

**REQUEST FOR ACTION**

**To:** Mark De Bie  
Deputy Director  
Waste Permitting, Compliance and Mitigation Division

**From:** Wes Mindermann  
Supervising Waste Management Engineer  
Engineering Support Branch

**Reviewed By:** Steve Levine, Legal Office

**Request Date:** February 27, 2014

**Decision Subject:** **APPROVAL OF THE BUCK MEADOWS SITE REMEDIATION, FACILITY NO. 22-CR-0004, SOLID WASTE DISPOSAL AND CODISPOSAL SITE CLEANUP PROGRAM (SOLID WASTE DISPOSAL TRUST FUND, FY 2013/2014)**

**Action By:** March 3, 2014

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**Summary of Request:**

At the request of the United States Department of Agriculture, Forest Service (USFS), the Department of Resources and Recycling (CalRecycle) staff has completed an evaluation and recommends approval of a Department-managed remediation of the Buck Meadows disposal site pursuant to the Solid Waste Disposal and Codisposal Site Cleanup Program (Program). This request is for the approval of the remediation of the site at an estimated cost of \$145,000.

**Recommendation:**

CalRecycle staff has completed the evaluation and recommends the approval of the Department-managed remediation of the Buck Meadows Site.

**Deputy Director Action:**

On the basis of the information and analysis in this Request for Action, the Department hereby approves this project under the Solid Waste Disposal and Codisposal Site Cleanup Program.

  
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Mark De Bie  
Deputy Director  
Waste Permitting, Compliance, and Mitigation Division

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**Background:**

Program Eligibility: The Program addresses cleanup of solid waste disposal and codisposal sites where the responsible party either cannot be identified or is unable or unwilling to pay for a timely remediation and where cleanup is needed to protect public health and safety or the environment. Cleanup projects are implemented through Department-managed contracts, grants, and loans. Staff uses adopted regulations and policies in determining site eligibility. Unless otherwise noted, actions proposed for this project are specifically eligible pursuant to the regulations.

Site Prioritization: The site is rated as an environment priority of A2. Priority A2 is a known condition of pollution or nuisance from solid waste based on comparison with state minimum standards with significant residential, industrial, park, recreation, or environmentally sensitive areas within one mile of the site.

California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA): Program staff has reviewed the proposed project and determined that it is categorically exempt per the Class 8 exemption (14 CCR §15308: Actions by Regulatory Agencies for Protection of the Environment). Compliance with CEQA requirements will be made with a Notice of Exemption filed by Program staff.

**Project Scope:**

Site Location/Description: The Buck Meadows disposal site is located in the Stanislaus National Forest in Mariposa County. The site is north of Highway 120 approximately 2.7 miles east of Smith Station Road, Groveland, CA.

A disposal site inspection in December 2013 revealed a small fire on the site resulting from the 256,000 acre Rim Fire that occurred from August through October 2013. The Rim Fire burned within watersheds of the Tuolumne River and its tributaries, including South, Middle and North Forks of the Tuolumne River and Clavey River near Sonora and Groveland, CA. The disposal site fire was subsequently reported to personnel at the USFS and they determined that the fire was contained to the debris underneath the surface of the ground and was not an immediate threat to becoming a surface fire. USFS personnel were concerned about unknown worker safety issues related to a disposal site fire and requested assistance from CalRecycle's Cleanup Program.

There is no record of the type of material deposited at the site. Previous records indicate that a hydraulic mine was located at the site that was later used for solid waste disposal. Additionally, an abandoned mine shaft was reported near the site. However, the shaft was not located during the site visit on January 29, 2014. Currently, smoke was observed emanating from several locations on the site as well as settlement fissures.

Proposed Remediation Project: The Program's contractor will excavate and remove smoldering material and place it on a prepared fire suppression pad. Fire retardant foam will be applied to the material until the fire is extinguished. The extinguished material will be compacted in the excavated hole. Worker and environmental safety measures will be provided during the project per a Work Plan and Fire Suppression plan developed by the contractor. The USFS will provide a standby fire truck and crew to assist in fire suppression.

The site appears to have a thin dirt cover on it varying from 6" to 1' thick and there are some areas of localized subsidence from the disposal site fire. Clean on-site soil is available and will be used to ensure proper cover and drainage on and around the disposal site. Erosion control measures will be installed as necessary after grading is complete.

**Fiscal Impacts:**

Cost Estimate: The Department-managed project will be performed on a time-and-materials basis under the Program's Northern California remediation contract number DRR12034. The Program's contractor has conducted a site visit with Program staff and developed a work plan with a preliminary cost estimate of \$145,000, which includes a 20 percent contingency. These costs would be shared per the terms of an agreement with the USFS. The USFS will reimburse the Department up to half of the initial cost estimate, to a maximum of \$72,500. The Department will incur all remaining costs, initially estimated at \$72,500, including all costs exceeding the initial cost estimate. Actual costs of the project may vary depending on a variety of factors including, but not limited to the quantities and/or types of materials encountered, market forces, the required timeframes for cleanup, and competitive bids from subcontractors.

Funding: The funding for the project will be derived from previously encumbered funds from the Solid Waste Disposal Trust Fund in the Program's Northern California remediation contract number DRR12034. The contract currently has approximately \$500,000 in available funds from the Solid Waste Disposal Trust Fund and is adequately funded to complete this project.

Cost Recovery: Public Resources Code §48023 directs the Department to seek reimbursement for monies expended under the Program to the extent possible. To address cost recovery for Department-managed projects on USFS lands, the USFS and the Department have adopted a Master Participating Agreement that defines agency roles and responsibilities and agrees to a cost sharing arrangement. The Department provides project management and remediation contractor services and the Forest Service provides project environmental permitting and reimburses the Solid Waste Disposal Trust Fund for their share of the remediation costs.

**Support:**

Staff has not received any written support at the time this document was submitted for approval.

**Opposition:**

Staff has not received any written opposition at the time this document was submitted for approval.