



California Department of Fish and Wildlife Region 1 Environmental Review Report for an Exempt Project

Note: This report form is intended for use by California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) staff to document a limited environmental impact analysis supporting the filing of a notice of exemption document for a proposed CDFW Wildfire Resiliency project. Although the project appears to fit within the descriptions for allowable categorical exemptions, this report presents CDFW's review for possible exceptions that would preclude finding the project to be categorically exempt as discussed in CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2. This report will be filed with the CEQA administrative record for this project to document the environmental impact analysis conducted by CDFW.

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Project Name:	Tauhindauli Park Public Area Hazardous Fuel Reduction Project		
Project Number:	NA		
Program Type:	Wildfire Resilient State Lands		
CAL FIRE Unit:	Siskiyou		
County:	Siskiyou		
Acres:	~10 acres		
Legal Location:	Portions of Section 24, T39N, R04W, MDB&M		
Name of USGS 7.5' Quad Map(s):	Dunsmuir		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Other Public Agency Review or Permit Required:		
Would the project result in:	YES	NO
Alterations to a watercourse (DFW - Lake and Stream Alteration Agreement)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Conversion of timberland (CAL FIRE - Conversion Permit or Exemption)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Demolition (Local Air District - Demolition Permit)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Soil disturbance over 1 acre (RWQCB - SWPPP)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Fill of possible wetlands (404 Permit - USACE)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Other: A smoke Management Plan, Burn Permit, and an Encroachment Permit will be required.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Discuss any above-listed topic item checked Yes and consultation with agencies:		

Project Description and Environmental Setting (describe the project activities, project site and its surroundings, its location, and the environmental setting):
<p>The project area is located within the city limits of the City of Dunsmuir, in Siskiyou County, California. The parcels are owned by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) and are managed for public access, and consist of the northern and southern portions of the Tauhindauli Public Access, a public access area that offers fishing access to the Sacramento River, which is generally located on the west side of the area and the CDFW parcels to be treated. Vegetation treatment will occur on Assessor's Parcel Numbers (APNs) 059-060-190, 059-070-020, and 059-070-040, on all areas that are accessible and located on the east side of the Sacramento River, as these portions of the ownership are used for public access and are in close proximity to other public and residential uses. This vegetation removal project is a part of a statewide and regional effort to make communities more fire safe by reducing hazardous fuels and improving the safety of the ingress/egress routes.</p> <p>The main project activity will entail the removal of overgrown and non-native understory plant species, falling the dead and dying hazardous trees, including removing select larger conifers that are showing</p>

significant signs of decline thus posing a distinct fire and public safety hazard, and removing small diameter conifer saplings and sprouts ($\leq 8''$ diameter at breast height) from the understory to prevent current and future overcrowding conditions and disease. Larger healthy trees may be pruned up to a maximum height of 10' from the ground.

Public access trails are present on APNs 059-060-190 (~3.8 acres) and 059-070-020 (~2.8 acres), which extend to the north and south of the main portion of the Dunsmuir City Park and Botanical Garden, which is owned and maintained by the City of Dunsmuir. The trail areas are forested with an overstory of Ponderosa pine, black oak, incense cedar, canyon live oak, Douglas fir, white fir, Pacific yew, Oregon ash, alder and Oregon boxwood, with dogwood, maple species, hazelnut, blackberry, rose, bracken fern, and poison oak in the understory. Invasive species include broad-leaved sweet pea, Himalayan blackberry, and English ivy. There are a considerable number of standing dead trees, mostly cedars, pines, firs and oaks, within the project boundaries which need to be removed. Fifteen large standing dead trees with a diameter of between roughly 12" and 40" were identified and mapped within the project area. A map showing the general location of those trees is included as an attachment. These trees do not constitute healthy, mature, scenic trees as the trees are not healthy, but are instead either completely dead or are dying.

Within forested areas, hazardous vegetation removal will consist of cutting down standing dead and dying trees as described above, removal of numerous small diameter conifer trees in the understory, and removal of invasive Himalayan blackberry, broad-leaved sweet pea, and English ivy that is over 6" in height. Removal will occur with chainsaws and other hand tools (such as "weed eaters" and pruning saws). No heavy equipment use or significant ground disturbance is proposed. Invasive vines and ground cover species will be cut at around 6" height with chainsaws or other suitable hand tools. To the extent feasible, woody debris will be cut and hauled out or chipped with a small chipper. Larger diameter dead trees that are felled will be removed to the extent that they interfere with the public access trail or other access such as roadways, but will otherwise be left on the ground to provide large woody debris.

South of the forested trail area, CDFW property on APN 059-070-040 (~3.8 acres) is comprised of a relatively flat residential site, which consists of a variety of vegetation types, including landscaping around the residence, black walnut, black locust and fruit trees farther out in the field, non-native grassland/mowed lawn, wetlands with cattail, willow, alder, and choke cherry, and forested areas with species similar to the forested trail area and surrounding areas. There are six large standing dead trees in the vicinity of the residence and old orchard which will be cut down to reduce hazardous fuel loading and improve public safety. Invasive species in this vicinity to be included in the removal effort include, but are not limited to, broad-leaved sweet pea, English ivy, and Himalayan blackberry.

Burn piles may be utilized in this area. If pile burning is to be used, control lines will be installed around all burn piles, as necessary, by hand crews. Pile burning will be conducted during favorable climatic conditions in compliance with a burn permit. Burn piles will be established in open areas in order to avoid damage to residual trees, away from wetlands and other resource areas.

