



## NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY TAHOE PROGRAM TIMBERLAND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) has released a Draft Program Timberland Environmental Impact Report (PTEIR) for public review.

**PROPOSED PROJECT:** Tahoe Program Timberland Environmental Impact Report (State Clearinghouse No. 2019069054)

**PUBLIC REVIEW AND COMMENT PERIOD:** May 22 to July 6, 2020

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION:** The PTEIR has been prepared according to the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (Public Resources Code [PRC] Section 21000 et seq.), the State CEQA Guidelines (California Code of Regulations [CCR], Title 14, Section 15000 et seq. [14 CCR Section 15000 et seq.]), Z'berg-Nejedly Forest Practice Act (FPA; Public Resources Code [PRC] Section 4511 et seq.), and the California Forest Practice Rules (CFPR; California Code of Regulations [CCR] Title 14 Section 1092.01). The PTEIR addresses a long-term program of forest management and fuel reduction on private, local jurisdiction, federal, and California Tahoe Conservancy (Conservancy) lands primarily within the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) throughout the California side of the Lake Tahoe Basin. The program includes numerous forest treatment activities to reduce the risk of wildfire including mechanical thinning, manual/hand thinning, prescribed understory burning, pile burning, sale and transport of merchantable timber, and the transport and use of biomass for energy generation and wood pulp products. Herbicide treatment is not proposed. The proposed program is anticipated to result in the treatment of approximately 1,250 acres per year.

CAL FIRE has primary authority for project review and approval as the lead agency under CEQA and the California Forest Practices Act. Other public agencies may serve as responsible agencies in approving later activities pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15168, and following California Forest Practice Rules. CAL FIRE prepared the PTEIR to more efficiently and comprehensively evaluate the effects of forest management, and improve the project approval and delivery process for subsequent fuel reduction activities that are consistent with the PTEIR.

The project objectives are to:

- ▲ reduce the risk of catastrophic wildfires that could damage Lake Tahoe Basin forests, watersheds, habitats, and communities;
- ▲ increase Lake Tahoe Basin forest resilience to effects of climate change, including prolonged drought, pest and disease outbreaks and increased tree mortality;
- ▲ protect and restore meadow and riparian ecosystems, and forest habitat quality in the Lake Tahoe Basin;
- ▲ develop and implement all-lands fuel reduction, forest health improvement, and restoration projects that deliver multiple community and ecosystem service benefits; and
- ▲ increase the pace and scale of fuel reduction projects to assist in achieving the goals of Executive Order B-52-18.

**PROJECT LOCATION:** Forest management and fuel reduction activities analyzed in the PTEIR would occur within a program area located on private, local jurisdiction, federal, and Conservancy lands both in the WUI and select

contiguous areas of forest outside of the WUI throughout the California side of the Tahoe Basin (see attached map). The program area covers approximately 17,490 acres in the City of South Lake Tahoe and in unincorporated areas of El Dorado and Placer Counties, including, but not limited to: Meyers, Cascade properties near Cascade Lake, Tahoma, Homewood, Alpine Peaks, Tahoe City, Dollar Point, Carnelian Bay, Tahoe Vista, and Kings Beach.

The program area includes 11,640 acres of land identified as “Planned CWPP Projects.” Planned CWPP Projects consist primarily of larger-acreage parcels of public land identified for fuel reduction in the Lake Tahoe Basin Community Wildfire Protection Plan. These areas include undeveloped open space within and near developed communities. The remaining 5,850 acres of the program area are identified as “Community Fuel Reduction Areas.” Community Fuel Reduction Areas include smaller-acreage parcels that are publicly or privately owned. These areas include developed parcels and undeveloped urban lots within and surrounding developed neighborhoods.

**ALTERNATIVES:** The State CEQA Guidelines (Section 15126.6) require that an EIR evaluate a range of reasonable alternatives to the project, which would feasibly attain most of the basic objectives of the project but would avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of the project. The PTEIR includes a comparative analysis of the alternatives. The PTEIR addresses a reasonable range of potentially feasible alternatives that would meet most project objectives and provide for informed decision making and public participation. Section 15126.6(e) of the State CEQA Guidelines requires an assessment of a no project alternative, as one of the alternatives considered, to allow decision makers to compare the environmental effects of taking an action with those associated with not taking it.

In addition to the proposed program, the PTEIR includes analysis of alternatives that incorporate the following approaches:

