpretations with little field work and is recognized as being useful only for preliminary review of regional slope stability.

Additional review and mapping of the Amaya Basin was completed in 2001 by Wayne Haydon of the California Geological Survey. Two maps were produced titled *Relative Landslide Potential, Amaya and Fern Gulches* and *Geologic and Geomorphic Features Related to Landsliding, Amaya and Fern Gulches*. These maps were used as a basis for the preparation of the Fern Gulch THP as well as the more recent Comstock Mill THP in the Amaya basin.

REMEDIATION PROJECTS

CAL FIRE will prioritize all sediment discharge projects identified and designed to remediate high- or extreme-risk conditions, as described above. Such projects will be implemented in conjunction with future timber operations according to their priority as available funding permits, to ensure, to the extent practicable, that no significant increase in sedimentation results from the timber operations proposed in each THP.

SDSF staff will continue to monitor roads and drainage structures following large storm events. When possible, inspections will be conducted during storm events. Any repair needs will be addressed as quickly as possible. To avoid adverse impacts of implementing remediation projects on water quality and fish habitat, CAL FIRE will evaluate the performance of each previously-implemented remediation project to determine whether the project was successful in reducing risk of large-scale sedimentation. If CAL FIRE determines that any project is not meeting its intended objective, CAL FIRE will redesign and modify the project as needed.

AQUATIC RESOURCE MONITORING

FISHERIES MANAGEMENT PLAN

A Draft Fisheries Management Plan for SDSF was completed in August, 1995 (Berlekamp and Sutfin). The aquatic-resource monitoring program includes the items described below.

FISH POPULATIONS

In cooperation with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), fish population surveys were conducted at four separate sites on SDSF from 1993 to 2001. From 2002 to the

present, SDSF has continued these annual surveys in cooperation with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's National Marine Fisheries Service (NOAA Fisheries). NOAA Fisheries added a fifth permanent station, increased the monitoring frequency, and incorporated additional research components.

HABITAT

One formal and comprehensive aquatic habitat survey was conducted on SDSF in 1994 (Berlekamp). Several additional surveys have been conducted by various fisheries biologists in conjunction with other research studies.

POOL SEDIMENTATION AND STREAM TEMPERATURE

Aquatic resources monitoring includes a pool sedimentation component to assess and monitor pool substrate embeddedness. When the Draft Fisheries Management Plan was completed, the V* methodology was a popular assessment procedure to quantitatively measure sediment impairment. Fisheries biologists and hydrologists later advised SDSF staff that measuring sediment in a small number of pools, particularly using the V* method, would not be as useful as measuring other parameters, such as water temperature. To date, no formal survey has been conducted to assess pool sedimentation on watercourses within the Forest. The 1994 Fish Habitat Survey Report and other limited-scope investigations provide descriptions of the channel substrate composition.

On the advice of fisheries biologists, SDSF staff initiated a long-term program to monitor stream temperature at seven sites on the Forest. Continuous water temperature data has been collected from 1997 to the present (CAL FIRE, 1997-2012).

AQUATIC INVERTEBRATES

A macroinvertebrate sampling study was performed by SDSF staff in October, 1995. The California Department of Fish and Wildlife analyzed the samples and produced a report of their findings in May, 1996. Since then, NOAA Fisheries has conducted additional assessments in conjunction with other research projects. Additional funding and agency coordination will be investigated for future aquatic invertebrate studies.

HABITAT ENHANCEMENT STRUCTURES

Fish habitat enhancement structures will be reviewed and approved by CDFW and an inter-agency team before installation.

To avoid adverse impacts of habitat-enhancement structures on fish habitat, CAL FIRE, in conjunction with CDFW, will evaluate structures annually for three years following installation to determine whether they are performing as intended and whether they are causing any unintended adverse impacts on fish habitat. If CAL FIRE and CDFW determine that any structure is functioning improperly or is adversely affecting aquatic habitat, CAL FIRE will redesign, repair, or remove the structure, as needed.

FISH POACHING AND HARASSMENT

To avoid adverse impacts of public use on fish, CAL FIRE and CDFW will conduct ongoing patrols in SDSF to enforce prohibitions on fishing and fish harassment. Incidents of fishing or harassment will be recorded and compiled. CAL FIRE and CDFW will evaluate such information annually in conjunction with fish population estimates to determine whether poaching or harassment have had a significant adverse effect on SDSF fisheries. If so, CAL FIRE will respond by closing streamside trails and intensifying law enforcement (e.g., increased patrols of streamside roads) as needed to ensure rapid fishery recovery and avoid additional adverse fishery effects.

RIPARIAN RESOURCE MONITORING

To avoid adverse impacts of public use on riparian habitat, CAL FIRE will conduct ongoing patrols in SDSF to enforce prohibitions on vandalism and other damage to riparian habitat related to public use. Incidents of damage will be recorded and compiled. A qualified wildlife biologist will evaluate such information annually to determine whether the damage constitutes a significant adverse effect on wildlife. If so, CAL FIRE will implement additional restrictions on public use (e.g., prohibiting camping or weekday recreation use or cordoning off sensitive areas) as needed to ensure rapid habitat recovery and to avoid additional adverse wildlife effects.

WILDFIRE MONITORING

To minimize increases in wildfire risks resulting from increased public use at SDSF, CAL FIRE will record and compile descriptions of all wildfires occurring at SDSF, including ambient weather and fire hazard conditions, ignition source, area and vegetation types burned, and estimated damage. Such information will be evaluated annually to determine frequency and severity of wildfire incidents. CAL FIRE will implement appropriate measures (e.g., prohibiting all fires or weekday recreation use, or allocating additional fire-suppression resources for SDSF) as needed to reduce wildfire risks.