Environmental Impact Analysis

Aesthetics

- This topic does not apply to this project and was not evaluated further.
 This topic could apply to this project, and results of the assessment are provided below:

The project area is located along a public access trail extending north and south from the Dunsmuir City Park and Botanical Garden, in Dunsmuir. Live, healthy, mature trees will be retained. Vegetation

removal will consist of overgrown understory vegetation, felling the dead and dying hazard trees, including removing select larger conifers that are showing signs of significant decline that pose a direct fire and public safety hazard, and removing small diameter conifer saplings and sprouts ($\leq 8''$ dbh) from the understory to reduce overcrowding conditions and improve overall stand health which will make the area more fire and climate resilient. Large healthy trees may be pruned up to a maximum height of 10' from the ground. The healthy overstory will be retained and native forbs and understory shrub layer species will be retained such that a more cleaned up, park-like aesthetic is achieved. Areas currently occupied by brush species will be more open immediately following treatment allowing a better view of the Sacramento River. It is expected, however, that these will quickly revegetate with brush sprouts and annual grasses and forbs the first spring following completion of operations.

Agriculture and Forest Resources

- This topic does not apply to this project and was not evaluated further.
 Yes No Would any trees be felled? If yes, discuss protection of nesting birds, if necessary.
 Yes No Would the project convert any prime or unique farmland?
 Yes No Would the project result in the conversion of forest land or timberland to non-forest use?
 This topic could apply to this project, and results of the assessment are provided below:

Roughly 15 standing dead and significantly dying trees with a diameter of $> 8''$ were identified for felling in the project area. Most small and young conifer ($\leq 8''$) may be removed in the project area. Species include incense cedar, Ponderosa pine, Douglas fir, white fir, and black oak. Larger trees will be pruned up to a maximum height of 10' from the ground while maintaining at least 40% live crown. The entire area was traversed by qualified personnel during layout and no bird nests were observed. During the bird breeding season (March 1-August 1) fallers will be instructed to look for nests and den structures before cutting a tree. Any live tree with a visible nest or cavity will be retained. This will negate any impacts to nesting birds. Where trees are present the goal is to leave a shaded fuel break. To accomplish this, trees will be retained (even if $\leq 8''$ dbh) at a 15' to 30' spacing.

There are no known active raptor or special status bird nests within the project area. If active raptor or special status bird nests are observed in the project area or within 1000' of the project area prior to the onset of vegetation removal, a buffer area adequate to protect the nest will be applied. If vegetation treatment occurs during the nesting season for common nesting birds, a nesting survey will occur within three days prior to the start of the project, and any trees with active nests will be retained.

There are no portions of this project that would constitute Timber Operations under the California Forest Practice Rules. No land conversions or changes in land use will occur as a result of the project.

No healthy, mature, scenic trees will be removed pursuant to CEQA 15304. No negative impacts to Agriculture or Forest Resources are expected from this project.

Air Quality

- This topic does not apply to this project and was not evaluated further.
 Yes No The local Air Quality Management District guidelines for dust abatement and other air quality concerns were reviewed for this project.
 This topic could apply to this project, and results of the assessment are provided below:

According to the California Air Resources Board (CARB), the Siskiyou County Air Pollution Control District is currently designated within "attainment" of California's standards related to Particulate Pollution (PM 10 and PM 2.5) and Ozone (ppm).

The proposed project will not result in a significant amount of ground disturbance; therefore, project activities will not result in air quality impacts associated with dust. Some emissions will result from the exhaust associated with the use of transport vehicles, chain saws and other hand tools.

If pile burning is conducted, we will expect smoke emissions from those piles. Burning will not be conducted on “no burn days”, when wind is expected to exceed ten miles per hour, or when inversion layers are located below 8000’ elevation. Given the overall small area of this project any smoke from pile burning will be insignificant to regional air quality.

Exhaust emissions should not result in detectable impacts to air quality. Potential adverse impacts to air quality are not anticipated given the nature of the project as described above.

Biological Resources

- This topic does not apply to this project and was not evaluated further.
 Yes No Will the project potentially effect biological resources?
 Yes No Was a current NDDDB review completed? Results discussed below:
 Yes No Was a biological survey of the project area completed? Results discussed below:
 This topic could apply to this project, and results of the assessment are provided below:

A query of the California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDDB) was conducted on August 29, 2023. Scoping was conducted within the City of Mt Shasta, Dunsmuir, Girard Ridge, Mount Eddy, Seven Lakes Basin, McCloud, Chicken Hawk Hill, Tombstone Mtn., and Yellowjacket Mtn USGS 7.5’ Quad maps to determine the potential occurrence of State or Federally listed plant and animal species (including state candidate species) and any California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) Species of Special Concern within or directly adjacent to the project area.

No State or Federally listed plant species are known to occur within the scoping area.

According to the CNDDDB the following listed animal species are known to occur within the scoping area: bald eagle, black swift, Cascades frog, fisher (northern California southern Oregon DPS), foothill yellow-legged frog – north coast DPS, northern goshawk, osprey, Pacific tailed frog, Shasta salamander, southern long-toed salamander, spotted bat, tricolored blackbird, western mastiff bat, western pond turtle, willow flycatcher, wolverine.

There will not be heavy equipment use, except for limited use in areas of existing paved and graveled driveways and roadways, and there will not be any significant ground disturbances resulting from the project, which consists of felling of hazard trees, and other hand removal of hazardous vegetation and woody material, broadcasting wood chips, and firewood and burn piles. Work will occur in areas that are regularly used for public access, where wildlife are conditioned to regular human presence.

Shasta Salamander

Shasta salamander (*Hydromantes shastae*) is a State Threatened species. The project area is within the known range for this species. This species is present in areas of limestone in valley foothill, hardwood-conifer, ponderosa pine and mixed conifer habitats, in elevations from 1100’ to 2550’. The project area is within the elevation range, and the vegetation types where Shasta salamander is known are present in the project area, however there are no limestone or other rock outcrops that would provide habitat for Shasta Salamander in the project area. The nearest known detection of Shasta Salamander is over 11 miles from the project area.