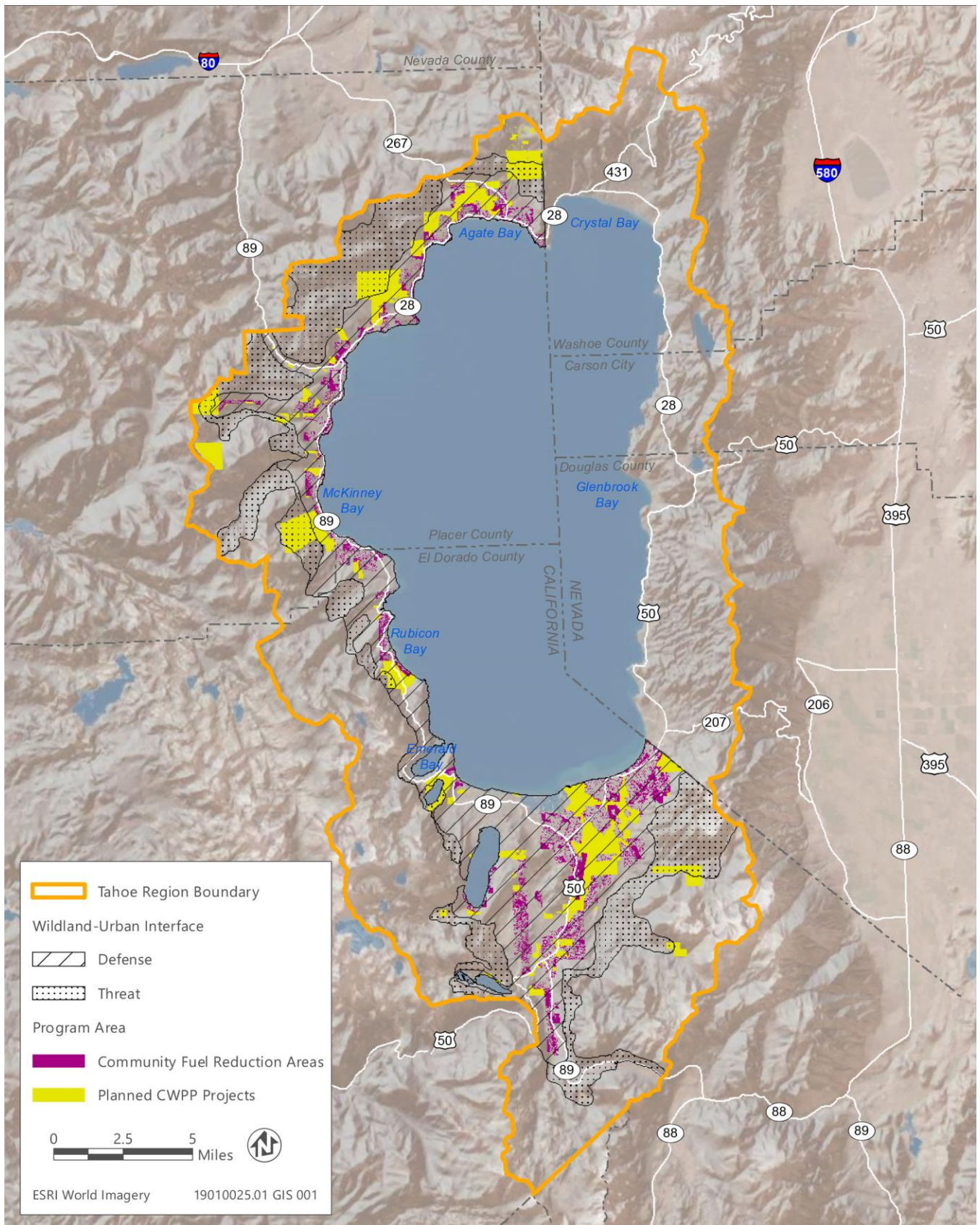
- ▲ No active forest management activities would be implemented, but active fire suppression would occur. This is a variation of a “no project” alternative.
- ▲ Continuation of current fuel reduction efforts within the PTEIR program area, which provides another variation of the “no project” alternative.
- ▲ Treatments that emphasize mechanical and hand thinning, with limited prescribed understory burning and pile burning.
- ▲ Treatments that rely less on hand thinning, mechanical thinning, or biomass energy generation; and rely more on prescribed burning.

**SIGNIFICANT ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS ANTICIPATED:** The Draft PTEIR identified significant or potentially significant effects associated with aesthetics, air quality, biological resources; cultural resources; greenhouse gases and climate change; recreation; and transportation. The majority of impacts would be mitigated to a less-than-significant level. However, even with the application of feasible mitigation measures, there would be significant and unavoidable impacts related to air quality, greenhouse gas emissions, and transportation.

**PUBLIC MEETING:** A public webinar on the Draft PTEIR will be held on June 17, 2020, at 5:30 p.m., instructions on attending the webinar are available at the following link <https://www.ntfire.net/tahoe-pteir> . The purpose of the webinar is to present the findings of, and receive comments on, the Draft PTEIR.

**WHERE DRAFT PTEIR MAY BE OBTAINED:** A copy of the Draft PTEIR is available for download at the <https://www.ntfire.net/tahoe-pteir>. To prevent the spread of COVID-19, printed copies of the Draft PTEIR will not be available for review at public buildings. Individuals that are unable to access the Draft PTEIR at the website listed above should contact North Tahoe Fire Protection District at [TahoePTEIR@ntfire.net](mailto:TahoePTEIR@ntfire.net) or 530-584-2344 to obtain a copy.

**SEND COMMENTS TO:** North Tahoe Fire Protection District, ATTN: Tahoe PTEIR, 222 Fairway Dr, Tahoe City, CA 96145; or email at [TahoePTEIR@ntfire.net](mailto:TahoePTEIR@ntfire.net) no later than 5:00 pm on July 6, 2020.



Source: Data received from CTC in 2012, Tahoe Resource Conservation District in 2018, and TRPA in 2011; adapted by Ascent in 2018

### Tahoe PTEIR Program Area