

**SNPLMA Round 20  
Hazardous Fuels Reduction and Wildfire Prevention  
Clear Creek Defense Zone  
Nomination Addendum**

**Nomination:** Tab 1 Clear Creek Defense Zone

**Entity:** Carson City Fire Department

**Section C. PURPOSE STATEMENT**

The Nomination Instructions stated that the “Purpose Statement” should be one to two sentences. The nomination’s “Purpose Sentence” has 4 sentences.

**Section F. PROJECT TIMEFRAME**

There was no specified number of years of the project’s timeframe provided, though based on the bullet time outline this is a 6-year proposal.

**Section G. LEVEL OF PROJECT READINESS FOR IMPLMENATION**

The nomination states the project is not shovel-ready due to the mandatory requirement to complete the environmental clearance and Section 106 (National Historic Preservation Act). These mandatory tasks, standard deliverables, are part of the project; therefore, the project is considered shovel-ready per SNPLMA standards.

**Budget Spreadsheet**

The BLM Grant Manager Officer will review these amounts and make a final determination if they are acceptable.

**Southern Nevada Public Land Management Act  
Hazardous Fuels Reduction and Wildfire Prevention  
Round 20**

Carson City Fire Department (CCFD)



Clear Creek Defense Zone

**Amount Requested: \$2,782,816**

## A. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

### a. Describe Relationship to prior Approved Phases or Related SNPLMA Projects and Anticipated Future Phases

CCFD, Wildland Division Round 20 nomination focuses on health and safety for the two distinct communities located within high-use recreational areas in Carson City, Nevada. The request funds standalone project to complete fuel mitigation and conduct community outreach and education in Kings Canyon and Clear Creek. The nomination enhances prior year hazardous fuels mitigation projects funded by SNPLMA in Rounds 16 and 18 by completing new treatments proposed in the Kings Canyon area. Enhancing and strategically placing fuel breaks around these communities will help slow or stop the spread of a wildfire by creating a barrier that lacks combustible fuels. This work will solidify defense zones and reduce risk of catastrophic fire while protecting and enhancing vegetation, soils, habitat and multiple watersheds that provide services to Carson City.

### b. Describe how the proposed project will protect or enhance wildlife habitat and/or resilience vegetative communities

The proposed project will improve the winter range habitat conditions for mule deer and various non-game species by decreasing the age class of vegetation and increasing the number of forbs within the interspaces of the remaining brush. As sagebrush and bitterbrush age, their stem production is reduced and chemical changes within the plants make them almost inedible to mule deer. To date, natural disturbance from wildfire has been limited in this project area. Therefore, this type of project is critical in restoring degraded ecosystems back to a healthy and resilient environment.

In addition, this project will alter the stand densities in the Clear Creek defense zone reducing the competition among desired tree species, improving their resistance to insects and disease. Fuel mitigation efforts proposed in the Clear Creek Defense Zone project will reduce the risk of stand replacement fire and support active management of the forest to prevent catastrophic wildfire.

### c. Acknowledgement of Stand-Alone Project and no Guarantee of Funding for Future Phases

The scope of this project is not a phased project. This nomination will result in a stand-alone, viable project. CCFD acknowledges that there is no guarantee of funding for future phases.

## B. SNPLMA STRATEGIC PLAN VALUES

Hazardous Fuels Reduction and Wildfire Prevention projects have two goals identified in the Strategic Plan:

- Goal 1: Sustain the quality of the outdoor environment by conserving, preserving, and restoring natural and cultural resources.
- Goal 2: Improve the quality of life for all publics in urban and rural communities by enhancing recreational opportunities that connect people with the outdoor environment.

Nominated projects should meet these goals by focusing on the three SNPLMA core values, connectivity, sustainability, and community. Every nomination must explain how the three values are promoted by the project.

1. Sustainability:

The project promotes sustainability by restoring the landscape, protecting and preserving healthy ecosystems through strategic reduction treatments. Proposed treatments will enhance the public's enjoyment of the outdoor environment of the Kings Canyon Waterfall recreation area and Clear Creek Trail. The Clear Creek Trail is maintained by one of our nonprofit partners, the Carson Valley Trail Association. This trail brings recreation users from the Carson Valley into the Spooner Summit located at the Tahoe Rim. It is a major connectivity link between Douglas County and Carson City. Similarly, the Kings Canyon Trail head is maintained by the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) and was recently renovated in a partnership project with Carson City. The area supports three of the major trails in Carson City; the Lincoln ByPass, the Ash to Kings and the Capital to Capital Trail. This project has shared support through agency and community partnerships, relevancy to former and future fuel reduction treatments.

2. Connectivity:

The project promotes connectivity by encouraging public interaction with nature through education workshops and outreach activities that allows CCFD to showcase the effectiveness of hazardous fuels reduction treatments and to link community to recreational opportunities. The adjacent residential neighborhoods are connected by the network of multi-use trail systems previously described.

3. Community:

The project promotes community by creating healthy and sustainable ecosystems. CCFD will work with partner agencies, community associations, and private property owners to improve the quality of life for the community while protecting the integrity of the biological community. The fuel reduction treatments will restore sustainable forest health in community forests and powerline corridors that enhance their safety and provide outdoor recreational opportunities.

## **C. PURPOSE STATEMENT**

The CCFD, Wildland Division proposes to treat 600-826 acres of hazardous fuels in the identified project areas to reduce the risk of catastrophic wildfire, mitigate the wildfire risk to life and property of vulnerable communities, and to restore a natural fire regime in the identified areas. Weed treatment to include herbicide will be applied post mowing and mastication as recommended by the Nevada Division of Forestry (NDF) and Department of Wildlife. Carson City has a sound collaboration history with both NDF and USFS Carson Ranger District back to the efforts to suppress and rehabilitate the Carson Range after the Waterfall Fire in 2004. Final acres treated will be determined based on environmental review and climatological factors, property owners' discretion, and cost determined to carry out the treatment in order to remain within the project budget. This project will include annual education workshops that will provide education on Fire Adapted Community and Ready for Wildfire concepts.

## D. PROJECT DELIVERABLES AND ACRES

1. Primary Deliverables:
  - a. Implementation of fuel treatments of 600-826 acres by means of machine mastication or mowing, hand cutting, chipping, piling and burning, and other mechanized brush and tree thinning within the Kings Canyon and Clear Creek project areas.
  - b. Perform herbicide application within the same or next growing season, weather permitting and at property owners' discretion post mowing/masticating as recommended by the Nevada Division of Forestry and Nevada Department of Wildlife.
  - c. Treatment monitoring on treated acres to include pre and post-treatment photo monitoring.
  - d. Host six Wildfire Education Workshops, open to community members, in support of the Nevada Wildfire Awareness Proclamation to promote hazardous fuels reduction projects and emphasize the importance of creating Firewise Communities.
  
2. Anticipated Deliverables:
  - a. Additional hand thinning and defensible space may be completed on privately owned property adjacent to the project area within the Defense Zone and/or on 5-10 privately owned properties resulting from educational workshops.
  - b. Complete 100 defensible space inspections adjacent to project areas.
  
3. Standard Deliverables:
  - a. Avoidance protocols for cultural resources and concurrence with a finding of no adverse effect from the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO). Both Clear Creek and Kings Canyon were important routes across the Sierra Nevada in the late 1800s and early 1900s.
  - b. Vegetation Management Plan, describing the prescription to accomplish the project's goals and objectives, and all necessary measures to mitigate negative impacts to wildlife, water quality, forest health, and cultural resources.
  - c. Contract preparation and administration.
  - d. Supervision of crews.

**Acres:** Calculate specific acres of proposed treatment of each zone (defense, threat, and general forest) and clearly identify the emphasis zone if more than one zone is identified in the nomination.

CCFD, Wildland Division will treat up to 720 acres in the defense zone and 106 acres in the threat zone depending on environmental studies, weather, and landowner discretion.

- Kings Canyon: 280 acres in the defense zone and 3 acres in the threat zone
- Clear Creek: 440 acres in the defense zone and 103 acres in the threat zone

## E. PROJECT LOCATION

### Physical location of project; identify County (s) and State(s):

The project covers two distinct areas within Carson City, Nevada that are identified as high-risk priority areas within the wildland urban interface (WUI). The treatments are located on private, state and city lands directly within and adjacent to the WUI that surrounds Carson Ranger District.

1. The Clear Creek project area runs north and south of Highway 50 and Clear Creek Road, and east and west from Highway 395 to Golf Club Drive.
2. Kings Canyon project area stretches along Kings Canyon Road starting east at Longview Way and west to the end of the road.

### Identify Congressional District(s):

This project is located in the 2nd Congressional district in Nevada.

### Latitude and Longitude:

Clear Creek project area 39.120137, -119.831266

Kings Canyon project area 39.153395, -119.810276

## F. PROJECT TIMEFRAME

### Year 1 (2025)

- Complete National Historic Preservation Act and federal environmental compliance
- Establish new position types for supervisor staff, recruit and hire full-time positions
- Create Vegetation Management Plan - describing the prescription to accomplish the project's goals and objectives
- Begin defensible space inspections in Clear Creek

### Year 2 (2026)

- Begin hazardous fuels reduction treatments in defense zone of Clear Creek
- Layout herbicide application needs and contract for services if needed
- Begin burning piles in Clear Creek

### Year 3 (2027)

- Begin hazardous fuels reduction treatments in threat zone of Clear Creek
- Begin defensible space inspections in Upper Kings Canyon
- Begin hazardous fuels reduction treatments in defense zone of Upper Kings Canyon
- Begin burning piles in Upper Kings Canyon

### Year 4 (2028)

- Defense and threat zone treatments completed in Clear Creek
- Begin hazardous fuels reduction treatments in threat zone of Upper Kings Canyon

### Year 5 (2029)

- Defense and threat zone treatments completed in Upper Kings Canyon
- Complete pile burning in Clear Creek

### Year 6 (2030)

- Complete pile burning in Upper Kings Canyon

- Close out project

Annual activities include:

- Host Annual Wildfire Education and Fire Safety Workshop supporting Nevada Wildfire Awareness Proclamation
- Recruit fall/winter and hire seasonal hand crew early spring

## **G. LEVEL OF PROJECT READINESS FOR IMPLEMENTATION**

Is this a shovel-ready project?  Yes  No

CCFD provides all-risk emergency services to Carson City communities, as well as fire prevention, emergency management, fuels management, and public education programs. The Department's Wildland Division is currently expanding to meet staffing needs identified in the 2023 Carson City Community Wildfire Protection Plan and will have adequate personnel to successfully complete oversight and implementation needed to execute this project once funds become available.

The Division has accomplished several large planning and implementation projects, funded by SNPLMA funds, in the last several years. Currently, the Division is implementing the SNPLMA Round 18 Hazardous Fuels Reduction Project in the Northwest Quadrant of the County, and this would be a favorable time to begin implementation on this proposed project.

An environmental review and cultural survey are necessary prior to implementing any hazardous fuels reduction treatments to comply with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969.

Have you applied, received, or is there the opportunity to obtain funding from another source for this project? Please list the additional funding opportunities received or applied for and indicate whether it is federal or nonfederal funding.

No. SNPLMA funding is currently the only source of funds available to support fuel reduction projects on the west side of Carson City.

## **H. 10-YEAR MULTI-JURISDICTIONAL PLAN**

Addresses whether the nomination is consistent with its 10-year multi-jurisdictional strategy and how important the proposed project would be in achieving the strategy of the plan. Describe how the proposed project relates to the specific elements of its multi-jurisdictional plan.

This project encompasses two areas that fall within the project boundaries of the 10-year multi-jurisdictional strategy and aligns with the objectives and strategies of the 2018 Carson Range Multi-Jurisdictional Fuel Reduction and Wildfire Prevention Strategy. The Clear Creek Defense Zone project will focus on implementing treatments that emphasize sustainability, connectivity, and community by creating resilient defensible spaces and increasing public involvement on improving forest health and wildfire awareness.

Private, state, and city lands would be treated for hazardous fuels reduction utilizing various treatment options designed to reduce the risk of catastrophic wildland fire. This would in turn, prevent impacts to recreation, public health and safety, and the visual impact on the viewshed for several different communities, travel routes, and recreation areas along the Carson Range. Implementation techniques would consist of hand thinning, hand piling, chipping, weed treatments, and mastication. By focusing on these areas that weren't addressed in previous mitigation projects, the hazardous fuels reduction treatments will enhance connectivity, resulting in more effective and resilient defensible spaces for the nearby communities.

All proposed treatments for this project would provide sustainability of a healthy forest when implemented, continuing to provide benefits through ensuring the functionality of this landscape and enhancing a resiliency to catastrophic wildland fire. By identifying priority treatment areas within these project areas, connectivity between numerous fuels reduction treatments will be increased by continuing treatments along the Sierra Front. With implementation of the proposed treatments in these project areas, the community will benefit through a reduced risk of catastrophic wildland fire affecting health and safety, private property values, recreational areas, and the intrinsic value of a healthy forest throughout the Carson Range.

The Clear Creek Defense Zone project supports fuel reduction efforts and community education that will positively impact the Clear Creek Trail System. The Clear Creek Trail System extends 30 miles, located to the west of Carson City and a few miles from the Tahoe Rim Crest. Due to the proximity of this project, fuel mitigation efforts will reduce the risk of wildland fire at one of the entry points into the Tahoe Basin and a major link between Douglas County and Carson City trails.

## **I. PROJECT BUDGET**

### Cost-Benefit Analysis

The cost per acre for hazardous fuels reduction treatments for this project is estimated to be \$3,370/acre. Project constraints such as location and vegetation prescriptions, the use of contractors to implement the proposed treatment would be inefficient and costly. The work force included in this nomination is predominantly seasonal employees that minimize costs to implement the project.

The cost of implementing this fuel mitigation project is significantly less than the cost to fight a wildland fire in these two high-risk project areas.

In addition, CCFD employees have a good understanding of the community and its needs. Having one crew dedicated to the project for multiple consecutive years will provide better continuity of the project throughout its duration. This will provide consistency of quality and production and limit downtime for project planning and coordination between seasons.

### Partnership and/or Contributed Funds

The Carson City Fire Department (CCFD) will fund a minimum of 7,000 hours (\$181,154) towards training the wildland seasonal crew in support of this nomination. In addition, CCFD will provide a \$83,846 of in-kind contribution to conduct defensible space inspections, community education workshops, project planning and pre/post video monitoring of the project.



<b>PROJECT BUDGET</b>		
<b>Budget Cost Categories (SF424A)</b>	<b>SNPLMA Funds</b>	<b>Cost Share Funds</b>
1) Personnel	\$ 1,687,820	\$ 234,157
2) Fringe Benefits	\$ 624,535	\$ 30,842
3) Travel	\$ 57,265	\$ -
4) Equipment	\$ -	\$ -
5) Supplies	\$ 100,247	\$ -
6) Contractual	\$ 60,962	\$ -
7) Construction	\$ -	\$ -
8) Other (e.g., training)	\$ -	\$ -
<b>Total Direct Costs (sum of 1 through 8)</b>	<b>\$ 2,530,829</b>	<b>\$ 265,000</b>
9) Indirect Charges ( <i>per OMB Circular A-122</i> )	\$ 251,987	\$ -
<b>TOTAL BUDGET (Direct &amp; Indirect Costs)</b>	<b>\$ 2,782,816</b>	<b>\$ -</b>
<b>Notes:</b>		
The budget is designed to maximize acres treated, efficiently implement fuel reduction treatments, and apply herbicide as needed while providing defensible space inspections, community outreach, and educational workshops. Cost per acre is \$3,370.		

## J. KEY CONTACTS

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Budget Officer: Dave Aurand  
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## K. RANKING CRITERIA

Provide a narrative response to the following Criteria and Factors that apply to the nomination.

**1. Improves the community within and/or adjacent to the project area.** Projects are only eligible for Factors A1, A2, or A3; select and answer ONLY ONE, based on where most of the proposed project area lies within. Answer Factors B and C as they apply to the nomination.

A. Addresses immediate public health and safety and community infrastructure.

1. Project is within the Defense Zone, generally an area within 0.25 mile of life and property, as depicted by the most current Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) map in the applicable plan.

This project is designed to reduce hazardous fuels in two distinct areas that fall within the Wildland Urban Interface Defense Zone. The project location map shows the fuel reduction areas in proximity to neighborhoods and the WUI defense zone boundaries. Specifically, the project areas are directly adjacent to community infrastructure as well as county, state, and forest service lands. Stand replacing timber and shrub wildland fires have previously occurred in the surrounding areas, threatening homes and other private property, and also threatening the safety of the public and firefighters. By implementing hazardous fuels reduction treatments within the priority areas in the identified project areas, fuels treatments would provide the most efficient and beneficial results, as well as significantly decreasing the likelihood that the public will be directly threatened.

By implementing the appropriate treatments, the effectiveness of any future fire suppression activities will be increased. The reduced fuel loading once implemented will decrease fire intensity therefore increasing the effectiveness of fire suppression and allow firefighters and equipment to safely access the area.

2. Project is within the Threat Zone, generally an area between 0.25 mile and 1.50 miles of life and property, as depicted by the most current WUI map in the applicable plan.

Answer: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

3. Project is within the general forest or other lands beyond the WUI (generally greater than 1.5 miles from life and property), as depicted by the most current map in the applicable plan.

Answer: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

B. Promotes protection of source water (rivers and lakes) or municipal watersheds.

Many watersheds are included in the proposed project area, including the Kings Canyon Waterfall that is a primary surface water source for Carson City. Per the U.S.

Forest Service, ephemeral and perennial streams that contribute to many different types of water sources, both municipal and agricultural, would be protected from the risk of a catastrophic wildland fire.

- C. Project includes education and outreach to the community on *Living with Fire* or Fire Adapted Communities and/or the importance of fuels reduction on federal, state, and local government land.

Prior to treatment implementation, the CCFD Wildland Division will contact landowners near the project areas to provide information and education regarding the fuels reduction treatments that will occur. During implementation of this project, wildland crews will be available to answer any questions residents and recreationists in the area have. In addition, signs will be posted near active work areas advising the public of what implementation activities are occurring, the hazards and safety practices for being in the area, and explanation of why the work is occurring.

Project deliverables of this nomination also include an annual workshop for the community in support of Nevada Wildfire Awareness Proclamation conducted in collaboration with the Carson City Sheriff's Office, University of Nevada, the Nevada Division of Forestry, and NV Energy. The workshop will provide education on Fire Adapted Community, *Living with Fire*, and Ready for Wildfire concepts. Workshops will be open to community members and offered live via internet streaming. Topics will also address wildland fire preparedness and preparation, importance of fuels reduction projects, how a wildfire spreads and the threat to the community.