The project is not expected to result in detrimental impacts to Shasta Salamander.

Cascades Frog

The Cascades frog (*Rana cascadae*) is a Candidate Endangered Species under the California Endangered Species Act. It inhabits wet mountain areas in open coniferous forests to near timberline, including small streams, small pools in meadows, lakes, bogs, ponds, and marshy areas near streams. Typically found in water with no predatory fish. There are no known occurrences within the project area. The closest known location is in Little Castle Creek, about 0.6 mile southeast of Castle Lake, approximately 4.8 miles from the project area.

There is no habitat for this species within the project area therefore there will be no impacts to the species.

Foothill Yellow-Legged Frog

The foothill yellow-legged frog (*Rana boylei* pop 1), North Coast DPS, is a California Species of Special Concern. It requires low gradient streams and rivers with abundant gravel and cobble bars for basking and foraging. There are 32 occurrences of foothill yellow-legged frog within the 9 quad search area surrounding the project area. One quarter of those occurrences are within the subject quad (Dunsmuir quad). Of the occurrences within the Dunsmuir quad, four are associated with Castle Creek, one is just south of Castle Creek at the Railroad Park, two are associated with Soda Creek, and one location is along the Sacramento River at Sweetbriar Camp. There are no known occurrences of this species along the Sacramento River adjacent to the project area, however there is adequate habitat present along the river.

There will be no instream work or dewatering occurring in this project so there is no chance of take of this species occurring within the stream zone. Impacts will further be avoided by limiting work to periods of dry weather, and felling trees away from the stream to the extent feasible. The project is not expected to result in significant impacts to this species.

Pacific Tailed Frog

Pacific tailed frog (*Ascaphus truei*) is a CDFW Species of Special Concern. It requires fast moving, moderate to high gradient, cool streams with high canopy cover. Most tributaries of the Sacramento River provide suitable habitat. In the project area, there are no tributaries that enter the Sacramento River. The closest tributary is Bear Creek, about 1,000 feet north of the project area, and there are no known observations of Pacific tailed frog in Bear Creek. The closest observation is about 3 miles southwest of the project area, in Little Castle Creek.

Given the lack of tributaries to provide adequate habitat in the project area, no impacts are expected to occur to this species.

Western Pond Turtle

Western pond turtle (*Emys marmorata*) is a California Species of Special Concern. Habitat includes ponds, marshes, rivers, streams, and irrigation ditches, usually with aquatic vegetation, at elevations below 6000 feet. It requires basking site and suitable upland habitat for egg laying, such as sandy banks or grassy open fields, within ½ kilometer from water for egg laying. Although there are no observations in the Dunsmuir quad, there are observations in adjoining quads where western pond turtle has been observed along the Sacramento River.

The potential for presence of western pond turtle is low. The project will not result in substantial ground disturbing impacts as vegetation removal will occur with hand equipment and will not include grading that could impact western pond turtle habitat. Additionally, trees and snags will be felled away from the stream to the extent feasible.

To the extent feasible, the project will be conducted outside of the western pond turtle nesting season (Between May and August). Should work occur during the nesting season, and nesting turtles be observed in the project area during project activities, a 100-foot no disturbance buffer will be installed around the nest where no activities, equipment access, or foot traffic will occur. The avoidance area will be inspected regularly by CDFW staff to ensure no disturbance of that area occurs. If adult turtles are observed, project activities will cease until the turtle is no longer occupying the project area.

There will be no use of filter fences or mesh made of materials that could entrap reptiles or amphibians.

Bald Eagle

Bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) is a State Endangered Species that nests in large, old growth or dominant live trees with open branches, especially Ponderosa pine, near waters such as lakes and rivers. The closest observations are near the McCloud River and Lake Siskiyou. There are no known bald eagle nests in or near the project area.

Northern Spotted Owl

Northern spotted owl (*Strix occidentalis caurina*) is a Federal and State Threatened species that nests in mature, multi-layered mixed conifer, redwood and Douglas-fir forests. There is no nesting habitat in the project area, however there is a low possibility that northern spotted owls may be found foraging in the project area, as forage habitat is present. The project is not expected to result in destruction, conversion or significant habitat alteration of forage habitat for this species.

No observations of northern spotted owl nests are known in the project area, and it is unlikely that nests would be present or disturbed. Trees and snags to be felled will be inspected for nests prior to felling to ensure no detrimental impacts occur to nesting birds as a result of the project. If special status

Black Swift

The black swift (*Cypseloides niger*) is a CDFW Species of Special Concern. Their nesting habitat is frequently associated with water. The birds most often nest on high cliff faces, either above ocean shorelines or behind or next to waterfalls. There is one known occurrence of this species along the Sacramento River near Mossbrae Falls.

Due to there being no suitable nesting habitat within the project area there will be no impact to this species.

Northern Goshawk

Northern goshawk (*Accipiter gentilis*) is a Board of Forestry Sensitive Species. They are forest raptors that inhabit large stands of mature, closed canopy forest in middle and higher elevations. They prey on small birds and mammals such as squirrels and chipmunks. It is generally thought that this species is very sensitive to disturbance. They usually nest on north slopes, near water, in live trees in dense stands, close to openings. There is an occurrence from 2003 recorded in the Dunsmuir quad, between Castle Crags State Park and Dunsmuir, about 2.5 miles southwest of the project area.

Although no observations are known in the project area, suitable habitat is present. Tree removal of live mature trees is limited to one conifer with less than 1/3 crown left, and this is expected to occur outside of the bird nesting season. Otherwise, trees to be felled will be inspected for nests prior to felling to ensure no detrimental impacts occur to nesting birds as a result of the project.

