

PROFESSIONAL FORESTRY WORK

5403

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"Professional forestry work" must be done by, or under the supervision of, a CDF Registered Professional Forester (RPF) pursuant to Public Resources Code (PRC), Sections 752 and 756, and Title 14, California Code of Regulation (14 CCR), Section 1602. Project plans or documents reporting work done by, or under the supervision of, an RPF must bear the name, signature, and license number of the RPF responsible (PRC, Section 766, and 14 CCR 1602.1), and failure to do so is a misdemeanor (PRC, Sections 778[e] and 779). A CDF unregistered assistant ("nonprofessional assistant," PRC, Section 756) may sign, then the RPF must co-sign each document showing the license number under which the work was performed. The RPF's seal (14 CCR 1603) may be used instead of RPF signature, and full responsibility applies.

If the THP-preparing RPF, LTO, or plan submitter does not agree with violations, citations, or mitigation proposed by a CDF unregistered assistant, an on-site inspection by the supervising RPF can be requested. This inspection will be made within ten working days, or later if justified by workload such as fire duty. An RPF, LTO, or plan submitter who disagrees with a CDF RPF's final determination may, as a standard procedure, file a complaint with the Director.

Examples of CDF work plans and documents requiring an RPF, or supervision thereof, include the following:

- Review team correspondence initiated by CDF employees.
- Preharvest (PHI) inspection reports prepared by CDF employees.
- Emergency Notice evaluation or reports.
- Timber operations stop order.
- Environmental documents required for conversion of timberlands.
- ACP/FIP/CFIP project.
- Management plans, including prescriptions for vegetation management.
- EIR responses on "forestry" issues.
- State Demonstration Forest timber appraisals.
- Waivers of sampling.

When conducting professional forestry work, as described above, communications between a supervising RPF and his or her unregistered assistants must be "sufficiently frequent to ensure the accomplishments of work to professional standards" (14 CCR 1622[b][2]). Failure to provide sufficient supervision is cause for disciplinary action (PRC, 756 and 14 CCR 1602.1). Rangers who are not RPFs may supervise unregistered employees conducting forestry-related activities, but all professional forestry work, including use of professional judgment, must be approved by an RPF who then becomes responsible. Activities of a clerical nature or verification of administrative procedures that may not require a license but should involve adequate supervision include:

- Forest practice inspections (such as fire laws or violations not requiring professional judgment).
- Work Completion reports.
- Reports of stocking.

An unregistered assistant should sign the plan or other work product, as appropriate. The RPF must countersign the documents showing the license number under which the work was performed.

An unregistered assistant acting in the capacity of a professional forester as defined in 14 CCR Section 1605.1 must be supervised by an RPF. Each unregistered CDF assistant must know the licensed supervisor who will be responsible for his/her "professional forestry work." Also, each RPF must know the CDF unregistered assistants for whom he/she will be responsible for providing technical forest supervision. These requirements do not preclude rangers who are not RPFs from supervision of unregistered assistants, where appropriate, but the technical aspects of professional forestry work performed by unregistered assistants must be under the effective supervision of a CDF RPF.

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