



Office: 81 N. Washington St. Suite B, Sonora, CA 95370 **Mail:** PO Box 4394, Sonora, CA 95370 **Phone:** (209) 642-8304

CEQA Initial Study and Notice of Intent to Adopt a (Mitigated) Negative Declaration

Date: July 31, 2023
To: Distribution List (See Attachment A)
From: Tuolumne County Resource Conservation District
Subject: Pine Mountain Lake Fuel Reduction Project (PMLFRP)
Comment Period: July 31, 2023 to August 30, 2023
Respond By: August 30, 2023

Public Hearing Date: August 31, 2023, 5:30 PM, at the TCRCD Office, 81 N Washington St., Suite B, Sonora, California 95370

The Tuolumne County Resource Conservation District anticipates adopting a Mitigated Negative Declaration for this project. This referral provides notice of a 30-day comment period during which Responsible and Trustee Agencies and other interested parties may provide comments to this District regarding our proposal to adopt the Negative Declaration. A simple response form to be returned to TCRCD is attached for your use.

All applicable project documents are available for review at: Tuolumne County Resource Conservation District, 81 N Washington Street, Suite B, Sonora, California 95370, and at <http://www.tcrd.org>. Please provide any additional comments to the above address or call us at 209-642-8304 if you have any questions. Thank you.

Applicant: Tuolumne County Resource Conservation District

Project Location: The PMLFR project is located East of Groveland, CA adjacent to the community of Pine Mountain Lake. The project footprint is owned by multiple private landowners.

APN OR LEGAL DESCRIPTION: The PMLFR project boundary is described as portions of sections 13, 23, 24, 25 & 26 T1S R16E MDB&M.

Project Description: This project will use a variety of methods to reduce fuel loading and remove ladder fuels on a highly dense, approximately 640-acre Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) east of Pine Mountain Lake. The primary method of fuel reduction will be mastication with a secondary method of herbivory.

The project objectives are to:

1. Build a sustainable, defensible fuel break.
2. Dramatically reduce potential of release of high levels of CO2 from wildfire.
3. Establish a fire resilient and healthy forest.

Full document with attachments available for viewing at:
<http://www.TCRCD.ORG>



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PURPOSE OF THE INITIAL STUDY

This document is an initial study (IS), prepared in accordance with CEQA (Public Resources Code [PRC], Section 21000 et seq.) and the CEQA Guidelines (Title 14, Section 15000 et seq. of the California Code of Regulations). The purpose of this IS is to (1) determine whether project implementation would result in potentially significant or significant effects on the environment; and (2) incorporate environmental commitments into the project design, and propose feasible mitigation measures, as necessary, to eliminate the project's potentially significant or significant project effects, or reduce them to a less than significant level.

An IS presents environmental analysis and substantial evidence in support of its conclusions regarding the significance of environmental impacts. Substantial evidence may include expert opinion based on facts, technical studies, or reasonable assumptions based on facts. An IS is neither intended nor required to include the level of detail provided in an Environmental Impact Report (EIR).

CEQA requires that State and local government agencies consider the environmental consequences of projects that they propose to carry out or over which they have discretionary authority, before implementing or approving those projects. The public agency that has the principal responsibility for carrying out or approving a project is the lead agency for CEQA compliance (CEQA Guidelines Section 15367). TCRCD has principal responsibility for carrying out the proposed project, and TCRCD is the CEQA lead agency for this IS.

TCRCD has prepared this IS to evaluate the potential environmental effects of the proposed project, and has incorporated mitigation measures to reduce or eliminate potentially significant project-related impacts. Therefore, an MND has been prepared for this project.



Office: 81 N. Washington St. Suite B, Sonora, CA 95370 Mail: PO Box 4394, Sonora, CA 95370 Phone: (209)559-9066

**TUOLUMNE COUNTY RCD
CEQA REFERRAL RESPONSE**

TO: Tuolumne County Resource Conservation District
PO BOX 4394, Sonora, CA 95370

FROM: _____

SUBJECT: PINE MOUNTAIN LAKE FUEL REDUCTION PROJECT

Based on this agency's particular field(s) of expertise, it is our position the above described project:

- Will not have a significant effect on the environment.
- May have a significant effect on the environment.
- No Comments.

Listed below are specific impacts which support our determination (e.g., traffic general, carrying capacity, soil types, air quality, etc.) – (attach additional sheet if necessary)

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Listed below are possible mitigation measures for the above-listed impacts: *PLEASE BE SURE TO INCLUDE WHEN THE MITIGATION OR CONDITION NEEDS TO BE IMPLEMENTED (PRIOR TO WORK COMMENCING, ETC.):*

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

In addition, our agency has the following comments (attach additional sheets if necessary).

Response prepared by:

Name	Title	Date
------	-------	------



CEQA INITIAL STUDY

Adapted from CEQA Guidelines APPENDIX G Environmental Checklist Form, Final Text, January 1, 2020

1. **Project title:** Pine Mountain Lake Fuel Reduction Project
2. **Lead agency name and address:** Tuolumne Co. Resource Conservation District
PO Box 4394
Sonora, CA 95370
3. **Contact person and phone number:** Lindsay Mattos, District Manager
4. **Project location:** East of the town of Groveland, Tuolumne County.
5. **Project sponsor's name and address:** Tuolumne Co. Resource Conservation District
PO Box 4394
Sonora, CA 95370
6. **Description of project:**

This project will use a variety of methods to reduce fuel loading and remove ladder fuels on a highly dense, approximately 640-acre Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) east of Pine Mountain Lake. The primary method of fuel reduction will be mastication with a secondary method of herbivory. The project objectives are to:

 1. Build a sustainable, defensible fuel break.
 2. Dramatically reduce potential of release of high levels of CO₂ from wildfire.
 3. Establish a fire resilient and healthy forest.
7. **Surrounding land uses and setting:**

The project lays in the southwestern portion of Tuolumne County in the Sierra Nevada Mountain range. The project is directly adjacent to Pine Mountain Lake and various surrounding communities. The project runs from Highway 120 in the south to just east of the Pine Mountain Lake Airport. The ownership consists of multiple private landowners with 2 larger main landowners being Pine Mountain Lake Association and the Motherlode Land Trust, the land is not actively managed as of present. The 640-acre project area is best described as a transition belt between montane-hardwood conifer to Sierra Nevada Mixed Conifer Forest consisting of sugar pine, ponderosa pine, incense cedar, white fir, black oak, valley oak, California foothill pine, interior live oak as well as other riparian species. The understory consists primarily of interior live oak, manzanita, conifer sapling, toyon, yerba santa, poison oak, ceanothus. Slopes within the project vary from level topography to over 50%. Elevation ranges from 2,500 to 3,100 feet. The aspect is variable though it mostly lies on multiple ridgelines with a northwest aspect. Big Creek, Texas Gulch, and Long Gulch run through the project.
8. **Other public agencies whose approval is required (e.g., permits, financing approval, or participation agreement.):** CalFire (Project Funding)
9. **Attachments:** Attachment A: Distribution List

ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED:

The environmental factors checked below would be potentially affected by this project, involving at least one impact that is a "Potentially Significant Impact" as indicated by the checklist on the following pages.

- Aesthetics**
- Agriculture & Forestry Resources**
- Air Quality**
- Biological Resources**
- Cultural Resources**
- Energy**
- Geology / Soils**
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions**
- Hazards & Hazardous Materials**
- Hydrology / Water Quality**
- Land Use / Planning**
- Mineral Resources**
- Noise**
- Population / Housing**
- Public Services**
- Recreation**
- Transportation**
- Tribal Cultural Resources**
- Utilities / Service Systems**
- Wildfire**
- Mandatory Findings of Significance**

DETERMINATION: (To be completed by the Lead Agency)

On the basis of this initial evaluation:

- I find that the proposed project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment, and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.
- I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, there will not be a significant effect in this case because revisions in the project have been made by or agreed to by the project proponent. A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.
- I find that the proposed project MAY have a significant effect on the environment, and an ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required.
- I find that the proposed project MAY have a "potentially significant impact" or "potentially significant unless mitigated" impact on the environment, but at least one effect 1) has been adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and 2) has been addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis as described on attached sheets. An ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required, but it must analyze only the effects that remain to be addressed.
- I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, because all potentially significant effects (a) have been analyzed adequately in an earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION pursuant to applicable standards, and (b) have been avoided or mitigated pursuant to that earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION, including revisions or mitigation measures that are imposed upon the proposed project, nothing further is required.

Signature on file.
Lindsay Mattos, District Manager

Date

**Initial Study-Mitigated Negative Declaration
for the proposed
Pine Mountain Lake Fuel Reduction Project
Tuolumne County, California**



prepared by:
California Reforestation, Inc
22230A South Colorado River Drive
Sonora, CA 95370

For
Tuolumne County Resource Conservation District

July 27, 2023

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MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION

Introduction and Regulatory Context

STAGE OF CEQA DOCUMENT DEVELOPMENT

- Administrative Draft.** This California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) document is in preparation by Tuolumne County Resources Conservation District (TCRCD) staff.
- Public Document.** This completed CEQA document has been filed by Tuolumne County Resource Conservation District (TCRCD) at the State Clearinghouse on **July 31, 2023** and is being circulated for a 30-day state agency and public review period. The review period ends on, **August 30, 2023**.
- Final CEQA Document.** This final CEQA document contains the changes made by the District following consideration of comments received during the public and agency review period. The CEQA administrative record supporting this document is on file, and available for review, at Tuolumne County Resource Conservation District (TCRCD)'s Sonora Headquarters.

INTRODUCTION

This initial study-mitigated negative declaration (IS-MND) describes the environmental impact analysis conducted for the proposed Pine Mountain Lake Fuel Reduction Project. This document was prepared by California Reforestation, Inc. and TCRCD consultants and staff utilizing information gathered from a number of sources including research, field review of the proposed project area and consultation with environmental planners and other experts on staff at other public agencies. Pursuant to § 21082.1 of CEQA, the lead agency, TCRCD, has prepared, reviewed, and analyzed the IS-MND and declares that the statements made in this document reflect TCRCD's independent judgment as lead agency pursuant to CEQA. TCRCD further finds that the proposed project, which includes revised activities and mitigation measures designed to minimize environmental impacts, will not result in a significant effect on the environment.

REGULATORY GUIDANCE

This IS-MND has been prepared by California Reforestation, Inc., and TCRCD to evaluate potential environmental effects that could result following approval and implementation of the proposed project. This document has been prepared in accordance with current CEQA Statutes (Public Resources Code §21000 *et seq.*) and current CEQA Guidelines (California Code of Regulations [CCR] §15000 *et seq.*)

An initial study is prepared by a lead agency to determine if a project may have a significant effect on the environment (14 CCR § 15063(a)), and thus, to determine the appropriate environmental document. In accordance with CEQA Guidelines §15070, a "public agency shall prepare...a proposed negative declaration or mitigated negative declaration...when: (a) The initial study shows that there is no substantial evidence...that the project may have a significant impact upon the environment, or (b) The initial study identifies potentially significant effects but revisions to the project plans or proposal are agreed to by the applicant and such revisions will reduce potentially significant effects to a less-than-significant level." In this circumstance, the lead agency prepares a written statement describing its reasons for concluding that the proposed project will not have a significant effect on the environment and, therefore, does not require the preparation of an environmental impact report. This IS-MND conforms to these requirements and to the content requirements of CEQA Guidelines § 15071.

This IS/MND evaluates the environmental effects of the proposed Pine Mountain Lake Fuel Reduction (PMLFR) project. The project grant funded by California Climate Investments; CAL FIRE, Fire Prevention Grants program awarded to Tuolumne County Resource Conservation District (TCRCD) in Southern Tuolumne County. The project will be complete fuels reduction via mechanical methods (i.e., mastication, hand crews, etc.) and prescribed grazing treatments.

PURPOSE OF THE INITIAL STUDY

Tuolumne County Resource Conservation District (TCRCD) has primary authority for carrying out the proposed project and is the lead agency under CEQA. The purpose of this IS-MND is to present to the public and reviewing agencies the environmental consequences of implementing the proposed project and to describe the adjustments made to the project to avoid significant effects or reduce them to a less-than-significant level. This disclosure document is being made available to the public and reviewing agencies for review and comment. The IS-MND is being circulated for public and state agency review and comment for a review period of 30 days as indicated on the *Notice of Intent to Adopt a Mitigated Negative Declaration* (NOI). The 30-day public review period for this project begins on **July, 31 2023 and ends on August 30, 2023.**

The requirements for providing an NOI are found in CEQA Guidelines §15072. These guidelines require TCRCD to notify the general public by providing the NOI to the county clerk for posting, sending the NOI to those who have requested it, and utilizing at least one of the following three procedures:

- Publication in a newspaper of general circulation in the area affected by the proposed project,
- Posting the NOI on and off site in the area where the project is to be located, or
- Direct mailing to the owners and occupants of property contiguous to the project.

California Reforestation, Inc. has elected to utilize the Union Democrat to publish the NOI on August 1, 8, 15, and 22, 2023. An electronic version of the NOI and the CEQA document were made available for review for the entire 30-day review period through their posting at:

www.tcrd.org

If submitted prior to the close of public comment, views and comments are welcomed from reviewing agencies or any member of the public on how the proposed project may affect the environment. Written comments must be postmarked or submitted on or prior to the date the public review period will close (as indicated on the NOI) for TCRCD's consideration. Written comments may also be submitted via email (using the email address that appears below), but comments sent via email must also be received on or prior to the close of the 30-day public comment period. Comments should be addressed to:

Lindsay Mattos
District Manager
Tuolumne County Resource Conservation District
P.O. Box 4394
Sonora, CA 95370
Phone: (209)559-9066
Email: lindsay@tcrd.org

After comments are received from the public and reviewing agencies, TCRCDC will consider those comments and may (1) adopt the mitigated negative declaration and approve the proposed project; (2) undertake additional environmental studies; or (3) abandon the project.

Project Description and Environmental Setting

PROJECT LOCATION

The PMLFR project is located East of Groveland, CA adjacent to the community of Pine Mountain Lake. The project footprint is owned by multiple private landowners. The PMLFR project boundary is described as portions of sections 13, 23, 24, 25 & 26 T1S R16E MDB&M.

BACKGROUND AND NEED FOR THE PROJECT

The Pine Mountain Lake Association (PMLA) is a large WUI subdivision in an extreme fire hazard zone in southern Tuolumne County. Since the major bark beetle infestation began in 2010 due to drought conditions and expanding climate change, the landscapes around Pine Mountain Lake have been dramatically impacted by conifer mortality. In some sections of the forest, it's not uncommon to witness over 50% mortality of the mature ponderosa pine component of the Sierra mixed conifer habitat type. Within the 3,360 acres that encompasses the Pine Mountain Lake Association, most of the dead, standing trees around houses and structures have been addressed through the hard work of the community. Their uninhabited green space has not been treated. This green space of PMLA and adjacent properties to the east need to have the dangerous dead fuels removed. These untreated lands to the east are relatively large parcels owned by landowners who have limited financial resources to adequately address the imposing wildfire threat that is currently present. The town of Groveland is juxtaposed to the west of PMLA, and is an important gateway to Yosemite National Park. Both PMLA and Groveland are large economic centers within Tuolumne County. This project will dramatically decrease the wildfire threat to the 2,834 parcels within PMLA, and the approximately 1,250 other parcels within the Groveland Community Service District. This region of Tuolumne County has historically been impacted by large wildfires. This project's intent is to develop a defensible fuel break on the eastern flank of Pine Mountain Lake and Groveland. This project will develop a defensible fuel break of approximately 640 acres, using the anchors of Highway 120 to the south and the rim of the Tuolumne River to the north.

PROJECT OBJECTIVES

1. Build a sustainable, defensible fuel break
2. Dramatically reduce potential of release of high levels of CO₂ from wildfire.
3. Establish a fire resilient and healthy forest

PROJECT START DATE

The project is proposed to start Fall 2023.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This project will use a variety of methods to reduce fuel loading and remove ladder fuels on a highly dense, approximately 640-acre Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) east of Pine Mountain Lake. The primary method of fuel reduction will be mastication with a secondary method of herbivory.

ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING OF THE PROJECT REGION

The project lays in the southwestern portion of Tuolumne County in the Sierra Nevada Mountain range. The project is directly adjacent to Pine Mountain Lake and various surrounding communities. The project foot print sprawls across portions of the Pine Mountain Lake, Hells Hollow creek and Grapevine creek watersheds. These are considered part of the upper Tuolumne River drainage and San Joaquin River basin. The project runs from Highway 120 in the south to just east of the Pine Mountain Lake Airport. The ownership consists of multiple private landowners with 2 larger main landowners being Pine Mountain Lake Association and the Motherlode Land Trust, the land is not actively managed as of present.

DESCRIPTION OF THE LOCAL ENVIRONMENT

The 640-acre project area is best described as a transition belt between montane-hardwood conifer to Sierra Nevada Mixed Conifer Forest consisting of sugar pine, ponderosa pine, incense cedar, white fir, black oak, valley oak, California foothill pine, interior live oak as well as other riparian species. The understory consists primarily of interior live oak, manzanita, conifer sapling, toyon, yerba santa, poison oak, ceanothus. Slopes within the project vary from level topography to over 50%. Elevation ranges from 2,500 to 3,100 feet. The aspect is variable though it mostly lies on multiple ridgelines with a northwest aspect. Big Creek, Texas Gulch, and Long Gulch run through the project.

CURRENT LAND USE AND PREVIOUS IMPACTS

There are many historic land uses. The central Sierra Mi-Wuk were known to inhabit this region in prehistoric times. In historic times, the lands were utilized in various subsistence manners and for resource extraction, such as gold, and timber. The project resides on a portion of the 1500-acre Long Gulch Ranch owned by the John Meyer and Lena Meyer Ferretti in the 1920's and was primarily range cattle land. Various mining ditches are located within the property. The historic main line of the Hetch Hetchy Railroad bisects the project. In 2014 the Mother Lode Land Trust (MLLT) purchased a portion of the Long Gulch Ranch placing half of it into a preserve for the Great Grey Owl (GGO) and the other half was subdivided. Since then, it has either been used for cattle range or has sat unoccupied. Present land uses on the various parcels include: wildlife habitat, recreation, residential.

Multiple projects have been proposed within the footprint though few have come to fruition. An NRCS funded fuel reduction project for Long Gulch Ranch was assessed in 2016 though never materialized and ultimately transformed into the present project.

