

**FINAL STATEMENT OF REASONS (FSOR), pursuant to GOV §11346.9(a)**

**“SOUTHERN SUBDISTRICT AND MARIN CO. STOCKING AMENDMENTS, 2020”**

**Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations (14 CCR),**

**Division 1.5, Chapter 4,**

**Subchapter 4**

**Articles 3 & 13**

**Amend: § 913.8  
§ 926.1  
§ 926.8  
§ 926.25  
§ 927.9  
§ 927.10  
§ 927.16**

**UPDATE OF INFORMATION CONTAINED IN ISOR (pursuant to GOV §11346.9(a)(1))**

No information contained in the Initial Statement of Reasons (ISOR) requires an update. All material relied upon was identified in the ISOR and made available for public review prior to the close of the public comment period.

**SUMMARY OF BOARD’S MODIFICATIONS TO 45-DAY NOTICED RULE TEXT AND INFORMATION REQUIRED PURSUANT TO GOV §11346.2(b)(1)) (pursuant to GOV §11346.9(a)(1))**

The rule text was adopted in its 45-Day noticed form.

**MANDATE ON LOCAL AGENCIES AND SCHOOL DISTRICTS (pursuant to GOV §11346.9(a)(2)):**

The adopted regulation does not impose a mandate on local agencies or school districts.

**COST TO ANY LOCAL AGENCY OR SCHOOL DISTRICT WHICH MUST BE REIMBURSED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE APPLICABLE GOVERNMENT CODE SECTIONS COMMENCING WITH GOV §17500 (pursuant to GOV §11346.9(a)(2)):**

The adopted regulation does not impose a reimbursable cost to any local agency or school district.

**ALTERNATIVE 3, BOARD’S ADOPTED ALTERNATIVE (update, pursuant to GOV §11346.9(a)(1)), of information pursuant to GOV §11346.2(b)(4)): Adopt Rulemaking Proposal as Modified Through Formal Public Review and Comment Process**

The Board selected Alternative #3 as proposed and modified through the formal public review and comment process. The Board adopted the rule text published with the 45-Day Notice (on December 6, 2019).

The proposed action is the most cost-efficient, equally or more effective, and least burdensome alternative. Alternatives 1 and 2 would not be more effective or equally effective while being less burdensome or impact fewer small businesses than the proposed action. Specifically, alternatives 1 and 2 would not be less burdensome and equally effective in achieving the purposes of the regulation in a manner that ensures

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full compliance with the authorizing statute or other law being implemented or made specific by the proposed regulation than the proposed action. Additionally, alternatives 1 and 2 would not be more effective in carrying out the purpose for which the action is proposed and would not be as effective and less burdensome to affected private persons than the proposed action, or would not be more cost-effective to affected private persons and equally effective in implementing the statutory policy or other provision of law than the proposed action. Further, none of the alternatives would have any adverse impact on small business. Small business means independently owned and operated, not dominant in their field of operations and having annual gross receipts less than \$1,000,000.

### **ALTERNATIVES DETERMINATION (pursuant to GOV §11346.9(a)(4) and (5))**

No other alternatives have been proposed or otherwise brought to the Board's attention, except as set forth in the ISOR and provided herein in the summary and responses to comments. Based upon the findings below and a review of alternatives the Board has determined the following:

- No alternative considered would be more effective in carrying out the purpose for which the regulation was intended.
- No alternative would be as effective and less burdensome to affected private persons than the adopted regulation.
- No alternative would be more cost effective to affected private persons and equally effective in implementing the statutory policy or other provision of law. (reference ECONOMIC IMPACT ANALYSIS in ISOR)
- No alternative considered would lessen any adverse economic impact on small business. (reference ECONOMIC IMPACT ANALYSIS in ISOR)

### **FINDINGS (BASED ON INFORMATION, FACTS, EVIDENCE AND EXPERT OPINION) TO SUPPORT THE ALTERNATIVES DETERMINATION**

- The Board finds that Public Resources Code § 4561.2 provides the Board the authority to "...adopt alternative stocking standards that meet the purposes of [PRC] Section 4561 if those alternative standards reasonably address the variables in forest characteristics, achieve suitable resource conservation, and contribute to specific forest health and ecological goals as defined by the board."
- The Board finds that the adopted alternative stocking standards meet the purposes of PRC § 4561 in that the adopted alternative both sets forth resource conservation standards for timber operations and ensures that a cover of trees of commercial species, sufficient to utilize adequately the suitable and available growing space, will be maintained or established following timber operations.
- The Board finds that the adopted alternative is necessary to achieve the ecological goals established by the Board and set forth within the Initial Statement of Reasons.
- The Board finds that the adopted alternative aligns the prescriptive requirements of existing silvicultural prescriptions with the aforementioned ecological goals and is necessary in order to clarify the application of these goals.
- The Board finds that the adopted alternative fulfills the obligations of the Board, specified in statute, and represents a product based upon compromise and the

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greatest degree of consensus achievable at the time the Board authorized noticing of these amendments.