This project also complements education and outreach activities of the CCFD Fuels Reduction Project (SNPLMA Round 18). Staff will continue defensible space inspections throughout this project period and participate in Fire Adapted Community events.

- 2. **Improves the connection of fuels reduction activities and wildlife habitat.** Respond to each of the following.

- A. Project protects or enhances wildlife habitat and/or resilient vegetative communities.

This project will improve the winter range habitat conditions for mule deer and various non-game species by decreasing the age class of vegetation and increasing the number of forbs within the interspace's remaining brush. As sagebrush and bitterbrush age, their stem production is reduced and chemical changes within the plants make them almost inedible to mule deer. To date, natural disturbance from wildfire has been limited in this project area. Therefore, this type of project is critical in restoring degraded ecosystems back to a healthy and resilient environment. If left untreated, the threat of wildfire has the potential to damage or destroy native plant life and/or suitable habitat for the existing wildlife.

In addition, this project will alter the stand densities in the Clear Creek Defense Zone reducing the competition among desired tree species, improving their resistance to insects and disease. Fuel mitigation efforts proposed in the Clear Creek Defense Zone project will reduce the risk of stand replacement fire and support active management of the forest to prevent catastrophic wildfire.

B. Project enhances the effectiveness of other treatments in progress or complete.

The proposed project ensures that areas not included but adjacent to previous fuels reduction projects are treated to increase the connectivity and effectiveness of fuels reduction treatments. This project enhances the effectiveness of treatments in Upper Kings Canyon that are complementary to project areas included in the Hazardous Fuels Reduction-Carson City, SNPLMA Round 18 award.

By focusing on the areas included in this nomination, the fuels reduction treatments will have an increased amount of connectivity, resulting in more effective and better maintained defensible spaces. In addition, the comprehensive fuel breaks around both communities will increase the effectiveness of a variety of fire management tactics reducing the intensity of fire and making it easier to control.

C. The project is planning for or implementing a treatment that is strategically located to connect to planned or existing projects on the landscape.

This project will support ongoing treatments and past treatments in Kings Canyon and Clear Creek. Due to the high amount of WUI on the Carson Ranger District, this proposed project is directly adjacent to county, state, and forest service lands. Also, there are numerous private land owners who have taken the initiative to complete hazardous fuels reduction work around their residence and out buildings.

3. **Improves sustainability of the multijurisdictional 10-year plans, environment, and financial resources.** Respond to each of the following.

A. Improve the sustainability of the forest health and ecosystem function (e.g., stand density, desired species mix and age, tree health, etc.).

The treatments proposed in this project are designed to promote long-term sustainability of the forest health and ecosystem through the challenges of natural climate variability and wildfire occurrence. Beyond fire hazard reduction, this project will provide watershed and wildlife habitat protection, recreational and scenic value protection as well as support to private property.

B. Improve habitat for sensitive species and Threatened and Endangered species. Includes mitigation and/or minimization measures when treatment in sensitive habitat is unavoidable.

CCFD would ensure that project treatments are designed to minimize the impact to wildlife habitat. Monitoring will be conducted during project implementation and

recorded. If deemed appropriate, areas found with protected species will be flagged as a restricted work activity. Long term, this project will provide connectivity between different types of vegetation communities and wildlife habitat areas by maintaining, enhancing, or enlarging previously accomplished fuels treatments.

- C. Include broadcast prescribed fire for resource management objectives for sustainable landscapes.

This project does not include broadcast prescribed fire.

- D. The method of treatment is fiscally responsible for the project area by balancing resource objectives, values at risk, and cost per acre factors or cost-benefit analysis.

During implementation, the workforce will consist of three full-time supervisor/lead staff dedicated 50% to the project and ten seasonal employees. The mixed workforce will ensure qualified and cost-effective resources are available to implement deliverables timely. Full-time staff will bring thorough understanding and project knowledge to the team each season and be able to continue fuel mitigation efforts after seasonal workforces has retired. This workforce will eliminate any downtime associated with assembling and awarding contracts. Due to the constraints presented by project location, vegetation prescriptions, the size of treatment areas and the distance between treatment areas, using contracts to implement the proposed treatments would be inefficient and costly. By using this established workforce, overall project costs will be minimized.

The cost to implement this project is significantly less than the cost to fight large wildland fires, loss of life or to restore the values of damaged structures. The cost to fight a wildland fire in these project areas is extremely high because of the proximity to communities and highly valued recreational properties. These project areas contain historic and prehistoric artifacts that will likely be negatively impacted by severe wildland fires, as some of the significant artifacts may be destroyed. Following an intense fire, re-vegetation and recovery of these areas would be slow and occur over decades.

- 4. **Demonstrates sound project management and quality control measures.** Respond to each of the following.

- A. Project goals and implementation processes are clear, measurable, achievable, and demonstrable.

The Clear Creek Defense Zone Project includes two distinct project areas with clear goals, implementation strategies and objectives through the use of hand thinning, piling, chipping, mastication, and weed treatments. These treatments are designed to bring fire behavior in line with acceptable parameters within the Wildland Urban Interface which include flame lengths of less than four feet in the WUI Threat Zone.

These specific objectives for the future condition of the project area are explicitly expressed in the Sierra Nevada Forest Plan Amendment of 2004 and guided by the National Forest Management Planning Act and National Environmental Policy Act.

- B. Project proponent has the capacity to implement this project in a timely manner (contractor and staff availability, no backlog of current projects, etc.) and within budget.

The CCFD began receiving SNPLMA funds for Hazardous Fuels Reductions in Round 16. Since then, the division has expanded to successfully completing larger landscape projects to implement local fuels reduction projects and respond nationally to fires. To ensure completion of planning and implementation projects, the Department has a professional, skilled work force which has previously shown the capacity to complete projects in a timely manner. CCFD staff include a Fuels Management Grants Administrator, a Business Manager, Engine and Hand Crew and administrative staff to facilitate project permitting, design, management, reimbursement and reporting.

The Wildland Division has successfully completed over 35 projects in Northern Nevada funded by Nevada Department of Forestry, NV Energy, and former rounds of SNPLMA. Project work entailed hand thinning, mechanical treatments, defensible space inspections, and community education projects.

- C. Is a phase or related component to a previously funded project.

This project is a stand-alone nomination and is not a phase in a previously funded SNPLMA project. The small project piece in Kings Canyon is related to the hand thinning and treatments efforts included in the Round 18 award.

- D. Has identified committed non-SNPLMA sources of funding or in-kind contribution in the development and/or implementation of the project.

Currently, SNPLMA funds are the only funds identified to complete the hazardous fuels treatment component of this project. Carson City Fire Department will contribute \$181,154 (7,000 hours of crew training) and \$83,846 (784 hours of planning, education and video/photo services) for a total in-kind contribution of \$265,000 over the six-year project period.

## L. ORDERS AND PRIORITIES

### A. Executive Orders (EO):

- ***EO No. 13855: Promoting Active Management of America's Forests, Range Lands to Improve Conditions and Reduce Wildfire Risk***

The Carson City Fire Department (CCFD) is an ideal agency to implement EO No. 13855 as its primary mission and proven fuels reduction treatment activities completely align with the policy and goals of the order. CCFD understands that dense trees and accumulated undergrowth in the nation's forests aids insect infestation, invasive species, and disease creating weakened forests and vulnerable communities at risk of damage from catastrophic wildfire. The Wildland Division employs both full-time and seasonal wildland firefighters, who are passionate about safely and aggressively fighting wildfire to protect communities and forests. All fire personnel understand the role of vegetative fuels in the wildland fire fight, and the role that management must take as we work to address the wildfire challenge. With the same vigor and commitment, they actively manage our forests to improve forest health conditions and reduce the wildfire risk. Roads to access the lands we manage are maintained over time to ensure these roads are available for emergency vehicles and evacuation traffic when the need arises.

- ***EO No. 14005: Ensuring the Future is Made in All of America by All of America's Workers***

The CCFD has implemented practices to maximize the use of goods, products, and materials produced in, and services offered in, the United States. If goods, products or materials are required to complete program deliverables a request will be submitted to federal funding agency to request a waiver prior to purchase/contract.

- ***EO No. 14063: Use of Project Labor Agreements for Federal Construction Projects (applicable to projects estimated at \$35 million or more)***

This executive order is not relevant to the fuels reduction project as there is no construction component.

- ***EO No. 14072: Strengthening the Nation's Forests, Communities, and Local Economies***

CCFD, Wildland Division works collaboratively with the Nevada Division of Forestry who offer education and information to property owners on forest insects and diseases and ways of managing them. Nevada's forests are host to several pests

that plague western forests and its through education and awareness that we can manage forest health. The work CCFD does promotes health of the Sierra Nevada Forest. Programs focus on implementing fuel reduction projects to mitigate the risk of wildfires and support safe outdoor recreational opportunities.

- ***EO No. 14096: Revitalizing Our Nation's Commitment to Environmental Justice for All***

CCFD is usually the first responders to natural disasters such as wildfires and play a crucial role in protecting the environment and promoting environmental justice. This project focuses on reducing hazardous fuels, providing outreach and education to residents as well as conducting an annual Wildfire Education and Fire Safety Workshop, and prioritizing fuel treatments as recommended by the National Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy to maintain fire-adapted ecosystems. These efforts will reduce the risk of catastrophic wildfire and the effects on communities and the environment.

The workshop supports the Nevada Wildfire Awareness Proclamation and is conducted in collaboration with the CC Sheriff's Office, University of Nevada, the Nevada Division of Forestry, and NV Energy. The workshop provides education on Fire Adapted Community, Living with Fire, and Ready for Wildfire concepts. Workshops will be open to community members and offered live via internet streaming. Topics will also address wildland fire preparedness and preparation, importance of fuel reduction projects, how a wildfire spreads and the threat to community.

## B. Secretarial Orders

- ***SO No. 3347: Conservation Stewardship and Outdoor Recreation.***

The fuels reduction treatments will restore sustainable forest health in community forests and powerline corridors within Clear Creek and Kings Canyon that enhance their safety and provide outdoor recreational opportunities. Proposed treatments will enhance the public's enjoyment of the outdoor environment of the Kings Canyon Waterfall recreation area and Clear Creek Trail. The Clear Creek Trail is maintained by one of CCFDs nonprofit partners the Carson Valley Trail Association. This trail brings recreation users from the Carson Valley into the Spooner Summit located at the Tahoe Rim. It is a major connectivity link between Douglas County and Carson City. Similarly, the Kings Canyon Trail head is maintained by the USFS and was recently renovated in a partnership project with Carson City. The area supports three of the major trails in Carson City; the Lincoln ByPass, the Ash to Kings and the



Capital to Capital Trail. This project has shared support through agency and community partnerships, relevancy to former and future fuels reduction treatments.

- ***SO No. 3356: Hunting, Fishing, Recreational Shooting, and Wildlife Conservation Opportunities and Coordination with States, Tribes and Territories.***

CCFD, Wildland Division Round 20 nomination focuses on health and safety for two distinct communities located within high-use recreational areas in Carson City, Nevada. The purpose of this project is to improve the quality of life for all publics in the community by enhancing recreational opportunities that connect people with the outdoor environment. All hazardous fuel reduction efforts proposed in the Clear Creek Defense Zone project will be carried out in accordance with Secretarial Order No. 3356 and in collaboration with the Nevada Division of Forestry, the Nevada Department of Wildlife, and Carson City Parks, Recreation and Open Space Department.

The CCFD, Wildland Division will collaborate with the Nevada Department of Wildlife to obtain advisement in project planning around wildlife management and implementation of fuels management projects to ensure activities are carried out in a responsible manner with minimal impact to local wildlife.

The proposed education and outreach activities and defensible space inspections will promote conservation stewardship. Associated fuel reduction efforts included in this project would immediately improve watershed and wildlife habitat conditions and reduce the risk and threat of wildfire within the project area.

- ***SO No. 3362: Improving Habitat Quality in Western Big-Game Winter Range and Migration Corridors.***

The proposed project will improve the winter range habitat conditions for mule deer and various non-game species by decreasing the age class of vegetation and increasing the number of forbs within the interspaces of the remaining brush. As sagebrush and bitterbrush age, their stem production is reduced and chemical changes within the plants make them almost inedible to mule deer. To date, natural disturbance from wildfire has been limited in this project area. Therefore, this type of project is critical in restoring degraded ecosystems back to a healthy and resilient environment.

- ***SO No. 3366: Increasing Recreational Opportunities on Lands and Waters Managed by the U.S. Department of the Interior***

This project will not occur on lands managed by the U.S. Department of Interior.

- ***SO No. 3370: Conservation Stewardship and Increasing Public Access to Urban National Wildlife Refuges.***

There are no urban national wildlife refuges impacted or near proposed project areas.

- ***SO No. 3372: Reducing Wildfire Risks on Department of the Interior Land Through Active Management.***

The primary intent of the Defense Zone Improvement Project is to reduce wildfire risks through active land management, and to plan for future land management activities. These lands are not owned federally, but are adjacent to lands in federal management, and the community of Carson City, NV. The fuels reduction work in defense zone forests serves to better protect people and communities from the threat of catastrophic wildfire, and the open forest stand that will result better protects wildlife habitat and watersheds.

- ***SO No. 3373: Evaluating Public Access in Bureau of Land Management Public Land Disposal and Exchanges (focus is on Sec. 4.b.(3) Potential increased public recreational access to existing public lands resulting from the proposed land acquired through an exchange (acquisition)).***

This project does not focus on evaluating public access in land disposals and exchanges.

- ***SO No. 3376: Increasing Recreational Opportunities through the use of Electric Bikes.***

The Carson City Fire Department requests funding to support fuel reduction efforts and to conduct community education that will positively impact the Clear Creek Trail System. This is Carson Valley Trails Association the most popular trail system, extending 30 miles, located to the west of Carson City.

C. Department of the Interior Priorities:

1. ***Identifying steps to accelerate responsible development of renewable energy on public lands and waters. We are investing in climate research and environmental innovation to incentivize the rapid deployment of clean energy solutions, while reviewing existing programs to restore balance on America's public lands and waters to benefit current and future generations.***

The proposed fuel reduction project in Carson City will promote development of renewable energy on public lands and water in several ways. Fuel reduction efforts will reduce the risk of wildfire that can damage and destroy renewable energy infrastructure and cause power outages and disrupt the transmission of electricity from renewable energy sources. This project has several power line right-a-ways stretching through the project area. Nevada Energy will continue to work with Carson City Fire Department, Wildland Division and assist with clearing fuels under various utility lines and right-a-ways included in the project.

2. ***Strengthening the government-to-government relationship with sovereign Tribal nations.*** *We understand that tribal sovereignty and self-governance, as well as honoring the federal trust responsibility to Tribal Nations, must be the cornerstones of federal Indian policy.*

This project is adjacent to parts of the Clear Creek Watershed. Historically, the Washoe Tribe practiced traditional subsistence, plant gathering, and religious activities on their ancestral lands, and consider the Clear Creek watershed important for cultural and environmental reasons. The Carson City Fire Department will strengthen relationships with the Washoe Tribe as fuel reduction projects are implemented in the Clear Creek and Kings Canyon project areas. In cooperation and consultation from state, federal and tribal entities, CCFD will develop management and protection measures for traditional use areas located within the project area.

3. ***Making investments to support the Administration's goal of creating millions of family-supporting and union jobs.*** *This includes establishing a new Climate Conservation Corps Initiative to put a new generation of Americans to work conserving and restoring public lands and waters, increasing reforestation, increasing carbon sequestration in the agricultural sector, protecting biodiversity, improving access to recreation, and addressing the changing climate.*

The Carson City Fire Department (CCFD), Wildland Division is expanding to meet staffing needs identified in the 2023 Carson City Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) and in support of making investments to support the goal of creating jobs in land restoration. As identified in the 2023 CC CWPP, program capacity to complete fire mitigation and land restoration projects is limited. The Division needs additional resources to meet the City's overall life and property wildfire protection needs. Funding requested in this application supports costs of a new Hand Crew, consisting of three full-time and 10 seasonal firefighters. (Source: CC CWPP 2023.<https://www.carson.org/government/departments-a-f/fire-department/divisions/fire-prevention-division/wildland-fuels-reduction/carson-city-community-wildfire-protection-plan>)

4. ***Working to conserve at least 30% each of our lands and waters by the year 2030.***  
*We will work to protect biodiversity, slow extinction rates, and help leverage natural climate solutions by conserving 30% of America’s lands and waters by 2030. This relies on support for local, state, private, and tribally led conservation and restoration efforts that are underway across America.*

The proposed fuel reduction efforts are an important part of conservation efforts impacting lands and water within Clear Creek and Kings Canyon. This project will reduce between 600-826 acres that will reduce the risk of wildfires, which can have devastating effects on ecosystems and water resources. The CCFD will also educate the community on the importance of fuel reduction projects and conservation of lands and waters through annual workshops.

5. ***Centering equity and environmental justice.*** *The impacts of the multiple crises in the United States are not evenly distributed in our society. Communities of color, low-income families, and rural and indigenous communities have long suffered disproportionate and cumulative harm from air pollution, water pollution, and toxic sites. At every step of the way, Interior will engage diverse stakeholders across the country, as well as conduct formal consultation with Tribes in recognition of the U.S. government’s trust responsibilities.*

The Clear Creek Defense Zone project would impact vulnerable communities in both project areas. Based on the CDC Agency for Toxic Substance and Disease Registry (ATSDR), the proposed project areas have a vulnerable risk to a community’s capacity to prepare for and respond to the stress of hazardous events such as wildfire. This overall social vulnerability is derived from the comprehensive assessment of sixteen census-derived factors that include economic data as well as education, family characteristics, housing, language, ability, ethnicity, and vehicle access data. (Source: ATSDR. CDC/ATSDR Social Vulnerability Index 2020, Carson City, Nevada.

[https://svi.cdc.gov/Documents/CountyMaps/2020/Nevada/Nevada2020\\_Carson%20City.pdf](https://svi.cdc.gov/Documents/CountyMaps/2020/Nevada/Nevada2020_Carson%20City.pdf))

#### D. USDA Forest Service Priorities:

##### 1. ***Controlling the COVID-19 pandemic***

The Carson City Fire Department (CCFD) works alongside federal partners to support and contain the COVID-19 pandemic. Crews and staff follow illness protocols to mitigate the risk of spreading disease if infected and to limit impact to the team’s ability to perform duties as needed.

**2. *Providing economic relief***

The Clear Creek Defense Zone project provides economic relief in several areas, including job creation, racial equity, and community protection. This project funds new workforce (10 firefighters) and sustains existing operation full-time staff to implement fuel reduction activities that will reduce threats from wildfire, protect communities, and further improve CCFD work environment.

