

State Water Resources Control Board

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 16, 2005
SWRCB 05-010

Contact: Liz Kanter
(916) 327-8239

STATE WATER BOARD ORDERS PALCO TO LIMIT TIMBER OPERATIONS

SACRAMENTO - The State Water Resources Control Board today reversed two decisions made by the North Coast Regional Water Board that had permitted Pacific Lumber to harvest timber in two sensitive watersheds.

"As the lead agency for protecting the waters of the state, the Board feels this order is appropriate for protecting water quality," said State Board Chair Arthur G. Baggett, Jr.

The Board's action means that PALCO cannot log in the affected areas without reapplying for permits and additional environmental review.

Finding that the North Coast Regional Board had not complied with the California Environmental Quality Act, the 5-member board unanimously ruled that the North Coast Board acted improperly in approving, eight Timber Harvest Plans submitted by Pacific Lumber in the Freshwater Creek and Elk River in November 2004 and March 2005.

In another action today, the Board unanimously approved a fee schedule for the Conditional Irrigated Lands Waiver program in the Central Valley and along the central coast. The Board also approved the decision of staff to enter into a pilot program with Butte and Glenn Counties where the State Board will fund positions in the offices of the County Agricultural Commissioners to work with the Central Valley Regional Board on waiver issues.

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