

# 1 firm bids to remove trees

## Forest demonstrates environmental logging

BY TERRI MORGAN  
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A Santa Cruz County timber firm has submitted the only bid to harvest trees from a 50-acre parcel within a Santa Cruz Mountains state forest to demonstrate environmentally sound logging practices.

Davenport's Big Creek Lumber Co. bid \$110,000 for the right to remove 550,000 board feet of lumber from the Soquel Demonstration State Forest, a rugged 2,681-acre timberland between the summit and the Forest of Nisene Marks State Park. The state had set the minimum bid price at \$104,500, and established specific harvesting requirements designed to protect the logging site and surrounding landscape.

The harvest will encompass about 1,000 second-growth trees, primarily redwoods. The 70- to 80-year-old forest also includes some Douglas fir trees. State officials in Sacramento are expected to formally approve Big Creek Lumber's bid by mid-May.

"We're very pleased," said Thom Sutfin, demonstration forest manager. "Big Creek has such a high standard of timber management in the state. We're looking forward to working with them to produce a demonstration forest we can be proud of."

The agreement will require the harvesting firm to control erosion, improve wildlife habitat and conduct research detailed in a management plan for the state

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# 1 firm bids to log demonstration forest

## LOG

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forest. Specific requirements for the logging operation include using horses to drag about 160 downed trees out of the forest and into a loading area, using a tree-based resin to surface logging roads to make them more resistant to erosion, and replanting trees after the harvest.

"We're also requiring Big Creek to purchase stream and rain gauge equipment to assist us in the watershed research we're doing," Sutfin added.

Big Creek Lumber will probably log the site this summer, said Bud McCrary, co-owner of the company. "Normally it would take a month or less," McCrary said. "In this case, it will take a lot longer because of the work the state wants done."

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Public tours will be held during and after the harvest to demonstrate environmentally sound logging practices, Sutfin said.

The family-run logging firm is looking forward to working with the state on the sustainable forestry project, McCrary said. The harvest will improve the overall health of the forest by thinning out densely packed second-growth trees, he added.

"We're excited," McCrary said.

"It fits right into our way of doing things."

The Soquel Demonstration State Forest was acquired in 1988, and has been managed by the state Department of Forestry and Fire Protection since 1990. More than a dozen logging operations have taken place in the forest since it was first harvested in the 1880s. Proceeds from the upcoming timber sale will go into a fund to pay for projects within the state's eight demonstration forests.

A management plan for the Soquel site calls for similar "ultra-conservative harvests" to be conducted every other year, Sutfin said. The forest will be re-evaluated every five years.

"If the forest is doing well and the watershed is healthy, we can justify a higher harvest level," Sutfin said.