Recorded known timber harvest activities include:

- Previous timber harvest activities were visible within the project area though no records were available during preparation of this document. These harvest activities likely occurred in the 1980's and possibly a previous harvest in the 1950's and or 1900's

Initial Study-Mitigated Negative Declaration for the Proposed Pine Mountain Lake Fuel Reduction Project

- 1996- Pine Mountain THP; 04-95-204-TUO-31, 130 acres of commercial thinning
- 1998- Double L THP; 04-99-020-TUO Shelter wood removal step in 2002 on approximately acres of the project in the SE region of the project.
- 2011- EQIP Program, Project #749104112ZN, Practice 666 (Timber Stand Improvement)
- 2012- Big-Long Fuel Reduction Project consists of shaded fuel breaks along two ridges in the Big Creek and Long Gulch areas near Groveland. The project is approximately 52 acres in size and links Big Creek Shaft Road off Highway 120 with Clinton Road off Ferretti Road.
- Other notable fuel reduction projects within the immediate vicinity were completed on Pine Mountain Lake Association property in 2021-22.

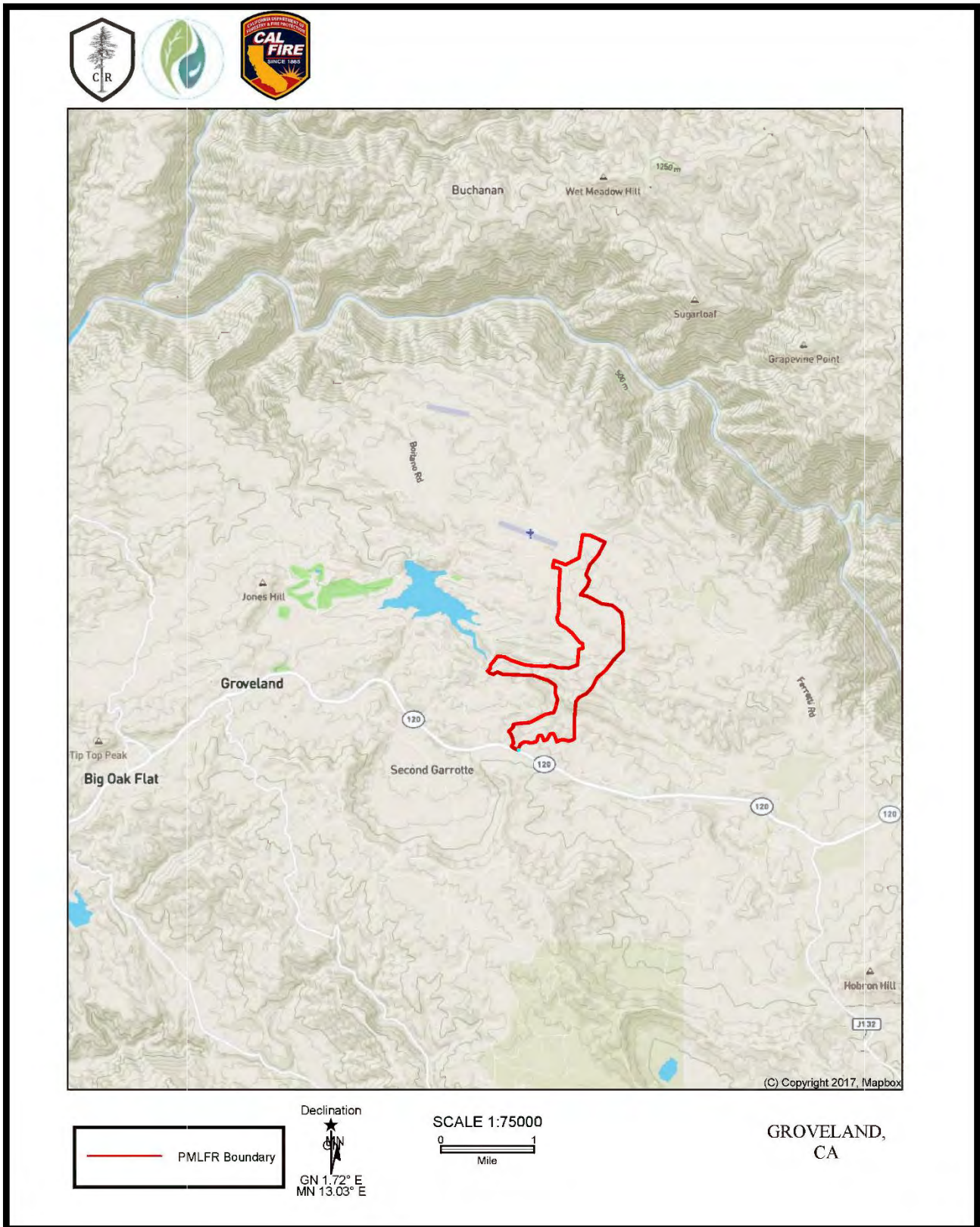
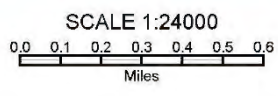
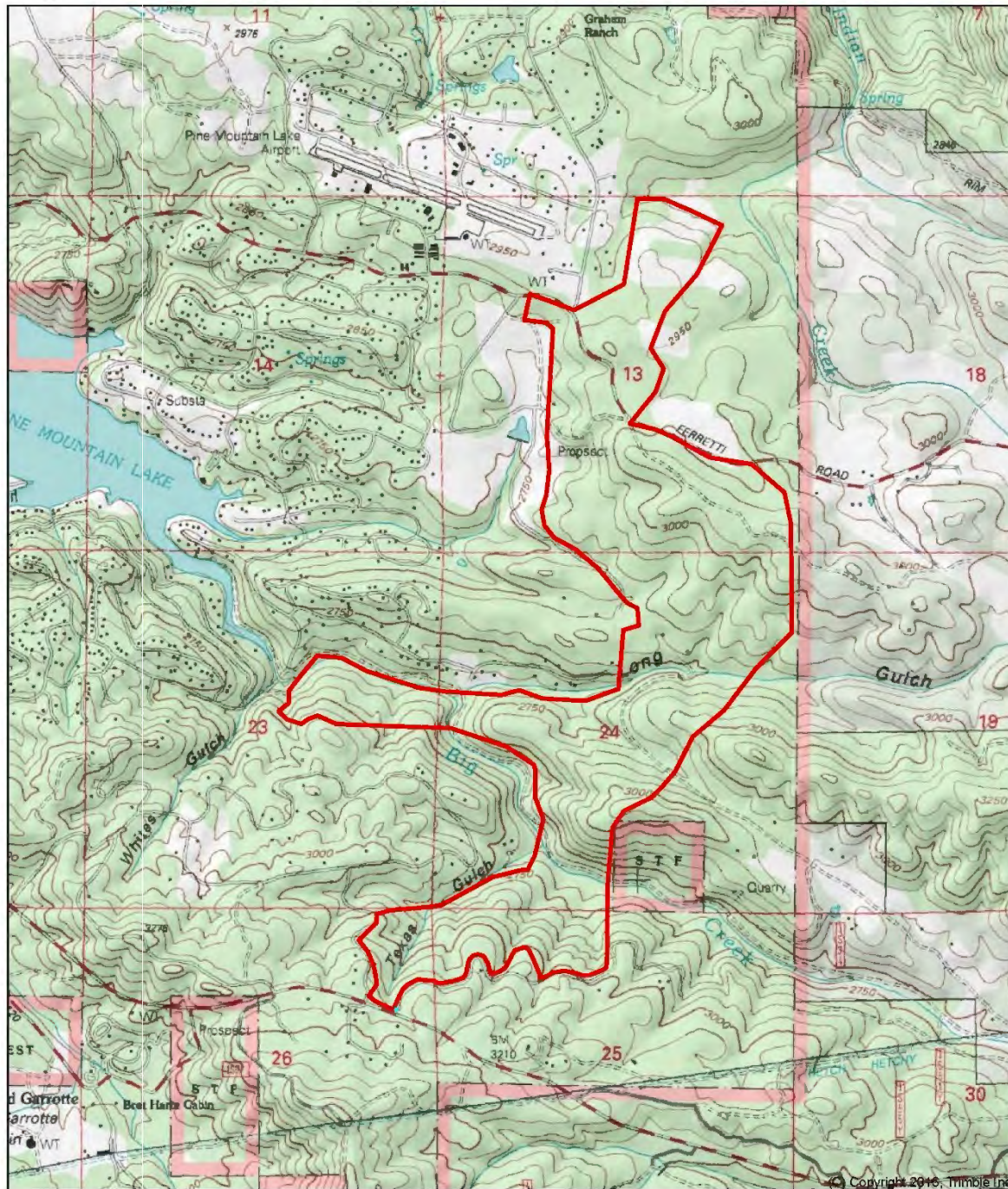


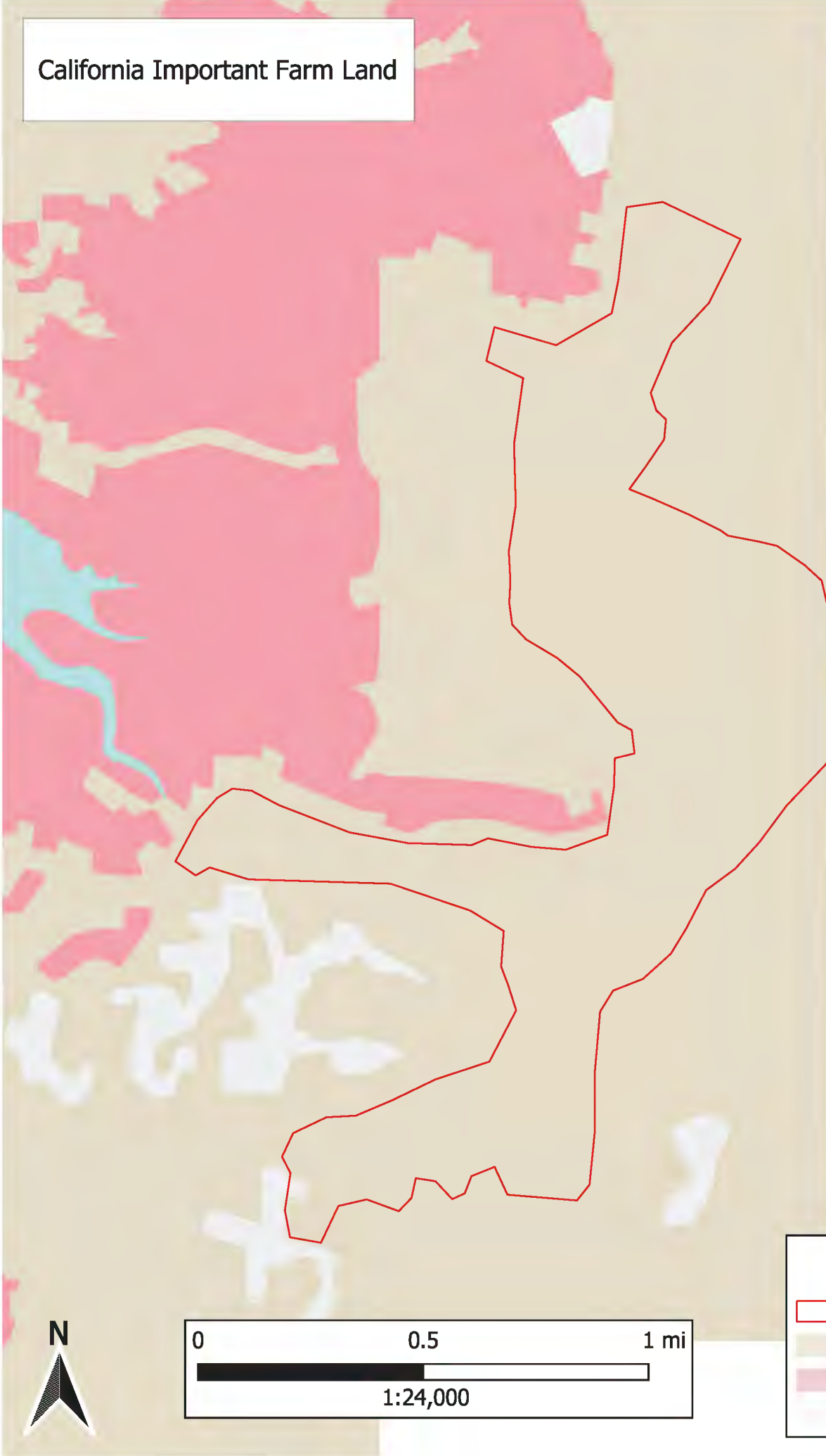
Figure 1. Project Location Map #1 of 1.







GROVELAND,
CA

Figure 2. Project Location Map #1 of 2.

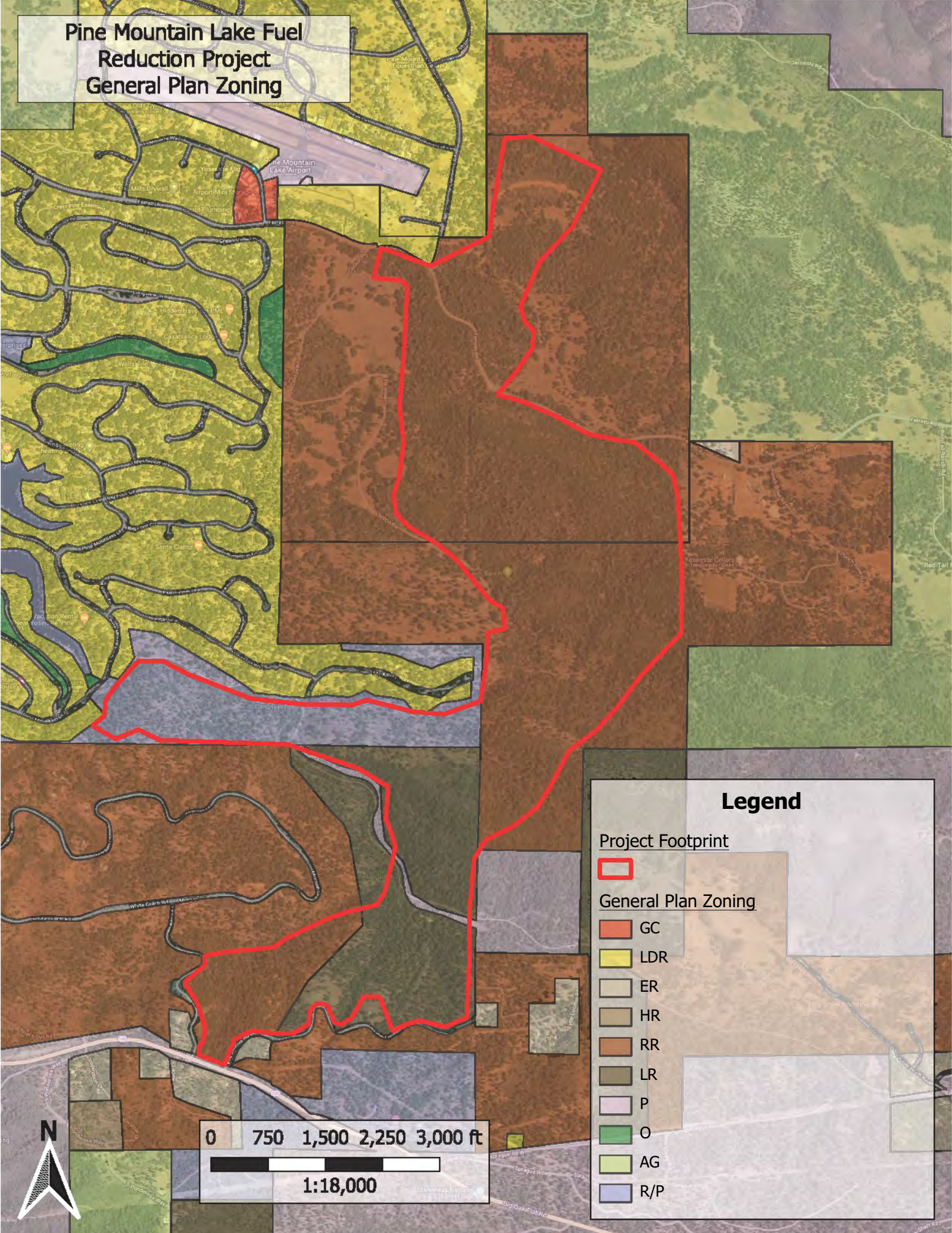
California Important Farm Land



Legend

-  PMLFR Footprint
-  Grazing Land
-  Urban and Built-Up Land
-  Other Land

Pine Mountain Lake Fuel Reduction Project General Plan Zoning



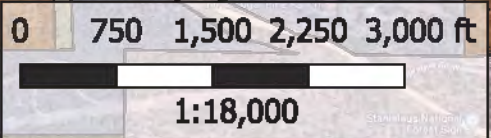
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Project Footprint

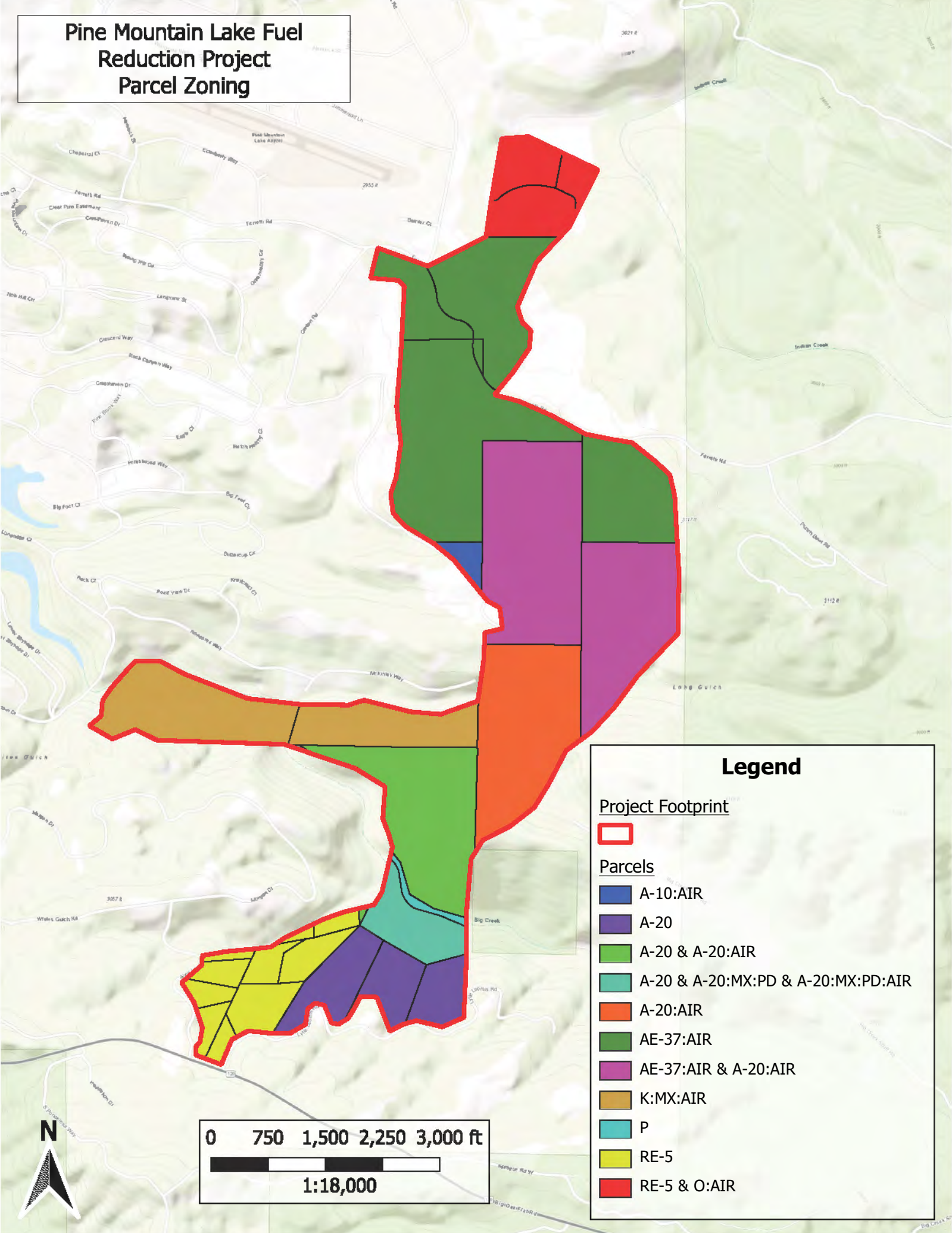


General Plan Zoning

-  GC
-  LDR
-  ER
-  HR
-  RR
-  LR
-  P
-  O
-  AG
-  R/P



Pine Mountain Lake Fuel Reduction Project Parcel Zoning














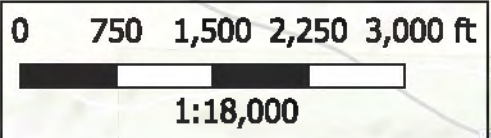
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Project Footprint

