

CCORP – Q&A

Latest update – 7/28/2026

Non rebuild Questions

Q1: Will pulling water from streams and rivers still be allowed?

A: Yes

Q2: If a lot does not get the OK to rebuild, has there been any discussion with the FS about getting another lot? (new 9/2/22)

A: Yes. The FS says they have in lieu lots identified, but we suspect they list is incomplete

Q3: Has there been any discussion of what will be required if a permit is abandoned?

A: Yes. The permit says return to natural conditions (as if a cabin never existed on the lot). Exactly what that means is still being discussed. For example, fill in septic tank vs removing.

Q4: Can we have a tent platform like they do at Berkley Echo Lake camp? (new 9/18)

A: No. The use permits and the handbook does not allow for temporary things like that.

Q5: When will bills for the debris cleanup be sent? (new 9/18)

A: We will find out.

Q6: For trees further than 200 ft from road, but which could fall on a cabin site, when will we be allowed to fall and remove those at our expense? (new 9/18)

A: We think as soon as your lot is returned to the county. We will check. It would seem like waiting until you have started the rebuild may be advantageous. Some may be taken out by the FS and others may fall on their own over the winter.

Rebuilding questions

Q1: What size can my rebuilt cabin be? (update 9/1/22)

A: Determination of walled-in space includes the sum total of all habitable structures. A total of up to 1,400 square feet is allowed (excluding loft which is defined as an unpartitioned open space under a roof) "On reasonably level lots, homes shall be no more than 26 feet from the ground to the peak of the roof." Note: LTBMU has in the past had a 4 foot restriction on how high loft walls can be.

Q2: What size can my deck be?

A: "Combined deck, porch, and patio size (including walkways) is limited to 60 percent of the primary structure first floor square footage (the cabin footprint). Small recreation residences may be authorized up to 250 square feet combined total which provides a usable deck/porch/patio)". Max size 800 sq. ft.

Q3: Can I have outbuildings such as tool sheds, outhouses, etc.? (updated 9/2/22)

A: The Forest Service currently discourages outbuildings; though, on a case by case basis some may be allowed if justified (smaller cabins) up to 40 square feet. Outhouses will not be allowed.

Q4: What are the standards for footings and foundations - both cabin structure and decks? (updated 7/28/2026)

A: The FSH states the foundation is to be contiguous. That does not preclude pier and post but the area between the post would need to be filled in with some material. Pier and post is frowned upon by the insurance industry and it may be hard to get insurance with it. In general, any design by a structural engineer has been approved

Q5: How much time will I have to rebuild my cabin?

A: After the FS gives the OK to rebuild, you have one year to submit plans to the FS. You have two years after they approve the plan to finish probably at least a shell. There can be some extensions to this timeframe if circumstances warrant it but are hazy at best. We are discussing modified timelines, which the Forest Service seems extremely receptive to at this juncture.

Q6: Will PG&E allow underground power? (updated 9/1/22)

A: In some cases, PG&E is putting main power transmission underground. In other cases, it's overhead. The amount of granite boulders in the vicinity is the key obstacle which determines their protocol.

PG&E has told us they will provide power back to your cabin at no charge (as it is a replacement, not new service); however, the cost of running it underground from the nearest pole all the way to the cabin would be the permittee responsibility. Note: there could be a few exceptions to this PG&E policy. Since power can no longer be strung between trees, we currently believe the best option is to have PG&E run the new power feed to a power pedestal (pole) located at a convenient spot close to the rebuilt cabin (new meter base location) and then run from the meter base underground to the cabin following the construction process. Another viable option is to use generator power during the early stages of construction and have the meter base located on the cabin with power being brought to the meter base at the appropriate time. FYI - most likely the majority of cabins will require 1-3 pedestals (poles) to reach the cabin if no underground for the nearest pole is used.

Q7: What kinds of building materials can we use? (9/1/22)

A: The Forest Service will allow any material as long as it looks natural and meets the color scheme. You are encouraged to use fire resistant materials, like cement board (that looks like wood).

Q8: Can I use my existing still operational septic system? (updated 7/28/26)

A: The FS is leaving this up to the county. El Dorado County requires the system be tested. If it passes, you will be allowed to use your surviving system. The test is to put 50 gals of water down the leach field. If the water is soaked up and doesn't appear on the surface, then it passes. This needs to be done by a licensed person.

Q9: Can we mill trees from our lot to use on in the rebuild? (updated 7/28/26)

A: Only lumber that has been stamped and graded can be used structurally. For areas not structural, like trim, some siding, etc. it is possible to use milled lumber; however, the FS owns the trees and they may be included in harvest contracts. Also, it is very labor intensive and time consuming to actually mill, size, dry, etc. lumber from logs. Mike Buehler has done this and will be happy to chat with anyone about what it takes.

El Dorado County is allowing people to mill their own lumber in the Grizzle Flats

area per CA title 24. The lumber needs to true size, e.g. a 2x4 is 2" x 4" and not 1 ½" by 3 ½". We are not sure if this can be extended to FS cabins.

Q10: Can I use a prefab or a kit cabin?

A: As long as it meets the final standards which are ultimately agreed upon, yes. Mobile homes and tiny houses on (typically on wheels) will not be allowed.

Q11: Are we considering groups sharing an engineer to reduce cost.

A: Not is the simple definition of "sharing". Once standards and applicable codes are agreed upon, there will be some aspects where engineering details can be shared. Ultimately, each cabin will require its own engineering; however, we anticipate some common engineering details may be made available to be used.

Q12: What will the Forest Service consider as complete for the rebuild.

A: When the county issues an occupancy permit. The county has specific requirements, such as a working bathroom and kitchen, sheet rock, waterproof flooring in the bathroom and kitchen.

Q13: Are we limited to the existing Forest Service color choices for cabin exteriors? (new 9/1/22)

A: This is under discussion. We are seeking to expand on the current limited color options, to also include all natural wood color tones.

Q14: What about topo and boundary surveys? (new 9/18)

A: In general the FS is happy with boundaries and elevations. They will not be requiring them, even though the county maps show some roads, cabins, etc. in wrong places. The FS Washington Office specifically does not want surveys.

Q15: Will county building permits be required? (new 9/18)

A: Yes. The FS does not have the expertise to inspect buildings, so they delegate that to the county. The building codes will be right sized for the cabins. The county and the FS signed a Memorandum of Understanding allowing us to use International Residential Code, IRC. California Building Codes are based upon

IRC with a bunch of added things, like earthquake (which is really only needed for coastal areas, solar, energy efficiencies, etc.

Q16: Will I need to meet any historical standards (new 7/28/26)

A: In general, the tract was deemed historical prior to the fire and less than 50% of the tract was destroyed, yes. If more than 50% destroyed there are some questions.

Q17: What is the process to get a design approved for rebuilding (new 7/28/26)

A: The FS has a concept approval form, see the website (www.nssha.org.ccorp). (note: NSSHA and NFH both think this form is overly complicated and too detailed). See process chart next page.

