



Lassen County Fire Safe Council, Inc.

PO Box 816
Susanville, CA 96130

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Cathy Dirden
Secretary
(530) 251-5560

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February 4, 2009

Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board
2510 Lake Tahoe Boulevard
South Lake Tahoe, California 96150

The following letters were sent to you during your informal comment period. Please accept them as comments for the formal comment period.

Lahontan needs to extend the exemption of the waiver requirements to the 10% Dead & Dying/Fuelwood Exemption just as they have for the Forest Fire Prevention Exemption and 150' From the Home Exemption. Again we encourage you to adopt the same process that the Central Valley Water Quality Control Board uses as outlined in the attached letters. Any activities conducted under those exemptions are automatically enrolled in the Central Valley's program. No additional filing or paperwork is required.

This is especially important now that governor has laid out a clear mandate to eliminate redundant regulatory activities by state agencies. We can think of no better example of redundancy than Lahontan's parallel regulation of fire safe council fuel treatment activities. The Department of Forestry and Fire Protection is quite capable of ensuring environmental compliance with regard to these minor timber treatments. And they are minor, that is why they are allowed to be conducted under an exemption.

Thank you for your consideration.

Very Truly,

Thomas W. Esgate,
Managing Director

cc: State Senator
Assemblyman
Governor



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Cathy Dirden
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December 4, 2008

Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board
2510 Lake Tahoe Boulevard
South Lake Tahoe, California 96150

Input and Comments Concerning Timber Waiver Revisions

The current Lahontan Timber Waiver process is costing our fire safe council thousands of dollars in unnecessary expenditures, money that could go to into protecting Lassen County communities, and hundreds of hours of staff time for filling out unnecessary paper work. We are hopeful that Lahontan will consider adopting the Central Valley Water Quality Control Board (CVWQCB) model for operating under a waiver. It's a simple process that automatically enrolls projects operating under CalFire exemptions in the waiver program. The relevant CVWQCB language sets this forth reads as follows:

Eligibility Criteria:

- a. Timber harvest activities (Notices of Exemption or Emergency) within 150 feet of existing structures (i.e., "FireSafe" treatments), harvest of Christmas trees, dead, dying or diseased fuelwood or split products, public agency, public and private utility right of way, fuel hazard reduction, substantially damaged timberland unmerchantable as sawlog and woody debris and slash removal, that are conducted pursuant to a Notice of Exemption accepted by CDF under 14 California Code of Regulations (CCR), will automatically be enrolled in the Waiver.

Lassen County communities within CVWQCB region can be signed up for fire safe and conservation/restoration projects seamlessly and benefit from efficient project implementation at lower costs. The citizens living within the Lahontan Region, and those on the Fire Safe Council charged with landowner sign up, are literally being buried in Lahontan paper work and faced with seemingly endless bureaucratic inquiries and aggressive notices to comply. By the way, in the past 5 years our Fire Safe Council has never received a notice of violation from CalFire for any of our projects.

We strongly urge Lahontan to adopt the CVWQCB model for waivers operating under CalFire exemptions so that scarce fuel reduction funding can be put to work protecting life and property without overburdening and unnecessary regulation. Furthermore, there are also fuel reduction and conservation practices that do not even require CalFire permitting, for example, hand work and mastication. In cases where a CalFire exemption or permit is not required, neither should a filing with Lahontan be required.

There are also technical issues that need to be addressed in the Lahontan waiver process and we strongly urge you to consider the comments of Mark Shaffer, the Fire Safe Council's consulting forester, when revising the process.

Very truly,

Dorine Beckman,
Chair

Cc: State Senator
Assemblyman
Governor

cc: Tom Esgate

County of Lassen
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS



ROBERT F. PYLE

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JIM CHAPMAN

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County Administration Office
221 S. Roop Street, Suite 4
Susanville, CA 96130
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November 25, 2008

State Water Resources Control Board
1001 I Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Input and Comments Concerning Timber Waiver Revisions

Dear Representatives:

The current Lahontan Timber Waiver process is costing our local Fire Safe Council thousands of dollars in unnecessary expenditures, money that could go into protecting Lassen County communities, and hundreds of hours of staff time filling out paper work. We are hopeful that Lahontan will consider adopting the Central Valley Water Quality Control Board (CVWQCB) model for operating under a waiver. It's a simple process that automatically enrolls projects operating under CalFire exemptions in the waiver program. The relevant CVWQCB language that sets this forth reads as follows:

Eligibility Criteria:

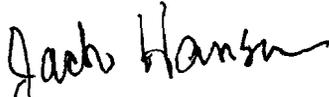
- a. Timber harvest activities (Notices of Exemption or Emergency) within 150 feet of existing structures (i.e., "FireSafe" treatments), harvest of Christmas trees, dead, dying or diseased fuelwood or split products, public agency, public and private utility right of way, fuel hazard reduction, substantially damaged timberland unmerchantable as sawlog and woody debris and slash removal, that are conducted pursuant to a Notice of Exemption accepted by CDF under 14 California Code of Regulations (CCR), will automatically be enrolled in the Waiver.

Lassen County communities within CVWQCB region can be signed up for fire safe projects seamlessly and benefit from efficient project implementation at lower costs. The citizens living within Lahontan Region, and those of the Fire Safe Council charged with landowner sign up, are literally being buried in Lahontan paper work and faced with seemingly endless bureaucratic inquiries and notices to comply. Please note that in the past 5 years, the Fire Safe Council has never received a notice of violation from the CalFire on any of their projects.

We strongly urge Lahontan to adopt the CVWQCB model for waivers operating under CalFire exemptions so that scarce fuel reduction funding can be put to work protecting life and property without overburdening and unnecessary regulation.

There are also technical issues that need to be addressed in the Lahontan waiver process and we strongly urge you to consider the comments of Mark Shaffer, the Fire Safe Council's consulting forester, when revising the process.

Sincerely,



Jack Hanson, Chairman
Lassen County Board of Supervisors

cc:

Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger
State Capitol
Sacramento, CA 95814

Senator Dave Cox
State Capitol, Room 2068
Sacramento, CA 95814

California Resources Agency
Mike Chrisman, Secretary
1416 Ninth Street, Suite 1311
Sacramento, CA 95814

State Water Resources Control Board
Dorothy R. Rice, Executive Director
1001 I Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board
2510 Lake Tahoe Boulevard
South Lake Tahoe, CA 96150