



Julie Hunter <julieh@myairdistrict.com>

318 comment

1 message

Greg Kinne <kgkinnes@gmail.com>
To: office@myairdistrict.com

Thu, Mar 14, 2024 at 7:17 PM

To: Northern Sierra Air Quality Management District
From: Greg Kinne
Date: March 12, 2024
Re: Comments on Rule 318 Revisions

Thank you for considering revisions to Rule 318. These revisions have the potential to greatly increase our ability as a community to reduce our wildfire risk.

I have lived in American Valley and burned piles for 44 years. I have been on 26 prescribed burns with Plumas Underburn Cooperative (PUC) and have been volunteering my time thinning and burning in our firewise community for 4 years. I have written burn plan prescriptions, been a smoke observer on burns with Smoke Management Plans and responsible for carrying out burns under NSAQMD permits. In addition, I am a certified NFPA Wildfire Mitigation Specialist.


Attached are the revisions recommended by our Quincy Firewise Community Committee. Careful consideration was given to the impacts on air pollution, hazardous fuel reduction, Quincy Volunteer Fire Department and hopefully a reduction in workload for NSAQMD staff.


If Rule 318 is revised, Quincy Firewise Community will take a role in community education on the rule change and offer assistance to permittees. Quincy Firewise has been active with monthly presentations and resident assistance for over 2 years.

Respectfully submitted,

Greg Kinne (530-864-6159)
NFPA Wildfire Mitigation Specialist

2 attachments

 **Proposal 3-2-24 pdf.pdf**
37K

 **318 text 3-2-24 pdf.pdf**
32K

Proposed revisions bold and italicized. By Quincy Firewise core group 3/2/24

Rule 318

REGULATION III OPEN BURNING

American Valley Burning Restrictions

All open burning of yard waste and debris or other rubbish shall be banned **except by *NSAQMD permit*** in that portion of the American Valley known as Quincy and East Quincy, which is a portion of the Quincy Fire Protection District, described more particularly in Exhibit A, attached to this resolution, and depicted in the map attached to this resolution as Exhibit B.

In the remainder of that portion of the American Valley that is within the Quincy Fire Protection District,

A. All open burning shall be allowed **by *NSAQMD permit only*** from November 15 to March 15 of each year, except that there shall be at least 15 days of such burning allowed in the fall. If there is not 15 days of such open burning between the lifting of a burn ban related to fire risk by area agencies that issue burn permits and the air quality burn ban starting November 15th, then the burn season shall be extended as necessary to achieve 15 days of such burning. Such burning during this extension shall be permitted only in accordance with all existing regulations and shall be restricted to the hours of 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM, or as determined by the APCO.

B. ***Agricultural (delete agricultural)*** Burning shall be allowed year-round, when conducted in accordance with all existing regulations. If a burn season is extended for residential burning per item 3.A., above, then burn hours for agricultural burning shall be restricted to the hours of 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM, or as determined by the APCO; and

C. From March 16 through November 14 all burning shall be permitted according to all existing regulations.

318.1 American Valley Definition

American Valley means all land within the boundaries of the Quincy Fire Protection District, and as amended in the Plumas County Ordinance #90-742.

318.2 Requirements

A. Burning shall be allowed only on the premises where the material originated.

B. Rule 312 - Burn Permit Requirements

C. Rule 313 - Burn Days

D. Rule 314 - Minimum drying times

E. Rule 315 - Burning Management

Northern Sierra AQMD Rule 318 - 1 Rules & Regulations

Amended 05/08/96

To: Quincy Firewise Community Members
From: Quincy Firewise Community Core Group
Date: March 2, 2024
RE: Proposal for revisions to Northern Sierra Air Quality Management District Rule 318

Revisions:

1. Allow burning of Hazard Fuels in the “No Burn” zone of Quincy and East Quincy by Permit from NSAQMD with stipulations in the permit for low pollution burn practices, and adjacent property notification requirements.
2. Allow burning of Hazard Fuels in the remainder of American Valley “restricted burn” zone by permit from NSAQMD between Nov. 15 and Mar.15. with stipulations outlined above. No NSAQMD permit would be required between Mar. 15 and Nov. 15.
3. Removal of the term “Agricultural” from 318 b. to clarify that Hazard Fuel burning is allowed.

