

Inspection Memorandum

To: File: Fox Meadows, Notice of Emergency 1-20EM-00125-SON

From: Jim Burke, Nonpoint Source and Forestry Unit, RWB

Date: 12/8/2022

Subject: 1052.1 (a)(2) Dead, Dying (Fire, etc.) Emergency Notice Inspection Report and Recommendations, 1-20EM-00125-SON

INSPECTION INFORMATION

Inspection Date
12/2/2022

Timberland Owner
Ken Bareilles

Emergency Notice Acceptance Date
10/21/2020

Licensed Timber Operator(s)
Ken Bareilles

Fire Name
Walbridge Fire (2020)

Inspection Timing
Post operations

Emergency Notice Size
106 acres

Percent Complete
100%

Registered Professional Forester
Randy Jacobszoon

Inspection Participants
Jim Burke – RWB
Kim Sone - CAL FIRE

FIELD OBSERVATIONS

The December 2, 2022 inspection was conducted jointly with CAL FIRE inspector Kimberly Sone following submittal by Mr. Bareilles of a Notice of Completion. During a previous site visit on October 26, 2022, with Ms. Sone and Randy Jacobszoon, your Registered Professional Forester (RPF), Regional Water Board staff evaluated site conditions. Regional Water Board staff observations are documented in an inspection memorandum dated October 27, 2022. In general, implementation of erosion control and stabilization measures at that time were adequate throughout much of the site. However, we observed four specific sites that continued to pose a threat to discharge. Our observations were not intended to comprehensively capture all potential sites that would have to be addressed by the Plan. Such a comprehensive inventory of the site is your responsibility or of the qualified professional tasked by you to develop the Plan.

During a phone conversation with Mr. Bareilles later in the day following the October 26, 2022 site visit, Regional Water Board staff informed him that we had observed four sites at which additional site stabilization was necessary to prevent discharge or threatened discharge of sediment and provided him with specific guidance on the location and the nature of the potential discharge that must be addressed. Those sites are briefly described along with indications whether recommended work had been conducted as of the December 2, 2022 inspection. Locations described below are displayed on the map at the end of this report:

Map Point 2: Loose soil must be removed from the outlets of several waterbars on the seasonal haul road leading to the north bank of Felta Creek in order for them to function as intended and erosion control (straw bales) where the road meets the river terrace should be enhanced. That work has been completed.

Inspection Point 2: A skid trail on a steep slope (approximately 50%) leading directly to a Class III watercourse less than 50 feet below terminates in a perched mass of soil and organic material. The downslope face of this mass is approximately 6 feet high and nearly vertical. There is high potential for this material to lose internal strength and fail when saturated, with a high likelihood of discharge to the watercourse below. Regional Water Board staff advised you that this perched material should be pulled back and stabilized. This was not done and the potential for sediment discharge remains high at this location.

Inspection Point 3: A swale below the landing at Map Point 3 that was highly disturbed from skidding logs and operating heavy equipment. Soil berms remains in the swale that will likely be eroded and sediment transported further down, potentially into the drainage network below. On October 29, 2022, CAL FIRE issued a Notice of Violation of Forest Practice Rules for equipment operations in an Equipment Limitation Zone (ELZ) Bare soil in the swale had previously been covered with slash for erosion control but had been removed. While it would potentially result in more disturbance to bring heavy equipment back into the swale to remove the berms, Regional Water Board staff advise you at a minimum to replace the slash on bare soil in contact with the ground to the extent feasible to try to prevent sediment movement. That was not done and the potential for sediment discharge remains at this location. It

appears that you did construct a berm at the head of the swale, which will prevent runoff from flowing into it from the landing to the south. However, runoff will continue to drain into the swale from hillslopes and nearby roads and discharge to the watercourse below.

Map Point 3: This is a complex area with several issues that had required addressing. The final item that required addressing were to remove slash and other organic debris from the Class III watercourse channel and construct additional waterbars as needed along the edge of the landing and skid trails to prevent concentration of runoff and resulting sediment discharge. The remaining work has been completed.

SUMMARY

This was a follow up inspection to assess site conditions after completion of timber harvest operations, the Emergency Notice extension having expired on October 21, 2022.

In general, with the exception of the two sites described above, roads and skid trails were adequately storm proofed. All the roads had waterbars installed, and most of them appeared adequate to prevent concentration of flow and delivery of sediment to watercourses.

The two sites described above that were not adequately addressed continue to pose the threat of sediment discharge and constitute violations of Order No. R1-2014-0011, *Categorical Waiver of Waste Discharge Requirements for Discharges Related to Timber Harvest Activities On Non-Federal Lands in the North Coast Region (Categorical Waiver)*.