**3. *Tackling climate change***

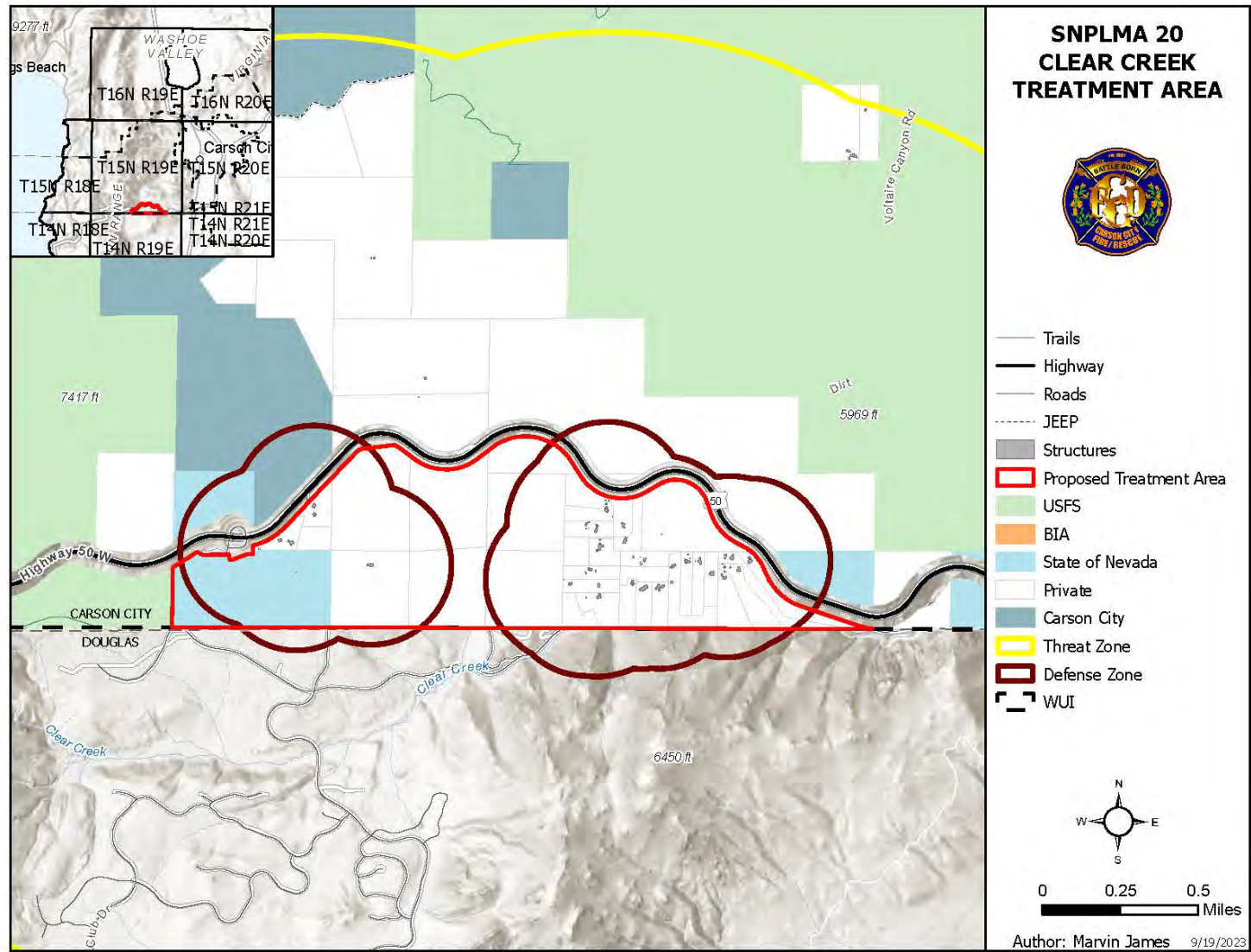
This project proposes to treat up to 826 acres of hazardous fuels at the base of the Sierra Nevada Mountains that will address the wildfire crisis and climate change impacts due to the Spring Atmospheric Rivers of 2023. Heavy snow fall created extensive saturation of the soils and greater than normal vegetation (fuel) development. Many of the Sierra Front, Central, and Eastern Nevada counties have been forced to declare a Disaster Declaration. Carson has been heavily impacted by these storms and excessive fuel growth. This disaster has led to excessive fuel growth, topographic changes to seasonal fire road, and sever erosion of the terrain. Fuel reduction projects will reduce the risk of catastrophic wildfire and restore the natural fire regime in identified project areas.

**4. *Advancing racial equity***

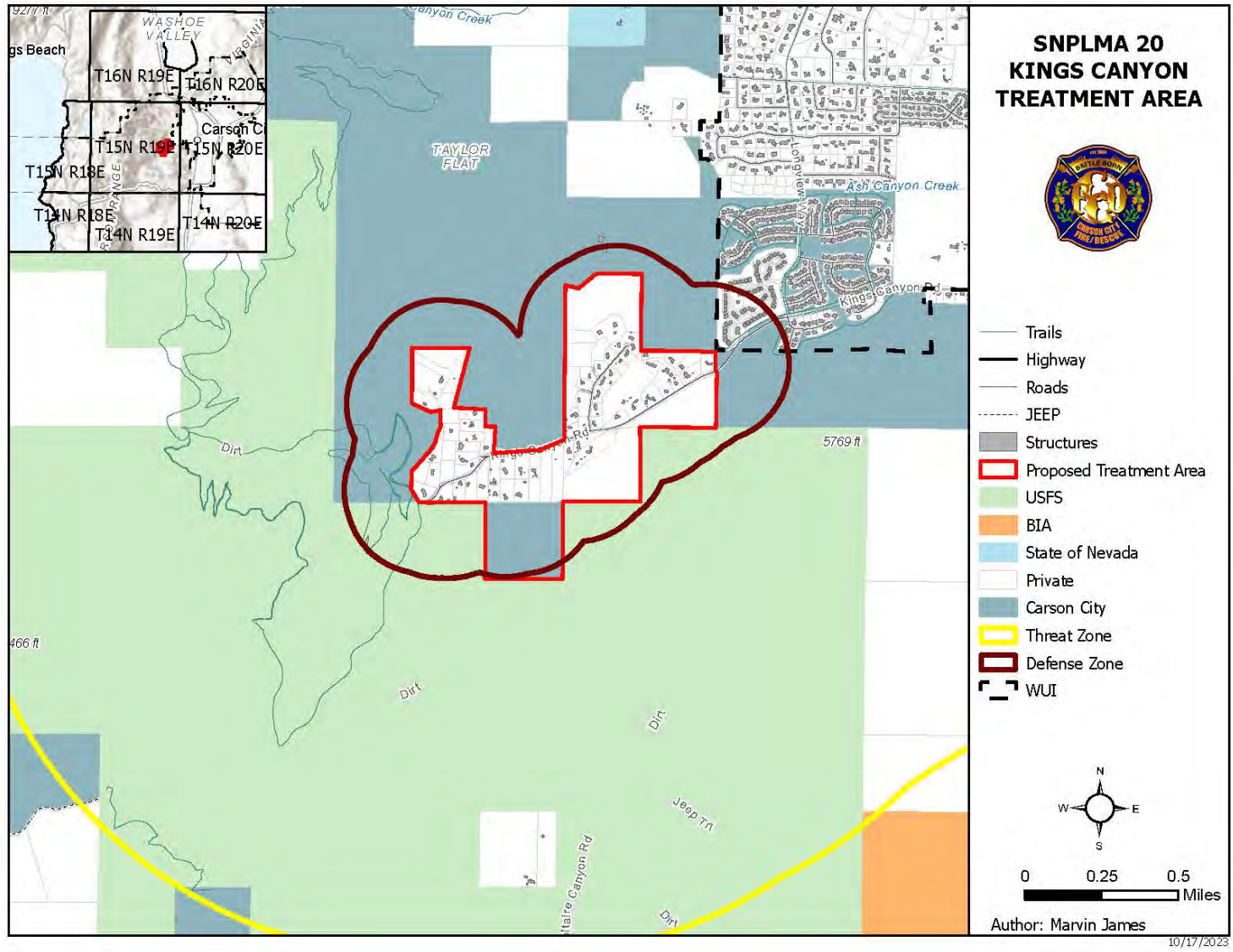
CCFD, Wildland Division is committed to increasing racial and gender diversity in the workforce to improve our organization through recruitment, training, and promotion processes. Recruitment and outreach events, hosted by both men and women, provide an opportunity to educate and prepare potential recruits for employment opportunities. Such events provide women firefighters an opportunity to show other interested women what the job is like and what they need to do to succeed. Employees are also made aware of their role in advancing racial equity and are required to complete classes such as Unconscious Bias annually as part of the evaluation process.

**5. *Improving our workforce and work environment***

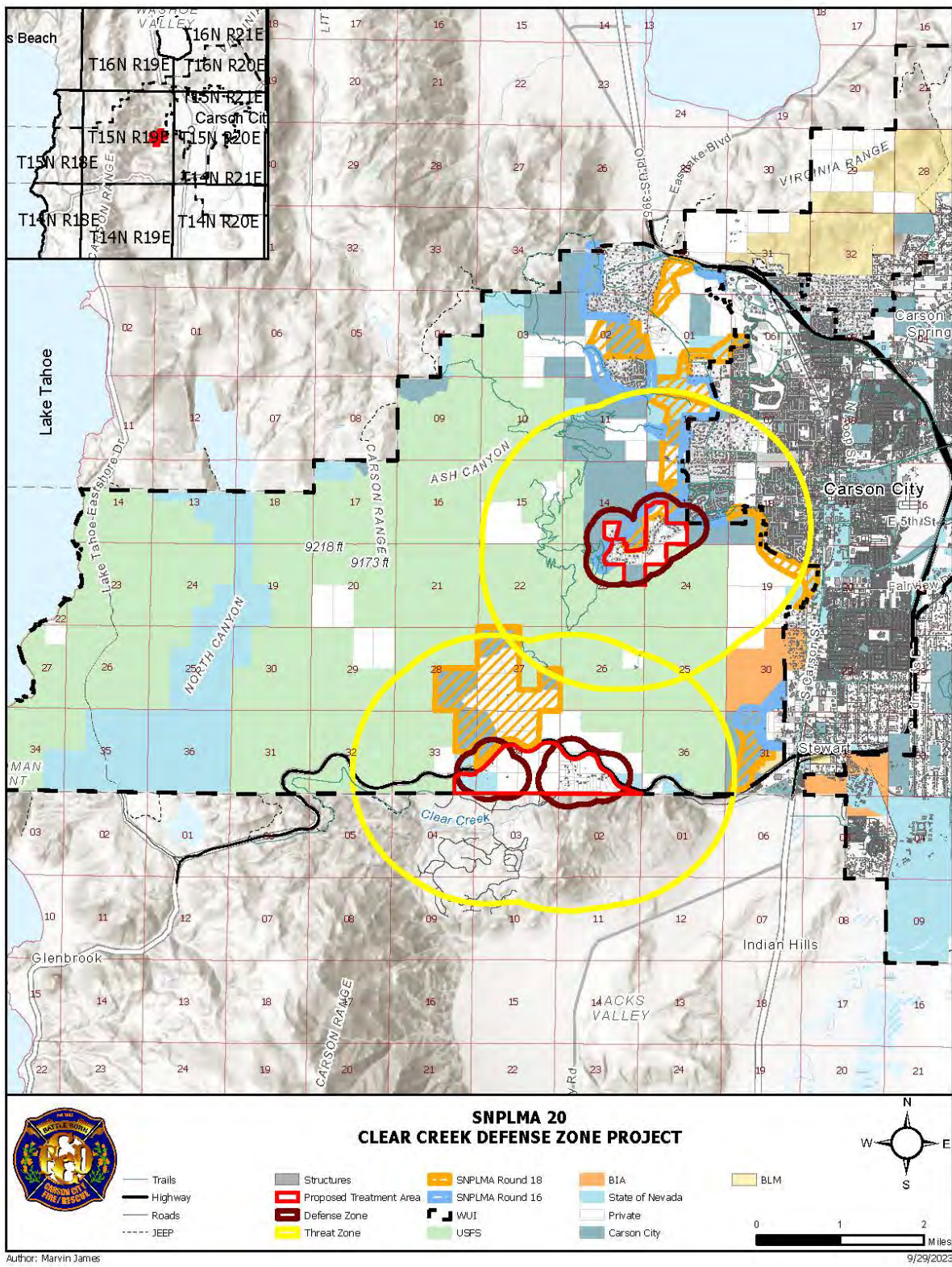
The CCFD, Wildland Division has limited resources that fund only half of a Type 2 IA Hand Crew. This proposal will allow the Division to solidify funding to fully staff the Hand Crew, at an increased firefighters wage, and provide supervisors who will led the team to manage hazardous fuel mitigation projects. This increased workforce will improve the work environment in many ways such as making it easier for crew members to take time off to rest, reducing stress, and improving the team-oriented environment.



Map 1: Location - Clear Creek



Map 2: Location – Kings Canyon



Map 3: Combined Locations



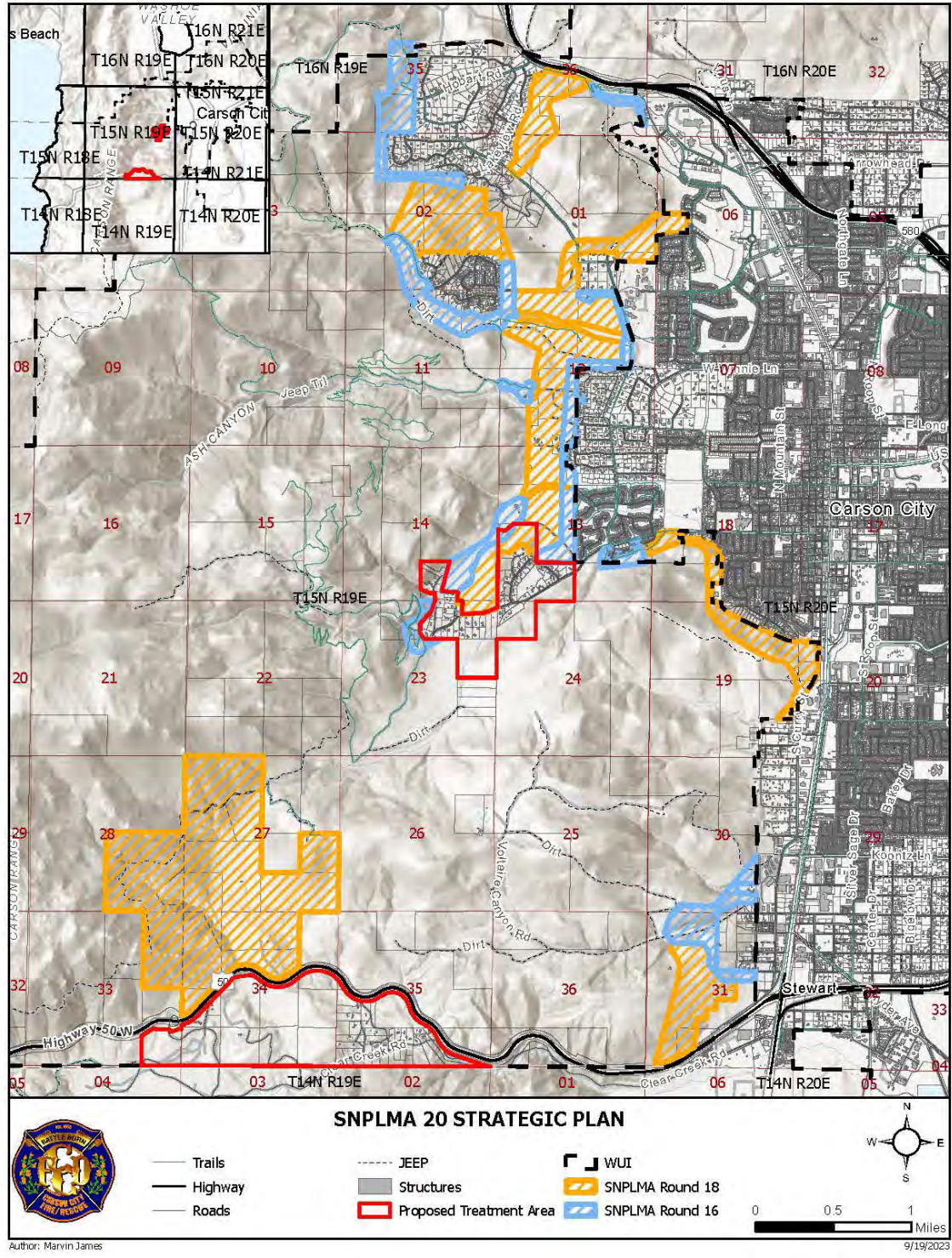


Figure 1: SNPLMA Strategic Values

## N. PERFORMANCE MEASURES

<b>SNPLMA FY2020-FY2024 STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL 1: Sustain the Quality of the Outdoor Environment by Conserving, Preserving, and Restoring Natural and Cultural Resources</b>		
<b>Performance Measures for Habitat Enhancement</b>	<b>Definition of Performance Measure</b>	<b>Quantity</b>
H9 - Acres of Invasive Plant Species Treated or Restored	<p>Report the number of acres of weed infestation treated with chemical, mechanical, physical, or biological control agents for the purpose of weed control. Include acres treated by fire when fire is used as a physical control agent for weed control rather than as a hazardous fuels treatment. Each acre treated is counted only once during the life of the project, no matter how many re-treatments occurred during the project.</p> <p>Report to the nearest whole acre.</p>	100-137
<b>Performance Measures for Wildland Fire Management</b>	<b>Definition of Performance Measure</b>	<b>Quantity</b>
F2 - Acres of Hazardous Fuels Treated – Wildland Urban Interface (WUI)	<p>Report the total number of acres of hazardous fuels treated, enhanced, or restored to reduce wildland fuels hazards and to restore or maintain ecosystem resiliency within the WUI. Where multiple treatments are necessary to meet vegetation management objectives, such as hand thinning followed by re-seeding, each treatment is counted individually.</p> <p>Report to the nearest whole acre.</p>	600-826
<b>SNPLMA FY2020-FY2024 STRATEGIC PLAN: Other Performance Measures that Also Support the Three Values for SNPLMA Implementation of Sustainability, Connectivity, and Community</b>		
<b>Other Performance Measures</b>	<b>Definition of Performance Measure</b>	<b>Quantity</b>
O5 - Number of Outreach Contacts Made	<p>Report the number of education and outreach contacts made through interpretation and environmental education, such as number of teachers trained, number of participants in workshops, etc.</p> <p>Report each participant as one unit.</p>	120
O6 - Number of New Interpretive or Education Publications/Signs/Kiosks/Displays/etc. Produced	<p>Report the number of new interpretive or education publications produced, signs produced and installed, public informational websites or other electronic media presentations designed and implemented, and informational or interpretive kiosk displays produced and installed.</p> <p>Report each item produced as one unit.</p>	2

<p>O7 - Number of Interpretive or Education Presentations Given and/or Community Events Participated in or Hosted</p>	<p>Report the number of interpretive or educational presentations given.  Report each presentation as one unit.</p>	<p>2</p>
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**O. PHOTOS**







**P. SUPPORT LETTERS**

1. Bureau of Land Management, Sierra Front Field Office
2. Carson Valley Trail Association
3. Carson City, Nevada, Open Space Manager
4. Clear Creek Community Members
5. USDA Forest Service, Humboldt - Toiyabe National Forest (Consultation and Support Letter)
6. Bureau of Land Management, SNPLMA Division (Consultation Letter)
7. Carson City Fire Department (Contribution Letter)



# United States Department of the Interior



## BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Carson City District Office

Sierra Front Field Office

5665 Morgan Mill Road

Carson City, Nevada 89701

Phone: 775-885-6000

Fax: 775-885-6147

<http://www.blm.gov/nevada>

In Reply Refer To:  
2710 (NVC02)

**OCT 23 2023**

Kimberly Fahey  
Fuels Management Grants Administrator  
Carson City Fire Department  
201 N. Carson Street, Ste. 5  
Carson City, Nevada 89701

Dear Kimberly Fahey,

This letter is to document the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Carson City District Office's (CCDO), support for the Carson City Fire Department (CCFD) Round 20 Southern Nevada Public Lands Management Act (SNPLMA) project proposal for the Clear Creek Defense Zone Project.