Osprey

The osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*) is a common raptor around aquatic habitats. It is a Board of Forestry Sensitive Species and a CDFW Watch List species. The species forages around any fish bearing water body and nests in larger trees, pilings and power poles near aquatic habitat. A nest was recorded in 2003 and last updated in 2004, that is located more than 1000 feet northwest of the project area at the closest point, in a large snag upslope on the other side of the river. No other nests are known to occur within the project area.

Tricolored Blackbird

Tricolored blackbird (*Agelaius tricolor*) is a State Threatened species. One observation is recorded within the 9-quad search of the project area, which was observed sometime between 1849 and 1853. The occurrence record indicates a colony was observed near Cottonwood Creek, about 7.8 miles ESE of Dunsmuir. There are no current records of tricolored blackbird colonies in or near the project area.

No impacts are expected to tricolored blackbird as there are no known colonies in the project area.

Willow Flycatcher

Willow flycatcher (*Empidonax traillii*) is a State Endangered species. It nests in dense willow thickets on the edge of wet meadows, ponds or backwaters, from 2000' to 8000' in elevation. The project area is within the current known range for this species. There are three known locations approximately 6.8 miles east of the project area south of the town of McCloud. The CDFW willow flycatcher habitat model identifies three areas of potential habitat in and adjacent to the project area. We believe all three of these areas are, in fact, not habitat. The one area of predicted habitat which is on the project area is actually the back yard of the DFW owned residence. A visual inspection of this area was conducted and determined not to be suitable habitat. The two areas of predicted possible habitat are associated with the Dunsmuir High School football field. There is no suitable willow flycatcher habitat in these areas.

No impacts are expected to willow flycatcher as there is no suitable habitat for this species in or near the project area.

Spotted bat

The spotted bat (*Euderma maculatum*) is a CDFW Species of Special Concern. This species inhabits open and dense deciduous and coniferous forests, hay fields, deserts, marshes, riparian areas, and dry shrub-steppe grasslands, roosting in rock crevices in cliffs or caves. There are no known occurrences within 2 miles of the project area.

While there may be potential habitat for this species, rock crevices are generally too close to the ground to serve as quality habitat, and there are no impacts proposed to rock crevices in the project area. Impacts to this species will not occur.

Western mastiff bat

The western mastiff bat (*Eumops perotis californicus*) is a CDFW Species of Special Concern. As described in CWHR the species is an uncommon resident in southeastern San Joaquin Valley and Coastal Ranges from Monterey Co. southward through southern California, from the coast eastward to the Colorado Desert. It occurs in many open, semi-arid to arid habitats, including conifer and deciduous woodlands, coastal scrub, annual and perennial grasslands, palm oases, chaparral, desert scrub, and urban. The species is the largest species of bat native to North America. Other accounts suggest the range of the species is far outside of Siskiyou County; principally believed southwest desert regions of the United States, along the border with Mexico, extending as far north on the Pacific coast as Alameda County, California. There are, however, several occurrences in the CNDDDB in Siskiyou County, the closest being in the town of Dunsmuir. Suitable habitat consists of extensive open areas with abundant

roost locations provided by rock crevices or buildings. Suitable roosting habitat is described as crevices in cliff faces, high buildings, trees and tunnels. Reproductive habitat is described as tight rock crevices at least 35" deep and 2" wide, or crevices in buildings.

The closest observation is about a mile south of the project area, along the Sacramento River, in the town of Dunsmuir.

The only relatively large open area in the project boundaries would be the orchard/residence site at the south end of the project area. There are no rocks that could provide for habitat there, but there is a structure that might serve as a habitat area. The inside of the structure was inspected and there were no signs of bat occupation. In any case the structure would not be impacted by the vegetation removal.

No detrimental impacts to Western mastiff bat are anticipated.

Pacific fisher

The Pacific fisher (*Pekania pennanti*), Northern California Southern Oregon DPS, is a CDFW Species of Special Concern. It is found throughout northern California; the Southern Sierra Nevada ESU is a Threatened Species under the California Endangered Species Act and an Endangered Species under the Federal Endangered Species Act. The fisher is a habitat generalist but generally prefers older forest with at least moderate canopy cover. It usually dens in cavities of hollow trees and snags and utilizes rest sites comprised of large branches, cavities, logs, mistletoe brooms and other pre-existing structures. It preys on a variety of small birds and mammals, reptiles, fruits and fungi. There are numerous known occurrences within several miles of the project area, however, none are within the project area.

Habitat for the fisher does occur within the project area. The potential for presence of this species in the project area is low due to it being largely dominated by residential development and subject to regular public use of the project area, and because only hand tools will be used for the project, detrimental impacts are unlikely. Trees and snags will be inspected for occupied den structures prior to felling. If occupied den structures are observed, the tree or snag will not be removed but will be left in place.

No detrimental impacts to Pacific fisher are anticipated.

Wolverine

Wolverine (*Gulo gulo*) is a State Threatened and Federal Proposed Threatened species found in a wide variety of high elevation habitats. Wolverines use caves, logs, and burrows for cover and den areas. An occurrence of wolverine was recorded in the 1980s on the south facing slope of Castle Crags, about 6.5 miles southwest of the project area. Due to regular public use of the trail and lack of any recent observations of wolverine in the vicinity, and because only hand tools will be used, there is a very low likelihood that there would be detrimental impacts to wolverine from the project. Trees and snags will be inspected for occupied den structures prior to felling. If occupied den structures are observed, the tree or snag will not be removed but will be left in place.

The project is not expected to result in detrimental impacts to wolverine.