American Valley, like the rest of our region, faces a tremendous excess of “Hazard Fuels” in and around our towns. In 2022 and 2023 there were several large and successful prescribed burn “pilot projects” conducted in both the “No Burn” and the “Restricted Zone” with special permits obtained from NSAQMD. These burns were successful as NSAQMD received no complaints from neighbors and demonstrated exactly the kind of burns that the revisions would allow on a larger scale.

In crafting our recommendations, we considered many factors. The purpose of the revision of Rule 318 is to allow for more hazard fuel reduction projects while maintaining the value of clean air and minimizing impacts on Quincy Volunteer Fire Dept. and NSAQMD. The value of clean air is supported through the permitting process including stipulations that clean burning practices are followed. The permit would stipulate that adjacent neighbors are to be notified prior to the burn date thereby reducing smoke calls to Quincy Volunteer Fire Dept. This kind of communication would help promote safe burning practices. Keeping the permitting process simple and convenient would minimize impacts on NSAQMD operation.

Sally McGowan, Vice-chair Plumas Firesafe Council, Quincy Firewise, Plumas Underburn Co-op

Greg Kinne, Quincy Firewise, Plumas Underburn Co-op, NFFPA Wildfire Mitigation Specialist

Mike Flanigan, Plumas Firewise Council Secretary/Treasurer, Quincy Firewise founder

Richard Stockton, Quincy Firewise founder

Richard Foster, Quincy Firewise

John Sheehan



Julie Hunter <julieh@myairdistrict.com>

Letter in support of controlled burning in American Valley

1 message

Ross Morgan MD <rmorganMD@pdh.org>
To: "office@myairdistrict.com" <office@myairdistrict.com>

Wed, Feb 7, 2024 at 12:36 PM

I want to thank the air district for working with Bill Jacks and Terra Fuego to safely do the necessary burning around American Valley. The site above QHS was an excellent example of what is needed in many other sites going forward. Inevitably there will be air quality issues that we must mitigate as best we can while still proceeding with the necessary burning to prevent catastrophic fire in the American Valley.

Ross Morgan, MD

Medical Doctor



Phone: (530) 283-2121
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Julie Hunter <julieh@myairdistrict.com>

Rule 318

1 message

Tat Thornedike <tatthornedike@gmail.com>

Mon, Feb 5, 2024 at 2:03 PM

To: "office@myairdistrict.com" <office@myairdistrict.com>

I have lived in the American Valley most of my life and been hoping and praying for the day this ridiculous rule comes to an end! Removing this burdensome regulation allows community members to be proactive with burning excessive fuels, thus keeping our communities safe from wildfire and preventing the resulting massive amounts of smoke.

Thanks to all involved for making this common sense a reality!

Tat,
American Valley



Julie Hunter <julieh@myairdistrict.com>

Rule 318 Public Comment - Plumas Underburn Cooperative

1 message

Logan Krahenbuhl <logan@plumasfiresafe.org>

Fri, Mar 15, 2024 at 1:50 PM

To: Front Desk <office@myairdistrict.com>

Cc: Julie Hunter <julieh@myairdistrict.com>

Hello,

Please see the attached PDF for Plumas Underburn Cooperative's public comment on Rule 318.

This comment was created by around 15 members of the community in regards to promoting prescribed fire in American Valley and throughout the County to reduce wildfire risk, protect communities, and restore forest health.

We hope you read and consider the recommendation included in the comment.
We enjoy working with the District and are excited to see a change in local policy.

Regards,

Logan Krahenbuhl (he/him)
Plumas Underburn Cooperative
Program Manager
Plumas County Fire Safe Council
(530) 927-5327
Learn more about our [programs](#).