This project proposal addresses the Community Wildfire Risk Assessment ratings for two communities, Clear Creek 181-high and Kings Canyon West 144-high, by implementing 600-826 acres of fuels treatments in the defense and threat zones. This project proposal also provides for enhancement of prior year hazardous fuel mitigation projects funded by SNPLMA in Rounds 16 and 18 by completing new treatments in in the Upper Kings Canyon Area. Although the proposed project is not within the BLM's administrative jurisdiction, the BLM is supportive of hazardous fuels projects and the promotion of the Nevada Wildfire Awareness Proclamation to promote fuel reduction projects and emphasize the importance of creating Firewise Communities.

Sincerely,

Paul Fuselier  
Acting Field Manager  
Sierra Front Field Office

e-cc: Gianna Vaccaro, SNPLMA Program Manager, SNPLMA Division, [gvaccaro@blm.gov](mailto:gvaccaro@blm.gov)



**CARSON VALLEY TRAILS ASSOCIATION**  
**P.O. Box 222, Minden, NV 89423**  
**[www.carsonvalleytrails.org](http://www.carsonvalleytrails.org)**

October 10, 2023

Southern Nevada Public Land Management Act (SNPLMA)  
Hazardous Fuels Reduction and Wildlife Prevention – Round 20

Subject: Support Letter for Carson City Fire Department's Clear Creek Defense Zone Project

Dear SNPLMA Review Committee:

The Carson Valley Trails Association (CVTA) is a non-profit corporation dedicated to provide and maintain access into public lands and offers their full support for the Carson City Fire Department's SNPLMA Round 20, grant funding request. The Carson City Fire Department (CCFD) requests this funding to support fuel reduction efforts and to conduct community education that will positively impact the Clear Creek Trail System.

The Clear Creek Trail System is our most popular, extending for 30 miles, located to the west of Carson City, Nevada. This trail is accessed by equestrians, bird watchers, mountain bikers and hikers of all ages and provides an opportunity for visitors to see wildlife while traversing between Jack's Valley Road and Highway 50. There are two access points one at Spooner Summit and the other at near the underpass on Hwy 50, the area of this project. This trail system protects vegetation and other resources by providing a well designed facility into the forested ecosystem. The SNPLMA Round 20 application funds reduction of hazardous fuels at the parking area off Highway 50 and along the 2-mile Clear Creek Connector. The Parcel of land is owned and managed by the NV Division of Environmental Protection and designated for Open Space by the Land Use Master Plan . The Clear Creek Connector provides access to the Tahoe Rim Trail as well as the Clear Creek Trail, James Lee Loops and Jacks Valley Loop trails. Attached hereto is a link to our CVTA map for the Clear Creek Trail System. [2023-04-18-Clear-Creek-Trail-System-Map-39x23-for-website.pdf \(carsonvalleytrails.org\)](#)

Due to the proximity to the Tahoe Rim Crest a few miles to the east of the project area, and the popularity of the site, this project as proposed will reduce fuels at our Clear Creek Community and offer some fuels mitigation at one of the entry points into the Tahoe Basin.

On behalf of CVTA, I urge you to fund the Carson City Fire Department's SNPLMA Round 20 application so they may implement needed fuel reduction efforts in Carson City to make our community more resilient from wildfire. The Carson City Fire Department fills a critical need within Carson City, and it will facilitate the continued support to achieve the Department and Community fire safety goals.



Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Very truly yours,

***Neal Falk***

Neal Falk  
President  
Carson Valley Trails Association



## CARSON CITY, NEVADA CONSOLIDATED MUNICIPALITY AND STATE CAPITOL

October 24, 2023

Southern Nevada Public Lands Management Act (SNPLMA)  
Hazardous Fuels Reduction and Wildlife Prevention – Round 20

Subject: Support Letter for Carson City Fire Department's Clear Creek Defense Zone Project

Dear SNPLMA Review Committee:

The Carson City Parks, Recreation & Open Space Department offers our full support for the Carson City Fire Department's SNPLMA Round 20 grant funding request. The Carson City Fire Department (CCFD) requests this funding to support fuel reduction efforts and to conduct community education that will positively impact the Clear Creek area and Clear Creek Trail system.

The Clear Creek community in Carson City has been identified as a high-risk wildfire area per the Nevada Department of Forestry's Community Risk and Hazard Assessment Tool. The high-risk rating is due to the fuel types and community risks. Lightning and human caused wildfires are of great concern in this community because of high fuel loading, the number of homes present, difficult egress and Clear Creek's importance as a watershed and drinking source to Carson City. The Carson City Parks, Recreation & Open Space Department (CCPROS) currently manages over 8,000 acres of City owned land throughout Carson City. These areas include parks, trails, natural areas and recreation facilities – much of which is located at the wildland urban interface. Specifically, Fuji Park is located adjacent to Clear Creek and recreational amenities, creek health and water quality would be impacted by a fire in this watershed. Additionally, Carson City owns and manages Open Space properties adjacent to the Clear Creek area, so any fuel reduction efforts in this area benefit Carson City Open Space property and makes our community and wildland urban interface more resilient from wildfire.

I urge you to fund the Carson City Fire Department's SNPLMA Round 20 grant application so they may implement needed fuel reduction efforts in Carson City to make our community more resilient from wildfire. The Carson City Fire Department fills a critical need within Carson City, and this funding opportunity will facilitate the continued support to achieve the Department and Community fire safety goals.

Sincerely,

Lyndsey Boyer  
Open Space Manager



September 27, 2023

Southern Nevada Public Land Management Act (SNPLMA)  
Hazardous Fuels Reduction and Wildlife Prevention – Round 20

Subject: Support Letter for Carson City Fire Department's Clear Creek Defense Zone Project

Dear SNPLMA Review Committee:

The Clear Creek Community residents offers their full support for the Carson City Fire Department's SNPLMA Round 20 funding request. The Carson City Fire Department (CCFD) requests this funding to support fuel reduction efforts and to conduct community education in the Clear Creek Community.

Clear Creek community in Carson City has been identified as a high-risk wildfire area per the Nevada Department of Forestry, Community Risk and Hazard Assessment Tool. The area is located in the Southwest Quadrant of Carson City, approximately three miles from the Tahoe Rim Trail and six miles from the Lake Tahoe Basin. The high-risk rating is due to the fuel types and community risks. The vegetation ranges from mixed coniferous forest, medium to low growing sagebrush and light flashy fuels. These ranges are often characterized with a continuous ground layer of flammable pine needles and mixed shrubs in forest openings that are be readily ignited. Lightning and human caused wildfires are of great concern in this community because of high fuel loading, the number of homes present, difficult egress and Clear Creek's importance as a watershed and a drinking source to Carson City.

The community is excited to obtain education and information on the concept of Fire Adapted Community through the Firewise USA Programs to minimize the potential for catastrophic loss of life and property if a wildfire was to ignite. Our community is very grateful for the ongoing support of Carson City Fire Department and their efforts to keep our community safe.

I urge you to fund the Carson City Fire Department's SNPLMA Round 20 application so they may implement needed fuel reduction efforts in Carson City to make our community more resilient from wildfire. The Carson City Fire Department fills a critical need within Carson City, and it deserves continued support to achieve their goals,

Sincerely,  
Clear Creek Community

Signatures per household

September 21, 2023

Southern Nevada Public Land Management Act (SNPLMA)  
Hazardous Fuels Reduction and Wildlife Prevention – Round 20

Subject: Support Letter for Carson City Fire Department's Clear Creek Defense Zone Project

Dear SNPLMA Review Committee:

The Clear Creek Community residents offer their full support for the Carson City Fire Department's SNPLMA Round 20 funding request. The Carson City Fire Department (CCFD) requests this funding to support fuel reduction efforts and to conduct community education in the Clear Creek Community.

Clear Creek community in Carson City has been identified as a high-risk wildfire area per the Nevada Department of Forestry, Community Risk and Hazard Assessment Tool. The area is located in the Southwest Quadrant of Carson City, approximately three miles from the Tahoe Rim Trail and six miles from the Lake Tahoe Basin. The high-risk rating is due to the fuel types and community risks. The vegetation ranges from mixed coniferous forest, medium to low growing sagebrush and light flashy fuels. These ranges are often characterized with a continuous ground layer of flammable pine needles and mixed shrubs in forest openings that are be readily ignited. Lightning and human caused wildfires are of great concern in this community because of high fuel loading, the number of homes present, difficult egress and Clear Creek's importance as a watershed and a drinking source to Carson City.

The community is excited to obtain education and information on the concept of Fire Adapted Community through the Firewise USA Programs to minimize the potential for catastrophic loss of life and property if a wildfire was to ignite.

We urge you to fund the Carson City Fire Department's SNPLMA Round 20 application so they may implement needed fuel reduction efforts in Carson City to make our community more resilient from wildfire. The Carson City Fire Department fills a critical need within Carson City, and it deserves continued support to achieve their goals.

Sincerely,

*Paula Leigh*  
5561 Old Clear Creek Rd

*Julie Brown*  
4980 Old Clear Creek Rd

*John J. Maxwell*  
5020 Old Clear Creek Rd  
CC NV 89705

*Collin Monson*  
007-042-11

*Christopher Sorman*  
5030 Old Clear Creek Rd

*Bob Lakeland*  
3476 Old Clear Creek Rd  
Carson City, NV 89705

*Timothy*  
5000 Old Clear Creek Road

*Ally P.*  
6235 Robert Hill Rd  
5820



Forest  
Service

Humboldt-Toiyabe  
National Forest

Carson Ranger District  
1536 S. Carson Street  
Carson City, NV 89701  
(775) 882-2766 Fax (775) 884-8199

File Code: 5150

Date: 09/28/2023

Route To:

**Subject:** Support Letter for Carson City Fire Department's Clear Creek Defense Zone Project

**To:** Dear SNPLMA Review Committee:

The U.S. Forest Service offers their full support for the Carson City Fire Department's SNPLMA Round 20, federal funding request. The Carson City Fire Department (CCFD) requests this funding to support fuel reduction efforts and to conduct community education in the Clear Creek Community.

Clear Creek community in Carson City has been identified as a high-risk wildfire area per the Nevada Department of Forestry's, Community Risk and Hazard Assessment Tool. The area is in the Southwest Quadrant of Carson City, approximately three miles from the Tahoe Rim Trail and six miles from the Lake Tahoe Basin. The high-risk rating is due to the fuel types and community risks. The vegetation ranges from mixed coniferous forest, medium to low growing sagebrush and light flashy fuels. These ranges are often characterized with a continuous ground layer of flammable pine needles and mixed shrubs in forest openings that can be readily ignited. Lightning and human caused wildfires are of great concern in this community because of high fuel loading, the number of homes present, difficult egress and Clear Creek's importance as a watershed and a drinking source to Carson City.

I support funding the Carson City Fire Department's SNPLMA Round 20 application so they may implement needed fuel reduction efforts in Carson City to make the community more resilient to wildfire. The Carson City Fire Department fills a critical need within Carson City, and deserves continued support to achieve collaborative goals in making our landscapes more resilient to wildland fire. .

**MATTHEW  
ZUMSTEIN**

Digitally signed by  
MATTHEW ZUMSTEIN  
Date: 2023.09.29  
08:15:04 -07'00'

Matthew Zumstein  
District Ranger





# United States Department of the Interior



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
Southern Nevada District Office  
4701 N. Torrey Pines Dr.  
Las Vegas, Nevada 89130  
<http://www.blm.gov/nv>

In Reply Refer To:  
2710 (NVS0055)

October 11, 2023

Carson City Fire Department  
Attn: Kimberly Fahey  
201 N. Carson Street Ste 5  
Carson City, NV 89701-4264  
[kfahey@carson.org](mailto:kfahey@carson.org)

Dear Ms. Fahey:

This correspondence acknowledges the participation of the Carson City Fire Department (CCFD) in the Southern Nevada Public Land Management Act (SNPLMA) Round 20 Hazardous Fuels Reduction and Wildfire Prevention (Fuels) consultation meeting held on October 5, 2023. I would like to thank the CCFD for their continued partnership in the SNPLMA program for the development of Fuels projects for the public and resource benefits and for participating in Round 20.

The CCFD has met the Bureau of Land Management consultation requirement concerning the Fuels Round 20 project nomination as described below.

**Clear Creek Defense Zone** – This proposal is to treat approximately 700 acres of hazardous fuels that covers two distinct areas within Carson City, Nevada that are identified as high-risk priority areas within the wildland urban interface (WUI). The treatment would reduce the risk of catastrophic wildfire, mitigate the wildfire risk to life and property of vulnerable communities and to restore a natural fire regime in the identified areas.

The proposal locations are as follows:

1. Clear Creek project area runs north and south of Highway 50 and Clear Creek Road, and east and west from Highway 395 to Golf Club Drive.
2. Kings Canyon project area stretches along Kings Canyon Road starting east at Longview Way and west to the end of the road.

Should this proposal be selected to receive SNPLMA funding, this project is subject to the requirements of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. The SNPLMA program will assist with this process and any coordination with the State Historic Preservation Office and federally recognized Tribes that may be needed.

Any questions regarding the Fuels program please contact Gianna Vaccaro, SNPLMA Program Manager at 702-515-5120 or [gvaccaro@blm.gov](mailto:gvaccaro@blm.gov).

Sincerely,

Robert C. Wandel  
Assistant District Manager

e-cc: Kevin Nyberg, CCDF [KNyberg@carson.org](mailto:KNyberg@carson.org)  
Robin Michel, Archaeologist, SNPLMA Division  
Gianna Vaccaro, SNPLMA Program Manager, SNPLMA Division



# CARSON CITY FIRE DEPARTMENT

*"Service with Pride, Commitment, and Compassion"*

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November 1, 2023

Robert Wandel  
Assistant District Manager – SNPLMA Division  
Bureau of Land Management  
[rwandel@blm.gov](mailto:rwandel@blm.gov)

RE: Contribution Funds for Clear Creek Defense Zone Project, a Round 20 nomination.

Dear Mr. Wandel, Partners Working Group, and Executive Committee,

Carson City Fire Department (CCFD) has an ongoing Fuel Reduction Program which includes defensible space inspections, public education and outreach, annual education workshops, and a seasonal wildland hand crew. CCFD will continue to offer these programs and document any homeowner match at the current rate. In addition, CCFD will include \$181,154 (7,000 hours of crew training) and \$83,846 (784 hours of planning, education and video/photo services) for a total minimum contribution of in-kind to be \$265,000 over the six-year project period.

The Fuels Reduction Program is an integral part of reducing and managing hazardous fuels on the west side of Carson City.

We truly appreciate the wonderful projects that have made our community more resilient from wildfire through SNPLMA funding, and we look forward to your favorable consideration of this nomination.

Sincerely,

Sean P. Slamon  
Fire Chief



**SNPLMA Round 20  
Hazardous Fuels Reduction and Wildfire Prevention  
Little Valley WUI Wildfire & Fire-Adapted Forest Restoration  
Nomination Addendum**

**Nomination:** Tab 2 Little Valley WUI Wildfire & Fire-Adapted Forest Restoration  
**Entity:** Boards of Regents, NSHE, obo University of Nevada, Reno  
Whittell Forest & Wildlife Area

**Cover Page**

The Nomination Instructions provided a list what should be included on the “Cover Page”. The following did not conform with the instructions: names of UNR personnel added and the logo is larger than the permitted size (2” x 3 ½”).

**Section D. PROJECT DELIVERABLES AND ACRES**

Under Anticipated Deliverables: “Improve access roads into and within WFWA to support proposed treatments as well as ingress and egress out of forest in the case of a wildfire.” During the Subgroup meeting, questions about the road maintenance needs and cost. The nominee provided some follow-up information:

The road access is the jurisdiction of the US Forest Service, an administrative use only and not open to the public. It is anticipated improvements are blading and grading, filling in large ruts or potholes, and surfacing with gravel. This road is a 4wd dirt road and it would not be widened, and no culverts need to be replaced. The goal is only maintenance and minor improvements on the road system for this project.

It is estimated \$340,000 of the \$1,333,000 is for the road maintenance and improvement. No further improvement would be needed after the fuel reduction project is complete and the contractor finishes with blading the road, normal requirement for contractors to blade road after project is near completion. However, leaving the road in an improved state (relative to it currently) will improve ingress and egress in the event of a wildfire, which is why we included that as a deliverable.

**Section E. PROJECT LOCATION**

Physical location was not addressed.

**Section G. LEVEL OF PROJECT READINESS FOR IMPLEMENTATION**

It is not clear if the nominee applied funding from another source for this project. Their answer did not address this question completely. The question was not only if they received funding but also if they applied or if there is another opportunity.