EMERGENCY SERVICES MONITORING

To minimize adverse effects on emergency response performance for residents of Santa Cruz County resulting from increased demands for such services at SDSF, CAL FIRE will record and compile all requests for emergency responses, including requests for police, fire, medical, or search and rescue services. Descriptions of emergency responses will include response times and will be evaluated annually. Improvements to emergency response will be evaluated and, as resources allow, CAL FIRE will enhance its emergency response capability by upgrading roads; developing additional helispots along remote trails; and, either directly or through a management agreement with another qualified entity, providing additional human and equipment resources for emergency response at SDSF.

This information has not been complied into a comprehensive report, but the data is examined by

staff to evaluate any trends. All incident reports must be requested through the Fire Prevention/law Enforcement Bureau of CAL FIRE to insure that legally confidential information (such as ongoing law enforcement actions, and the identities of juveniles or injured Forest visitors) is not disclosed.

NUISANCE MONITORING

To minimize nuisance impacts on SDSF neighbors, CAL FIRE will record and compile descriptions of all reported nuisances caused by SDSF users at SDSF or on adjacent ownerships including, but not limited to, trespass, vandalism, littering, and noise. This information has not been compiled into a comprehensive report, but the data is examined by staff to evaluate any trends.

SDSF staff work closely with individuals and groups of volunteers to assist in this effort. The Stewards of Soquel Forest and a local National Mountain Bike Patrol group have both contributed information to the nuisance monitoring database. SDSF staff have developed good relationships with neighbors to prevent incidents that constitute a nuisance.

PUBLIC-USE MONITORING

CAL FIRE will use camping records, surveys and other information to compile annual estimates of public use of SDSF in user days. Use will be estimated for specific activities including, but not limited to, mountain biking, hiking, equestrian use, and educational activities.

CULTURAL RESOURCE MONITORING

CAL FIRE will monitor and periodically inspect heritage resources on SDSF to ensure that existing policies are affording effective protection. The identification and protection of cultural resources are important components of forestry in California today. Registered Professional Foresters are required to attend archaeological training classes to acquire the ability to recognize cultural materials, and to be able to develop effective protection measures. In its role as a demonstration forest, SDSF can serve as a proving ground for the development and implementation of effective heritage resource management strategies.

APPENDIX D: BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

INVASIVE PLANTS

- Scout the work site and access roads for presence of invasive plants prior to starting project work. Flag the location(s) of invasive plants to be avoided. If avoidance is not possible, treat or remove any invasive plants prior to allowing equipment to enter the work area.
- Schedule activities for periods when the risk of introducing or spreading invasive plants will be low (such as prior to flowering or when plant is dormant).
- Include methods to reduce the spread of invasive plants in training session prior to starting work on project.
- Clean clothing, tools, vehicles, equipment, and gear prior to entering the project site. Require the use of an inspection form to document that cleaning occurred before leaving an infested area or arriving at non-infested sites.
- Use a weed-free source for materials (including sand, gravel, seed, mulch, and other erosion control materials) brought in from outside locations. If no weed-free source is available, inspect, sterilize and/or treat material as needed.
- Prevent contamination of materials by invasive plants during storage and transport. Cover stockpiles of top soil, mulch, etc. with impermeable material (such as a tarp).
- Revegetate and/or mulch disturbed soils as soon as possible to reduce the likelihood of invasive plant establishment.
- Include not introducing invasive plants as a performance requirement in contracts.
- Minimize soil disturbance when conducting fuels reduction projects by using techniques such as chainsaw thinning and piling slash by hand.

AQUATIC ORGANISMS

- Disinfect all research equipment brought in from other watersheds. Include wading, diving, survey, electrofishing, and bug collecting gear, as well as in-stream equipment including ropes, fencing, and fish traps. Begin the decontamination procedure by scrubbing off equipment so it is clean and free of mud and other debris.
- Equipment can then be placed in a freezer overnight (at least four hours); soaked in hot water (at least five minutes in water at least 120 degrees); or soaked for at least 20 minutes in a 10% solution of bleach. If using diluted bleach, allow equipment to drip dry before rinsing. (Two other disinfectants, Roccal and iodophore, are acceptable substitutes for diluted bleach.)
- Vehicles carrying gear from areas infested with New Zealand mudsnail should also be cleaned to remove dirt and debris that might contain the snails.

SUDDEN OAK DEATH (SOD)

- Minimize travel, equipment operation, and/or collection of plants, firewood, or water in SOD disease centers.
- Minimize working in disease centers during muddy conditions, and during periods that are warm and rainy.
- If possible, start work in healthy stands before entering infected areas. Clean cutting tools (loppers, chainsaws, etc.) used on infected trees before working on healthy ones.
- Clean tools, equipment, tires, and foot wear after working in infected areas. Brush off mud, leaves and other debris, and spray shoes and any cutting tools with a disinfectant, such as Lysol or a 10% bleach solution. Power washers or car washes are effective means for cleaning cars, trucks, or large pieces of equipment.
- Movement of soil or plant parts (including firewood) may require a permit from the County Agricultural Commissioner. See http://www.suddenoakdeath.org/diagnosis-and-management/regulations/ for detailed information on requirements.

HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

- Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS), material labels and any additional handling and emergency instruction of hazardous materials are kept on file at the SDSF Headquarters.
- Any state employee handling hazardous materials are made aware of the potential hazards, given proper training and instruction, and also made aware of the location of the MSDS and any other documentation for the material.
- All contractors used in the application or use of these hazardous materials shall have the appropriate licenses and be able to read and understand the MSDS labels, appropriate recommendations and application instructions.
- The storage of the potentially hazardous materials on SDSF is in accordance with the MSDS and any buildings that are used for storage will display appropriate placards.