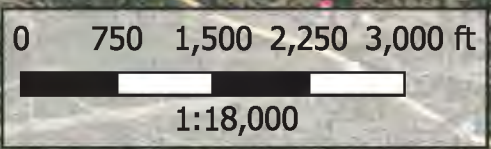
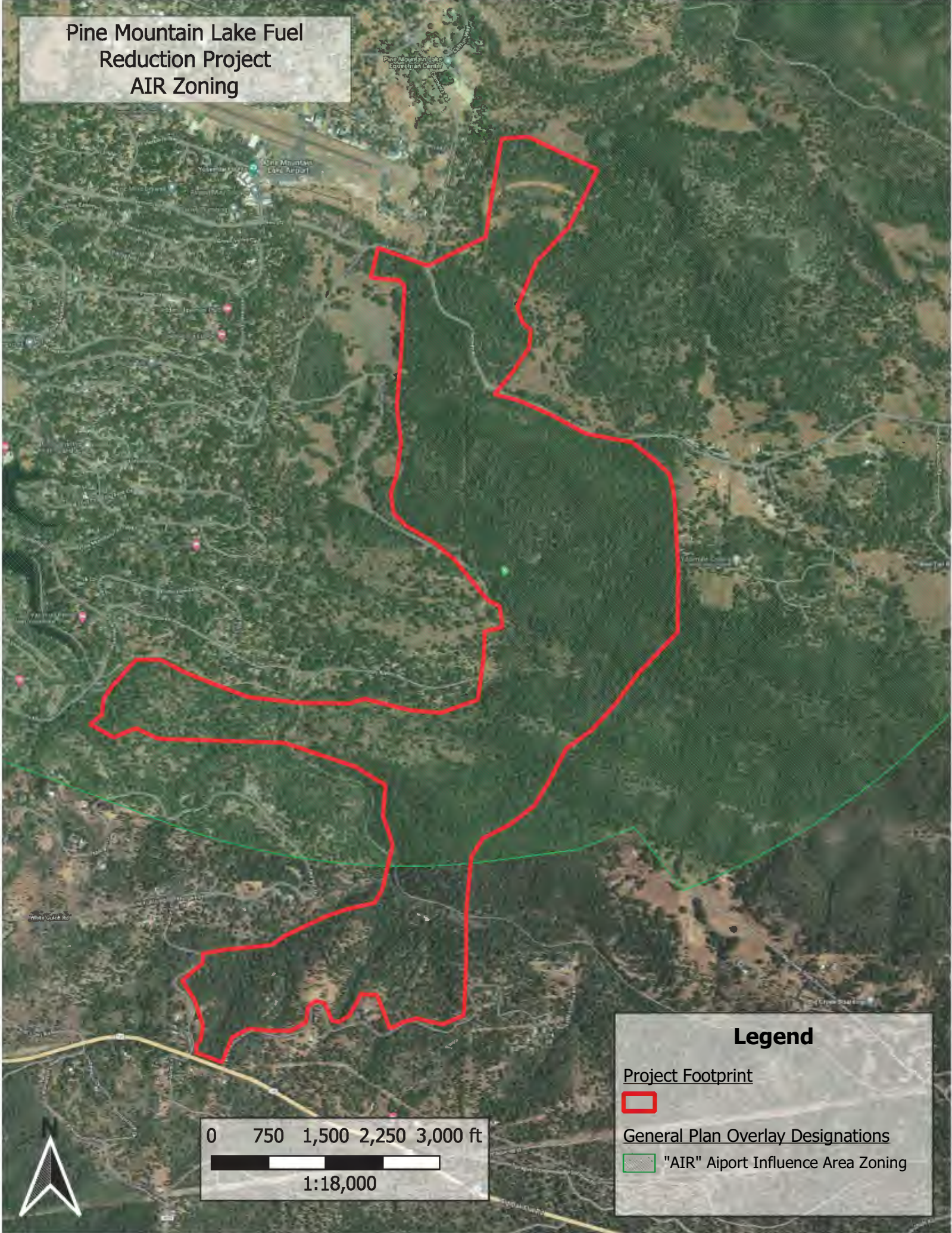


Parcels

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-  A-20
-  A-20 & A-20:AIR
-  A-20 & A-20:MX:PD & A-20:MX:PD:AIR
-  A-20:AIR
-  AE-37:AIR
-  AE-37:AIR & A-20:AIR
-  K:MX:AIR
-  P
-  RE-5
-  RE-5 & O:AIR



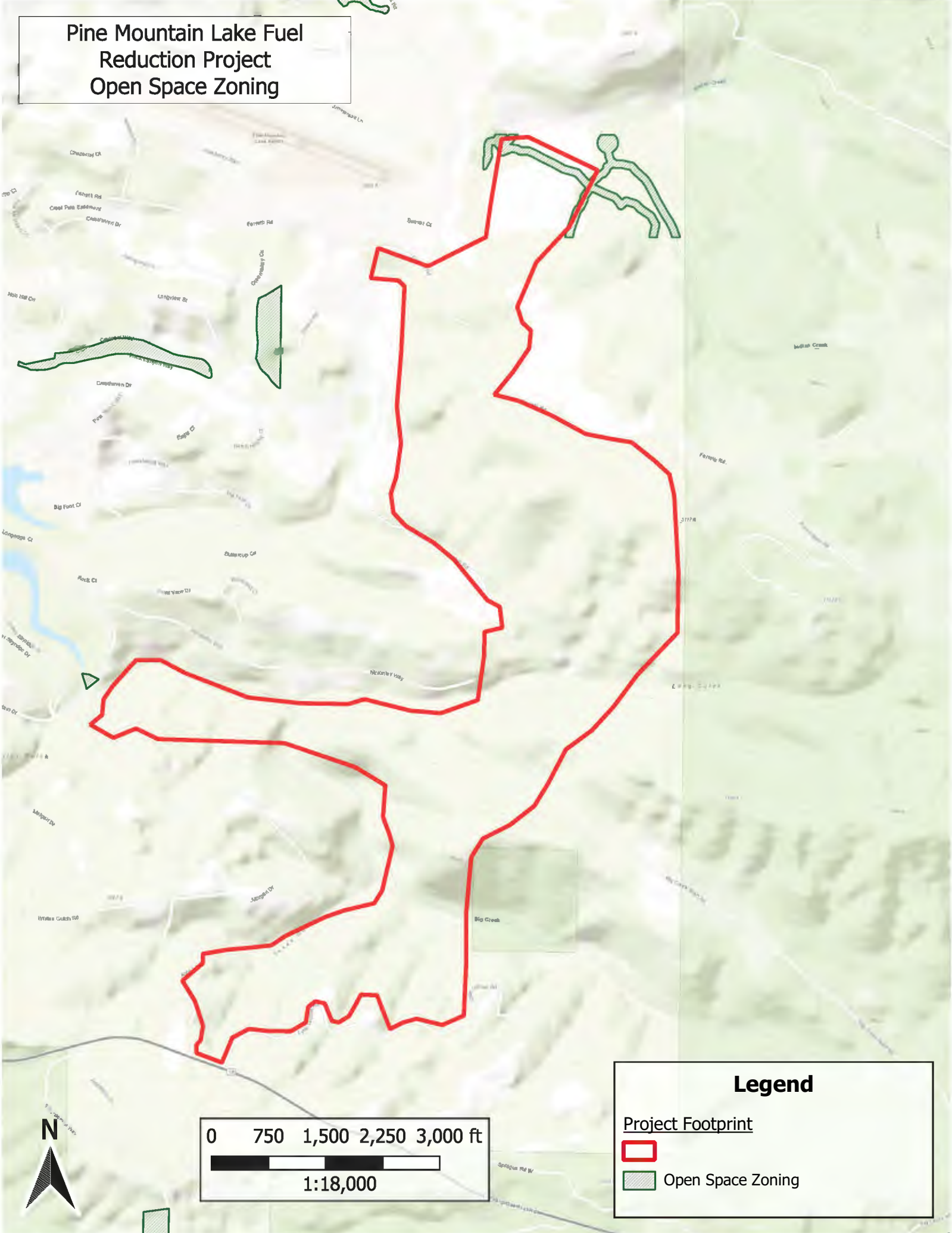
Pine Mountain Lake Fuel Reduction Project AIR Zoning



Legend

- Project Footprint**
- General Plan Overlay Designations**
 "AIR" Airport Influence Area Zoning

Pine Mountain Lake Fuel Reduction Project Open Space Zoning



Legend

Project Footprint



Open Space Zoning



0 750 1,500 2,250 3,000 ft

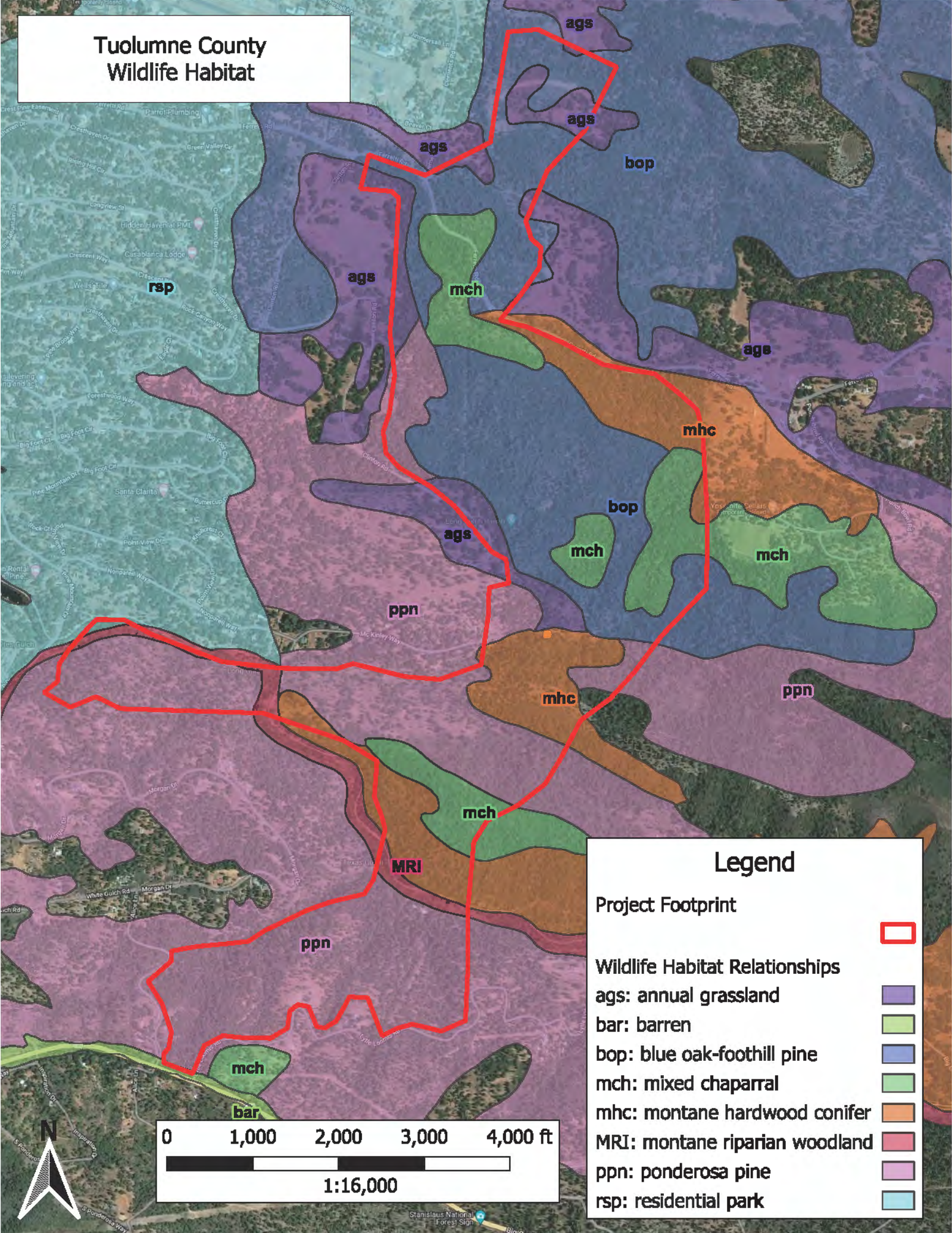


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Tuolumne County Wildlife Habitat

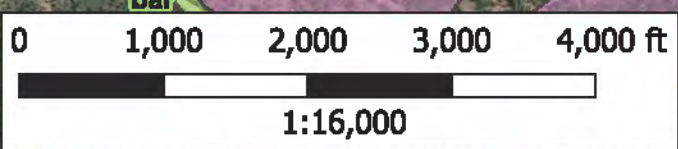


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Project Footprint

Wildlife Habitat Relationships

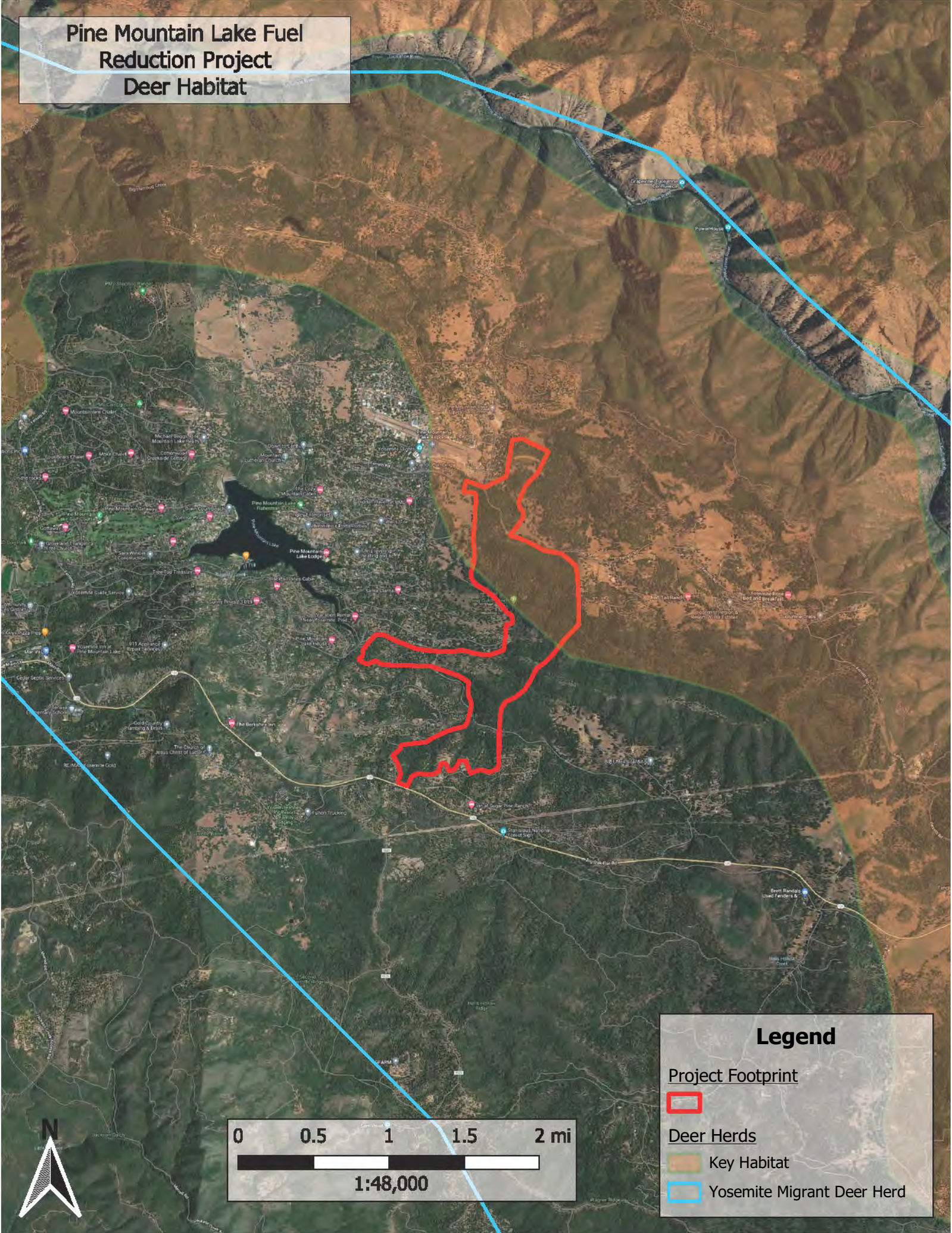
- ags: annual grassland
- bar: barren
- bop: blue oak-foothill pine
- mch: mixed chaparral
- mhc: montane hardwood conifer
- MRI: montane riparian woodland
- ppn: ponderosa pine
- rsp: residential park



