

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Statistical Hydrologist and Environmental Group Release New Analytical Report Regarding Watershed Impacts from Clearcutting and Post-Fire Salvage Logging**

**MANTON, CA**—Jack Lewis, Statistical Hydrologist, of Arcata in partnership with non-profit northern California environmental group Battle Creek Alliance, has released a new analytical report entitled “An Analysis of Turbidity in Relation to Timber Harvesting in the Battle Creek Watershed, northern California”.

The industrial timberland in the Battle Creek watershed began being heavily clearcut in 1998. This intensively destructive practice continued until 2012 when a 27,000 acre fire burned the majority of what remained of the industrial timberland. The burned land was subsequently “salvage” logged, which has fewer rules and more impacts than does clearcutting. Battle Creek is just one of many watersheds that have been impacted this way, and should be construed as an example of a widespread problem. *See fire ecologist Dr. Dennis Odion discuss clearcutting and salvage logging and their effects on fire behavior here:*

<http://youtu.be/nHiFfx7Zu3M>

Lewis states: “The Battle Creek Alliance has gone to great lengths to collect nearly 1,700 measurements of turbidity (an optical indicator of suspended sediments) at 13 locations in Battle Creek over the past 4 and a half years, and their effort has yielded useful results. Two reports issued before the 27,000-acre Ponderosa fire by Sierra Pacific Industries and an interagency task force failed to identify water quality impacts from clearcut logging in Battle Creek, but the BCA data show clearly that turbidity is greatest in tributaries that have experienced the heaviest logging.”

Lewis analyzed data which Battle Creek Alliance began collecting for its Citizen’s Water Monitoring Project in 2009. Key findings of the analysis are:

- Statistical analyses of these measurements demonstrate strong associations of turbidity with the proportion of area harvested in watersheds draining to the measurement sites.
- The average change in turbidity for a watershed that has been 30% cut is +200% and, for a watershed that has been 90% cut it is 3000%. These changes, which are far in excess of the Water Board's Turbidity Standard for the Central Valley region, are unlikely to have been caused by factors other than harvesting, fire, salvage logging, and associated road use.

Marily Woodhouse, director of Battle Creek Alliance said: “CalFire, as the lead regulatory agency, along with the timber industry, continue to insist that there are no significant impacts to California’s watersheds from the destructive practices of clearcutting and salvage logging. This analysis shows those conclusions are untrue and erroneous.”

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