Cultural Resources/Tribal Cultural Resources

- This topic does not apply to this project and was not evaluated further.
- Yes No Was a current archaeological records check completed? Results discussed below:
- Yes No Was a staff or contract archaeologist consulted? Results discussed below:
- Yes No Was an archaeological survey of the project area completed? Results discussed below:
- Yes No Will the project effect any historic, archaeological or tribal cultural resources?

This topic could apply to this project, and results of the assessment are provided below:

An archaeological records check was conducted for the Dunsmuir Fire Safe Council project area by Vestra, a consulting firm contracted to assist with the project. The California Department of Fish and Wildlife properties where vegetation removal will occur are located within that mapped project area that was subject to the records check. The results of the records check were provided to CDFW.

All sites identified will be perimeter flagged with an Equipment Avoidance Zone (EAZ) and all vegetation to be removed shall be cut with a chainsaw and piled and burned outside the flagged sites.

Because there will not be ground disturbing activities, the project is not expected to result in detrimental impacts to undiscovered historic or prehistoric resources.

Energy

This topic does not apply to this project and was not evaluated further.

This topic could apply to this project, and results of the assessment are provided below:

Geology and Soils

This topic does not apply to this project and was not evaluated further.

This topic could apply to this project, and results of the assessment are provided below:

The proposed project will not result in significant adverse impact to slope stability or soil productivity due to the following conditions and project parameters:

- The project area does not contain any unstable slopes.
- Vegetation to be removed shall generally be done by hand with chainsaws or other hand tools to minimize ground disturbance. The only exception may be in one flat graded area near the residence on the hatchery housing property, where larger equipment may be utilized to safely remove vegetation that is overhanging the residence structure.
- Slopes do not exceed 80% within the project area, and most slopes are less than 40%.
- Burn piles will be no larger than five feet wide by six feet high to minimize heat and potential scorching to the soil.

Greenhouse Gas Emissions

This topic does not apply to this project and was not evaluated further.

Yes No Would the project generate significant greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions?

Yes No Would these GHG emissions result in a significant impact on the environment? Discuss below:

Yes No Would the project conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases? Discuss below:

Greenhouse Gas Emissions will result from exhaust associated with the use of chainsaws, masticators, and transport vehicles and from pile burning, if utilized. The project is 10 acres which is very small in scope and not likely to produce measurable GHG emissions which could result in adverse cumulative impacts on a global scale. Furthermore, treatment activities will be limited to a short time frame and will not lead to long term increases in GHG emissions. In terms of net GHG emissions ensuing from cut vegetation, the probable result is known through the scientific principles of the carbon cycle which explains that CO₂ is released through decay or burning and then sequestered from the atmosphere and the soil as plants absorb CO₂ in order to grow and conduct photosynthesis. The improved growing conditions resulting from the proposed treatment should increase the sites remaining trees ability to carry out photosynthesis and therefore sequester carbon at a higher rate. Furthermore, by reducing the

likelihood of catastrophic wildfire this project has the potential to reduce the substantial increase in short term emissions from wildfire.

Hazards and Hazardous Materials

- This topic does not apply to this project and was not evaluated further.
 This topic could apply to this project, and results of the assessment are provided below:

State Water Resources Control Board GeoTracker was consulted on September 20, 2023, and there are no open water quality cleanup sites in the project area. One site, which consisted of ground contamination from an underground fuel storage tank located at 4801 Dunsmuir Avenue, near the botanical gardens, was cleaned up and the case was closed in 2012. The Department of Toxic Substances Control EnviroStor database was also consulted on September 20, 2023 and no sites were identified in the project area.

Hazards to hand crews and overhead personnel could result from the use of chainsaws and working on steep slopes. All necessary precautions will be implemented to ensure personnel safety including the proper use of personal protective equipment and appropriate training associated with the proper use of chainsaws. Crews will not be allowed to use tools or conduct work beyond their level of training. Pile burning will only be conducted during safe climatic conditions in accordance with State and County Regulations.

The hazardous materials being utilized for this project include diesel, gasoline, oil and other fluids associated with motorized equipment. Equipment used on this project will not be serviced in locations which could allow oil or fuel to contaminate soil or pass into a watercourse.

The project is not likely to result in adverse impacts created by hazardous conditions or hazardous materials.

Hydrology and Water Quality

- This topic does not apply to this project and was not evaluated further.
 Yes No Will the project potentially affect any watercourse or body of water?
 This topic could apply to this project, and results of the assessment are provided below:

The Sacramento River, a relatively large fish bearing stream, is present to the west, and generally downslope of the project area. Due to the proximity of the stream, no heavy equipment use is proposed for the project near the stream or riparian zone. Vegetation removal will occur with chainsaws and other hand tools, and vegetation will either be chipped and spread on site using a small trail sized chipper, will be hand-hauled out to roadway access areas where vehicles can be staged on the roadway to haul material out, or will be hauled to the burn pile locations located at least 125 feet from the stream, where pile burning can safely be accomplished. Standard Best Management Practices will be followed to ensure that the project does not result in detrimental impacts to hydrology and water quality, including:

- Fueling and servicing of equipment will be conducted in areas where spills cannot contaminate the soil or reach the stream.
- Heavy equipment use will be limited to the relatively flat paved and compacted and graveled driveway and roadway areas in close proximity to the existing residence (fish hatchery housing), and will not enter natural or vegetated areas, watercourses, wet areas, or riparian areas.

- Any areas disturbed by project activities that could convey soil to rivers or streams will be stabilized prior to October 15 or within 10 days if work that results in soil disturbances occurs after October 15. These areas will be stabilized using chipped material or other erosion reducing material.

No detrimental impacts to the stream are anticipated.