Stanislaus National Forest Sign

Big Oak

Pine Mountain Lake Fuel Reduction Project Deer Habitat



Legend

Project Footprint



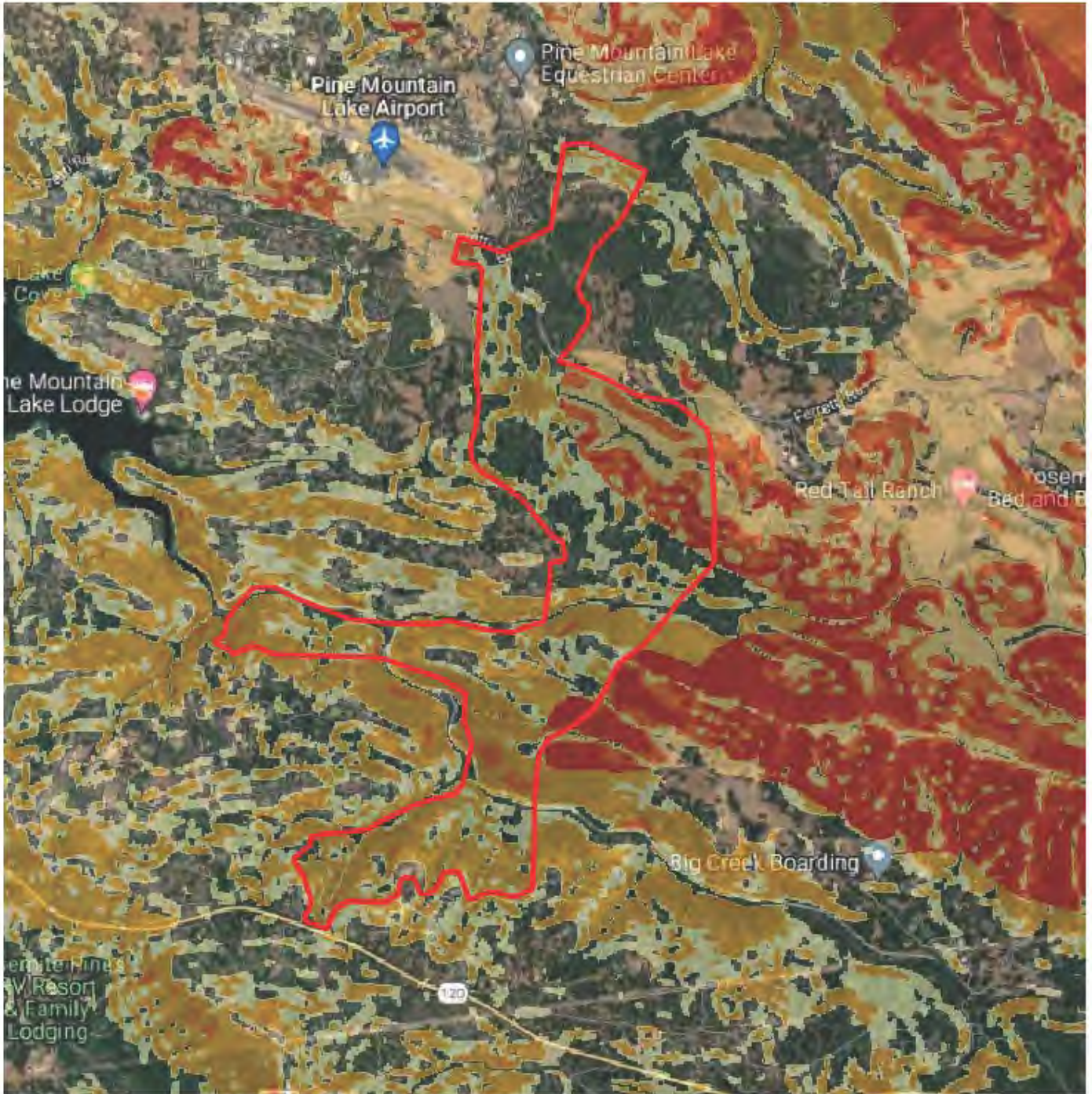
Deer Herds

Key Habitat

Yosemite Migrant Deer Herd

Landslide Susceptibility Classification

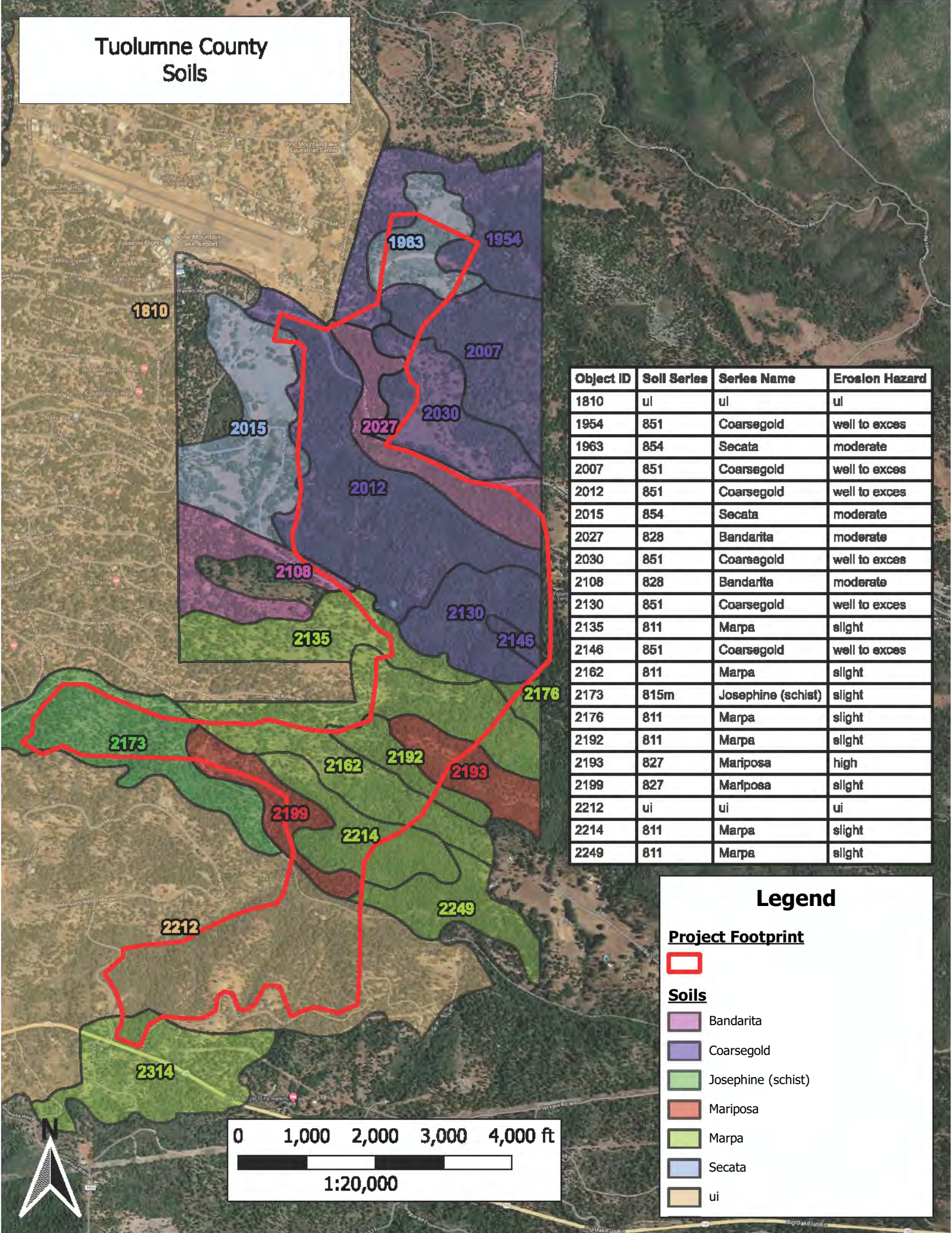
Pine Mountain Lake Fuel Reduction



Landslide Susceptibility Classes

- 0
- III
- V
- VI
- VII
- VIII
- IX
- X

Tuolumne County Soils



Object ID	Soil Series	Series Name	Erosion Hazard
1810	ul	ul	ul
1954	851	Coarsegold	well to exces
1963	854	Secata	moderate
2007	851	Coarsegold	well to exces
2012	851	Coarsegold	well to exces
2015	854	Secata	moderate
2027	828	Bandarita	moderate
2030	851	Coarsegold	well to exces
2108	828	Bandarita	moderate
2130	851	Coarsegold	well to exces
2135	811	Marpa	slight
2146	851	Coarsegold	well to exces
2162	811	Marpa	slight
2173	815m	Josephine (schist)	slight
2176	811	Marpa	slight
2192	811	Marpa	slight
2193	827	Mariposa	high
2199	827	Mariposa	slight
2212	ui	ui	ui
2214	811	Marpa	slight
2249	811	Marpa	slight

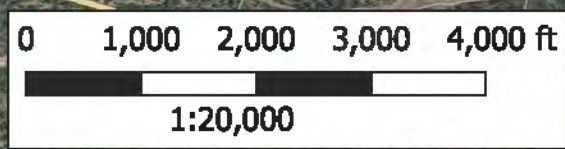
Legend

Project Footprint

Project Footprint

Soils

- Bandarita
- Coarsegold
- Josephine (schist)
- Mariposa
- Marpa
- Secata
- ui



Pine Mountain Lake Fuel Reduction Project Geologic Units

Mehrten Formation (undifferentiated)

Mehrten Formation (undifferentiated)

Calaveras Complex (undifferentiated)

Mehrten Formation (undifferentiated)

Legend

Project Footprint

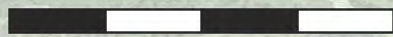


Geologic Units

Calaveras Complex (undifferentiated)

Mehrten Formation (undifferentiated)

0 750 1,500 2,250 3,000 ft

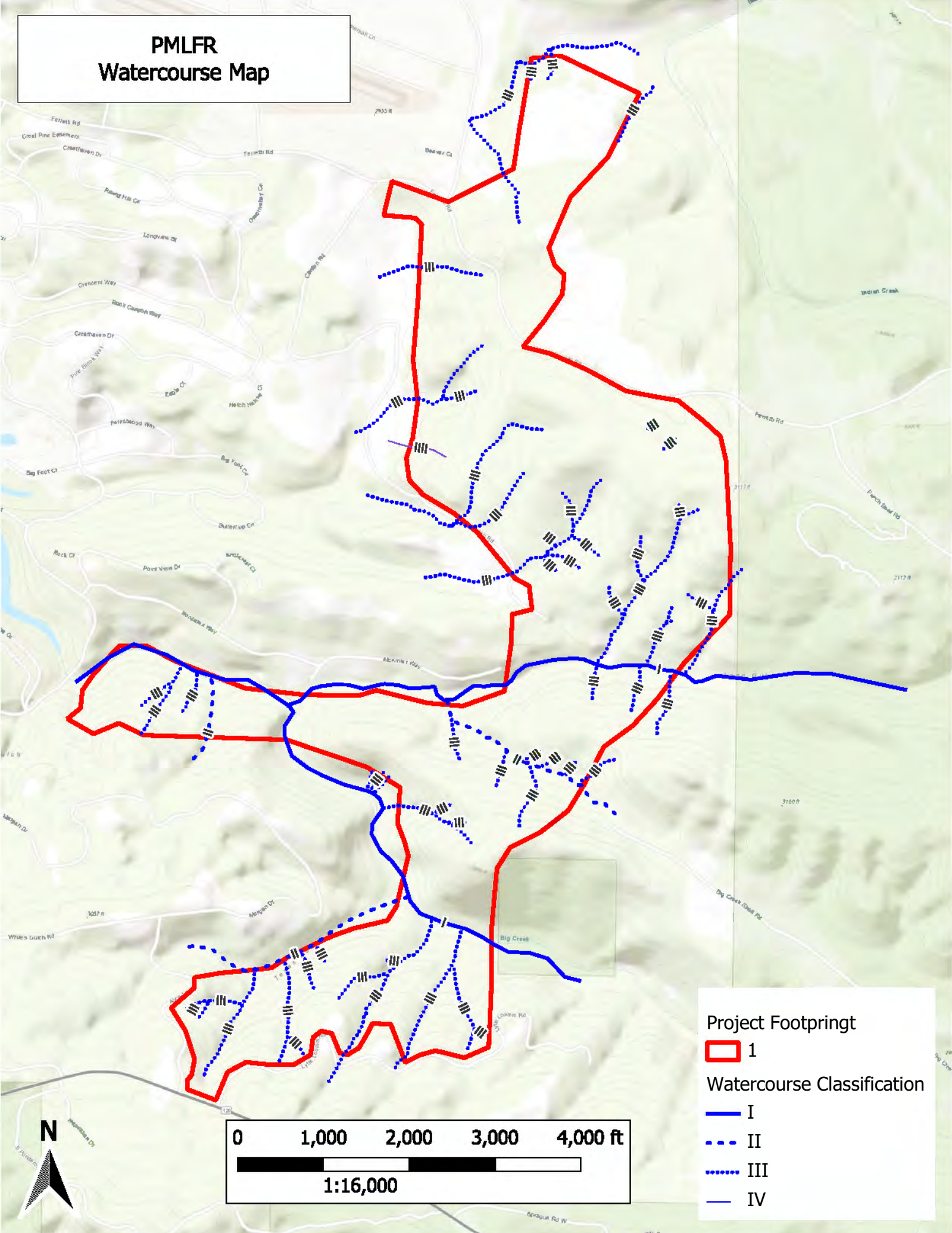


1:18,000



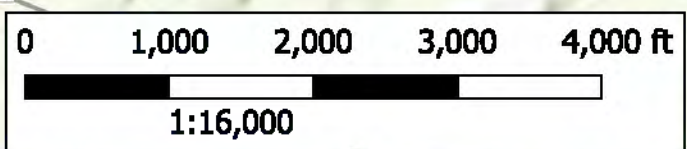
Sullivan Creek terrane (phyllite belt)

PMLFR Watercourse Map



Project Footprint
1

Watercourse Classification
I
II
III
IV



Conclusion of the Mitigated Negative Declaration

ENVIRONMENTAL PERMITS

The proposed project will not require any additional environmental permits.

MITIGATION MEASURES

The following mitigation measures will be implemented by TCRCO to avoid or minimize environmental impacts. Implementation of these mitigation measures will reduce the environmental impacts of the proposed project to a less than significant level.

Mitigation Measure Biological Resources 1: Riparian areas (Class II watercourse) will have a minimum 50-foot Equipment Exclusion Zone (EEZ). If foothill yellow-legged frogs are found near or in project area, a 300-foot no work zone will be established.

Mitigation Measure Biological Resources 2: An RPF or RPF designee will determine occupancy status for all CA Spotted owls, Great Grey Owls (GGO), Bald eagles and Goshawks nests known to occur within a ¼ mile of proposed project activities prior to starting during the year of disturbance. If a nest is found to be occupied by brooding CA Spotted owls, Great Grey Owls, Osprey, Bald eagles and Goshawks then a disturbance buffer will be established around the nest depending on specific species criteria.

- ¼ mile radius circle for CA Spotted owls, Great Grey Owls, Osprey, and Goshawks for the period of March 1 to August 15th, or until the chicks have fledged the nest.
- If no occupied nest is found, then a protection zone will be established around the current activity center or the last known activity center. Protection zones will vary in size and shape based on the species associated with that activity center.

Mitigation Measure Biological Resources 3: A ¼ mile no work buffer will be placed around the Great Gray Owl nest tree until chicks have fledged. It should be noted that mastication and fuel reduction will increase hunting habitat.

Mitigation Measure Biological Resources 4: A 25-foot EEZ will be flagged around active Crotch Bumblebee hives additionally, a 5 foot no work buffer will be placed surrounding the hive. A minimum of 5 pollinator shrubs/trees per acre will be maintained where possible. It should be noted that mechanical treatments will increase open ground and wildflower habitat and should increase habitat for pollinators in general.

Mitigation Measure Biological Resources 5: If populations of any sensitive plant species are detected, a 50' no disturbance buffer will be delineated around the extant population.

Mitigation Measure Biological Resources 6: If populations of special status reptiles or mammals are detected, a 50' no disturbance buffer will be delineated around the location.

Mitigation Measure Biological Resources 7: On April 1, 2008, the Board of Supervisors adopted Ordinance 2903 which added chapter 9.24 to the Tuolumne County Ordinance Code. Chapter 9.24 is intended to

discourage the premature removal of oak trees by establishing procedures and penalties for such removal.

Premature removal means:

- Removal of native oak trees resulting in a 10% or greater average decrease in native oak canopy cover within an oak woodland
- Removal of any old growth oak tree
- Removal of any valley oak tree measuring five inches or greater in diameter at breast height (DBH) from a site within the five years preceding the submission of an application for a discretionary entitlement from Tuolumne County for a land development project.

The PMLFR project will target vegetation removal including oak trees. Oaks targeted for removal will primarily be constituted of interior live oak, non-canopy trees. No removals will be over 12 inches diameter breast height (DBH) and none will be old growth. Valley oak trees over 5 inches DBH may be targeted when the following conditions are met:

- Said tree is damaged, diseased or defective.
- Said tree is suppressed by an established healthy overstory.

Mitigation Measure Cultural Resources 1:

- Cultural sites may be assigned an Equipment Exclusion Zone (EEZ), as determined in consultation with a Registered Professional Archaeologist to protect the integrity of the site.
- No ground disturbing operation of any kind shall occur within the EEZ of a cultural site.
- All sites will be flagged prior to operations.
- Trees/snags within striking distance will be directionally felled away from sites.
- Use of heavy equipment within EEZ boundaries may include, but is not limited to existing roads, tractor trails and/or landings.
- A Registered Professional Archaeologist may approve additional or alternative site-specific protections measures prior to project activities occurring.
- Meeting between Registered Professional Forester (RPF) or supervised designee familiar with on-site conditions and Contractor will be conducted prior to start of operations.
- Project planners shall utilize site records to plan and designate protection measure placement to ensure adherence to prescribed protection measures.
- Contractors performing work shall be cautioned to protect the recorded sites described herein and any cultural resources uncovered during the project operations.
- If any cultural resources are found during implementation, project activities within 100 feet of the newly discovered cultural resource shall be immediately halted and notification given to landowner and RPF.
- The RPF shall initiate site review and notify and consult with Registered Professional Archaeologist for site specific protection measures and its recording notification will be provided to the appropriate Native American tribal groups and Archaeologist.

Mitigation Measure Cultural Resources 2:

- If human remains are discovered, the Tuolumne County Coroner and Consulting Archaeologist must be contacted within 24 hours. Work may not resume until clearance is granted by the Consulting Archaeologist.
- The RPF shall initiate site review and notify and consult with the consulting Archaeologist for site specific protection measures and its recording notification will be provided to the appropriate Native American tribal groups and Archaeologist.
- If any cultural resources are found during implementation, project activities within 100 feet of the newly discovered cultural resource shall be immediately halted and notification given to landowner and RPF.
- No ground disturbing operations of any kind shall occur within cultural sites.