**Section I. PROJECT BUDGET**

Cost-Benefit Analysis, comparing a proposal within the Carson Range area to a project cost in the Lake Tahoe is comparing apples to oranges. A proposal should be able to provide a good analysis of how this proposal is a cost – benefit/cost-effective.

**Section M. MAPS**

No dates were included on the maps as outlined in the nomination instructions to include.

**Section P. SUPPORT LETTERS**

One cannot submit a self-supporting letter. UNR submitted a supporting letter signed by the Authorized Officer listed in the nomination. This letter was not included in the nomination package.

**Budget Spreadsheet**

The BLM Grant Manager Officer will review these amounts and make a final determination if they are acceptable.

**Southern Nevada Public Land Management Act  
Hazardous Fuels Reduction and Wildfire Prevention  
Round 20**

Board of Regents, NSHE, obo University of Nevada, Reno  
Whittell Forest & Wildlife Area  
PIs: Dr. Sarah Bisbing and Mr. Hunter Noble



Little Valley WUI Wildfire Mitigation & Fire-Adapted Forest  
Restoration

**Amount Requested: \$3,553,663**

## A. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

### a. Describe Relationship to prior Approved Phases or Related SNPLMA Projects and Anticipated Future Phases

This hazardous fuel reduction project is proposed for the threat zone within the West Washoe Valley (WWV) wildland urban interface (WUI) ~10 miles south of Reno, Nevada, on the University of Nevada, Reno's (UNR) Whittell Forest & Wildlife Area (WFWA). This Sierra Front landscape is listed as one of the top 10 priority firesheds in USDA Forest Service (USFS) Region 4 (Nevada, Utah, southern Idaho, & western Wyoming) and the only priority fireshed falling in Nevada while also abutting a top 10 priority fireshed in USFS Region 5 (California) (USDA Fireshed Registry 2021). In this priority fireshed, we propose to treat all machine- and hand-accessible acres (up to 350ac) adjacent to the WFWA road network to tie into the existing SNPLMA-funded USDA Forest Service Humboldt-Toiyabe (HT) Hazardous Fuel Reduction Planning Project Areas surrounding the WFWA (Little Valley & Mt Rose Corridor Hazardous Fuel Reduction Projects) as well as the SNPLMA-funded Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District (TMFPD) East Mt Rose Corridor Non-Federal Project. This proposed treatment will also augment planned TMFPD Hazard Mitigation Grant Program funded projects along the Mt Rose Corridor and in Washoe Valley. Filling in this treatment gap will create a continuous fuel break along ~10 miles of the high-risk Sierra Front Landscape. The four treatment areas listed here (Little Valley & Mt Rose Corridor, East Mt Rose Corridor, & WFWA) fall within the WUI zone mapped in the Carson Range Multi-Jurisdictional Fuel Reduction and Wildfire Prevention Strategy Plan (2018) and are being treated by the cooperating partners identified in the Plan (HT, TMFPD, & UNR). The acres proposed for treatment at WFWA (250-350ac) will be managed by UNR foresters, with fuel reduction activities occurring in two zones – a high-priority 300' wide core treatment area along the west and east sides of Little Valley Road to support any future firefighting efforts as well as a buffer treatment area that extends east from the main road system to provide additional risk mitigation to the WUI. The majority of treatment acres (63%) fall within the threat zone of the Sierra Front WUI defined in the Multi-Jurisdictional Plan, and the project will be deemed complete once treatment has modified forest structure to a low-density, low fuel, defensible buffer between the high-density forest to the west of the project area and homes to the east. Associated with this fuel reduction work will be outreach events and educational signs that communicate the intent, outcomes, and objectives of the project in support of greater landscape-level fuel reduction projects and WUI protection. Treatment and outreach of this 250–350-acre project area is expected to take six years from receipt of the initial transfer to project close-out.

### b. Describe how the proposed project will protect or enhance wildlife habitat and/or resilience vegetative communities.

Excessive fuel accumulation combined with limited forest management and an expanding WUI create hazardous conditions in this semi-arid, fire-prone landscape of the Sierra Front. A 2016 wildfire displayed the consequences of wildfire on forest resilience in which ~500ac of the 2,300ac fire (~22%) burned at high-severity and has largely type-converted from forest to shrub (manzanita) and grassland (non-native cheatgrass). One of the primary objectives of this treatment is to restore the historic fire-adapted forest structure and composition in this WUI-adjacent Sierra mixed-conifer forest in order to proactively mitigate these wildfire

effects and allow forests to persist through fire. Currently, this forest has extraordinarily high tree densities (~1000 trees per acre (TPA) vs. historic <100 TPA), excessive fuel (6-18 Tons/ac), and a disproportionate number of small trees (~90%) as well as a predominance of fire-sensitive species (white fir) and size classes (saplings to pole size trees). Proposed treatments will promote forest resilience broadly by creating forest structure aligned with historic fire-adapted forest conditions through targeted removal of small-diameter, fire-sensitive trees and retention of large-diameter, fire-tolerant trees that may resist mortality to fire and other density-dependent disturbances (insects, disease, drought, etc.). Restoring forest composition and structure for the benefit of vegetative communities will also benefit wildlife through the enhancement of open forest conditions, which increases grass and herbaceous species success, and thus forage, as well as lower canopy conditions more favorable for wildlife movement and hunting of prey.

**c. Acknowledgement of Stand-Alone Project and no Guarantee of Funding for Future Phases**

We confirm that the current nomination will result in a stand-alone, viable project and acknowledge that there is no guarantee or expectation of funding for future phases.

## **B. SNPLMA STRATEGIC PLAN VALUES**

Hazardous Fuels Reduction and Wildfire Prevention projects have two goals identified in the Strategic Plan:

- Goal 1: Sustain the quality of the outdoor environment by conserving, preserving, and restoring natural and cultural resources.
- Goal 2: Improve the quality of life for all publics in urban and rural communities by enhancing recreational opportunities that connect people with the outdoor environment.

Nominated projects should meet these goals by focusing on the three SNPLMA core values, connectivity, sustainability, and community. Every nomination must explain how the three values are promoted by the project.

1. Sustainability:

This project is designed to restore a forest both out of character and at high risk of catastrophic fire effects to its historic, fire-adapted, resilient condition. Restoration of low stand basal areas and tree densities as well as a targeted retention of fire-tolerant, large-diameter trees will create conditions conducive to a lower severity wildfire that may allow the forest to sustain a wildfire or other density-dependent disturbance (insects, disease, drought, etc.). These treatments will increase sustainability of forests on the landscape, and treatments themselves have high sustainability in their efficacy due to the shared, cooperative, landscape-level application over ~10 north to south miles and over various state, private, and federal land ownerships.

2. Connectivity:

Although this project does not directly open up recreational opportunities, the project area is situated in the Reno-Tahoe WUI zone along the Sierra Front, which is a regional recreation mecca. Reducing hazardous fuels in WFWA creates a continuous, landscape-level treatment zone from Reno to the north and Carson City to the south by tying into other SNPLMA-funded projects (Little Valley & Mt Rose Corridor and East Mt Rose Corridor projects) aimed at protecting natural, human, and recreational values from the threat of wildfire. The WFWA treatment area itself sits below Diamond Peak Resort and above historic Bower's Mansion while also positioned north of Spooner State Park and south of the Mount Rose Wilderness and Mt Rose Ski Area. Filling in this treatment gap between HT treatment areas has the potential to have widespread, positive effects on wildfire mitigation and defense of natural, human, and recreational values.

3. Community:

This project will improve the quality of life for local and regional residents of both biological and human communities by reducing the risk of high-severity wildfire through the creation of low-fuel, fire-adapted conditions. Direct benefits will include: 1) low-hazard conditions that allow trees to survive wildfire, 2) a safety corridor for ingress and egress out of WFWA in the event of a fire, 3) an anchor point for initial attack and fire suppression efforts to prevent wildfire from reaching the WUI, and 4) reductions in smoke associated with wildfire when it does occur.

## C. PURPOSE STATEMENT

UNR will implement a hazardous fuels reduction project over 250-350 acres on the WFWA to restore fire-adapted forest conditions and reduce the risk of high-severity wildfire in this high-priority fireshed along the Sierra Front WUI.

## D. PROJECT DELIVERABLES AND ACRES

1. Primary Deliverables:

- Core treatment area – Hand or mechanical thinning (contractor dependent) plus mastication or chipping on 100 to 150 acres that fall within 150' feet (300' width) of the Little Valley Road to create a ~3-mile continuous shaded fuel break.
- Buffer treatment area – Hand thinning and lop-and-scatter on 150 to 200 acres to expand hazardous fuel reduction toward the WUI. Chipping or mastication will be utilized in as many acres as possible, given terrain and edaphic constraints to operation.

2. Anticipated Deliverables:

- Host semi-annual to annual outreach workshops (3-5 total) to display treatment progress to the local residents as well as to provide a demonstration site for education of WUI residents and UNR students on the critical importance of hazardous fuel reduction projects to restore fire-adapted forest conditions and mitigate wildfire severity effects on biological and human communities.
- Improve access roads into and within WFWA to support proposed treatments as well as ingress and egress out of forest in the case of a wildfire.

### 3. Standard Deliverables:

- Cultural resource assessment and associated section 106 compliance
- Pre-treatment and post-treatment stand exams
- Prescription and scope of work development for contract bidding
- SNPLMA close-out package

**Acres:** Calculate specific acres of proposed treatment of each zone (defense, threat, and general forest) and clearly identify the emphasis zone if more than one zone is identified in the nomination.

250 to 350 acres proposed for treatment. Of the total treatment acreage, 210 acres (63%) fall within the threat zone, while ~126 acres (37%) fall within the general forest zone.

## **E. PROJECT LOCATION**

### **Physical location of project; identify County (s) and State(s):**

Washoe County, NV

### **Identify Congressional District(s):**

Nevada's 2nd Congressional District

### **Latitude and Longitude:**

39.26236, -119.8731

## **F. PROJECT TIMEFRAME**

The proposed work will occur over a six-year timeframe, including project preparation, contracting, and close-out.

- Year 1 – Federal compliance requirements (section 106) and surveying, unit layout and tree marking, contract bid preparation and award
- Year 2 – Treatment initiation in core treatment area, annual site visit & reporting
- Year 3 – Treatment completion in core treatment area, annual site visit & reporting
- Year 4 – Treatment initiation in buffer treatment area, annual site visit & reporting
- Year 5 – Treatment completion in buffer treatment area, annual site visit & reporting
- Year 6 – Project reporting and close-out

## **G. LEVEL OF PROJECT READINESS FOR IMPLEMENTATION**

Is this a shovel-ready project?  Yes  No

The WFWA Forest Manager has completed pre-treatment stand exams across the proposed treatment areas. Wildlife and cultural surveys will be completed as needed based on guidance from the BLM and federal entities, if awarded. We are staffed and prepared to begin project development and contract bidding documents upon award.

Have you applied, received, or is there the opportunity to obtain funding from another source for this project? Please list the additional funding opportunities received or applied for and indicate whether it is federal or nonfederal funding.

No funding is secured to complete this work.

## **H. 10-YEAR MULTI-JURISDICTIONAL PLAN**

Addresses whether the nomination is consistent with its 10-year multi-jurisdictional strategy and how important the proposed project would be in achieving the strategy of the plan. Describe how the proposed project relates to the specific elements of its multi-jurisdictional plan.

The hazardous fuels reduction work proposed here aligns with the priorities outlined in the Carson Range Multi-Jurisdictional Plan and Wildfire Prevention Strategy (2018) by working collaboratively across property ownerships to make meaningful progress toward the nationally-defined goals of creating landscape resilience, supporting the development and progress toward building fire-adapted communities, and providing forest and road conditions that facilitate safe and effective wildfire response in the threat zone above the WUI. This project specifically addresses the critical need for wildfire protection in the Carson Range planning area by reducing hazardous fuel loads directly adjacent to communities. The acres treated under this project fall within the high to extreme risk WUI zones mapped in the 2018 plan, and the prescription developed for the core and buffer treatment areas would collectively meet the desired condition for the region by reducing ladder and crown fuels within the project area to lower the potential for high-severity fire and promoting forest resilience by retaining large-diameter, fire-resistant trees to provide an ongoing source of forest cover and tree seed. Moreover, this plan identifies this landscape as a high-risk priority treatment area, a classification recently highlighted by the listing of this Sierra Front landscape to the regional and national priority firesheds lists.

## **I. PROJECT BUDGET**

### Cost-Benefit Analysis

Total project cost per acre (total ask/total proposed acres) is estimated at \$10,153/acre. Several key factors result in this cost per acre, particularly operational and administrative constraints. The current road network has never been used to support heavy equipment use and access. As such, the road requires maintenance and minor improvements for basic equipment access. Furthermore, current roads do not support access for log trucks and would require significant upgrades to do so. Despite being within the WWV WUI, access to the project site requires driving on several miles of 4WD access roads.

The inability to use prescribed fire of any kind (hand piles, machine piles, broadcast) requires the use of other more costly mechanical treatments such as chipping and mastication. Additionally, the size and volume of the biomass under this proposed project makes heavy equipment usage during the thinning operation mandatory to be efficient.

Moreover, this land is owned and managed by UNR, which has a negotiated NICRA rate of 47% indirect. Although the University has agreed to lower this rate to an approved 31% due to the off-campus implementation of the work, the high indirect costs required to manage and maintain



University property increase the per-acre cost. These costs are, however, comparable to estimated costs per acre for much of the planning and treatments proposed and funded for the adjacent Tahoe Basin so within per acre estimates of previously funded SNPLMA projects.

Despite constraints and costs, the proposed project would reduce the risk of high severity wildfire and aid in protecting homes as well as critical water and power infrastructure in the adjacent WUI. The Little Valley Fire of 2016, which impacted the WUI that the proposed project would help protect, resulted in damages of over \$25 million dollars. This value was strictly monetary losses associated with property and homes and does not include the value of lost natural resources and ecological functions or the cost of post wildfire remediation. As such, the total project cost is a fraction of the potential cost associated with losses in the event of a high severity wildfire on the landscape.

Partnership and/or Contributed Funds

N/A

<b>PROJECT BUDGET</b>		
<b>Budget Cost Categories (SF424A)</b>	<b>SNPLMA Funds</b>	<b>Cost Share Funds</b>
1) Personnel	\$ 345,621	\$ -
2) Fringe Benefits	\$ 97,650	\$ -
3) Travel	\$ 16,768	\$ -
4) Equipment	\$ -	\$ -
5) Supplies	\$ 10,886	\$ -
6) Contractual	\$ 2,241,795	\$ -
7) Construction	\$ -	\$ -
8) Other (e.g., training)	\$ -	\$ -
<b>Total Direct Costs (sum of 1 through 8)</b>	<b>\$ 2,712,720</b>	<b>\$ -</b>
9) Indirect Charges ( <i>per OMB Circular A-122</i> )	\$ 840,943	\$ -
<b>TOTAL BUDGET (Direct &amp; Indirect Costs)</b>	<b>\$ 3,553,663</b>	<b>\$ -</b>

## J. KEY CONTACTS

Authorized Officer: Jenni Bonk, Pre-Award Manager  
 Email: jbonk@unr.edu  
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Project Manager: Hunter Noble, Forest Manager  
 Email: hunternoble@unr.edu  
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Budget Officer: Crystal Metzenheim, Grant Accountant  
 Email: crystalm@unr.edu  
 Phone Number: 775-784-4063

## K. RANKING CRITERIA

Provide a narrative response to the following Criteria and Factors that apply to the nomination.

**1. Improves the community within and/or adjacent to the project area.** Projects are only eligible for Factors A1, A2, or A3; select and answer ONLY ONE, based on where most of the proposed project are lies within. Answer Factors B and C as they apply to the nomination.

A. Addresses immediate public health and safety and community infrastructure.

1. Project is within the Defense Zone, generally an area within 0.25 mile of life and property, as depicted by the most current Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) map in the applicable plan.

Answer: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

2. Project is within the Threat Zone, generally an area between 0.25 mile and 1.50 miles of life and property, as depicted by the most current WUI map in the applicable plan.

Answer: The majority of this project area (~63% of proposed treatment acres) falls within the WUI threat zone, as defined in the Multi-Jurisdictional Plan, and is immediately adjacent to the community of West Washoe Valley (WWV). The WWV is particularly vulnerable to catastrophic fire and categorized as high-risk due to high fuel loading, the intermix nature of the community, a lack of defensible space, and the regular occurrence of extreme wind events (FRCC III, CWPP 2015). The 2021 Caldor Fire was a reminder of the urgent need for restoration of fire-adapted conditions, as it had the potential to spread into WWV. However, mitigation has been largely excluded from the high-risk WWV, and attempts to return fire to the forest via a 2016 prescribed fire led to a wildfire, illustrating the potential devastation to humans and forests (23 homes lost, ~2300ac burned) when cross-agency pre-fire restoration is not prioritized. Our project would mitigate

future catastrophic fire effects through targeted fuel reduction that increases defensible space and restores fire-resilient conditions. State, federal, and private entities will collaboratively build on treatments implemented on adjacent federal land to create a continuous fuel break of ~10 miles across this priority Sierra Front fireshed and reduce risk of future catastrophic fires in WWV.

3. Project is within the general forest or other lands beyond the WUI (generally greater than 1.5 miles from life and property), as depicted by the most current map in the applicable plan.

Answer: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

- B. Promotes protection of source water (rivers and lakes) or municipal watersheds.

Franktown Creek runs through the WFWA and is the point water source for both state (Hobart Reservoir) and private ranching (WWV Franktown Irrigation Company) water rights in the region. Impacts to this water source would have cascading detrimental effects to all downstream municipal, ranching, and farming uses. Ultimately, Franktown Creek enters Washoe Lake on the eastern edge of WWV, which is a source of irrigation water for local ranches. The 2016 Little Valley Fire displayed the undesirable effects of high-severity fire on these water sources, such as high levels of surface and soil erosion, flooding, and sedimentation of downstream water sources, including the primary irrigation ditches.

- C. Project includes education and outreach to the community on Living with Fire or Fire Adapted Communities and/or the importance of fuels reduction on federal, state, and local government land.

UNR Cooperative Extension runs Nevada's Living with Fire program and is a collaborating partner in outreach around hazardous fuel reduction activities on WFWA. NDF's Fire Adapted Communities program is also integrated into the fuel reduction activities on the WFWA and will continue to play a key role in outreach to the WWV community. We will additionally host annual outreach events to demonstrate progress toward a more fire-adapted, defensible condition as well as incorporation into instructional material and field labs in UNR's forestry program. We anticipate ~12 attendees at each event. We will additionally install a minimum of three educational signs showing pre- and post-treatment conditions and educating the public on the project rationale, objectives, needs, and outcomes.