Land Use and Planning

- This topic does not apply to this project and was not evaluated further.
- This topic could apply to this project, and results of the assessment are provided below:

Mineral Resources

- This topic does not apply to this project and was not evaluated further.
- This topic could apply to this project, and results of the assessment are provided below:

Noise

- This topic does not apply to this project and was not evaluated further.
- This topic could apply to this project, and results of the assessment are provided below:

Chainsaws will be used in the project area at times when those portions of the project area are closed to the public. The areas to be treated are in close proximity to residential properties, which may be impacted by noise from the project. Chainsaw operations will be limited to daylight hours between 8am and 5pm on weekdays and between 9am and 5pm on weekends.

Population and Housing

- This topic does not apply to this project and was not evaluated further.
- This topic could apply to this project, and results of the assessment are provided below:

Public Services

- This topic does not apply to this project and was not evaluated further.
- This topic could apply to this project, and results of the assessment are provided below:

Recreation

- This topic does not apply to this project and was not evaluated further.
- This topic could apply to this project, and results of the assessment are provided below:

The project will occur within the public access areas of the state property, including in the direct vicinity of public trails. Public trails will be closed temporarily in order to protect the public during vegetation removal. Closures are expected to be less than one week in duration. There will be no significant detrimental long-term impacts to recreation.

Transportation and Traffic

- This topic does not apply to this project and was not evaluated further.
- This topic could apply to this project, and results of the assessment are provided below:

Utilities and Service Systems

- This topic does not apply to this project and was not evaluated further.
- This topic could apply to this project, and results of the assessment are provided below:

Wildfire

- This topic does not apply to this project and was not evaluated further.
 This topic could apply to this project, and results of the assessment are provided below:

This project is designed to lessen the effects of wildfire within the highly populated Wildland Urban Interface immediately adjacent to the city of Dunsmuir and along public trails in the state-owned Tauhindauli Public Access properties. Any pile burning of vegetation will be done pursuant to a valid burn permit.

Changes Made to Avoid Environmental Impacts:

Burning will not be conducted on “no burn days”, when wind is expected to exceed ten miles per hour, or when inversion layers are located below 8000’ elevation.

Equipment used on this project will not be serviced in locations which could allow oil or fuel to contaminate soil or pass into a watercourse.

Hand crews will be required to use personal protective equipment and will not be allowed to use tools or conduct work beyond their level of training or comfort level.

Chainsaw operations will be limited to daylight hours between 8am and 5pm on weekdays and between 9am and 5pm on weekends.

Work will be conducted outside of wet periods, and trees will be felled away from the stream to the extent feasible.

Vegetation removal of live vegetation is expected to occur outside of the bird nesting season if feasible.

During the bird breeding season (March 1-August 1) fallers will be instructed to look for nests and den structures before cutting a tree. Any live tree with a visible nest or cavity will be retained. This will negate any impacts to nesting birds. Where trees are present the goal is to leave a shaded fuel break. To accomplish this, trees will be retained (even if $\leq 8''$ dbh) at a 15’ to 30’ spacing.

There are no known active raptor or special status bird nests within the project area. If active raptor or special status bird nests are observed in the project area or within 1000’ of the project area prior to the onset of vegetation removal, a buffer area adequate to protect the nest will be applied.

To the extent feasible, the project will be conducted outside of the western pond turtle nesting season (between May and August). Should work occur during the nesting season, and nesting turtles be observed in the project area during project activities, a 100-foot no disturbance buffer will be installed around the nest where no activities, equipment access, or foot traffic will occur. The avoidance area will be inspected regularly by CDFW staff to ensure no disturbance of that area occurs.

If adult turtles are observed, project activities will cease until the turtle is no longer occupying the project area.

There will be no use of filter fences or mesh made of materials that could entrap reptiles or amphibians.

Mandatory Findings of Significance:	YES	NO
(a) Does the project have the potential to 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, reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal, or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
(b) Does 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 probably future projects.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
(c) Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Justification for Use of a Categorical Exemption (discuss why the project is exempt, cite exemption number(s), and describe how the project fits the class):

The proposed project qualifies for a Categorical Exemption under CEQA Guidelines, Sections 15304 and 15308.

Section 15304, Class 4 consists of minor alterations of vegetation which do not involve removal of healthy, mature, scenic trees on public or private land. The project involves removal of brush species, seedling and saplings, and dead and dying trees only.

Section 15308, Class 8 consists of actions by regulatory agencies for protection of the environment. The project would assure the maintenance and protection of the environment by increasing fire resiliency through thinning and the removal large woody material.

Conclusion:

After assessing potential environmental impacts and evaluating the description for the various classes of categorical exemptions to CEQA, California Department of Fish and Wildlife has determined that the project fits within one or more of the exemption classes and no exceptions exist at the project site which would preclude the use of this exemption. California Department of Fish and Wildlife considered the possibility of (a) sensitive location, (b) cumulative impact, (c) significant impact due to unusual circumstances, (d) impacts to scenic highways, (e) activities within a hazardous waste site, and (f) significant adverse change to the significance of a historical resource. A notice of exemption will be filed at the State Clearinghouse.

After assessing potential environmental impacts and evaluating the description for the various classes of categorical exemptions to CEQA, California Department of Fish and Wildlife has determined that the project does not fit within the description for the various exemption classes or has found that exceptions exist at the project site that precludes the use of a categorical exemption for this project. Additional environmental review will be conducted and the appropriate CEQA document used may be a negative declaration or a mitigated negative declaration.