A Program of Plumas Corp

 **Rule 318 Public Comment FINAL.pdf**
338K



Rule 318 Public Comment by the Plumas Underburn Cooperative (PUC)

To: Northern Sierra Air Quality Management District (NSAQMD), 3/15/2024

NSAQMD should take into consideration the following recommendations for changing Rule 318, provided by community members, fire practitioners, and land stewards who manage land in the American Valley and elsewhere throughout Plumas County. The intentions of Rule 318 are valuable. It is important to have open burn regulation in the American Valley to encourage responsible burning and discourage unnecessary smoke production. The neighborhoods of Quincy and East Quincy are densely populated compared to the rest of the County, with many elderly folks or individuals that are at-risk to harm from smoke (largely produced by wood stoves). However, the No Burn Area that includes Quincy and East Quincy encapsulates wildland areas where there is sufficient need to perform outdoor burning to reduce fuels for forest health and community safety. Prescribed fire and cultural burning are a critical ecological process ("good fire"/low intensity fire) that restores and maintains forest health and keeps our communities safe. The current Rule is a detriment to good fire and public safety in our community as it discourages efficient, responsible burning within and around our communities.

- 1. Redraw map and improve definition of American Valley:** the current map used to delineate American Valley (Quincy Fire Protection Dist. Boundary) is not representative of the American Valley Airshed.
- 2. Rewrite Rule so that clear language is used:** the current Rule does not describe in clear language where and when permits are needed, and what types of burning are allowed. Under the current language, staff at NSAQMD can interpret the rule in different ways which is not ideal. Staffing changes in the future will lead to different Rule interpretations, and more confusion, if not changed.
- 3. Consider that the dollar cost associated with Air Quality permits is a barrier to accessibility protecting our community from wildfire and restoring our forests.** Folks in the community of lesser financial means may be less inclined to do hazardous fuels mitigation around their property because there is a cost associated with burning material at certain times of the year. Charging landowners a fee de-incentivizes good fire and increases wildfire threat to communities. There is no reasonable alternative to prescribed burning in our community.
- 4. Allow prescribed burns to be permitted in Quincy and East Quincy at any time of year.** And state this clearly within the rule. Wildland fuels (trees, branches, brush, etc.) exist even in neighborhoods.
- 5. Allow prescribed burns to be permitted in the rest of American Valley at any time of year.** Favorable burn windows can happen at any time of the year, even between Nov. 15th - Mar. 15th. That period of time is often the safest time of the year to undertake pile burning due to high surface fuel moistures, limiting opportunities for wildfire. The 4 - month, full stop, burning restriction is too broad. Additionally, Certified burn bosses, cultural fire practitioners, and people affiliated with reputable community organizations, not just public agencies, should be entrusted with permits when burn conditions are favorable.
- 6. Continue placing burning stipulations on air quality permits.** These stipulations/guidelines are a great educational tool for learning how to burn responsibly. Include stipulations such as minimum mixing height, minimum drying time, max wind speed, and others. Refer permit holders to NWS Fire Weather Dashboard www.weather.gov/dlh/fwd to monitor weather conditions. Encourage burning that is backed up by weather observations and predictions.
- 7. Create more educational products for landowners.** See CAL FIRE's video required for Residential Burn Permits. www.youtube.com/watch?v=_lJlU5lJhmc
- 8. Change unjustified policies beyond 318:** There are 2 issues beyond Rule 318 that impact burning in American Valley and PUC's past operations. **A.** Burning should not be banned on holidays, for no other reason



Rule 318 Public Comment

than it being a holiday. **B.** Even during wildfire season, NSAQMD should issue permits to those requesting it regardless of fire weather: if the air quality is favorable, there is good air quality. NSAQMD is not a fire agency and should only regulate air quality issues. Burners are already required to work with CAL FIRE during fire season to determine when conditions are prime/safe for burning.