2. **Improves the connection of fuels reduction activities and wildlife habitat.** Respond to each of the following.

- A. Project protects or enhances wildlife habitat and/or resilient vegetative communities.

The fuel treatments proposed for the project area will restore the fire-adapted forest conditions to which native vegetative and wildlife communities are adapted. The 2012

Nevada Wildlife Action Plan identified altered fire regimes as the greatest habitat threat to Sierra coniferous forests and woodlands. Excessive fuel accumulation combined with limited forest management and an expanding WUI create hazardous conditions in this semi-arid, fire-prone landscape of the Sierra Front. A 2016 wildfire displayed the consequences of wildfire on forest resilience in which ~500ac of the 2,300ac fire (~22%) burned at high-severity and has largely type-converted from forest to shrub (manzanita) and grassland (non-native cheatgrass). One of the primary objectives of this treatment is to restore the historic fire-adapted forest structure and composition in this WUI-adjacent Sierra mixed-conifer forest in order to proactively mitigate these wildfire effects and allow forests to persist through fire. Currently, this forest has extraordinarily high tree densities (~1000 TPA vs. historic <100 TPA), excessive fuel (6-18 Tons/ac), and a disproportionate number of small trees (~90%) as well as a predominance of fire-sensitive species (white fir) and size classes (saplings to pole size trees). Proposed treatments will promote forest resilience broadly by creating forest structure aligned with historic fire-adapted forest conditions through targeted removal of small-diameter, fire-sensitive trees and retention of large-diameter, fire-tolerant trees that may resist mortality to fire and other density-dependent disturbances (insects, disease, drought, etc.). Restoring forest composition and structure for the benefit of vegetative communities will also benefit wildlife through the enhancement of open forest conditions, which increases grass and herbaceous species success, and thus forage, as well as lower canopy conditions more favorable for wildlife movement and hunting of prey. Species of conservation priority that occur on WFWA and may benefit from the restoration of fire-adapted conditions and associated mitigation of high-severity wildfire include the California spotted owl, the Northern goshawk, mule deer, the Northern flying squirrel, snowshoe hare, and the silver-haired bat.

B. Project enhances the effectiveness of other treatments in progress or complete.

These treatment areas were strategically placed in order to fill in gaps between existing SNPLMA-funded HT Hazardous Fuel Reduction NEPA Project Areas surrounding the WFWA (Little Valley and Mount Rose NEPAs). The proposed 250-350-acre treatment area on the WFWA would enhance the effectiveness of these projects by expanding the east to west fuel reduction zone west of the WWV community while also connecting these two NEPA Project Areas north to south and creating a continuous zone of north to south treatment from the Galena Forest north of NV-431 south to Tunnel Creek Road.

C. The project is planning for or implementing a treatment that is strategically located to connect to planned or existing projects on the landscape.

These treatment areas are designed to tie into the existing SNPLMA-funded HT Hazardous Fuel Reduction NEPA Project Areas surrounding the WFWA (Little Valley and Mount Rose NEPAs) as well as the SNPLMA-funded TMFPD Mt Rose Corridor project. Filling in this treatment gap will create a continuous fuel break along ~10 miles of the high-risk Sierra Front Landscape. The four treatment areas listed here (Little Valley & Mt Rose NEPA, Sky Tavern, & WFWA) fall within the WUI zone

mapped in the Carson Range Multi-Jurisdictional Fuel Reduction and Wildfire Prevention Strategy Plan (2018) and are being treated by the cooperating partners identified in the Plan (HT, TMFPD, & UNR). With the exception of the proposed fuel treatments in WFWA, treatment is completed or in progress in the adjacent project areas, and filling this treatment gap would create a continuous line of restored, defensible forest conditions in the Sierra Front WUI.

**3. Improves sustainability of the multijurisdictional 10-year plans, environment, and financial resources.** Respond to each of the following.

- A. Improve the sustainability of the forest health and ecosystem function (e.g., stand density, desired species mix and age, tree health, etc.).

The project prescription was designed using both the body of Sierra Nevada forestry and fire science as well as the success stories of treatments implemented across the region. Generally, dropping basal area to or below historic levels, dramatically reducing tree densities, and retaining large-diameter, fire-tolerant trees is the most sustainable action for promoting ongoing forest persistence on the landscape by mitigating disturbance and climate change effects. This treatment will restore fire-adapted conditions through a heavy thinning operation down to 50 to 100 ft<sup>2</sup>/acre basal area followed by a mastication/chipping of remaining ladder fuels, targeting fire-sensitive species for removal and retaining fire-tolerant species to restore historic forest composition and structure.

- B. Improve habitat for sensitive species and Threatened and Endangered species. Includes mitigation and/or minimization measures when treatment in sensitive habitat is unavoidable.

No federally listed animal species are known to occur on the WFWA, however several species of conversation priority outlined in the Nevada Wildlife Action Plan have been observed on the Forest. In particular, the coniferous Jeffrey pine habitat that occurs throughout much of the WFWA is home to several priority species, including northern goshawk, California spotted owl, American marten, and mule deer. Avian species that are particularly vulnerable to impact on forest structure will be surveyed prior to operations. These include Northern goshawk and California spotted owl. If an individual or nest of these species is identified within and or immediately adjacent to the project area, consultation with NDOW will occur to determine the necessary buffer zones and mitigation measures to protect the individuals or sensitive habitat. Broadly, treatments will actively restore the forest to pre-fire suppression structure and densities to which native species are adapted while also reducing the risk of high severity stand replacing fire, which eliminates critical habitat by altering or removing mature tree canopy.

- C. Include broadcast prescribed fire for resource management objectives for sustainable landscapes.

Due to the escape of the 2016 Little Valley Prescribed Fire, fire use is not currently an option on this property but will be continually evaluated as a potential fuel reduction treatment once hazardous fuels are reduced

- D. The method of treatment is fiscally responsible for the project area by balancing resource objectives, values at risk, and cost per acre factors or cost-benefit analysis.

Several important values are at risk both within and immediately adjacent to the project area. The WWV WUI includes historic ranches as well as critical power and domestic water infrastructure that are at risk of damage or loss to high severity wildfire given current stand conditions and proximity to the project area. High value state and federal recreation areas also neighbor the project area and will benefit from the reduced high severity fire risk. The economic value of the standing timber alone in the project area (upwards of 40,000 board feet/acre) exceeds the cost of treatment on a per acre basis. Suppression of wildland fire in this region was proven to be difficult and costly during the 2016 Little Valley Fire due to the close proximity to the WWV community and high value of both infrastructure and recreational assets on the landscape. Further, damage to or loss of the water and/or power infrastructure within or adjacent to the project area would have significant economic impacts beyond the cost of repairing said infrastructure. For instance, nearly all of the irrigation water utilized by the WWV ranching community passes through the project area.

Administrative and operational constraints currently limit the treatment alternatives available for use on the WFWA, which impacts the overall cost per acre. The current road network system restricts the ability to remove biomass offsite via conventional trucking, which could help offset costs through wood product revenue. Furthermore, the limited road access impacts overall treatment cost through the increased travel time into the WFWA. The inability to utilize neither broadcast nor pile burning further constrains management options and prohibits the use of a low-cost management alternative to removing biomass offsite. As a result of these constraints, the proposed treatments are therefore the most fiscally responsible action given the critical need to protect values at risk balanced against our administrative limitations.

- 4. **Demonstrates sound project management and quality control measures.** Respond to each of the following.
  - A. Project goals and implementation processes are clear, measurable, achievable, and demonstrable.

The project goals and implementation metrics are clear, measurable, achievable, and demonstrable. Acres treated will be our primary metric of meeting deliverables, and

we identify a range of acres (250-350) to account for terrain, edaphic, cultural, or other potential limitations that may reduce acres from the target maximum. This metric meets each of these key assessment points. Moreover, each proposed deliverable meets a key need as well as clear deliverable in implementation. For instance, the outreach events meet the community strategic plan values as well as provide ongoing education and extension opportunities between land managers and the public.

- B. Project proponent has the capacity to implement this project in a timely manner (contractor and staff availability, no backlog of current projects, etc.) and within budget.

The project has been internally scoped, including layout and bid estimates, and is thus shovel-ready. If funded, the WFWA's Forest Manager has no other funded fuel reduction projects in hand and is prepared to prioritize this critical activity, and our purchasing department is prepared to begin procuring bids once funds become available.

- C. Is a phase or related component to a previously funded project.

No. SNPLMA funding would directly fund final project compliance (cultural resource assessment) and project implementation.

- D. Has identified committed non-SNPLMA sources of funding or in-kind contribution in the development and/or implementation of the project.

No funding is secured to complete this work.

## L. ORDERS AND PRIORITIES

- A. Executive Orders (EO):

- ***EO No. 13855: Promoting Active Management of America's Forests, Range Lands to Improve Conditions and Reduce Wildfire Risk***

This hazardous fuel reduction project within the West Washoe Valley WUI will actively manage forests by reducing tree densities and fuel continuity across a fire-prone landscape. The project area and greater landscape has experienced fire suppression for the last 100+ years resulting in greater susceptibility to large, catastrophic wildfires. Through active management including, thinning, chipping, and mastication, the risk of high severity fire will be reduced and forest conditions and structure will be restored to a similar state prior to the fire suppression era.

- ***EO No. 14005: Ensuring the Future is Made in All of America by All of America's Workers***

The project will use local workers and contractors who utilize American designed and/or manufactured equipment to the greatest extent possible to complete treatments. The project will also hire or utilize union member workers, as available.

- ***EO No. 14063: Use of Project Labor Agreements for Federal Construction Projects (applicable to projects estimated at \$35 million or more)***

This project does not involve construction and does not exceed \$35 million dollars.

- ***EO No. 14072: Strengthening the Nation's Forests, Communities, and Local Economies***

This project supports local and regional workforce development by providing job opportunities for local workers, operators, and technicians, as well as revenue for local, rural communities. These workers and contractors will conduct hazardous fuel and forest restoration treatments to reduce the risk of high severity wildfire. In doing so, these treatments will help protect adjacent communities in the Wildland Urban Interface.

- ***EO No. 14096: Revitalizing Our Nation's Commitment to Environmental Justice for All***

The project identifies the diverse stakeholders of the landscape, including Indigenous Peoples, and integrates and collaborates with these groups in the planning and outreach process.

#### B. Secretarial Orders

- ***SO No. 3347: Conservation Stewardship and Outdoor Recreation.***

This project practices active management and stewardship of natural resources across the landscape by utilizing scientifically-based management tools.

- ***SO No. 3356: Hunting, Fishing, Recreational Shooting, and Wildlife Conservation Opportunities and Coordination with States, Tribes and Territories.***

The project is located within the Whittell Forest and Wildlife Area (WFWA), and, as part of the founding principles of the Forest, wildlife populations are protected to the greatest degree possible. This includes prohibiting the hunting and fishing of wildlife



in the Whittell Forest. The WFWA also serves a refugia of habitat for many game and non-game species in a WUI area that has extensive human impact.

- ***SO No. 3362: Improving Habitat Quality in Western Big-Game Winter Range and Migration Corridors.***

The project's hazardous fuels and forest restoration treatments will create forest stand densities and structures that are more akin to historic, pre-fire suppression forests, which big game such as black bear and mule deer are adapted. Additionally, by reducing the risk of stand-replacing wildfire, this project protects big game populations from both direct and indirect effects of wildfire.

- ***SO No. 3366: Increasing Recreational Opportunities on Lands and Waters Managed by the U.S. Department of the Interior***

This project will reduce the risk of high severity fire within the project area and tie into adjacent fuel treatments, reducing wildfire risk across the landscape. This will help protect the substantial land and water recreation opportunities in the area by reducing the chance of loss or damage by high severity wildfire and other associated impacts such as damage to infrastructure and soil erosion.

- ***SO No. 3370: Conservation Stewardship and Increasing Public Access to Urban National Wildlife Refuges.***

This project promotes conservation stewardship of the land by utilizing scientifically based, best management practices to reduce high severity wildfire and protect ecological integrity.

- ***SO No. 3372: Reducing Wildfire Risks on Department of the Interior Land Through Active Management.***

This project reduces wildfire risk through active management via mechanical treatment including thinning, chipping, and mastication. In doing so, tree densities are reduced, as are horizontal and vertical fuel continuities, decreasing the risk of high severity crown fire.

- ***SO No. 3373: Evaluating Public Access in Bureau of Land Management Public Land Disposal and Exchanges (focus is on Sec. 4.b.(3) Potential increased public recreational access to existing public lands resulting from the proposed land acquired through an exchange (acquisition).***

This project does not involve land acquisition or exchanges but will help protect public recreational access to existing public lands through fuel treatments that help protect adjacent national forest.

- ***SO No. 3376: Increasing Recreational Opportunities through the use of Electric Bikes.***

Recreation is not condoned within the project area, but non-motorized recreators including electric bike users are able to pass on the road network of the WFWA.

C. Department of the Interior Priorities:

1. ***Identifying steps to accelerate responsible development of renewable energy on public lands and waters.*** *We are investing in climate research and environmental innovation to incentivize the rapid deployment of clean energy solutions, while reviewing existing programs to restore balance on America's public lands and waters to benefit current and future generations.*

The project is not located on public lands or waters.

2. ***Strengthening the government-to-government relationship with sovereign Tribal nations.*** *We understand that tribal sovereignty and self-governance, as well as honoring the federal trust responsibility to Tribal Nations, must be the cornerstones of federal Indian policy.*

The project, which takes place wholly within the traditional subsistence grounds of the Washoe Tribe of NV and CA, integrates the Tribe into planning and outreach, including a cultural resource inventory and assessment to assess historic Washoe use within the project area.

3. ***Making investments to support the Administration's goal of creating millions of family-supporting and union jobs.*** *This includes establishing a new Climate Conservation Corps Initiative to put a new generation of Americans to work conserving and restoring public lands and waters, increasing reforestation, increasing carbon sequestration in the agricultural sector, protecting biodiversity, improving access to recreation, and addressing the changing climate.*

This project utilizes active forest management to reduce the risk of long-term forest cover loss by catastrophic wildfire. In doing so, wildlife habitat and biodiversity are protected, as are carbon pools and sinks in trees which help combat climate change.

4. ***Working to conserve at least 30% each of our lands and waters by the year 2030.***  
*We will work to protect biodiversity, slow extinction rates, and help leverage natural climate solutions by conserving 30% of America's lands and waters by 2030. This relies on support for local, state, private, and tribally led conservation and restoration efforts that are underway across America.*

This project led by local stakeholders and agencies will lead forest conservation efforts through hazardous fuel and forest restoration treatments.

5. ***Centering equity and environmental justice.*** *The impacts of the multiple crises in the United States are not evenly distributed in our society. Communities of color, low-income families, and rural and indigenous communities have long suffered disproportionate and cumulative harm from air pollution, water pollution, and toxic sites. At every step of the way, Interior will engage diverse stakeholders across the country, as well as conduct formal consultation with Tribes in recognition of the U.S. government's trust responsibilities.*

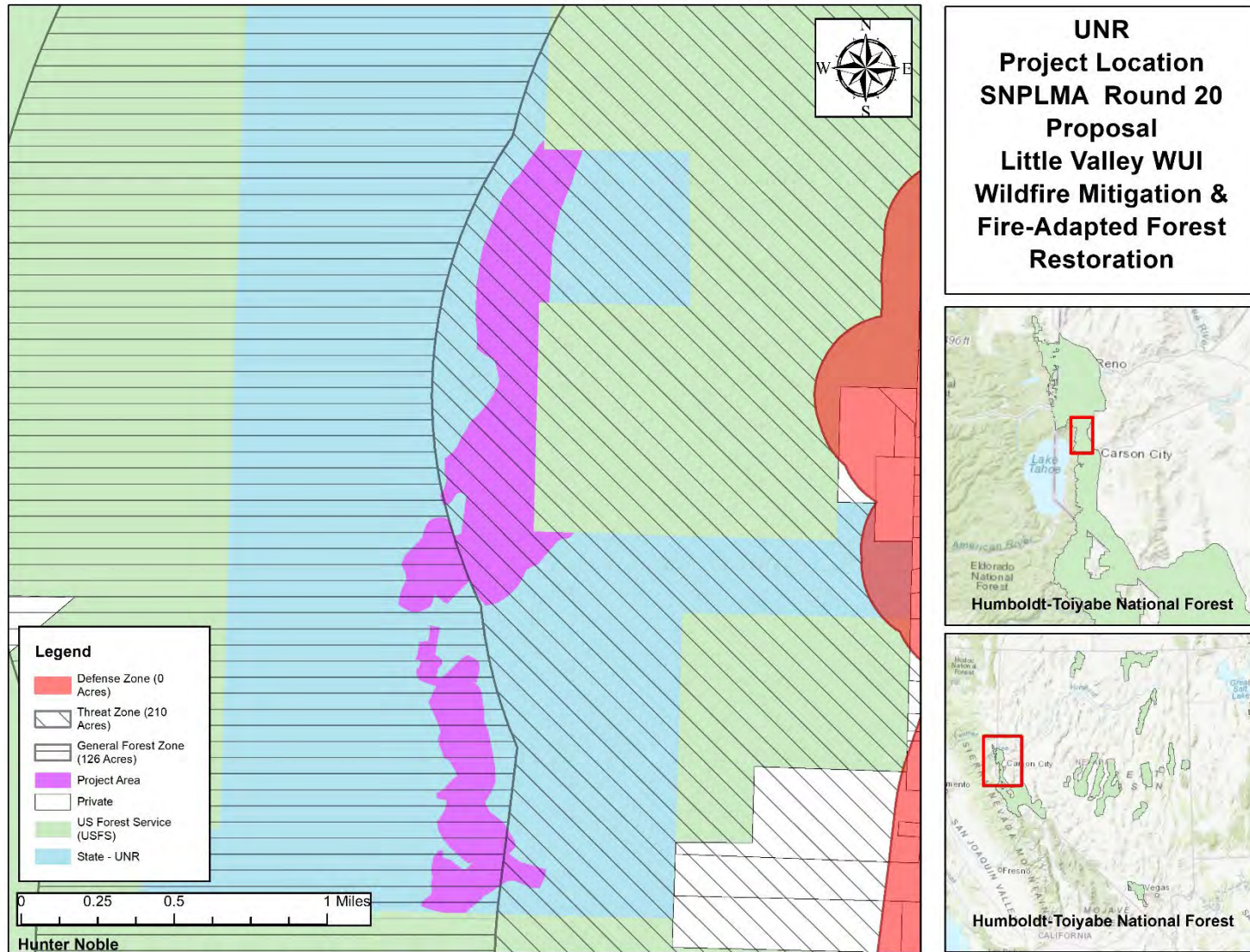
This project will actively engage with the diverse stakeholders of the landscape, particularly the Washoe Tribe of NV & CA, whose primary subsistence grounds wholly encompass the project area.

