



BUTTE FIRE: THE RPF's ROLE

2015.10.28 JAN BRAY/RPF 2360

ROLE OF THE REGISTERED PROFESSIONAL FORESTER: A Registered Professional Forester (RPF) is a person knowledgeable in a wide range of studies such as biology, ecology, entomology, geology, hydrology, dendrology, silviculture, engineering, business administration, forest economics, and other natural resource subjects. RPFs use their well-rounded education and experience to maintain the sustainability of forest resources like timber, forage, wildlife, water, and outdoor recreation to meet the needs of the people while protecting the biological integrity and quality of the forest environment.

RPFs perform a wide variety of activities. RPFs organize and direct systems of control for forest fires, insect pests, and tree diseases. They determine the environmental impacts of management decisions, and plan for maintenance of wildlife habitat. They prescribe thinning for an immature stand of trees or removal of defective trees for stand improvement. RPFs measure the volume of standing timber, appraise market value, plan harvests, and administer the sale of the forest products. RPFs also help plan for recreational uses of the forest including the maintenance of its natural beauty. They are called upon to revegetate, enhance, or restore overused, burned, or abused forest sites and recreational areas. In addition, Registered Professional Foresters must be well-versed in federal, state, and local laws affecting forestry practices in California in order to administer them properly. In order for a professional forester to fulfill their responsibilities with regard to a particular activity on a site, the professional forester may need to utilize the services of other qualified experts, such as archaeologists, botanists, civil engineers, ecologists, fisheries biologists, geologists, hydrologists, land surveyors, landscape architects, range scientists, soil scientists, or wildlife biologists. Because forestry activities can have a significant impact upon the ecology of California's forests and the quality of the forest environment, the State legislature enacted the Professional Foresters Law in 1972, which provides for the licensing of professional foresters and certified specialists.

Being a Registered Professional Forester carries with it many responsibilities. The term "Registered Professional Forester" is defined in the Professional Foresters Law as: "..a person who, by reason of his or her knowledge of the natural sciences, mathematics, and the principles of forestry, acquired by forestry education and experience, performs services, including, but not limited to, consultation, investigation, evaluation, planning or responsible supervision of forestry activities when [such] professional services require the application of forestry principles and techniques." [PRC §752]

The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) enforces the laws that regulate logging on privately owned lands in California. These laws are found in the Forest Practice Act, which was enacted in 1973 to ensure logging is done in a manner that will protect our natural resources. The removal of "commercial" timber species from areas of pending new construction, and from the area around existing structures is included under these regulations. In Calaveras County, "commercial" timber species includes Ponderosa Pine, Jeffery Pine, Sugar Pine, Western White Pine, White Fir, Red Fir, Douglas Fir, Lodgepole Pine (Tamarack) and Incense Cedar. The documents listed below are used in those situations that are exempt from the requirement of a Timber Harvesting Plan. These permits are free of charge from CAL FIRE and are submitted to CAL FIRE Region Headquarters in Fresno. Gary Whitson is the local CAL FIRE Licensed Forester in Calaveras County; Gary is available to assist landowners through the permit process. Gary Whitson can be reached at 209/754-2708.

- 1. Removal of Fire Hazard Trees within 150 feet of a Structure Exemption:** This exemption is required for the removal of selected trees which are located up to 150 feet from around existing structures which have been permitted through the County Building Permit process. This permit is required only if the wood is sold, bartered, exchanged, or traded. A Licensed Registered Professional Forester's (RPF) services are not required. A Licensed Timber Operator (LTO) must be listed on the permit and is responsible for all logging activities. The LTO must have an approved copy on-site at the time of operations and has one year to complete timber operations. Clearcutting, Shelterwood Removal and Seed Tree Removal cutting methods are not allowed. CAL FIRE has up to 5 days to accept the permit.
- 2. Dead, Dying, or Diseased: Fuelwood or Split Products Exemption:** This Exemption permit is required when removing trees that are dead or are obviously dying from insect attack or disease, or when removing fuel wood or split rails. The harvest cannot exceed 10% of the volume per acre. Otherwise, a Timber Harvesting Plan is required. A Licensed Registered Professional Forester's services are not required. This CAL FIRE permit is required only if the wood is sold, bartered, exchanged, or traded. CAL FIRE has up to 5 days to accept the permit. This permit is valid for 1 year.
- 3. Notice of Emergency Timber Operations:** An Emergency Notice is required to salvage trees that are dead and dying when the harvest exceeds 10% of the total volume per acre. Emergency conditions include trees that are dead or dying as a result of insects, disease, fire, wind-throw etc. The Registered Professional Forester (RPF) preparing the Notice of Emergency Timber Operations shall describe the nature of the emergency and the need for immediate

harvesting. Timber operations pursuant to an Emergency Notice may not commence for five working days from the date of receipt unless such waiting period is waived by the Director. The Emergency Notice is valid for one year.