Mitigation Measure Tribal Cultural Resources 1:

- Cultural sites may be assigned an Equipment Exclusion Zones (EEZ), as determined in consultation with a Registered Professional Archaeologist, to protect the integrity of the site.
- No ground disturbing operations of any kind shall occur within the EEZ of a cultural site.
- All sites will be flagged prior to operations.
- Trees/snags within striking distance will be directionally felled away from sites.
- Use of heavy equipment within EEZ boundaries may include, but is not limited to, existing roads, tractor trails, and/or landings.
- All cultural site EEZ's shall be protected through construction of hand and/or tractor fire control lines where necessary to protect site attributes such as "historic wood features."
- Fire control lines shall not be located within the EEZ of a cultural site needing protection from prescribed burning.
- A Registered Professional Archaeologist may approve additional or alternative site-specific protection measures prior to project activities occurring.
- Meeting between Registered Professional Forester or supervised designee familiar with on-site conditions and contractors to go over site location and protection measures.
- Project planners shall utilize site records to plan and designate fire control line placement to ensure adherence with prescribed protection measures.
- Contractors shall be cautioned to protect the recorded sites described herein and any cultural resources uncovered during the project operations.
- If any cultural resources are found during project implementation, project activities within 100 ft. of the newly discovered cultural resource shall be immediately halted and notification given to landowner and RPF.
- The RPF shall initiate site review and notify and consult with Registered Professional Archaeologist for site-specific protection measures, and site recording notification will be provided to the appropriate Native American tribal groups and Archaeologist.
- If human remains are discovered, the County Coroner and the Registered Professional Archaeologist must be contacted within 24 hours. Work may not resume until clearance is granted by the Registered Professional Archeologist.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

This IS-MND has been prepared to assess the project's potential effects on the environment and an appraisal of the significance of those effects. Based on this IS-MND, it has been determined that the proposed project will not have any significant effects on the environment after implementation of mitigation measures. This conclusion is supported by the following findings:

1. The proposed project will have no effect related to Energy, Land Use and Planning, Mineral Resources, Population and Housing, Public Services, Recreation, Transportation, and Utilities and Services Systems.
2. The proposed project will have a less than significant impact on Aesthetics, Geology and Soils, Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, Hydrology and Water Quality, and Wildfire.

3. Mitigation is required to reduce potentially significant impacts related to Biological Resources, Cultural Resources, and Tribal Cultural Resources

The Initial Study-Environmental Checklist included in this document discusses the results of resource-specific environmental impact analyses that were conducted by the District. This initial study revealed that potentially significant environmental effects could result from the proposed project. However, TCRCD revised its project plans and has developed mitigation measures that will eliminate impact or reduce environmental impacts to a less than significant level. TCRCD has found, in consideration of the entire record, that there is no substantial evidence that the proposed project as currently revised and mitigated would result in a significant effect upon the environment. The IS-MND is therefore the appropriate document for CEQA compliance.

INITIAL STUDY-ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST

The environmental factors checked below would be potentially affected by this project involving at least one impact that is a potentially significant impact as indicated by the checklist on the following pages.

Environmental Factors Potentially Affected

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Aesthetics	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Greenhouse Gas Emissions	<input type="checkbox"/> Public Services
<input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture Resources	<input type="checkbox"/> Hazards & Hazardous Materials	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Recreation
<input type="checkbox"/> Air Quality	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hydrology and Water Quality	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Biological Resources	<input type="checkbox"/> Land Use and Planning	<input type="checkbox"/> Utilities and Service Systems
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cultural Resources	<input type="checkbox"/> Mineral Resources	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Wildfire
<input type="checkbox"/> Energy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Noise	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mandatory Findings of Significance
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Geology and Soils	<input type="checkbox"/> Population and Housing	

Determination

On the basis of this initial evaluation:

- I find that the proposed project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment, and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION would be prepared.
- I find that although the proposed project COULD have a significant effect on the environment, there WOULD NOT be a significant effect in this case because revisions in the project have been made by or agreed to by the project proponent. A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION would be prepared.
- I find that the proposed project MAY have a significant effect on the environment, and an ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required.
- I find that the proposed project MAY have a “potentially significant impact” or “potentially significant unless mitigated” impact on the environment, but at least one effect 1) has been adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and 2) has been addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis as described on attached sheets. An ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required, but it must analyze only the effects that remain to be addressed.
- I find that although the proposed project COULD have a significant effect on the environment, because all potentially significant effects (a) have been analyzed adequately in an earlier ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT or NEGATIVE DECLARATION pursuant to applicable standards, and (b) have been avoided or mitigated pursuant to that earlier ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT or NEGATIVE DECLARATION, including revisions or mitigation measures that are imposed upon the proposed project, nothing further is required.

Lindsay Mattos
 District Manager
 Tuolumne County Resource Conservation District

Date

Environmental Checklist and Discussion

AESTHETICS

a) Except as provided in Public Resources Code § 21099, would the project have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Except as provided in Public Resources Code § 21099, would the project substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Except as provided in Public Resources Code § 21099, <u>in non-urbanized areas</u> , would the project substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings? (Public views are those that are experienced from publicly accessible vantage point.) If the project is <u>in an urbanized area</u> , would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality?	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Except as provided in Public Resources Code § 21099, would the project create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

- a) The project is proposed on properties which would not impact any public significant or prominent scenic vistas. The project borders highway 120 to the north though it does not provide any scenic vistas from this vantage. This section does not fall into highway 120's scenic highway corridor.¹ The project includes thinning and release of suppressed, decadent and overstocked vegetation via mechanical methods and may cause minor visual impacts due to the resulting chip layer and ground disturbance. This effect is short term and will last approximately one to two growing seasons after treatment. After which the project will increase the aesthetic values of vista and in general by opening sightlines and improving the health and vigor of the residual vegetation.
- b) The project will increase aesthetic value to the forest as well as protect the trees, rock outcroppings and historic buildings from wildfire.
- c) The project exists in the wildland urban interface (WUI) the footprint falls within both of non-urbanized and urbanized areas. The project would temporarily degrade the visual character in the short term due to the nature of mastication and fuel reduction. The project inherently reduces the amount of vegetation by shredding and integrated it into the soil. This degraded visual character lasts for approximately 1- 2 growing seasons after which the resulting forest stand structure has drastically increased the visual character by increasing the vigor and water yield of the remaining vegetation and

¹ <https://dot.ca.gov/programs/design/lap-landscape-architecture-and-community-livability/lap-liv-i-scenic-highways>

opening up sight lines through the understory and canopy as well as decreasing the number of decadent trees and shrubs.

d) Not applicable, the project would not produce a new source of substantial light or glare.

AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES

a) Would the project convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Would the project conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use or a Williamson Act contract?	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Would the project conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code §12220(g)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code §4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code §51104(g))?	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Would the project result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e) Would the project involve other changes in the existing environment, which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of farmland to non-agricultural use?	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<p>a) According to the California Resource Agencies data² the majority of the project lies on land designated as “Grazing Land”. Land on which the existing vegetation is suited to the grazing of livestock. This category is used only in California and was developed in cooperation with the California Cattlemen's Association, University of California Cooperative Extension, and other groups interested in the extent of grazing activities. The project will not convert the use type from grazing.</p> <p>b) The project is compatible to this use.</p> <p>c) The project is compatible to this use.</p> <p>d) The project will not convert the forest land to non-forest uses. The project inherently will protect and improve forest land.</p> <p>e) This project is developed and designed to help preserve forest land and will not convert any land to nonagricultural uses.</p>				

² See Important Farmland Map on Page 11

AIR QUALITY

a) Would the project conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Would the project result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard?	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Would the project expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Would the project result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Project setting:

The project is situated Tuolumne County within the Mountain Counties Air Basin (MCAB) and falls under the jurisdiction of the Tuolumne County Air Pollution Control District (TCAPCD). The TCAPCD consists of small towns and rural communities. The Tuolumne County portion of the MCAB is a nonattainment area for the state standards for ozone (CARB 2017) and is unclassified or in attainment for the federal standards for ozone and for the federal and state standards for CO, nitrogen dioxide, SO₂, PM₁₀, PM_{2.5}, and lead (CARB 2015). The Tuolumne County Air Pollution Control District (TCAPCD) is responsible for implementing emissions standards and other requirements of federal and state laws regarding most types of stationary emission sources. CARB has determined that the ozone levels in Tuolumne County are caused by “overwhelming transport” of emissions into the air district (CAPCOA 2015). Therefore, the TCAPCD is relieved from preparing an attainment plan for ozone, and no other criteria air pollutant levels are high enough to require an attainment plan. Although there are no required attainment plans, or other local plans specifically addressing air quality, Tuolumne County must conform to existing state and federal air quality standards.³

Criteria air pollutants are substances regulated by federal and state governments with established outdoor concentration standards to safeguard public health. These pollutants include volatile organic compounds (VOCs), also known as reactive organic gases (ROGs), nitrogen oxides (NO_x), carbon monoxide (CO), sulfur oxides (SO_x), particulate matter with an aerodynamic diameter equal to or less than 10 microns (PM₁₀), and particulate matter with an aerodynamic diameter equal to or less than 2.5 microns (PM_{2.5}). VOCs and NO_x are particularly significant as they contribute to the

³ <https://www.tuolumnecounty.ca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/11300/Section-33>

formation of ozone (O₃). Construction activities typically generate criteria air pollutants through the operation of off-road construction equipment, on-road hauling and material delivery trucks, and worker commuting. Motor vehicles are the primary sources of CO and NO_x emissions, while mobile sources and agricultural operations contribute to ROG emissions.

A project would have a significant impact on air quality if, pursuant to Tuolumne County Air Pollution Control District regulations, it would result in project-generated emissions in excess of the following used by the Tuolumne County Air Pollution Control District:

- Reactive Organic Gases (ROG) – 1,000 lbs/day or 100 tons per year.
- Oxides of Nitrogen (NO_x) – 1,000 lbs/day or 100 tons per year.
- Particulate Matter (PM₁₀) – 1,000 lbs/day or 100 tons per year.
- Carbon Monoxide (CO) – 1,000 lbs/day or 100 tons per year.⁴

To assess the project's impact on air quality, the significance criteria are determined based on the recommendations outlined in Appendix G of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines. Additionally, Appendix G of the State CEQA Guidelines states that, if available, the significance criteria established by the relevant air quality management district can be used to determine whether a project would have a significant impact on air quality. The TCAPCD has set thresholds to evaluate the significance of air quality impacts resulting from a project stated above. The project's emissions do not cause or contribute to exceeding state or federal ambient CO emissions, the impacts would be considered less than significant.

- a) The proposed project will not conflict with or obstruct the implementation of the air quality act. The use of vehicles and mechanical equipment would not result in emissions of criteria pollutants that could exceed Tuolumne County General Plan, California Ambient Air Quality Standards (CAAQS) or National Ambient Quality Standards (NAAQS) thresholds.
- b) The project is not expected to result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of the criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard.
- c) No long-term impact on air quality will result from this project. Best available control measures will be utilized to minimized the short-term impacts of emissions from the project.
- d) No long-term impact on air quality will result from this project. Best available control measures will be utilized to minimized the short-term impacts of emissions from the project.

BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

⁴ https://www.tuolumnecounty.ca.gov/364/Air-Pollution-Control-District-chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcgclefindmkaj/https://www.tuolumnecounty.ca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/1072/TCAPCD_Significance_Thresholds_2?bidId=

a) Would the project have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special-status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Would the project have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Would the project have a substantial adverse effect on state or federally protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Would the project interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e) Would the project conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f) Would the project conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

a) On 3/17/2023 a 9-quadrangle and 3-mile radius query of the California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDDB) was conducted. 38 endangered, threatened or sensitive species were identified within the 9-quad search. Of the 38, 22 species had potential habitat. 8 species were found within the 3-mile radius and 1 within the project area. On 5/22/2023 the CNDDDB query was repeated to ensure that additional species were not added to the list; there were no new special-status species in the report. The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) was notified by email and provided a description of recommendations. A Biological Assessment was created by Justin Walker and William Dorrell.

With implementation of mitigation measures as described below, the project is not expected to have a substantial effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a

candidate, sensitive or special status in local or regional plans, policies, or regulation or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or the US Fish and Wildlife services. The following table provides a summary of the CNDDDB findings:

Amphibians

Scientific Name	Common Name	Federal Status	State Status	CDFW	CDF	Habitat in project	Within 3-Miles	Discussion
<i>Hydromantes brunus</i>	limestone salamander	None	Threatened	Fully Protected	None	N	N	N
<i>Rana boylei</i> pop. 5	foothill yellow-legged frog - south Sierra DPS	Proposed Endangered	Endangered	None	None	Y	Y	Y

Arachnids

Scientific Name	Common Name	Federal Status	State Status	CDFW	CDF	Habitat in project	Within 3-Miles	Discussion
<i>Banksula tuolumne</i>	Tuolumne cave harvestman	None	None	None	None	N	N	N

Birds

Scientific Name	Common Name	Federal Status	State Status	CDFW	CDF	Habitat in project	CNDDDB 3-Mile	Discussion
<i>Athene cunicularia</i>	burrowing owl	None	None			N	N	N
<i>Falco mexicanus</i>	prairie falcon	None	None	Watch List		N	N	N
<i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i>	bald eagle	Delisted	Endangered	Fully Protected	Sensitive	N	N	Y
<i>Strix nebulosa</i>	great gray owl	None	Endangered		Sensitive	Y	Y	Y
<i>Vireo bellii pusillus</i>	least Bell's vireo	Endangered	Endangered	None	None	N	N	N

Crustaceans

Scientific Name	Common Name	Federal Status	State Status	CDFW	CDF	Habitat in project	Within 3-Miles	Discussion
<i>Stygobromus harai</i>	Hara's Cave amphipod	None	None	None	None	N	N	N
<i>Stygobromus wengerorum</i>	Wengerors' Cave amphipod	None	None	None	None	N	N	N

Fish

Scientific Name	Common Name	Federal Status	State Status	CDFW	CDF	Habitat in project	Within 3-Miles	Discussion
<i>Hesperoleucus symmetricus symmetricus</i>	central California roach	None	None	SSC	None	N	N	N

Insects

Scientific Name	Common Name	Federal Status	State Status	CDFW	CDF	Habitat in project	Within 3-Miles	Discussion
<i>Bombus crotchii</i>	Crotch bumble bee	None	Candidate Endangered	None	None	N	N	Y
<i>Desmocerus californicus dimorphus</i>	valley elderberry longhorn beetle	Threatened		None	None	N	N	N

Mammals

Scientific Name	Common Name	Federal Status	State Status	CDFW	CDF	Habitat in project	Within 3-Miles	Discussion
<i>Antrozous pallidus</i>	pallid bat	None	None	SSC	None	N	N	N
<i>Corynorhinus townsendii</i>	Townsend's big-eared bat	None	None	SSC	None	N	Y	Y
<i>Euderma maculatum</i>	spotted bat	None	None	SSC	None	N	N	N
<i>Eumops perotis californicus</i>	western mastiff bat	None	None	SSC	None	N	N	N
<i>Lasiorycteris noctivagans</i>	silver-haired bat	None	None	None	None	N	N	N
<i>Lasiurus cinereus</i>	hoary bat	None	None	None	None	N	N	N
<i>Lasiurus frantzii</i>	western red bat	None	None	SSC	None	N	N	N
<i>Myotis evotis</i>	long-eared myotis	None	None	None	None	N	N	N
<i>Myotis thysanodes</i>	fringed myotis	None	None	None	None	N	N	N
<i>Myotis volans</i>	long-legged myotis	None	None	None	None	N	N	N
<i>Myotis yumanensis</i>	Yuma myotis	None	None	None	None	N	N	N

Mollusks

Scientific Name	Common Name	Federal Status	State Status	CDFW	CDF	Habitat in project	Within 3-Miles	Discussion
<i>Margaritifera falcata</i>	western pearlshell	None	None	None	None	N	N	N
<i>Monadenia circumcarinata</i>	keeled sideband	None	None	None	None	N	N	N
<i>Monadenia tuolumneana</i>	Tuolumne sideband	None	None	None	None	N	N	N
<i>Monadenia yosemitensis</i>	Yosemite sideband	None	None	None	None	N	N	N

Plants

Scientific Name	Common Name	Federal Status	State Status	CRPR	Habitat in project	Within 3-Miles	Discussion
<i>Balsamorhiza macrolepis</i>	big-scale balsamroot	None	None	1B.2	N	N	N
<i>Camissonia lacustris</i>	grassland suncup	None	None	1B.2	N	N	N
<i>Clarkia australis</i>	Small's southern clarkia	None	None	1B.2	Y	N	Y
<i>Clarkia biloba ssp. australis</i>	Mariposa clarkia	None	None	1B.2	Y	Y	Y
<i>Clarkia rostrata</i>	beaked clarkia	None	None	1B.3	Y	N	N
<i>Cryptantha mariposae</i>	Mariposa cryptantha	None	None	1B.3	N	Y	Y
<i>Cryptantha spithamaea</i>	Red Hills cryptantha	None	None	1B.3	N	N	N
<i>Diplacus pulchellus</i>	yellow-lip pansy monkeyflower	None	None	1B.2	Y	Y	Y
<i>Eryngium pinnatisectum</i>	Tuolumne button-celery	None	None	1B.2	N	N	N
<i>Erythranthe filicaulis</i>	slender-stemmed monkeyflower	None	None	1B.2	Y	Y	Y
<i>Horkelia parryi</i>	Parry's horkelia	None	None	1B.2	N	N	N
<i>Lomatium congdonii</i>	Congdon's lomatium	None	None	1B.2	N	N	N
<i>Lupinus spectabilis</i>	shaggyhair lupine	None	None	1B.2	N	N	N
<i>Navarretia miwukensis</i>	Mi-Wuk navarretia	None	None	1B.2	N	N	N
<i>Packera layneae</i>	Layne's ragwort	Threatened	Rare	1B.2	N	N	N
<i>Senecio clevelandii</i> var. <i>heterophyllus</i>	Red Hills ragwort	None	None	1B.2	N	N	N
<i>Allium tuolumnense</i>	Rawhide Hill onion	None	None	1B.2	N	N	N
<i>Erythronium tuolumnense</i>	Tuolumne fawn lily	None	None	1B.2	Y	Y	Y
<i>Rhynchospora capitellata</i>	brownish beaked-rush	None	None	2B.2	N	N	N

Reptiles

Scientific Name	Common Name	Federal Status	State Status	CDFW	CDF	Habitat in project	Within 3-Miles	Discussion
<i>Emys marmorata</i>	western pond turtle	None	None	SSC	None	Y	Y	Y

Discussion:

Amphibians

Rana boylei- foothill yellow-legged frog

- Habitat- Partially shaded shallow streams and riffles with a rocky substrate in a variety of habitats. Needs at least some cobble sized substrate for laying and at least 15 weeks to attain metamorphosis.
- 3-Mile- Found within three-mile radius of project in 4 locations: grapevine creek, Clavey river, Tuolumne River (near grapevine creek), Tuolumne River (near humbug creek).
- Preliminary site survey- a general biological site survey was conducted on: 1/26, 1/30, 2/24, 4/12, 5/9, 5/26. With no presence found during the surveys.
- Avoidance Measures: Riparian areas (Class II watercourse) will have a minimum 50-foot Equipment Exclusion Zone (EEZ). If species is found near or in project area, a 300-foot no work zone will be established.