#### D. USDA Forest Service Priorities:

1. ***Controlling the COVID-19 pandemic***  
 The project the comply with all current or future COVID-related executive orders and issues.
2. ***Providing economic relief***  
 This project supports local economics by proving opportunities for local workers, operators, and technicians, as well as revenue for local communities.
3. ***Tackling climate change***  
 By reducing the risk of high severity fire and the associated impacts of diminished carbon pools in live and dead trees, fuels, and soils, as well as carbon sequestration capabilities of live trees, this project reduces carbon emissions that drive climate change.
4. ***Advancing racial equity***  
 The project integrates the Washoe Tribe of NV and CA into planning and outreach of the project, including a full cultural resource inventory and assessment to assess historic Washoe use of the landscape.

**5. *Improving our workforce and work environment***

Project provides opportunities for training of early forestry workforce through cruising, marking, and project layout activities. The project also will provide hands-on learning opportunities for forestry students at the University of Nevada - Reno to observe active forest operations.



Map 1: Location – Whittell Forest & Wildlife Area

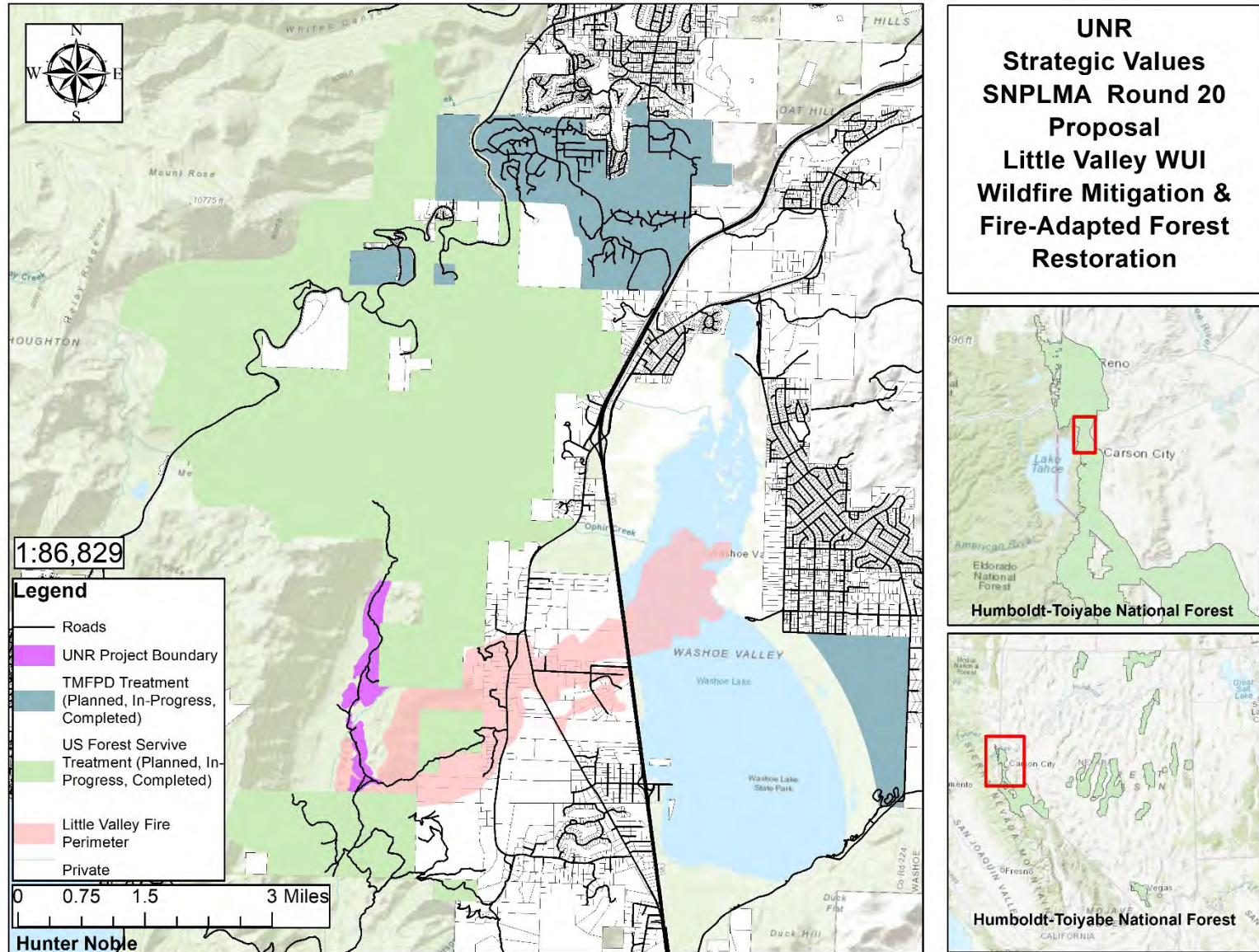


Figure 1: SNPLMA Strategic Values

## N. PERFORMANCE MEASURES

<b>SNPLMA FY2020-FY2024 STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL 1: Sustain the Quality of the Outdoor Environment by Conserving, Preserving, and Restoring Natural and Cultural Resources</b>		
<b>Performance Measures for Wildland Fire Management</b>	<b>Definition of Performance Measure</b>	<b>Quantity</b>
F2 - Acres of Hazardous Fuels Treated – Wildland Urban Interface (WUI)	Report the total number of acres of hazardous fuels treated, enhanced, or restored to reduce wildland fuels hazards and to restore or maintain ecosystem resiliency within the WUI. Where multiple treatments are necessary to meet vegetation management objectives, such as hand thinning followed by re-seeding, each treatment is counted individually.  Report to the nearest whole acre.	250-350
<b>SNPLMA FY2020-FY2024 STRATEGIC PLAN: Other Performance Measures that Also Support the Three Values for SNPLMA Implementation of Sustainability, Connectivity, and Community</b>		
<b>Other Performance Measures</b>	<b>Definition of Performance Measure</b>	<b>Quantity</b>
O5 - Number of Outreach Contacts Made	Report the number of education and outreach contacts made through interpretation and environmental education, such as number of teachers trained, number of participants in workshops, etc.  Report each participant as one unit.	36-60
O7 - Number of Interpretive or Education Presentations Given and/or Community Events Participated in or Hosted	Report the number of interpretive or educational presentations given.  Report each presentation as one unit.	3-5

**O. PHOTOS**

Photo1: An example of current stand conditions in the project area with a high density of young Jeffrey pine.



Photo 2: Several stands in the project area are composed of high densities of lodgepole pine such as those in this photo.





Photo 3: Another stand in the project area of small, nearly closed canopy lodgepole pine.



Photo 4: Riparian zone in the project area with high densities of lodgepole pine encroachment and continuous canopy.



Photo 5: Stand in the project area with high density understory white fir growth and high fuel loads.



Photo 6: Another stand in the project area with high densities of small diameter white fir in understory.

**P. SUPPORT LETTERS**

1. Bureau of Land Management, Carson City District Office
2. USDA Forest Service, Humboldt - Toiyabe National Forest (Consultation and Support Letter)
3. Bureau of Land Management, SNPLMA Division (Consultation Letter)



# United States Department of the Interior



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
Carson City District Office  
5665 Morgan Mill Road  
Carson City, Nevada 89701  
Phone: 775-885-6000 Fax: 775-885-6147  
<http://www.blm.gov/nevada>

In Reply Refer To:  
2710 (NVC02)

**OCT 24 2023**

Board of Regents, NSHE, obo University of Nevada, Reno  
Whittell Forest & Wildlife Area  
Attn: Sarah Bisbing  
[sbisbing@unr.edu](mailto:sbisbing@unr.edu)

Dear Ms. Sarah Bisbing,

This letter is to document the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Carson City District Office's, support for the University of Nevada, Reno Round 20 Southern Nevada Public Lands Management Act (SNPLMA) project proposal for the Little Valley WUI Wildfire Mitigation & Fire-Adapted Forest Restoration project.

This project proposal is to treat up to 350 acres of the threat and general forest zones within the West Washoe Valley WUI. The project proposal objectives include reducing the risk of catastrophic high severity wildfire on the Whittell Forest and Wildlife Area and the surrounding WUI. Although the proposed project is not within the BLM's administrative jurisdiction, the BLM is supportive of hazardous fuels projects that focus on community health and safety, enhancement of wildlife habitat, and reducing risks of future habitat loss.

Sincerely,

Paul Fuselier  
Acting Field Manager  
Sierra Front Field Office

e-cc: Gianna Vaccaro, SNPLMA Program Manager, SNPLMA Division, [gvaccaro@blm.gov](mailto:gvaccaro@blm.gov)



Forest  
Service

Humboldt-Toiyabe  
National Forest

Carson Ranger District  
1536 S. Carson Street  
Carson City, NV 89701  
(775) 882-2766 Fax (775) 884-8199

File Code:  
Route To:

Date: 10/20/2023

Subject: Support Letter for Whittell Forest and Wildlife Area Round 20 SNPLMA Proposal

To: Dear SNPLMA Review Committee:

The U.S. Forest Service offers their full support for the Whittell Forest and Wildlife Area's SNPLMA Round 20, federal funding request. The Whittell Forest and Wildlife Area requests this funding to support fuel reduction efforts in the Little Valley area.

West Washoe Valley has been identified as a high-risk wildfire area per the Nevada Department of Forestry's, Community Risk and Hazard Assessment Tool. The area proposed for treatment is in the Little Valley area west of Washoe Valley, east of the Lake Tahoe Basin and south of Reno NV. The high-risk rating is due to the fuel types and community risks. The vegetation ranges from mixed coniferous forest, medium to low growing sagebrush and light flashy fuels. These ranges are often characterized with a continuous ground layer of flammable pine needles and mixed shrubs in forest openings that can be readily ignited. Lightning and human caused wildfires are of great concern in this community because of high fuel loading, the number of homes present, difficult egress and Little Valley's importance as a watershed and a drinking source to Virginia City.

I support funding the Whittell Forest and Wildlife Area's SNPLMA Round 20 application so they may implement needed fuel reduction efforts in Little Valley to make the community and the general forest more resilient to wildfire. Whittell Forest is a substantial landowner adjacent to the Humboldt-Toiyabe N.F. and deserves continued support to achieve collaborative goals in making our landscapes more resilient to wildland fire.

**MATTHEW  
ZUMSTEIN** Digitally signed by  
MATTHEW ZUMSTEIN  
Date: 2023.10.23  
12:27:27 -07'00'

Matthew Zumstein  
District Ranger





# United States Department of the Interior



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
Southern Nevada District Office  
4701 N. Torrey Pines Dr.  
Las Vegas, Nevada 89130  
<http://www.blm.gov/nv>

In Reply Refer To:  
2710 (NVS0055)

October 25, 2023

Board of Regents, NSHE, obo University of Nevada, Reno  
Whittell Forest & Wildlife Area  
Attn: Sarah Bisbing  
[sbisbing@unr.edu](mailto:sbisbing@unr.edu)

Dear Ms. Bisbing:

This correspondence acknowledges the participation of the Board of Regent, NSHE, University of Reno, Whittell Forest & Wildlife Area (UNR) in the Southern Nevada Public Land Management Act (SNPLMA) Round 20 Hazardous Fuels Reduction and Wildfire Prevention (Fuels) consultation meeting held on October 5, 2023. I would like to thank the UNR for their partnership in the SNPLMA program for the development of Fuels projects for the public and resource benefits and for participating in Round 20.

UNR has met the Bureau of Land Management consultation requirement concerning the Fuels Round 20 project nomination as described below.

**Little Valley Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) Wildfire Mitigation & Fire-Adapted Forest Restoration** – This proposal is to implement a hazardous fuels reduction project over 250-350 acres on the Whittell Forest & Wildlife Area to restore fire-adapted forest conditions and reduce the risk of high-severity wildfire in this high-priority fireshed along the Sierra Front WUI

Should this proposal be selected to receive SNPLMA funding, this project is subject to the requirements of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. The SNPLMA program will assist with this process and any coordination with the State Historic Preservation Office and federally recognized Tribes that may be needed.

Any questions regarding the Fuels program please contact Gianna Vaccaro, SNPLMA Program Manager at 702-515-5120 or [gvaccaro@blm.gov](mailto:gvaccaro@blm.gov).

Sincerely,  
**ROBERT  
WANDEL**

Robert C. Wandel  
Assistant District Manager

Digitally signed by ROBERT  
WANDEL  
Date: 2023.10.25 07:31:49 -07'00'

e-cc: Robin Michel, Archaeologist, SNPLMA Division  
Gianna Vaccaro, SNPLMA Program Manager, SNPLMA Division

**SNPLMA Round 20  
Hazardous Fuels Reduction and Wildfire Prevention  
Meadow Restoration and Fuels Reduction  
Nomination Addendum**

**Nomination:** Tab 3 Meadow Restoration and Fuels Reduction

**Agency:** USDA Forest Service, Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit

**COVER PAGE**

The nomination instructions did state the amount being requested should be in whole dollars on the “Cover Page”. There were cents included on the cover page.

**Section C. PURPOSE STATEMENT**

A range of acres was not included to clearly describe purpose statement. Though under the “Project Deliverable and Acres” section the number of acres was outlined – approximately 645 acres to be treated.

**Section G. LEVEL OF PROJECT READINESS FOR IMPLEMENTATION**

Answering the question if one applied for other funds is either a yes or no answer not a N/A. It does apply to all proposals.

**Section O. PHOTOS**

The nomination instructions stated the maximum number of photos is 6. A collage of 8 photos on one jpg is not doable. The size of the photos was so small not worth including in the nomination package and it exceeded the maximum limit.

**Southern Nevada Public Land Management Act  
Hazardous Fuels Reduction and Wildfire Prevention  
Round 20**

U.S. Forest Service, Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit



Meadow Restoration and Fuels Reduction Project

**Amount Requested: \$2,133,825.00**



## A. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

### a. Describe Relationship to prior Approved Phases or Related SNPLMA Projects and Anticipated Future Phases

The proposed Meadow Restoration and Fuels Reduction project (Project) would implement fuels reduction, hydrologic restoration, and maintenance burning in four of the six highest priority meadows on the Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit (LTBMU). These actions were planned under the Restoration of Fire Adapted Ecosystems Decision Notice, signed on April 25, 2016, which is consistent with the objectives, standards, and guidelines of the 1988 Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit Land and Resource Management Plan. The purpose of the Project is to increase meadow and downstream watershed resilience to wildfire and climate change. The meadows were prioritized based on severity of conifer encroachment, past grazing impacts on plant community and hydrological processes, declining vegetative trend, and existing or potential to provide critical habitat for Threatened, Endangered, Proposed, Candidate, or Sensitive (TEPCS) species as demonstrated by long term meadow condition monitoring.

This Project includes first entry treatments in and around three general forest meadows (Freel, Hell Hole, and Meiss; 645 acres total) and maintenance treatments in and around one defense zone meadow (Baldwin; 170 acres total). The emphasis zone is general forest and fuel reduction treatments in Freel (50 acres), Hell Hole (66 acres), and Meiss meadows (529 acres) would involve hand thinning and piling of conifers, piling and lop and scattering of slash and bole wood, and pile burning. These treatments would be completed within the meadows and within an upland buffer at Freel and Meiss. Trees larger than 18 inches that are considered a seed source for future encroachment may be felled, girdled, or piles may be placed underneath to encourage tree mortality. These treatments would increase meadow size to improve function as a natural fuel break, increase meadow wetness to improve vegetation condition and drought resilience, and increase resilience to wildfire by reducing potential fire severity. Hydrologic restoration in Freel and Meiss meadows would involve headcut repair. Headcuts would be stabilized by hand crews using on-site rock, log material, willows, or other vegetative material. Headcuts larger than the capabilities of a hand crew are outside the scope of this project; in general, this will limit the project to repairing headcuts less than approximately 2 feet high. Headcut repair would reduce stream channel erosion and wetland soil loss, increase post-fire sediment storage capacity, enhance wetland vegetation condition and Threatened, Endangered, Sensitive, Proposed and Candidate (TESPC) species habitat, and increase meadow wetness resulting in greater resistance to conifer encroachment and wildfire spread. Due to the remote nature of these areas, hand and fire crews would need to spike out to sites and supplies would need to be delivered by UTVs and helicopter sling loads.

First entry fuels reduction treatments and broadcast burning were implemented in Baldwin meadow in 2018. All conifers up to 30-inch diameter were felled, slash was lopped and scattered and piled, and a broadcast burn was completed resulting in 80% of the wood in the slash piles was consumed. In the five years following the controlled burn, lodgepole pine seedlings have already begun regenerating in mass. In 2022,

approximately 6,500 seedlings averaging 3 inches in height were hand pulled across 10 acres of the treated meadow. A maintenance burn is needed in Baldwin meadow within the next five years to prevent recruitment of seedlings into larger size classes and to reduce the activity fuels in the adjacent uplands to maintain the function of the meadow as a natural fuel break and its resistance to climate change. This burn would include the adjacent upland forested area, treated under the 2012 South Shore Fuels Reduction and Healthy Forest Restoration Project Record of Decision, to consume residual activity fuels and increase the fuel break area in the defense zone. This Project component would include completion of fireline preparation and broadcast burn implementation.

Planning for the Restoration of Fire Adapted Ecosystems project was funded in SNPLMA Round 11 and received \$375,000 for planning and environmental compliance. The SNPLMA Round 18 Nomination for Hazardous Fuels Reduction and Wildfire Prevention, "LTBMU Prescribed Fire Implementation", account F040, awarded \$2,444,225 towards prescribed fire implementation in the Lake Tahoe Basin. These funds were for ignition of 2,500 acres of piles within the LTBMU WUI and also 737 acres of pile/understory burning in Benwood, Star, Big, and Meeks meadows. Benwood and Star meadows are the remaining two of six priority meadows included in the Restoration of Fire Adapted Ecosystems.

**b. Describe how the proposed project will protect or enhance wildlife habitat and/or resilience vegetative communities.**

Meadows offer important wildlife habitat by providing food, water, and shelter for a variety of species. They are also important for watershed resilience to wildfire and climate change. Functioning wet meadows serve as wildfire fuel breaks, sediment and carbon capture areas, and provide critical habitat for numerous terrestrial and aquatic species. Functioning meadows also buffer extreme storm events, increase water availability throughout the year, reduce erosion of fine sediment, and improve water quality. These ecosystem services have been suppressed or lost by the degradation of meadow condition from unsustainable historic grazing practices, fire exclusion, stream incision, conifer encroachment, climate change, and recreation intensity.