4. **Less than 3 Acre Conversion Exemption:** This one-time Exemption permit is required for property owners who intend to clear trees in order to build structures and other needed improvements (i.e. driveways, utility lines, out buildings, septic systems, etc.) in preparation for such development. This permit is required whether or not the trees are sold, bartered, exchanged, or traded. There are other uses for this conversion form and each situation is unique. Consult your local CAL FIRE Forester for more information. A Registered Professional Forester must prepare this permit and a Licensed Timber Operator must conduct timber operations. The LTO must have a copy of the exemption on-site at the time of operations and has one year to complete timber operations. Responsibility for treatment of logging slash and woody debris may be assumed by the landowner, provided the landowner acknowledges in writing to the Director at the time of notice such responsibility and specific slash and woody debris treatment requirements and timing. Building contractors are ineligible to perform timber operations unless they are an LTO. CAL FIRE has up to 15 days to accept the permit. This Exemption permit is valid for 1 year.

Specific terms and conditions apply to all permits, including logging debris clean-up requirements and protection of wildlife, archaeological sites, water quality, and other natural resources. Before hiring an LTO, be sure to ask the LTO for proof of valid insurance, or call CAL FIRE LTO Licensing at (916) 653-7211. A state filing fee is not imposed for the three forms, however the person listed on the form as a Timber Owner will be required to pay a post-harvest yield tax based on the board foot volume of timber removed from the parcel to the State Board of Equalization. Small amounts of timber may be exempt from yield tax. A complete listing of these and other CAL FIRE forms and information can be found at: <http://www.fire.ca.gov/resourcemanagement/harvestingforms.asp>

Below is partial listing of Registered Professional Foresters and Licensed Timber Operators that conduct forestry and timber harvesting operations within Calaveras County. This listing does not imply endorsement or availability of a particular company. Be sure to ask both the LTO and RPF to show proof of a valid license and liability insurance. Additional contacts may be found in the yellow pages of a local telephone book, under Foresters-Consulting and Logging Companies.

REGISTERED PROFESSIONAL FORESTERS		LICENSED TIMBER OPERATORS	
David Thompson	(209) 245-5235	Fischer Logging	(209) 293-4847
Mike Albrecht	(209) 984-1146	Butch Bray Logging	(209) 728-2575
Dave Baker	(209) 588-1891	George Dubois Logging	(209) 293-7884
Will Dorrell	(209) 586-2115	Tanner Bros. Logging	(209) 728-2923
Leon Manich	(209) 586-2115	Poston Logging	(209) 532-2423 or (209) 768-9575
Tom Lowry	(209) 223-0251	Dunlap Enterprises	(209) 532-4974
Steve Cannon	(209) 296-1569	Crook Logging	(209) 962-7716
Mike Vroman	(209) 770-6258	Joe Cover & Sons Logging	(209) 928-4433
Ross Richards	(209) 736-4988	Sierra West Logging	(209) 795-1203
Glenn Gottschall	(209) 533-3748	Finn's Logging & Tree Serv.	(209) 795-7649
Jan Bray	(209) 256-7667	Dave Alley Tree Service	(209) 533-3448
Rob Allen	(530) 644-4838	Gray Logging	(209) 532-3294 or (209)768-3518
Gary Gould	(530) 626-0236	C&H Tree Service	(209) 588-1846
		A-1 Land Management	(209) 736-6786
		Ryan Callahan	(209) 768-8101
		Dollar and Associates	(209) 795-5192
		Jason Roland	(209) 768-8733
		Robert Sapien	(209) 795-6135
		Proper Pruning	(209) 728-9494
		Ace Tree Service	(209) 768-6226
		Roger Alderman	(209) 770-3160
		Fulton Trucking & Logging	(209) 962-4350 or (209) 962-7228
		Kalkowski Brush & Timber Management	(209) 962-7578
		Nate's Tree Service	(209)532-2460
		Sasha's Land Clearing	(209) 559-9010
		Sutton Logging	(209) 770-0283
		Twain Harte Tree Service	(209) 586-2254
		Woolery Timber Management	(209) 928-1850
		Radovich Logging	(209) 984-0673