Birds

Raptors

An RPF or RPF designee will determine occupancy status for all CA Spotted owls, Great Grey Owls (GGO), Bald eagles and Goshawks nests known to occur within a ¼ mile of proposed project activities prior to starting during the year of disturbance. If a nest is found to be occupied by brooding CA Spotted owls, Great Grey Owls, Osprey, Bald eagles and Goshawks then a disturbance buffer will be established around the nest depending on specific species criteria.

- ¼ mile radius circle for CA Spotted owls, Great Grey Owls, Osprey, and Goshawks for the period of March 1 to August 15th, or until the chicks have fledged the nest.
- If no occupied nest is found, then a protection zone will be established around the current activity center or the last known activity center. Protection zones will vary in size and shape based on the species associated with that activity center.

Strix nebulosa- Great Grey Owl

- Field survey- Initial site visit (1/24/23) to project confirmed presence of one adult. Continued surveys for owl on: 1/26, 1/30, 1/31, 2/1, 2/24 began night survey on 4/6 all with negative results. During botanical survey on 4/12 GGO was sighted, and roost/nest tree was located. 4/13 roost/nest tree confirmed.
- Avoidance Measures: ¼ mile no work buffer will be placed around the nest tree until chicks have fledged. It should be noted that mastication and fuel reduction will increase hunting habitat.

Insects

Bombus crotchii- Crotch bumble bee

- Habitat-once common and widespread, species has declined precipitously from central CA to southern B.C., perhaps from disease.
 - According to a CDFW report to the Fish and Game Commission dated April 4, 2019: Crotches bumble bee construct their nests underground and may rely on sufficient availability of rodent and other animal burrows to provide potential nesting sites. Plant families most commonly visited in California include: Fabaceae, Apocynaceae, Asteraceae, Lamiaceae, Hydrophyllaceae, Asclepiadaceae and Boraginaceae (Thorp et al. 1983; Richardson 2017).
 - As noted in “Status Review of Three Formerly Common Bumble Bee in the Subgenus *Bombus*” by Evans, Thorp, Jepsen, and Black: Pollination ecology that may be found on the project could include: Apples, Cherries, black berries as well as a large variety of wildflowers.
- Range- Element was last seen in 1927 in the vicinity of Oakland Recreation Camp along the middle fork of the Tuolumne River.
 - According to a CDFW report to the Fish and Game Commission dated April 4, 2019: Stating that the Crotch bumble bee inhabits open grassland and scrub habitats. It was historically common in the Central Valley.
- Avoidance Measures- 25-foot EEZ will be flagged around active hives additionally, a 5 foot no work buffer will be placed surrounding the hive. A minimum of 5 pollinator shrubs/trees per acre will be maintained where possible. It should be noted that mechanical treatments will increase open ground and wildflower habitat and should increase habitat for pollinators in general.

Mammals

Corynorhinus townsendii- Townsend's big-eared bat

- Habitat- Roosts in the open, hanging from walls and ceilings. Roosting sites limited. Extremely sensitive to human disturbance.
- 3-mile- Found within 3-mile radius, last sighting was in 1997 at the "Ellen Winton Mine" According to Westernmininghistory.com the Ellen Whinton Mine is located on the south bank of the Tuolumne River just east of Big Humbug Creek.
- Avoidance Measures- General biological surveys were completed on the project by RPF supervised designee, no roosting habitat was identified. No presence of species was identified at the time of survey. Project is not expected to impact this species, no active mitigations are proposed. If species is discovered on the property a 100 foot no work buffer will be placed around site.

Plants

Clarkia australis- Smalls's southern clarkia

- Habitat- on serpentine. Open, rocky sites in conifer forest or oak woodland 910-2075.
- 3-mile- Not mapped within 3 miles of project boundary.
- Was not present during time of field surveys. Other variety of clarkia were found within the project footprint: *Clarkia purpurea*, *Clarkia dudleyana* and *Clarkia virgata*.
- Avoidance Measures- General biological surveys were completed on the project by RPF or RPF supervised designee. No presence of species was identified at the time of survey. If populations are detected, a 50' no disturbance buffer will be assigned.

Clarkia biloba ssp. australis- Mariposa Clarkia

- Habitat- on serpentine. Several sites occur in the foothill woodland/ riparian ecotone. 120-1480m.
- 3-mile- CNDDDB Bios places location inside of project boundary. Occurrence Detail states the exact location is unknown. Mapped by CNDDDB around Long Gulch east of McKinley Way based on 1995 Michael Brandman Associates Coordinates (accuracy of coordinates unknown), In the NE ¼ of section 24. Only source of information for this site is a 1995 Michael Bradman Associates collection. Field surveys were inconclusive no *Clarkia biloba ssp. australis* were found within the project area. Other variety of clarkia were found within the project footprint: *Clarkia purpurea*, *Clarkia dudleyana* and *Clarkia virgata*.
- Avoidance Measures- General biological surveys were completed on the project by RPF or RPF supervised designee. No presence of species was identified at the time of survey. If populations are detected, a 50' no disturbance buffer will be assigned.

Cryptantha mariposae- Mariposa cryptantha

- Habitat- On serpentine outcrops. 90-825 m.
- 3-Mile- Mapped generally along the road between Coulterville and Bagby. Main source of information was from a 1938 collection.
- Avoidance measures- No habitat exists within the project area. No impacts expected.

Diplacus pulchellus- yellow-lip pansy monkeyflower

- Habitat- Lower montane coniferous forests, meadows and seeps. Vernal wet sites. Soils can be clay, volcanic, or granitic. 670-1950 m.
- 3-mile- There are multiple occurrences within 3-miles of the project they are as follows:
 - 1) Site is 0.5 mile east of pine mountain lake airport near Indian

creek.

2) North of highway 120 between smith station and buck meadows forest service station.

- Avoidance measures- General botanical surveys were completed on the project by RPF or RPF supervised designee. No presence of species was identified at the time of survey. If populations are detected, a 50' no disturbance buffer will be assigned.

Erythranthe filicaulis- Slender-stemmed monkey flower

- Habitat- Cismontane woodland, lower montane coniferous forest, meadows and seeps, upper montane coniferous forest. Within the transition zone of the Sierra Nevada; moist granitic sand and meadow edges; vernal mesic sites. 620-1685 m.
- 3-mile- There are multiple occurrences within 3-miles of the project they are as follows:
 - 1) miles north of highway 120 at a point 0.3-0.4 miles NNW from smith station road.
 - 2) East of pine mountain lake airport, about 0.7 mile east of springs at the head of big humbug creek.
 - 3) North of Highway 120 between smith station and buck meadows forest service station.
 - 4) North of the Hetch Hetchy aqueduct, north of Kassabaum meadow, east of Groveland.
- Avoidance measures- General botanical surveys were completed on the project by RPF or RPF supervised designee. No presence of species was identified at the time of survey. If populations are detected, a 50' no disturbance buffer will be assigned.

Erythronium tuolumnense- Tuolumne fawn lily

- Habitat- Broad-leaved upland forest, chaparral, cismontane woodland, lower montane coniferous forest. Often on clay soils; on cliffs and near drainages. 485-1405 m.
- 3-mile- There is one occurrence located along grapevine creek east of sugarloaf, and about 1.5 air miles south of round meadow. This occurrence is less than 1 mile from the project boundary. Big Creek flows through the project area.
- Avoidance measures- General botanical surveys were completed on the project by RPF or RPF supervised designee. No presence of species was identified at the time of survey. If populations are detected, a 50' no disturbance buffer will be assigned.

Reptiles

Emys marmorata- western pond turtle

- Habitat- A thoroughly aquatic turtle of ponds, marshes, rivers, streams and irrigation ditches, usually with aquatic vegetation, below 6000 ft elevation. Needs basking sites and suitable (sandy banks or grassy open fields) upland habitat up to 0.5 km from water for egg-laying.
- 3-mile- There is one occurrence within a 3-mile radius in Big Creek, about 0.7 miles ne of highway 120 at Sprague Road and 3.7 miles SE of Groveland, vicinity of Stanislaus National Forest.
- Avoidance measures- General biological surveys were completed on the project by RPF or RPF supervised designee. No presence of species was identified at the time of survey, but it is expected that this species is extant. If populations are detected, a 50' no disturbance buffer will be assigned.

All the standards set forth in the Forest Practice Rules for watercourse and lake protection zones (WLPZ) will be incorporated into the project criteria. This will include the standards for watercourse classification Class- (I, II, III & IV), overstory retention standards, understory retention standards,

identification requirements, and any other restrictive practice noted in the Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations.

Mitigation Measures have been added to ensure that all potential impacts to biological resources are reduced to a less than significant level.

- b)** The project is not expected to have a substantial adverse impact on any riparian habitat, or other sensitive species/ habitat within local or regional plans set forth by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or the United States Fish and Wildlife Services. The standards set forth in the Forest Practice Rules protection of watercourse and lake zones will be incorporated into the project projections standards.
- c)** There are no state or federal wetlands within the project area.
- d)** The project is not expected to have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites. The project will cover 6 different wildlife habitats as mapped by the Tuolumne County General Plan's Wildlife Habitat relationships⁵

Deer habitat: The project is considered part of the Yosemite Migrant Deer Herd's Key Habitat, from the Tuolumne County General Plan⁶. Fuels reduction will increase available forage and improve movement corridors and shelter available for the migrant deer herd.

- e)** On April 1, 2008, the Board of Supervisors adopted Ordinance 2903 which added chapter 9.24 to the Tuolumne County Ordinance Code. Chapter 9.24 is intended to discourage the premature removal of oak trees by establishing procedures and penalties for such removal. Premature removal means:
 - Removal of native oak trees resulting in a 10% or greater average decrease in native oak canopy cover within an oak woodland
 - Removal of any old growth oak tree
 - Removal of any valley oak tree measuring five inches or greater in diameter at breast height (DBH) from a site within the five years preceding the submission of an application for a discretionary entitlement from Tuolumne County for a land development project.

The PMLFR project will target vegetation removal including oak trees. Oaks targeted for removal will primarily be constituted of interior live oak, non-canopy trees. No removals will be over 12 inches diameter breast height (DBH) and none will be old growth. Valley oak trees over 5 inches DBH may be targeted when the following conditions are met:

- Said tree is damaged, diseased or defected.
- Said tree is suppressed by an established healthy overstory.

- f)** There is no conservation plan or easement for the properties under this plan. There are some restrictions set forth under the Motherlode Land Trust lands which were obtained through a Wildlife

⁵ See Tuolumne County Wildlife Habitat, page 16

⁶ See Deer Habitat Map, page 17

Conservation Board (WCB) Grant: The property shall be held and used for the purposes of protecting habitat and that supports threatened and endangered species and for compatible public or private uses, all as may be consistent with wildlife habitat preservation and protection of sensitive biological resources (individually and collectively, the “Purposes of Grant”.)

Biological Resources Mitigation Measures

Mitigation Measure Biological Resources 1: Riparian areas (Class II watercourse) will have a minimum 50-foot Equipment Exclusion Zone (EEZ). If foothill yellow-legged frogs are found near or in project area, a 300-foot no work zone will be established.

Mitigation Measure Biological Resources 2: An RPF or RPF designee will determine occupancy status for all CA Spotted owls, Great Grey Owls (GGO), Bald eagles and Goshawks nests known to occur within a ¼ mile of proposed project activities prior to starting during the year of disturbance. If a nest is found to be occupied by brooding CA Spotted owls, Great Grey Owls, Osprey, Bald eagles and Goshawks then a disturbance buffer will be established around the nest depending on specific species criteria.

- ¼ mile radius circle for CA Spotted owls, Great Grey Owls, Osprey, and Goshawks for the period of March 1 to August 15th, or until the chicks have fledged the nest.
- If no occupied nest is found, then a protection zone will be established around the current activity center or the last known activity center. Protection zones will vary in size and shape based on the species associated with that activity center.

Mitigation Measure Biological Resources 3: A ¼ mile no work buffer will be placed around the Great Gray Owl nest tree until chicks have fledged. It should be noted that mastication and fuel reduction will increase hunting habitat.

Mitigation Measure Biological Resources 4: A 25-foot EEZ will be flagged around active Crotch Bumblebee hives additionally, a 5 foot no work buffer will be placed surrounding the hive. A minimum of 5 pollinator shrubs/trees per acre will be maintained where possible. It should be noted that mechanical treatments will increase open ground and wildflower habitat and should increase habitat for pollinators in general.

Mitigation Measure Biological Resources 5: If populations of any sensitive plant species are detected, a 50’ no disturbance buffer will be delineated around the extant population.

Mitigation Measure Biological Resources 6: If populations of special status reptiles or mammals are detected, a 50’ no disturbance buffer will be delineated around the location.

Mitigation Measure Biological Resources 7: On April 1, 2008, the Board of Supervisors adopted Ordinance 2903 which added chapter 9.24 to the Tuolumne County Ordinance Code. Chapter 9.24 is intended to discourage the premature removal of oak trees by establishing procedures and penalties for such removal. Premature removal means:

- Removal of native oak trees resulting in a 10% or greater average decrease in native oak canopy cover within an oak woodland
- Removal of any old growth oak tree

- Removal of any valley oak tree measuring five inches or greater in diameter at breast height (DBH) from a site within the five years preceding the submission of an application for a discretionary entitlement from Tuolumne County for a land development project.

The PMLFR project will target vegetation removal including oak trees. Oaks targeted for removal will primarily be constituted of interior live oak, non-canopy trees. No removals will be over 12 inches diameter breast height (DBH) and none will be old growth. Valley oak trees over 5 inches DBH may be targeted when the following conditions are met:

- Said tree is damaged, diseased or defective.
- Said tree is suppressed by an established healthy overstory.

CULTURAL RESOURCES

a) Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to § 15064.5?	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to § 15064.5?	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Would the project disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

An archaeological and historic records check was obtained on 1/23/2023. An Archaeological Survey Report (ASR) was completed by Justin Walker, Troy Stull and William Dorrell to discuss protection measures and implementation of the protection measures. *This report and impact assessment were reviewed by Julia G. Costello, Ph.D., Registered Professional Archaeologist, with Foothill Resources, LTD. in Mokelumne Hill, CA. She concluded that the report appears to be thorough, following the standard requirements for CEQA Compliance for this CAL FIRE project, and that the Archaeological Survey is satisfactory for this project. See attached letter dated July 23, 2023.*

- Numerous historical sites are located on and adjacent to the project area including remnants of the Laveroni sawmill, the historic Big Oak Flat Road to Yosemite, portions of the Hetch Hetchy railroad grade, numerous earthen ditches, several trash and can dumps, as well as a historic abandoned ranch house. There is also at least one lithic scatter with shards and possible tools. The ASR describes each in detail, but specific site locations are confidential. The ASR is available for review at the TCRCO offices to qualified individuals. Implementation of the protection measures within the ASR should prevent substantial adverse change to a historical resource. Mitigation measures have been added to ensure that all potential impacts to historic and cultural resources are reduced to a less than

significant level.

○

As such, it is not expected the proposed project will result in any significant damages to any archaeological or historic resources.

- b) See a) above.
- c) The project is not expected to disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries. Archaeological procedures for projects were undertaken in the preparation of this project. An archaeological records check was obtained on 1/23/2023. The Native American consultation was completed. No known burial or internment sites are located on the project area. Mitigation measures have been added to ensure that all potential impacts to any newly discovered burial or internment sites are reduced to a less than significant level.

●

Cultural Resource Mitigation Measures

Mitigation Measure Cultural Resources 1:

- Cultural sites may be assigned an Equipment Exclusion Zone (EEZ), as determined in consultation with a Registered Professional Archaeologist to protect the integrity of the site.
- No ground disturbing operation of any kind shall occur within the EEZ of a cultural site.
- All sites will be flagged prior to operations.
- Trees/snags within striking distance will be directionally felled away from sites.
- Use of heavy equipment within EEZ boundaries may include, but is not limited to existing roads, tractor trails and/or landings.
- A Registered Professional Archaeologist may approve additional or alternative site-specific protections measures prior to project activities occurring.
- Meeting between Registered Professional Forester (RPF) or supervised designee familiar with on-site conditions and Contractor will be conducted prior to start of operations.
- Project planners shall utilize site records to plan and designate protection measure placement to ensure adherence to prescribed protection measures.
- Contractors performing work shall be cautioned to protect the recorded sites described herein and any cultural resources uncovered during the project operations.
- If any cultural resources are found during implementation, project activities within 100 feet of the newly discovered cultural resource shall be immediately halted and notification given to landowner and RPF.
- The RPF shall initiate site review and notify and consult with Registered Professional Archaeologist for site specific protection measures and its recording notification will be provided to the appropriate Native American tribal groups and Archaeologist.

Mitigation Measure Cultural Resources 2:

- If human remains are discovered, the Tuolumne County Coroner and Consulting Archaeologist must be contacted within 24 hours. Work may not resume until clearance is granted by the Consulting Archaeologist.
- The RPF shall initiate site review and notify and consult with the consulting Archaeologist for site specific protection measures and its recording notification will be provided to the appropriate Native American tribal groups and Archaeologist.
- If any cultural resources are found during implementation, project activities within 100 feet of the newly

discovered cultural resource shall be immediately halted and notification given to landowner and RPF.

- No ground disturbing operations of any kind shall occur within cultural sites.