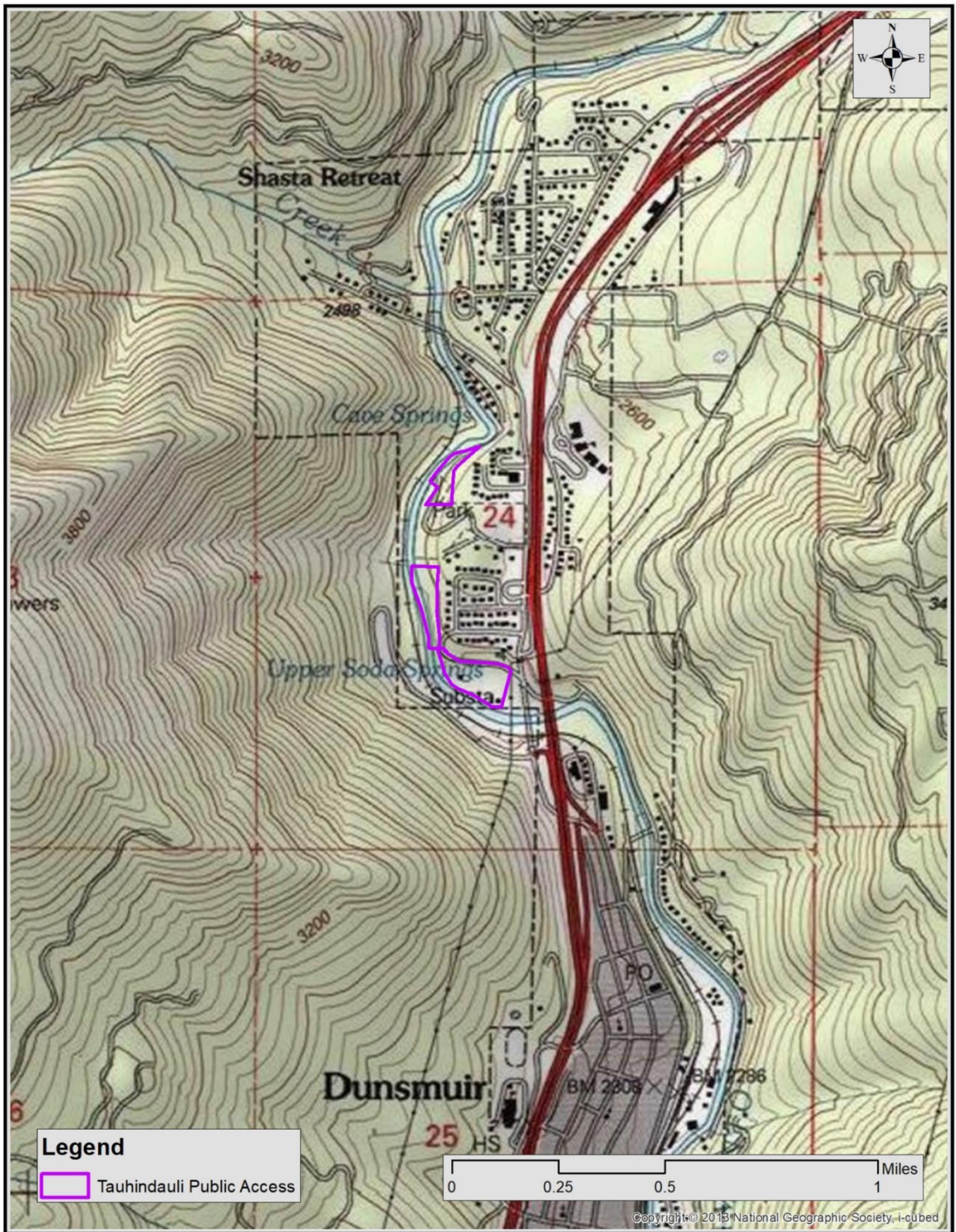


Figure 1. Location map.

