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MENLO PARK PASSES RESOLUTION TO BAN CLEARCUT LOGGING IN CALIFORNIA

Menlo Park, CA– On Tuesday April 7, 2015, Menlo Park’s City Council passed a resolution to call on the state legislature and governor to ban clearcut logging in California, making it the fifth California municipality to pass a resolution. Other cities to pass such a resolution are Daly City, San Francisco, Davis, and Monte Sereno. Saratoga and Sunnyvale have taken other supportive actions.

Why are a growing number of cities, where no clearcutting occurs, speaking out against clearcutting?

“Given how critical water is to all Californians and how important healthy forest ecosystems are to California's water production, we need to do what we can to protect water at its source.” stated City Councilmember Ray Mueller who initiated the action. Logging operations on private lands are regulated by the governor and the state legislature. Passing resolutions to ban clearcutting is an effective means of letting them know their constituency wants them to take action.

Clearcutting is an ecologically destructive form of logging in which nearly all native vegetation is removed, soils are deep-ripped, and herbicides are applied across the landscape. It harms water quality, wildlife habitat, and exacerbates climate change. It replaces diverse forests with tree farms that can have a higher risk of catching fire.

Timber can be harvested using a less destructive method known as selective logging, which involves the carefully planned removal of some trees while leaving the forest intact. Selective logging is the method used in the Santa Cruz Mountains.

What happens in the forests – especially in the Sierras – is important to Bay Area Cities. 60% of Bay Area water is stored in and filtered through Sierra forest watersheds, and 15% comes from the forested Santa Cruz Mountains. In addition, at least 15% of California’s carbon dioxide emissions are sequestered by California forests, and clearcutting both reduces the amount of carbon forests can retain, and releases excess greenhouse gases.

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