ENERGY

a) Would the project result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation?	Potentially Significant Impact <input type="checkbox"/>	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated <input type="checkbox"/>	Less Than Significant Impact <input type="checkbox"/>	No Impact <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Would the project conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?	Potentially Significant Impact <input type="checkbox"/>	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated <input type="checkbox"/>	Less Than Significant Impact <input type="checkbox"/>	No Impact <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
a) Not applicable b) Not applicable				

GEOLOGY AND SOILS

a) Would the project directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? (Refer to California Geological Survey Special Publication 42.)	Potentially Significant Impact <input type="checkbox"/>	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated <input type="checkbox"/>	Less Than Significant Impact <input type="checkbox"/>	No Impact <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Would the project directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving strong seismic ground shaking?	Potentially Significant Impact <input type="checkbox"/>	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated <input type="checkbox"/>	Less Than Significant Impact <input type="checkbox"/>	No Impact <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Would the project directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?	Potentially Significant Impact <input type="checkbox"/>	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated <input type="checkbox"/>	Less Than Significant Impact <input type="checkbox"/>	No Impact <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Would the project directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving landslides?	Potentially Significant Impact <input type="checkbox"/>	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated <input type="checkbox"/>	Less Than Significant Impact <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No Impact <input type="checkbox"/>

e) Would the project result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f) Would the project be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse?	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
g) Would the project be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994, as updated), creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property?	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
h) Would the project have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water?	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
i) Would the project directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
a) The project is designed to reduce the risk of catastrophic wildfire which would result in significant erosion and risk to human life and property. Significant erosion will be prevented by avoidance of heavy equipment used on steep slopes or near watercourses or saturated soils.				
b) The project is small in nature and does not have the capability to cause seismic ground shaking.				
c) No liquefaction zones are located near the project site. The project is small in nature and does not have the capability to cause any liquefaction events				
d) Significant erosion will be prevented by avoidance of heavy equipment used on steep slopes or near watercourses or saturated soils. Grazing will be timed avoid oversaturated soils as well as over grazing. No geological unit or unstable soil types exist within the project area. This project should not result in any unstable soil. See the USGS map for more detail ⁷ .				
e) The project is designed to reduce the risk of catastrophic fire which would result in significant erosion and risk to human life and property. Significant erosion will be prevented by avoidance of heavy equipment used on steep slopes or near watercourses or saturated soils. Grazing will be timed avoid oversaturated soils as well as over grazing. See attached map ⁸ for more information regarding soils present on site.				
f) Significant erosion will be prevented by avoidance of heavy equipment used on steep slopes or near watercourses or saturated soils. Grazing will be timed avoid oversaturated soils as well as over grazing. No geological unit or unstable soil types exist within the project area. This project should not				

⁷ See Landslide Susceptibility Classification map, page 18 and Tuolumne County Soils map, Page 19

⁸ See Tuolumne County Soils map, page 19

result in any unstable soil. See the previously mentioned maps for more details.

- g) Not applicable
- h) Not applicable
- i) The project does not have any soils known to have palaeontologic resources or geologic features present in them.⁹

GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Would the project generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Would the project conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<p>a) Understory (including manzanita, ceanothus, poison oak and saplings) and suppressed sub-merchantable trees will be the primary target of fuels reduction leaving intermediate, dominant and codominant trees, which should improve their ability to sequester carbon. The proposed practices are expected to make the residual stands more resilient to catastrophic stand replacing wildfires. Over time the carbon that is stored in vegetation will be released as part of the normal carbon cycle. Carbon will also be sequestered overtime as new vegetation grows if the land remains productive. Mechanical and herbivory treatments are tools to help maintain those carbon stocks over time. By reducing the probability of catastrophic wildfire prescribed fire can increase the probability of survival of the overstory trees allowing them to continue to sequester carbon. The carbon released by the treatments will be re-sequestered by the remaining living trees and new vegetation following fuel reduction. This has the potential to reduce the massive increase in short term emissions from wildfire and spread the emissions over a longer period while allowing sequestration to occur in the remaining vegetation. The amount of greenhouse gasses being emitted by this project are less than significant, especially when compared to the alternative of a stand replacement intensity fire.</p> <p>b) The project is designed to reduce the chance of a large catastrophic wildfire emitting large amounts of emissions. The project is not expected to conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases.</p>				

HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Would the project create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

⁹ See Geologic Unit map, page 20

b) Would the project create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and/or accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?	Potentially Significant Impact <input type="checkbox"/>	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated <input type="checkbox"/>	Less Than Significant Impact <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No Impact <input type="checkbox"/>
c) Would the project emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?	Potentially Significant Impact <input type="checkbox"/>	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated <input type="checkbox"/>	Less Than Significant Impact <input type="checkbox"/>	No Impact <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Would the project be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code § 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?	Potentially Significant Impact <input type="checkbox"/>	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated <input type="checkbox"/>	Less Than Significant Impact <input type="checkbox"/>	No Impact <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area?	Potentially Significant Impact <input type="checkbox"/>	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated <input type="checkbox"/>	Less Than Significant Impact <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No Impact <input type="checkbox"/>
f) Would the project impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	Potentially Significant Impact <input type="checkbox"/>	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated <input type="checkbox"/>	Less Than Significant Impact <input type="checkbox"/>	No Impact <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
g) Would the project expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires?	Potentially Significant Impact <input type="checkbox"/>	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated <input type="checkbox"/>	Less Than Significant Impact <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No Impact <input type="checkbox"/>
<p>a) Small amounts of petroleum product will be transported for the use of this project. No other hazardous materials will be transported or used.</p> <p>b) It is possible that petroleum product could be released to the environment, resulting in a minor hazardous waste spill. Spills could result from transport of fuel, or a leak/ major malfunction of forestry equipment. Equipment will be kept clean and inspected for leaks. Leaks will be repaired. Spill kits will be on site, spills of chemicals will be contained and disposed of.</p> <p>c) Not within ¼ mile of a school.</p> <p>d) No</p> <p>e) All of the project lies within 2 miles of the Pine Mountain Lake Airport. Several of the parcels within the project are zoned with a secondary zoning of Airport Influence Zone (AIR) Chapter 18.24 of the Tuolumne County Ordinance code. Noise will not be a factor for local workers or residence as this airport is rural and has a low volume of traffic. Noise impact will be limited to normal operating hours. Work will not be stationary, noise levels in any given area will be temporary.</p> <p>f) The project will not negatively affect the current emergency response or evacuation plan. It does have the possibility to positively affect emergency planning in regards to WUI and wildfire defense.</p>				

- g) The project has been developed to reduce the fire hazard severity and fire potential in the area.

HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

a) Would the project violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality?	Potentially Significant Impact <input type="checkbox"/>	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated <input type="checkbox"/>	Less Than Significant Impact <input type="checkbox"/>	No Impact <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Would the project substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?	Potentially Significant Impact <input type="checkbox"/>	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated <input type="checkbox"/>	Less Than Significant Impact <input type="checkbox"/>	No Impact <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Would the project substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would result in substantial on- or off-site erosion or siltation?	Potentially Significant Impact <input type="checkbox"/>	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated <input type="checkbox"/>	Less Than Significant Impact <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No Impact <input type="checkbox"/>
d) Would the project substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in on- or off-site flooding?	Potentially Significant Impact <input type="checkbox"/>	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated <input type="checkbox"/>	Less Than Significant Impact <input type="checkbox"/>	No Impact <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e) Would the project substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff?	Potentially Significant Impact <input type="checkbox"/>	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated <input type="checkbox"/>	Less Than Significant Impact <input type="checkbox"/>	No Impact <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
f) Would the project substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a	Potentially Significant Impact <input type="checkbox"/>	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated <input type="checkbox"/>	Less Than Significant Impact <input type="checkbox"/>	No Impact <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

manner which would impede or redirect flows?

g) In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, would the project risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
h) Would the project conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

All the standards set forth in the Forest Practice Rules for watercourse and lake protection zones (WLPZ) will be incorporated into the project criteria. This will include the standards for watercourse classification Class- (I, II, III & IV) designated on associated map¹⁰, overstory retention standards, understory retention standards, identification requirements, and any other restrictive practice noted in the Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations.

Figure 3A. Indicators for determining a Watercourse Transition.



- a) The project area is located in the CAL FIRE Designated watersheds: Pine Mountain Lake (6536.400503), Grapevine Creek (6536.400504), Hells Hollow Creek (6536.400502) and the USGS designated watershed the project is located in the San Joaquin Basin, Upper Tuolumne Sub Basin, Big Creek-Tuolumne River watershed, Big Creek, Grapevine Creek-Tuolumne River sub-watersheds. The project falls under the prevue of the *Federal*- Clean Water Act, *State*- Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act, *County*- Tuolumne-Stanislaus Integrated Regional Water Management Plan. The Central Valley Water Board region 5S is the governing body which oversees operations in the project region. A letter was sent to the Central Valley Water Board in Rancho Cordova notifying

¹⁰ See PMLFR Watercourse Map, page 21

Procedures for Determining Watercourse and Lake Protection Zone Widths and Protective Measures ¹								
Water Class Characteristics or Key Indicator Beneficial Use	1) Domestic supplies, including springs, on site and/or within 100 feet downstream of the operations area and/or		1) Fish always or seasonally present offsite within 1000 feet downstream and/or		No aquatic life present. Watercourse showing evidence of being capable of sediment transport to Class I and II waters under normal high water flow conditions after completion of Timber Operations.		Man-made Watercourses, usually downstream, established domestic, agricultural, hydroelectric supply or other beneficial use	
	2) Fish always or seasonally present onsite, includes habitat to sustain fish migration and spawning.		2) Aquatic habitat for nonfish aquatic species.					
			3) Excludes Class III waters that are tributary to Class I waters.					
Water Class	Class I		Class II		Class III		Class IV	
Slope Class (%)	Width Feet	Protection Measure	Width Feet	Protection Measure	Width Feet	Protection Measure	Width Feet	Protection Measure
					[see 916.4(c)] [see 936.4(c)] [see 956.4(c)]		[see 916.4(c)] [see 936.4(c)] [see 956.4(c)]	
≤30	75	BDG	50	BEI	See CFH		See CFI	
30-50	100	BDG	75	BEI	See CFH		See CFI	
>50	150 ²	ADG	100 ³	BEI	See CFH		See CFI	
1 - See Section 916.5(e) for letter designations application to this table. 2 - Subtract 50 feet width for cable Yarding operations. 3 - Subtract 25 feet width for cable Yarding operations.								

them of the project on June 1, 2023.

- b) The project may increase short term ground water availability by reducing surface vegetation.
- c) The reduction in understory vegetation through mastication and herbivory may increase groundwater availability. Mastication will retain organic material in the surface soils mitigating surface runoff. The project is not expected to substantially alter watercourse or drainage patterns.
- d) The reduction in surface level vegetation may result in higher flow rates and increased groundwater availability. Adequate residual vegetation and embedded organic matter will be retained to minimize surface runoff. The project is not expected to substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in on- or off-site flooding.
- e) This project is located in a rural area with no existing stormwater systems which would be affected. No additional sources of polluted runoff are expected to be resulted from this project.
- f) Heavy equipment will not be used to cross within the standard width WLPZ along watercourses except along existing roads and where permitted along Class III watercourses. No degradation of water quality is expected from this project.
- g) The project is not located within a flood, tsunami or seiche zone.
- h) 2007 was the most recent draft of the Tuolumne County Water Quality Plan (TCWQP). The relevant priorities were, soil erosion and sediment delivery to waterways “The improvement of forest health, including the reduction of factors which may contribute to the severity of wildfires in the watershed.” Was listed on the priority list. This project is in line with the goals of the TCWQP

LAND USE AND PLANNING

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Would the project physically divide an established community?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Would the project cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
a) The project is in the WUI area east of the community of Pine Mountain Lake, this will not divide the community but protect it.				
b) The Mother Lode Land Trust (MLLT), major land owners within the project, have a NUGA (Notice of Unrecorded Grant Agreement) with the California Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB). This NUGA states “The Property shall be held and used for the purposes of protecting habitat that supports threatened and endangered species and for the compatible public or private uses all as may be consistent with the wildlife habitat preservation and protection of sensitive biological resources (individually and collectively, the “Purposes of Grant”)” The project will not impact this agreement and is in line with protecting habitat that supports threatened and endangered species.				

MINERAL RESOURCES

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Would the project result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Would the project result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan, or other land use plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
a) The project is located on two distinct geologic units <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Calaveras Complex: The main minerals found in this complex are: Gold (lode) Limestone, Dolomite, Graphite, and crushed stone. This complex is noted for its chaotic nature and paucity of coarse detrital material b. Mehrten Formation: The main minerals found in this complex are: crushed stone, sand and gravel, gold (placer), and uranium. This complex is noted for volcanic flows, mudflows, plugs, and sediment of andesitic composition includes some mafic and silicic rock. The entirety of the project is classified as MRZ-3b for precious metals, MRZ-3a/b for carbonate rock, Not classified for Concrete grade aggregate. There is no known significant mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state within the project boundaries.				
b) The project is not expected to result in the loss of availability of locally important mineral resource				

recovery site.

NOISE

a) Would the project result in generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or in other applicable local, state, or federal standards?	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Would the project result in generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) For a project located within the vicinity of a private airstrip or an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>a) Tuolumne County does not have a noise ordinance. The project would include large trucks hauling crews and heavy equipment to the site. These haul trucks would need to pass by residential areas and the event of each truck passing would increase the single event noise levels. Most haul trips would occur during daytime hours, which avoid the potential to cause sleep disturbance to residents. The project setting is in a wildland urban interface (WUI). The majority of the project is located at a distance far enough away from residences or topographic features which will diminish or impede the sound from reaching above. The areas which are adjacent to the residential areas will temporarily increase the ambient noise within the residential zones. This noise level increase will be transient and temporary. This will not warrant mitigations outside of the normal operating procedures for working around residential areas. Such as when working with in the vicinity of the residential homes the hours of operation will be limited to 7:00 am to 7:00 pm Monday through Saturday. Noise generating activities will be prohibited on Sunday and County Holidays.</p> <p>b) This project is not expected to generate groundborne vibration or noise.</p> <p>c) All of the project lies within 2 miles of the Pine Mountain Lake Airport. Several of the parcels within the project are zoned with a secondary zoning of Airport Influence Zone (AIR) Chapter 18.24 of the Tuolumne County Ordinance code. Noise level increase will be transient and temporary. This will not warrant mitigations outside of the normal operating procedures for working around residential areas.</p>				

POPULATION AND HOUSING

a) Would the project induce substantial unplanned population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example,	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?

b) Would the project displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
a) This project will not induce population growth.				
b) This project will not displace any people or housing.				

PUBLIC SERVICES

a) Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, or the need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives for fire protection?	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, or the need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives for police protection?	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, or the need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives for schools?	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

<p>d) Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, or the need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives for parks?</p>	<p>Potentially Significant Impact</p>	<p>Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</p>	<p>Less Than Significant Impact</p>	<p>No Impact</p>
	<p><input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>e) Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, or the need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives for other public facilities?</p>	<p>Potentially Significant Impact</p>	<p>Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</p>	<p>Less Than Significant Impact</p>	<p>No Impact</p>
	<p><input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>

No governmental facilities or services will be impacted from this project

RECREATION

<p>a) Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?</p>	<p>Potentially Significant Impact</p>	<p>Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</p>	<p>Less Than Significant Impact</p>	<p>No Impact</p>
	<p><input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>b) Would the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities that might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?</p>	<p>Potentially Significant Impact</p>	<p>Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated</p>	<p>Less Than Significant Impact</p>	<p>No Impact</p>
	<p><input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>

- a) Currently the Long Gulch Ranch portion of the project has been working with the community of Groveland to offer equestrian, hiking, and other recreation opportunities on the property. Trails on the property are visible but are in a state of disrepair. The fuels reduction would reduce vegetation and open up access to these trails increasing the use of these facilities. No physical facilities exist within this trail network. The only effect would be increased use of the trails. Pine Mountain Lake association has roads used as walking trails for the local community which access the Long Gulch Ranch trail system. Substantial physical deterioration is not expected to result from this project. Other properties within this project are private properties and do not have public recreation facilities.
- b) This project does not propose or require the construction or expansion of recreation facilities.

TRANSPORTATION

a) Would the project conflict with a program, plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities?	Potentially Significant Impact <input type="checkbox"/>	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated <input type="checkbox"/>	Less Than Significant Impact <input type="checkbox"/>	No Impact <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Would the project conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines § 15064.3(b)?	Potentially Significant Impact <input type="checkbox"/>	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated <input type="checkbox"/>	Less Than Significant Impact <input type="checkbox"/>	No Impact <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Would the project substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?	Potentially Significant Impact <input type="checkbox"/>	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated <input type="checkbox"/>	Less Than Significant Impact <input type="checkbox"/>	No Impact <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Would the project result in inadequate emergency access?	Potentially Significant Impact <input type="checkbox"/>	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated <input type="checkbox"/>	Less Than Significant Impact <input type="checkbox"/>	No Impact <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<p>a) The proposed project does not conflict with any program, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system.</p> <p>b) This project is small in nature and will not affect greenhouse gas emissions thresholds.</p> <p>c) The proposed project will have no effect on traffic patterns.</p> <p>d) This project will increase access for emergency fire access across the project. It will not negatively affect any other emergency access.</p>				

TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

a) Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code § 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code § 5020.1(k)?	Potentially Significant Impact <input type="checkbox"/>	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Less Than Significant Impact <input type="checkbox"/>	No Impact <input type="checkbox"/>
b) Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code § 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural	Potentially Significant Impact <input type="checkbox"/>	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Less Than Significant Impact <input type="checkbox"/>	No Impact <input type="checkbox"/>

landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is: A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code § 5024.1? In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resource Code § 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.

An archaeological records check was obtained on 1/23/2023. An Archaeological Survey Report completed by RPF Will Dorrell and supervised designees Justin Walker and Troy Stull to discuss protection measures and implementation of the proposed protection measures. *This report and impact assessment were reviewed by Julia G. Costello, Ph.D., Registered Professional Archaeologist, with Foothill Resources, LTD. in Mokelumne Hill, CA. She concluded that the report appears to be thorough, following the standard requirements for CEQA Compliance for this CAL FIRE project, and that the Archaeological Survey is satisfactory for this project. See attached letter dated July 23, 2023.*

Only one lithic scatter site with shards and tools is recorded on the project area. The ASR describes this site in detail, but the specific site location is confidential. The ASR is available for review at the TCRCDC offices to qualified individuals. Implementation of the protection measures within the ASR should prevent substantial adverse change to any tribal cultural resources. Mitigation measures have been added to ensure that all potential impacts to historic and cultural resources are reduced to a less than significant level

. Implementation of protection measures within the ASR should prevent substantial adverse change to a Tribal Cultural resource.

Tribal Cultural Resource Mitigation Measures

Mitigation Measure Tribal Cultural 1:

- Cultural sites may be assigned an Equipment Exclusion Zones (EEZ), as determined in consultation with a Registered Professional Archaeologist, to protect the integrity of the site.
- No ground disturbing operations of any kind shall occur within the EEZ of a cultural site.
- All sites will be flagged prior to operations.
- Trees/snags within striking distance will be directionally felled away from sites.
- Use of heavy equipment within EEZ boundaries may include, but is not limited to, existing roads, tractor trails, and/or landings.
- All cultural site EEZ's shall be protected through construction of hand and/or tractor fire control lines where necessary to protect site attributes such as "historic wood features."
- Fire control lines shall not be located within the EEZ of a cultural site needing protection from prescribed burning.
- A Registered Professional Archaeologist may approve additional or alternative site-specific protection measures prior to project activities occurring.
- Meeting between Registered Professional Forester or supervised designee familiar with on-site

conditions and contractors to go over site location and protection measures.