Sincerely,

Logan Krahenbuhl
Plumas Underburn Cooperative Program Manager
Plumas County Fire Safe Council

PUC is excited to contribute feedback that will make a positive change in our community. Please listen to citizens and consider their input and expertise: they are the stewards of our community.



Julie Hunter <julieh@myairdistrict.com>

Rule 318

1 message

ashley letscher <amletscher@gmail.com>
To: office@myairdistrict.com

Thu, Feb 8, 2024 at 6:01 AM

To whom it may concern:

As a resident of East Quincy, I support Rule 318. In continually changing environment of climate as well as the lack of resources to assist people to maintain their property changing this rule is crucial in encouraging people to create defensible space around their properties. Changing this rule will make it easier to get rid of debris that build up around their property.

Thank you for your consideration and support.

Ashley Letscher



Julie Hunter <julieh@myairdistrict.com>

Rule 318

1 message

Kelby Gardiner <kelbygardiner@gmail.com>
To: office@myairdistrict.com

Mon, Feb 5, 2024 at 1:55 PM

As a homeowner in downtown Quincy, I support rescinding the ban and allowing us to burn dead vegetation. This will make it easier to maintain a firewise community!
Thank you,
Kelby Gardiner

Rule 318 Air Quality Control and the EPA (regulating, restricting and outlawing prescribed fire)

My name is Bill Jacks, I am a certified California Prescribed Fire Burn Boss (CARx), and fifth generation to Plumas County. I have been studying Forest health and fire ecology since 1998 when I started learning about wildfire and prescribed fire at Feather River College (Located in Quincy). A Healthy Forest Ecology, and community wildfire resiliency depends on human's ability to prescribe frequent fires.

Baseline knowledge

Fire is a critical ecological process and a natural part of the earth's carbon cycle. When prescribed fire is promoted frequently on regular intervals it benefits all life. Wildfire and prescribed fire are both part of the same natural process, and should both be understood as unavoidable. Prescribed fire is as necessary as wild fire is inevitable. Humans have an obligation and a right to prescribe fire and reduce the threat and intensity of wildfires. The survival of Forests and communities depends on human's ability to prescribe frequent fire for forest health and community resiliency to catastrophic fire. Many towns in the west are located in fire prone landscapes that depend on frequent fire.

Prescribed fire is absolutely necessary, as necessary as wildfires are inevitable.

Professional Prescribed Fire Technicians and Prescribed Fire Burn Bosses

Those individuals and or groups who provide a Burn Plan and a smoke management plan to burn dry fuel with adequate mixing heights and or transport winds, with Air Quality being a critical goal and objective of the burn plan, shall be allowed to burn in fire prone and dependent areas to reduce risk of catastrophic fire impacting communities and destroying forests. Burn Bosses and prescribed fire technicians who follow a burn plan and smoke management Plan that explicitly make air quality a critical element, following best management practices, demonstrating "Due Diligence"- shall be indemnified from litigation and negative reproductions from Air Quality Control and or the EPA.

Those individuals who cause smoke related impacts without the proper experience, knowledge and planning shall be vulnerable to legal negligence and charges from the Air Quality Management and or the EPA. Those who do not follow an approved Burn Plan and Smoke Management Plan shall be vulnerable to the consequences set by Air Quality Management and or the EPA.

I am not in favor of allowing just anyone to burn. There is a huge difference between the unexperienced / unknowledgeable and the seasoned professional, in their ability to prescribe fire and limit air quality impacts.

Consequences of restricting prescribed fire

Without human initiated prescribed fire there will be a huge back log of forest fuel accumulation that will eventually burn during a fire weather event that makes it impossible to suppress by fighting fire. The smoke impacts and destroyed communities from wild fire is far more hazardous than smoke produced from prescribed fire professionals, and prescribed fire makes fire suppression more effective.

Restricting Prescribed fire professional's ability to do their work is like holding a knife against our community's throat, they will eventually be destroyed by catastrophic fire, along with the forest that the entire global climate depends on for carbon sequestration.

We care about Air Quality, Forest Health and Community Survivability. Thank you