- The Board finds that the adopted alternative was the result of consultation with, and evaluation of the recommendations of, appropriate agencies, groups, and individuals in conformance with PRC § 4553.

### **BRIEF SYNOPSIS OF ADDITIONAL ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED AND REJECTED (update, pursuant to GOV §11346.9(a)(1)), of information pursuant to GOV §11346.2(b)(4))**

#### **Alternative 1: No Action**

The Board considered taking no action, but the “No Action” alternative was rejected because it would not address the problems.

#### **Alternative #2: Make Existing Regulation Less Prescriptive**

This action could include greatly simplifying the stocking standards by eliminating standards by site, aspect, and or environmental factors to establish a statewide minimum as is common in many states. This would not address resource conservation standards in a manner which took into account variable forest characteristics, which is required by statute, so it was rejected as an alternative.

### **SUMMARY AND RESPONSE TO COMMENTS (pursuant to GOV 11346.9(a)(3))**

The comments below are identified in the following format: The letter S or W followed by a series of numbers separated by a hyphen, followed by the name and affiliation (if any) of the commenter (e.g. W1-8: John Doe, Healthy Forest Association).

S: Indicates the comment was received from a speaker during the Board hearing associated with the Notices of Proposed Action.

W: Indicates the comment was received in a written format.

1st number: Identifies the comments in the order in which it was received.

### **WRITTEN COMMENTS AND RESPONSES RESULTING FROM 45-DAY NOTICE OF PROPOSED RULEMAKING PUBLISHED DECEMBER 6, 2019**

#### **Comment W1-1: Nadia Hamey, Hamey Woods**

“Thank you for proposing amendments to improve the suitability of the stocking standards under 14 CCR 913.8 for forest management in the Southern Subdistrict.

The proposed lower point count provides for better resource conservation by reducing competition between trees for the essential resources of sunlight, water and nutrients needed for photosynthesis, and eliminates the need for expensive pre-commercial thinning treatments and resulting fuel buildup that can contribute to wildfire risk and carbon release.

Striking the requirement to plant 450 trees per acre if Group B species are counted for Stocking will make prudent forest management possible. It will allow forest managers to protect and enhance the prominence and health of large, specimen-quality hardwood trees, to preserve existing species diversity and forest structure, to protect the stand from catastrophic disturbance, and to promote resilience to environmental stressors. Planting copious conifer trees per acre would result in an increase in small diameter trees, which is inconsistent with forest health and ecological goals in this forest context.

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The removal of eucalyptus from the commercial species list in 2013 justifies the amendment to 14 CCR 913.8(d). However, the issue of much-needed eucalyptus management in the Coastal Zone for fire hazard reduction and native species restoration remains a serious issue. Removal of eucalyptus from the Board of Forestry purview has made permitting eucalyptus harvesting projects a more daunting undertaking in the Coastal Zone, with the alternative being a Coastal Development Permit. The pace and scale of fire hazard reduction and native species restoration projects on the coast would benefit from the Board of Forestry working with the Coastal Commission to streamline permitting for habitat improvement and fire resiliency projects.”

**Board Response:** The Board appreciates the support of Ms. Hamey. Though the issue of Eucalyptus as a commercial species defined pursuant to 14 CCR § 895.1 is outside the scope of this rulemaking, the Board has prioritized the issue of the definition of commercial species within its 2019 Annual Report and looks forward to working with all involved stakeholders on this issue in the future.

**Rule Text Change:** No

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>VERBAL COMMENTS RECEIVED DURING THE PUBLIC HEARING CONDUCTED JANUARY 22, 2020</b></p>
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**Comment S1: Eric Huff, Staff Chief, CAL FIRE**

Mr. Huff expressed support for the rulemaking proposal on behalf of the Department.

**Board Response:** The Board appreciates the support of the Department.

**Rule Text Change:** No