- Project planners shall utilize site records to plan and designate fire control line placement to ensure adherence with prescribed protection measures.
- Contractors shall be cautioned to protect the recorded sites described herein and any cultural resources uncovered during the project operations.
- If any cultural resources are found during project implementation, project activities within 100 ft. of the newly discovered cultural resource shall be immediately halted and notification given to landowner and RPF.
- The RPF shall initiate site review and notify and consult with Registered Professional Archaeologist for site-specific protection measures, and site recording notification will be provided to the appropriate Native American tribal groups and Archaeologist.
- If human remains are discovered, the County Coroner and the Registered Professional Archaeologist must be contacted within 24 hours. Work may not resume until clearance is granted by the Registered Professional Archeologist.

UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

a) Would the project require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects?	Potentially Significant Impact <input type="checkbox"/>	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated <input type="checkbox"/>	Less Than Significant Impact <input type="checkbox"/>	No Impact <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Would the project have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years?	Potentially Significant Impact <input type="checkbox"/>	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated <input type="checkbox"/>	Less Than Significant Impact <input type="checkbox"/>	No Impact <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Would the project result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider that serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand, in addition to the provider's existing commitments?	Potentially Significant Impact <input type="checkbox"/>	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated <input type="checkbox"/>	Less Than Significant Impact <input type="checkbox"/>	No Impact <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Would the project generate solid waste in excess of State or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals?	Potentially Significant Impact <input type="checkbox"/>	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated <input type="checkbox"/>	Less Than Significant Impact <input type="checkbox"/>	No Impact <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e) Would the project comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?	Potentially Significant Impact <input type="checkbox"/>	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated <input type="checkbox"/>	Less Than Significant Impact <input type="checkbox"/>	No Impact <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
a) The proposed project will not result in construction of new or expanded utility systems.				

- b) The proposed project will not result in needed changes to water development only limited water use will be needed for the project.
- c) The proposed project will not result in needed changes to waste water developments.
- d) The proposed project will not require landfill accommodations for the implementation of this project.
- e) Not applicable.

WILDFIRE

a) If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	Potentially Significant Impact <input type="checkbox"/>	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated <input type="checkbox"/>	Less Than Significant Impact <input type="checkbox"/>	No Impact <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, exacerbate wildfire risks, and thereby expose project occupants to, pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire?	Potentially Significant Impact <input type="checkbox"/>	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated <input type="checkbox"/>	Less Than Significant Impact <input type="checkbox"/>	No Impact <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines or other utilities) that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment?	Potentially Significant Impact <input type="checkbox"/>	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated <input type="checkbox"/>	Less Than Significant Impact <input type="checkbox"/>	No Impact <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes?	Potentially Significant Impact <input type="checkbox"/>	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated <input type="checkbox"/>	Less Than Significant Impact <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No Impact <input type="checkbox"/>
<p>a) The project has been developed to reduce the fire hazard severity. The project will not impair any emergency response or evacuation plans and should increase the effectiveness of said plans.</p> <p>b) The project has been developed to reduce the fire hazard severity. The project will not exacerbate wildfire risks.</p> <p>c) The project is designed to reduce the fire hazard severity by reducing flammable fuels. No new roads, water sources, power lines or other utilities will be necessary as a result of this project.</p> <p>d) The project is designed to reduce the fire hazard severity. Fuels treatment will temporarily increase surface level runoff due to decrease in understory vegetation. Integration of organic matter into the soil substrate, WLPZ and EEZ limitations, saturated & erosive soils and slope limitations will mitigate post fire downstream flooding and landslides. This project is not expected to affect flooding</p>				

or landslides.

MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE

<p>a) Would the project have the potential to substantially degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of an endangered, rare, or threatened species, or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?</p>	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>b) Would the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? (“Cumulatively considerable” means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects.)</p>	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<p>c) Would the project have environmental effects that would cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?</p>	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<p>a) On 3/17/2023 a 9-quadrangle and 3-mile radius query of the California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDDB) was conducted. 38 endangered, threatened or sensitive species were identified within the 9-quad search. Of the 38, 22 species had potential habitat. 8 species were found within the 3-mile radius and 1 within the project area. On 5/22/2023 the CNDDDB query was repeated to ensure that additional species were not added to the list; there were no new special-status species in the report. The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) was notified by email and provided a description of recommendations. A Biological Assessment was created by Justin Walker and William Dorrell. The project is not expected to have a substantial effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive or special status in local or regional plans, policies, or regulation or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or the US Fish and Wildlife services.</p>				

An archaeological and historic records check was obtained on 1/23/2023. An Archaeological Survey Report (ASR) completed by Justin Walker, Troy Stull and William Dorrell to discuss protection measures and implementation of the protection measures. *This report and impact assessment were reviewed by Julia G. Costello, Ph.D., Registered Professional Archaeologist, with Foothill Resources, LTD. in Mokelumne Hill, CA. She concluded that the report appears to be thorough, following the standard requirements for CEQA Compliance for this CAL FIRE project, and that the Archaeological Survey is satisfactory for this project. See attached letter dated July 23, 2023.*

Several historic sites and only one lithic scatter site with shards and tools are recorded on the project area. The ASR describes this site in detail, but the specific site location is confidential. The ASR is available for review at the TCRCD offices to qualified individuals. Implementation of protection measures within the ASR should prevent substantial adverse change to a historical resource.

No substantial degradation to the environment, fish and wildlife habitat, fish or wildlife population, plant or animal community, endangered species, or cultural resource is expected to occur as a result of this project

- b) Cumulative effects are not anticipated for the proposed project. The project was designed to be complimentary to allow the Lead Agency to coordinate treatments over an increasingly large area. Doing so allows agencies flexibility to tailor treatments across the landscape rather than. Fuel treatment activities are typically scheduled during normal working hours (7am – 7pm) so nocturnal animals would not be affected by activities and noise from project activities would deter wildlife from entering the project area. Ultimately, the cumulative effects would benefit the environment by habitat improvement, and benefit the surrounding communities by the reduction of wildfire risk. This project is being prepared by a Registered Professional Forester. Consultation with resource professionals from CAL FIRE and Tuolumne County Resource Conservation District as part of the scoping process for this project to ensure that any negative cumulative effects are avoided.
- c) Not applicable

APPENDIX A

Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Plan

In accordance with CEQA Guidelines § 15074(d), when adopting a mitigated negative declaration, the lead agency will adopt a mitigation monitoring and reporting plan (MMRP) that ensures compliance with mitigation measures required for project approval. Tuolumne County Resource Conservation District (TCRCD) is the lead agency for the above-listed project and has developed this MMRP as a part of the final IS-MND supporting the project. This MMRP lists the mitigation measures developed in the IS-MND that were designed to reduce environmental impacts to a less-than-significant level. This MMRP also identifies the party responsible for implementing the measure, defines when the mitigation measure must be implemented, and which party or public agency is responsible for ensuring compliance with the measure.

POTENTIALLY SIGNIFICANT EFFECTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

The following is a list of the resources that will be potentially affected by the project and the mitigation measures made part of the Initial Study-Mitigated Negative Declaration.

- I. Potentially Significant Impact:** Disturbance to Foothill yellow-legged frog or its habitat.
(Biological Resources impacts a and b)

Mitigation Measure Biological Resources 1: Riparian areas (Class II watercourse) will have a minimum 50-foot Equipment Exclusion Zone (EEZ). If foothill yellow-legged frogs are found near or in project area, a 300-foot no work zone will be established.

Schedule: Each year of operations prior to ground disturbing activities.

Responsible Party: A Registered Professional Forester (RPF) or RPF designee.

Verification of Compliance:

Monitoring Party: TCRCD

Initials: _____

Date: _____

- II. Potentially Significant Impact:** Disturbance to raptors or their habitat. (Biological Resources impacts a and b)

Mitigation Measure Biological Resources 2: An RPF or RPF designee will determine occupancy status for all CA Spotted owls, Great Grey Owls (GGO), Bald eagles and Goshawks nests known to occur within a ¼ mile of proposed project activities prior to starting during the year of disturbance. If a nest is found to be occupied by brooding CA Spotted owls, Great Grey Owls, Osprey, Bald eagles and Goshawks then a disturbance buffer will be established around the nest depending on specific species criteria.

- ¼ mile radius circle for CA Spotted owls, Great Grey Owls, Osprey, and Goshawks for the period of March 1 to August 15th, or until the chicks have fledged the nest.
- If no occupied nest is found, then a protection zone will be established around the current activity center or the last known activity center. Protection zones will vary in size and shape based on the species associated with that activity center.

Schedule: Each year of operations prior to ground disturbing activities.

Responsible Party: A Registered Professional Forester (RPF) or RPF designee.

Verification of Compliance:

Monitoring Party: TCRC

Initials: _____

Date: _____

III. Potentially Significant Impact: Disturbance to great gray owls or their habitat. (Biological Resources impacts a and b)

Mitigation Measure Biological Resources 3: A ¼ mile no work buffer will be placed around the Great Gray Owl nest tree until chicks have fledged. It should be noted that mastication and fuel reduction will increase hunting habitat.

Schedule: Each year of operations prior to ground disturbing activities.

Responsible Party: A Registered Professional Forester (RPF) or RPF designee.

Verification of Compliance:

Monitoring Party: TCRC

Initials: _____

Date: _____

IV. Potentially Significant Impact: Disturbance to sensitive insects or their habitat. (Biological Resources impacts a and b)

Mitigation Measure Biological Resources 4: A 25-foot EEZ will be flagged around active Crotch Bumblebee hives additionally, a 5 foot no work buffer will be placed surrounding the hive. A minimum of 5 pollinator shrubs/trees per acre will be maintained where possible. It should be noted that mechanical treatments will increase open ground and wildflower habitat and should increase habitat for pollinators in general.

Schedule: Each year of operations prior to ground disturbing activities.

Responsible Party: A Registered Professional Forester (RPF) or RPF designee.

Verification of Compliance:

Monitoring Party: TCRC

Initials: _____

Date: _____

V. Potentially Significant Impact: Disturbance to sensitive plant species or their habitat. (Biological Resources impacts a and b)

Mitigation Measure Biological Resources 5: If populations of any sensitive plant species are detected, a 50' no disturbance buffer will be delineated around the extant population.

Schedule: Each year of operations prior to ground disturbing activities.

Responsible Party: A Registered Professional Forester (RPF) or RPF designee.

Verification of Compliance:

Monitoring Party: TCRC

Initials: _____

Date: _____

VI. Potentially Significant Impact: Disturbance to special status reptiles or mammals or their habitat. (Biological Resources impacts a and b)

Mitigation Measure Biological Resources 6: If populations of special status reptiles or mammals are detected, a 50’ no disturbance buffer will be delineated around the location.

Schedule: Each year of operations prior to ground disturbing activities.

Responsible Party: A Registered Professional Forester (RPF) or RPF designee.

Verification of Compliance:

Monitoring Party: TCRC

Initials: _____

Date: _____

VII. Potentially Significant Impact: Disturbance to oak woodlands and heritage oaks (Biological Resources impact b)

Mitigation Measure Biological Resources 7: On April 1, 2008, the Board of Supervisors adopted Ordinance 2903 which added chapter 9.24 to the Tuolumne County Ordinance Code. Chapter 9.24 is intended to discourage the premature removal of oak trees by establishing procedures and penalties for such removal. Premature removal means:

- Removal of native oak trees resulting in a 10% or greater average decrease in native oak canopy cover within an oak woodland
- Removal of any old growth oak tree
- Removal of any valley oak tree measuring five inches or greater in diameter at breast height (DBH) from a site within the five years preceding the submission of an application for a discretionary entitlement from Tuolumne County for a land development project.

The PMLFR project will target vegetation removal including oak trees. Oaks targeted for removal will primarily be constituted of interior live oak, non-canopy trees. No removals will be over 12 inches diameter breast height (DBH) and none will be old growth. Valley oak trees over 5 inches DBH may be targeted when the following conditions are met:

- Said tree is damaged, diseased or defective.
- Said tree is suppressed by an established healthy overstory.

Schedule: Throughout project operations.

Responsible Party: A Registered Professional Forester (RPF) or RPF designee.

Verification of Compliance:

Monitoring Party: TCRC

Initials: _____

Date: _____

VIII. Potentially Significant Impact: Disturbance to Cultural or Historical Resources. (Cultural Resources impacts a and b)

Mitigation Measure Cultural Resources 1:

- Cultural sites may be assigned an Equipment Exclusion Zone (EEZ), as determined in consultation with a Registered Professional Archaeologist to protect the integrity of the site.
- No ground disturbing operation of any kind shall occur within the EEZ of a cultural site.
- All sites will be flagged prior to operations.
- Trees/snags within striking distance will be directionally felled away from sites.
- Use of heavy equipment within EEZ boundaries may include, but is not limited to existing roads, tractor trails and/or landings.
- A Registered Professional Archaeologist may approve additional or alternative site-specific protection measures prior to project activities occurring.
- Meeting between Registered Professional Forester (RPF) or supervised designee familiar with on-site conditions and Contractor will be conducted prior to start of operations.
- Project planners shall utilize site records to plan and designate protection measure placement to ensure adherence to prescribed protection measures.
- Contractors performing work shall be cautioned to protect the recorded sites described herein and any cultural resources uncovered during the project operations.
- If any cultural resources are found during implementation, project activities within 100 feet of the newly discovered cultural resource shall be immediately halted and notification given to landowner and RPF.
- The RPF shall initiate site review and notify and consult with Registered Professional Archaeologist for site specific protection measures and its recording notification will be provided to the appropriate Native American tribal groups and Archaeologist.

Schedule: Throughout project operations.

Responsible Party: A Registered Professional Forester (RPF) or RPF designee. Must have current Cal Fire certification for archaeological training.

Verification of Compliance:

Monitoring Party: TCRC

Initials: _____

Date: _____

IX. Potentially Significant Impact: Disturbance to Cultural or Historical Resources. (Cultural Resources impact c)

Mitigation Measure Cultural Resources 2:

- If human remains are discovered, the Tuolumne County Coroner and Consulting Archaeologist must be contacted within 24 hours. Work may not resume until clearance is granted by the Consulting Archaeologist.
- The RPF shall initiate site review and notify and consult with the consulting Archaeologist for site specific protection measures and its recording notification will be provided to the appropriate Native American tribal groups and Archaeologist.
- If any cultural resources are found during implementation, project activities within 100 feet of the newly discovered cultural resource shall be immediately halted and notification given to landowner and RPF.
- No ground disturbing operations of any kind shall occur within cultural sites.

Schedule: Throughout project operations.

Responsible Party: A Registered Professional Forester (RPF) or RPF designee. Must have current Cal Fire certification for archaeological training.

Verification of Compliance:

Monitoring Party: TCRC

Initials: _____

Date: _____

X. Potentially Significant Impact: Disturbance to Tribal Cultural or Historical Resources. (Tribal Cultural Resources impacts a and b)

Mitigation Measure Tribal Cultural Resources 1:

- Cultural sites may be assigned an Equipment Exclusion Zones (EEZ), as determined in consultation with a Registered Professional Archaeologist, to protect the integrity of the site.
- No ground disturbing operations of any kind shall occur within the EEZ of a cultural site.
- All sites will be flagged prior to operations.
- Trees/snags within striking distance will be directionally felled away from sites.
- Use of heavy equipment within EEZ boundaries may include, but is not limited to, existing roads, tractor trails, and/or landings.
- All cultural site EEZ's shall be protected through construction of hand and/or tractor fire control lines where necessary to protect site attributes such as "historic wood features."
- Fire control lines shall not be located within the EEZ of a cultural site needing protection from prescribed burning.
- A Registered Professional Archaeologist may approve additional or alternative site-specific protection measures prior to project activities occurring.
- Meeting between Registered Professional Forester or supervised designee familiar with on-site conditions and contractors to go over site location and protection measures.
- Project planners shall utilize site records to plan and designate fire control line placement to ensure adherence with prescribed protection measures.
- Contractors shall be cautioned to protect the recorded sites described herein and any cultural resources uncovered during the project operations.
- If any cultural resources are found during project implementation, project activities within 100 ft. of the newly discovered cultural resource shall be immediately halted and notification given to landowner and RPF.
- The RPF shall initiate site review and notify and consult with Registered Professional Archaeologist for site-specific protection measures, and site recording notification will be provided to the appropriate Native American tribal groups and Archaeologist.
- If human remains are discovered, the County Coroner and the Registered Professional Archaeologist must be contacted within 24 hours. Work may not resume until clearance is granted by the Registered Professional Archeologist.

Schedule: Throughout project operations.

Responsible Party: A Registered Professional Forester (RPF) or RPF designee. Must have current Cal Fire certification for archaeological training.

Verification of Compliance:

Monitoring Party: TCRCD

Initials: _____

Date: _____

APPENDIX B

Archaeological Survey Report

The Archaeological Survey Report is a confidential file and as such is not being circulated as part of this Initial Study. The Survey Report document is available at the TCRCDD District Office 81 N. Washington St. Suite B Sonora, CA 95370, but is not attached to this public review document.

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Tricia Peller
TCRD Grant Administrator
tricia@tcrd.org

23 July 2023

RE: Archaeological Survey Report: Pine Mountain Lake Fuel Reduction, Tuolumne County

I have reviewed the Pine Mountain Lake Fuel Reduction Project's Archaeological Survey Report prepared by Troy Stull, a Paraprofessional Archaeologist. The report appears to be thorough, following the standard requirements for CEQA Compliance for this CAL FIRE project.

My only issue is in Section 2 (p. 3): Native American Consultation. The current report did not allow for the standard 30 days of response time. The first letter allowed only 14 days, the second letter only 1 day. However, now that over a month has passed, I suggest the report be corrected by inserting today's date and including any input that may have been received.

With this correction, I conclude that the Archaeological Survey is satisfactory for this project. Please contact me if further clarification or discussion is necessary.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Julia G. Costello".

Julia G. Costello, Ph.D., RPA

PREPARERS OF THIS DOCUMENT

William Dorrell, RPF#2311, California Reforestation, Inc.

Justin Walker, California Reforestation, Inc.

Troy Stull, California Reforestation, Inc.

EXPERTS CONSULTED

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Gary Whitson, RPF#2516, CAL FIRE

Caroline Peterson, Environmental Scientist, CAL FIRE

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