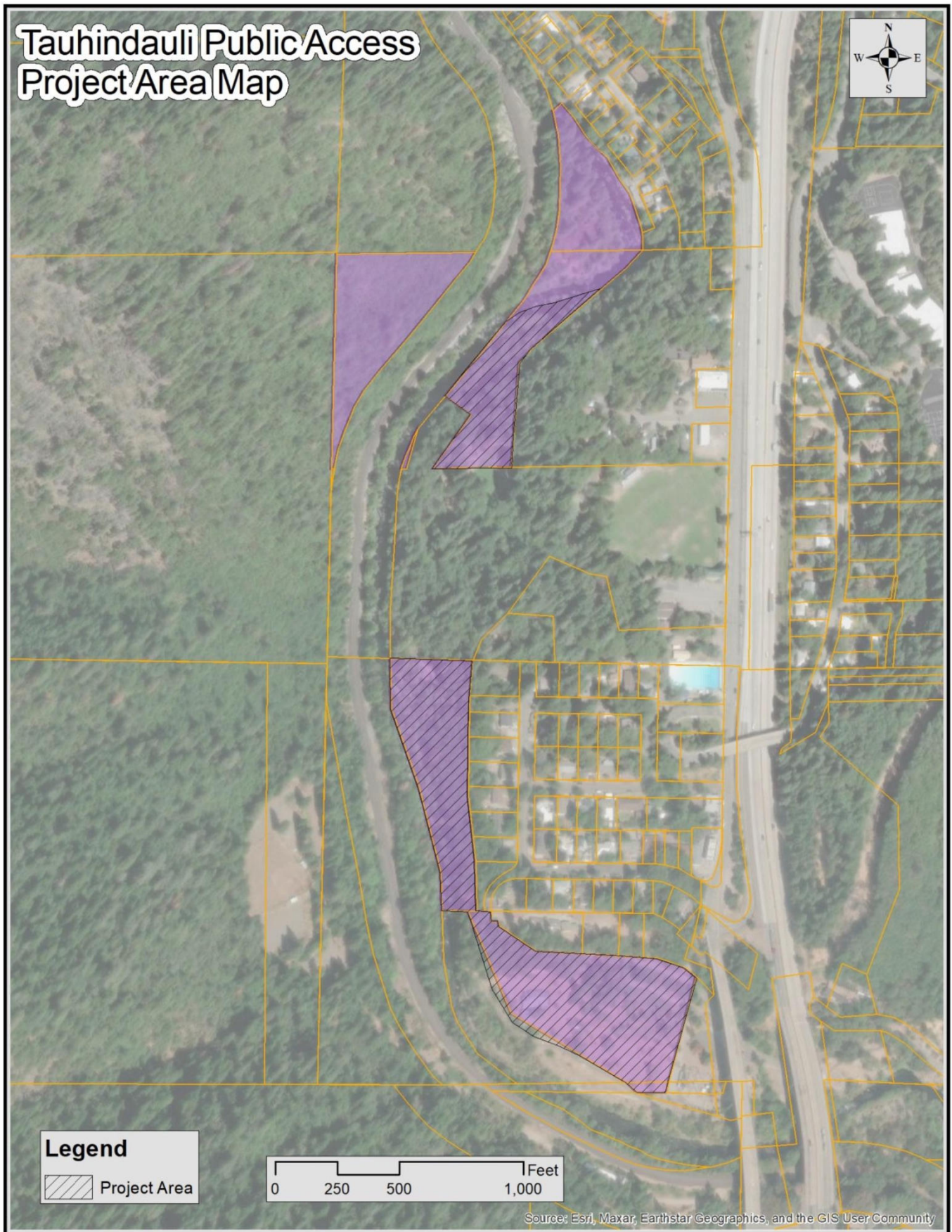


Figure 2. Project area map.

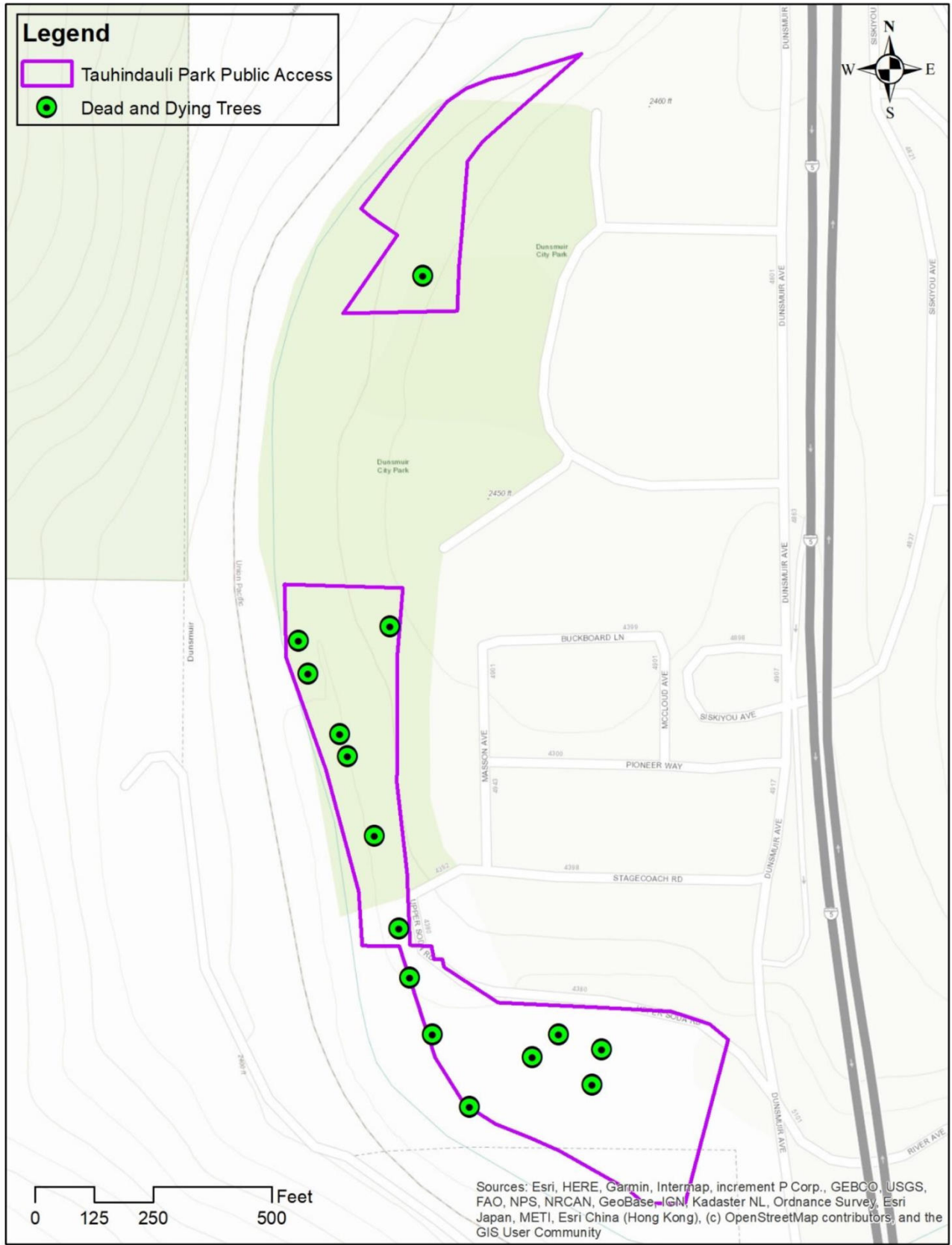


Figure 3. Dead and dying tree removal locations.



Figure 4. Standing dead hazard tree to be removed, example of tree removal.