Funding from Round 20 SNPLMA will be utilized to complete forest thinning, piling, lop and scattering, pile burning, broadcast burning, and headcut repair in four of the Lake Tahoe Basin's highest priority meadows which support TESPC fish, wildlife, and plant species and a municipal watershed. Hell Hole meadow is the only occupied habitat for the federally endangered Sierra Nevada yellow legged frog in the Lake Tahoe Basin and contains willow flycatcher emphasis habitat and several Forest Service sensitive plant species. Conifer removal will enhance habitat quality for yellow legged frog by increasing area suitable for basking sites. It will also enhance willow flycatcher habitat by increasing willow cover and sensitive wetland dependent plant species by reducing shading and increasing meadow wetness. The upland buffer around Freel meadow supports federally threatened white bark pine. Removal of competing lodgepole pine and

white fire and their associated fuels will increase resilience of this species to wildfire, drought, and insect outbreaks. Meiss meadow is occupied habitat for the federally endangered Sierra Nevada red fox and the federally threatened Lahontan cutthroat trout. Headcut repair will improve stream channel habitat and breeding areas for cutthroat trout and conifer removal will improve hunting habitat for red fox by supporting increased prey abundance.

Although three out of these four meadows are outside of the defense zone, functioning meadows, specifically wet meadows, create fire breaks and suppression opportunities before fire reaches the WUI and buffers post fire watershed response before stormwaters reach public water sources. Left unrestored, these meadows have lost capacity to serve as fuel breaks and capture sediment but also produce a source of fine sediment to streams and fast-growing fuel beds that threaten urban areas and associated critical values as well as important habitat for TESP fish, wildlife, and plant species.

**c. Acknowledgement of Stand-Alone Project and no Guarantee of Funding for Future Phases**

We acknowledge that there is no guarantee for future phases to be funded and can confirm that this project is a viable stand-alone project with specific deliverables that will be accomplished.

## **B. SNPLMA STRATEGIC PLAN VALUES**

Hazardous Fuels Reduction and Wildfire Prevention projects have two goals identified in the Strategic Plan:

- Goal 1: Sustain the quality of the outdoor environment by conserving, preserving, and restoring natural and cultural resources.
- Goal 2: Improve the quality of life for all publics in urban and rural communities by enhancing recreational opportunities that connect people with the outdoor environment.

Nominated projects should meet these goals by focusing on the three SNPLMA core values, connectivity, sustainability, and community. Every nomination must explain how the three values are promoted by the project.

1. Sustainability:

The project will sustain the quality of the outdoor environment through vegetation management actions that will restore and protect natural and cultural resources. It will create systems resilient to disturbances such as climate change and wildfire. The vegetation management actions will maintain or increase the quality of natural resources and protect their ecological integrity and sustainability.

2. Connectivity:

The Project will enhance and preserve the Baldwin, Freel, and Meiss meadows link the public to natural areas of outstanding scenic and recreational value. Meiss Meadow is intersected by the Pacific Crest Trail, a congressionally designated National Scenic Trail and provides expansive views of wildflowers and peaks across the headwaters of the Upper Truckee River. Freel meadow is a scenic feature along the Tahoe Rim Trail, a congressionally designated National Recreation Trail. Baldwin Meadow surrounds the access to one of the public Lake Tahoe beaches and the open area offers unimpeded views of Mt Tallac and Freel Peak which would be obscured from the recreation site were the meadow allowed to convert to forest. Each of the four Project meadows are formed in floodplains of tributaries of Lake Tahoe, a designated Outstanding Natural Resource Water und the Clean Water Act.

By decreasing conifer encroachment into meadow habitats and repairing headcuts in meadow channels, natural meadow functions will be restored. This will improve water availability and quality, improve habitat quality and connectivity, and incorporate into the strategic network for fuel treatments.

3. Community:

This project will improve the quality of life for all publics who live in and visit Lake Tahoe by reducing wildfire risk to communities and improving water quality, quantity, as well as wetland conditions and habitats. Forest ecosystems, including meadows, that are resilient to natural disturbance provide sustainable recreational opportunities and reduced risk of wildfire to adjoining communities.

## **C. PURPOSE STATEMENT**

The USDA Forest Service Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit will restore Baldwin, Freel, Hell Hole, and Meiss meadow resilience to wildfire and drought by reducing conifer and upland species invasion through hand thinning, reducing hazardous fuel loading by pile burning, re-establishing conditions under which broadcast burning can safely reduce future conifer recruits and upland shrub and herbaceous species, and improving hydrologic function through headcut repair. This restoration approach supports adaptations to changing future conditions and reduces the threat of catastrophic fire to communities around South Lake Tahoe, CA and threatened and endangered species habitat.

## **D. PROJECT DELIVERABLES AND ACRES**

1. Primary Deliverables:

The following primary deliverables will be accomplished:

- Treatment unit recon, compliance with natural and cultural resource protection measures, layout and preparation for contracting of meadow and surrounding upland forest restoration actions. The project will accomplish layout and contract preparation for approximately 645 acres of watershed restoration in upland forests, meadow and riparian habitats.

- Hand thin and pile burn approximately 645 acres within four meadows and surrounding upland forests in the general forest zone. Actual acres treated will be determined by the costs for conducting hand thinning, service contracts, and pile burning contracts at the time of project implementation so as not to exceed the approved budget. This will include the contract rates for hand thinning and piling of slash, removal of biomass material, and fuels treatments such as pile burning in the upland areas. This will also include the USFS personnel rates for hand thinning, girdling, and lop and scatter within the meadows. The final acres may also change as a result of currently unknown circumstances that may not be discovered until implementation, such as changed information on wildlife species, newly discovered heritage resource sites, etc.
- Broadcast burn approximately 170 acres in the defense zone near private inholdings and recreation residence tracts along Emerald Bay Highway.

## 2. Anticipated Deliverable

- Improvement/upgrading of forest trail BMPs and water crossings within meadow boundaries.
- Enhancement or restoration of 2-20 headcuts within meadow boundaries.
- Conservation Education/Community Outreach through 5-15 social media and public notifications, 2-10 community and classroom events, and installation of an interpretive kiosk at Baldwin meadow to educate the public on Tahoe Living with Fire program.
- Mitigation of invasive plant establishment spread from implementation activities.
- Supporting enhancement of culturally significant plant species

## 3. Standard Deliverables:

- Project management and SNPLMA reporting.
- Develop project work plan and budget to support project implementation.
- Prepare, award, and administer hazardous fuels reduction hand thinning service contracts and timber stewardship sale or service contracts.
  - Prepare, award, and administer hand thin/pile hazardous fuels reduction contracts including all contract inspections, final payment, and contract close-out.
  - Prepare, award and administer mechanical fuels reduction contracts including all contract inspections, final payment and contract closeout.
- Close out all obligations associated with this project.
- Prepare the project closing letter and final financial record.
- Conduct site visit and file review with SNPLMA Division and close out the project in the SNPLMA database.

**Acres:** Calculate specific acres of proposed treatment of each zone (defense, threat, and general forest) and clearly identify the emphasis zone if more than one zone is identified in the nomination.

645 acres in general forest zone and 170 acres in defense zone. The emphasis zone is general forest.

## E. PROJECT LOCATION

### Physical location of project; identify County (s) and State(s):

Baldwin, Freel, Hellhole, and Meiss Meadows are located within the Lake Tahoe Basin on National Forest System Lands in Eldorado County, California. Baldwin Meadow is in the Tallac Creek watershed; Baldwin Meadow Township 13N, Range 17E, Section 26. Freel Meadow is in the Trout Creek watershed located in the Freel Inventoried Roadless Area; Township 11N, Range 18E, Section 12. Hell Hole Meadow is in the Trout Creek watershed located in the Freel Inventoried Roadless Area; Township 11N, Range 18E, Section 1. Meiss Meadow is in the headwaters of the Upper Truckee River and located in Dardanelles Inventoried Roadless Area; Township 10N, Range 18E, Sections 8, 9, and 16.

### Identify Congressional District(s):

Fourth

### Latitude and Longitude:

38.810441 / -119.947234

## F. PROJECT TIMEFRAME

6 years, 0 months

Year	Task	Est. Acres	Notes
Year 1	Complete section 7 consultation under ESA for effects to white bark pine and Sierra Nevada red fox.	320	White bark pine (WBP) was listed in 2022, after the 2015 decision notice was signed. Sierra Nevada was first observed in the Lake Tahoe Basin in 2023.
Year 1	Initiate resource surveys for hand thinning in compliance with NHPA, ESA, and NEPA.	500	Wildlife, aquatics, botany, and heritage
Year 2	Complete prep and layout for hand thinning and award thinning contract	400-500	
Year 2	Complete resource surveys for hand thinning	150	Wildlife, aquatics, botany, and heritage

Year 2	Complete pre-implementation weed treatments	50	
Year 3	Complete implementation of hand thinning	645	
Year 3	Complete headcut repairs	N/A	
Year 3	Complete prep of broadcast burning	170	
Year 3-5	Implement broadcast burn	170	Implementation of burn possible depending on weather conditions and staffing availability.
Year 5	Complete pile burning	400-500	
Year 5	Complete post implementation weed treatments	50	
Year 6	Closeout all contracts/agreements	N/A	

## G. LEVEL OF PROJECT READINESS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Is this a shovel-ready project?  Yes  No

Restoration of Fire Adapted Decision Notice signed in 2015. South Shore Fuels Reduction and Healthy Forest Restoration Project Record of Decision signed in 2012. US Fish and Wildlife consultation completed for Sierra Nevada yellow legged frog in 2015.

Have you applied, received, or is there the opportunity to obtain funding from another source for this project? Please list the additional funding opportunities received or applied for and indicate whether it is federal or nonfederal funding.

N/A

## H. 10-YEAR MULTI-JURISDICTIONAL PLAN

Addresses whether the nomination is consistent with its 10-year multi-jurisdictional strategy and how important the proposed project would be in achieving the strategy of the plan. Describe how the proposed project relates to the specific elements of its multi-jurisdictional plan.

The Lake Tahoe Basin Multi-Jurisdictional Fuel Reduction and Wildfire Prevention Strategy (2014) identified several values at risk of catastrophic wildfire: 1. Communities and public safety, 2. socioeconomic considerations, 3. recreation and scenic resources, 4. water quality, watersheds, and riparian zones, 5. wildland habitat and forest vegetation, 6. air quality.

This project will reduce the risk to all of these values, either directly, or indirectly. Risk to #1 is reduced because properly functioning wet meadows act as fuel breaks and act as connectors to other fire control features to reduce the potential for catastrophic fire to spread into the WUI. Risk to #2 is reduced because the visitor experience is enhanced by healthy and resilient ecosystems sustained into the future which contributes to a stable tourism-based economy in the Lake Tahoe Basin. Local businesses will benefit by implementing the Project, as well as from purchasing power. Risk to recreation and scenic resources is directly reduced due to expansion of expansive meadow view sheds along designated National Scenic and Recreation trails through conifer removal, improved wildlife and wildflower viewing opportunities through habitat enhancement, and more sustainable conditions through increased vegetation community resilience. Reducing risk water quality, watersheds, riparian zones, wildland habitat, and forest vegetation are the primary objectives of the project and would be a direct result of its implementation. Reduced risk to air quality is another important benefit that comes from restoring meadows as burning occurs under favorable conditions, and potential for large, high severity fire is reduced.

## I. PROJECT BUDGET

### Cost-Benefit Analysis

These meadows are in remote areas and are not accessible by roads. As a result, implementation costs are higher than those in the lower elevation project areas and the combined cost for planning and restoring 815 acres of meadows and uplands is estimated as \$2,620/acre. An estimate of \$125 per acre for contracting, prep, and compliance, \$2,500 per acre for thinning and piling, \$2,000 per acre pile burning, and \$1,350 per acre broadcast burning was used for implementation cost.

### Partnership and/or Contributed Funds

N/A

<b>Cost Categories</b>	<b>SNPLMA</b>	<b>Non-Federal Contribution</b>
1. Personnel (labor plus benefits)	\$ 381,925.00	\$ -
2. Travel	\$ 22,400.00	\$ -
3. Training	\$ -	\$ -
4. Equipment	\$ 120,000.00	\$ -
5. Supplies/Materials	\$ 216,500.00	\$ -
6. Contracts and/or Agreements	\$ 1,363,000.00	\$ -
7. Vehicle Use	\$ 30,000.00	\$ -
8. Other Necessary Expenses	\$ -	\$ -
<b>9. TOTAL PROJECT BUDGET</b>	<b>\$ 2,133,825.00</b>	<b>\$ -</b>



## J. KEY CONTACTS

Authorized Officer: Erick Walker  
 Email: erick.walker@usda.gov  
 Phone Number: 530.543.2640

Project Manager: Emma Williams  
 Email: emma.williams@usda.gov  
 Phone Number: 530.543.2842

Budget Officer: Tegan Shermikas  
 Email: Tegan.shermikas@usda.gov  
 Phone Number: 541.603.8321

## K. RANKING CRITERIA

Provide a narrative response to the following Criteria and Factors that apply to the nomination.

**1. Improves the community within and/or adjacent to the project area.** Projects are only eligible for Factors A1, A2, or A3; select and answer ONLY ONE, based on where most of the proposed project are lies within. Answer Factors B and C as they apply to the nomination.

A. Addresses immediate public health and safety and community infrastructure.

1. Project is within the Defense Zone, generally an area within 0.25 mile of life and property, as depicted by the most current Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) map in the applicable plan.

Answer: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

2. Project is within the Threat Zone, generally an area between 0.25 mile and 1.50 miles of life and property, as depicted by the most current WUI map in the applicable plan.

Answer: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

3. Project is within the general forest or other lands beyond the WUI (generally greater than 1.5 miles from life and property), as depicted by the most current map in the applicable plan.

The Project emphasizes general forest treatments and includes remote meadows greater than 1.5 miles from the WUI. These meadows provide fuel breaks and opportunities for fire suppression actions before wildfire reaches the WUI. Headcut repairs would increase meadow storm water and post-fire watershed response buffering capacity which would protect downstream communities of

Meyers, CA and South Lake Tahoe, CA from flooding and associated infrastructure damage.

B. Promotes protection of source water (rivers and lakes) or municipal watersheds.

Yes, this project would enhance meadow condition by addressing headcuts in meadows which contribute sediment to tributaries of the Lake Tahoe Basin, a municipal watershed. Project would also reduce fire severity in treated areas, reducing vegetative cover loss, and increase meadow capacity to capture post-fire sediment transport which would protect quality of drinking water sources when a wildfire occurs.

C. Project includes education and outreach to the community on Living with Fire or Fire Adapted Communities and/or the importance of fuels reduction on federal, state, and local government land.

This project includes development of community outreach and education products and dissemination using news releases and social media posts. Outreach content would focus on informing the local public on progress of fuel reduction projects through the Living with Fire program. LTBMU would install an interpretive kiosk at Baldwin Meadow to educate the public on importance of fuels reduction projects and the role meadows play in protecting communities, water sources, and wildlife habitat.

2. **Improves the connection of fuels reduction activities and wildlife habitat.** Respond to each of the following.

A. Project protects or enhances wildlife habitat and/or resilient vegetative communities.

The meadows in this project were prioritized in part due to their outstanding wildlife habitat value. The Project would directly enhance occupied habitat of the federally endangered Sierra Nevada yellow legged frog and Sierra Nevada red fox and the federally threatened white bark pine and Lahontan cutthroat trout. Reduction of hazardous fuel conditions which would increase habitat resilience of all species, conifer removal would increase frog basking habitat and increase resistance of white bark pine to fire and drought, headcut repair would reduce sedimentation of trout and frog spawning habitat, and increased vegetation cover and condition would increase prey abundance in fox hunting territories. The increase in meadow wetness from conifer removal and headcut repair would enhance willow flycatcher habitat by increasing willow cover. The project would also increase meadow and downstream watershed resilience to invasive plant introduction and spread, wildfire, and drought by reducing wildfire severity in the treated areas, increasing meadow wetness and hydrologic function, and increasing meadow and riparian vegetation condition and function.

B. Project enhances the effectiveness of other treatments in progress or complete.

The Project would enhance the effectiveness of the South Shore Fuels Reduction and Healthy Forest Restoration Project by consuming activity fuels associated with past mechanical fuel reduction treatments in the upland forests surrounding Baldwin meadow. The restoration of Meiss meadow would enhance the effectiveness of the Lahontan Cutthroat Trout Restoration project (SNPLMA F083, F119, and F139) by improving breeding habitat for this species in the Upper Truckee River.

C. The project is planning for or implementing a treatment that is strategically located to connect to planned or existing projects on the landscape.

Past fuels reduction projects in the Lake Tahoe Basin have focused on the defense and threat zones. Current planning efforts are building off of this work to extend fuels reduction into the general forest to reduce extent of extreme fire behavior, increase fire suppression opportunities on the landscape before it reaches the WUI, and increase forest and watershed resilience. Restoration of Fire Adapted Ecosystems, Big Meadow Creek Watershed Fire Regime Restoration, Aspen Community Restoration Project, and Caldor Restoration projects are existing and planned projects that connect the South Tahoe Fuels Treatment Project and South Shore Fuels Reduction and Healthy Forest Restoration Project to the broader landscape to protect the communities of South Lake Tahoe, CA and Meyers, CA. Meadows and aspen stands serve as natural fuel breaks on the landscape and are strategic features to anchor fuels reduction projects. This project would implement thinning and pile burning in the remaining three of the total six planned Restoration of Fire Adapted Ecosystem meadows. Together with the Big Meadow Creek Watershed Fire Regime Restoration and Aspen Community Restoration Project, these treatments would create a ring of natural fuel breaks upslope of the Caldor fire burned area. The planned Caldor Restoration project would reduce heavy fuel loadings associated with fire killed trees on the slopes between the WUI and the ring of natural fuel breaks enhanced by this Project and existing projects. All together, these projects will increase landscape connectivity of fuel reduction projects around high-risk communities, increasing their combined effectiveness at reducing wildfire severity, increasing wildfire suppression opportunities, and moving towards reintroducing fire into the landscapes to maintain desired fuel and watershed conditions.

3. **Improves sustainability of the multijurisdictional 10-year plans, environment, and financial resources.** Respond to each of the following.

A. Improve the sustainability of the forest health and ecosystem function (e.g., stand density, desired species mix and age, tree health, etc.).

This Project will restore hydrologic and vegetation function in four highest priority meadows in the Lake Tahoe Basin. Restored hydrologic function from conifer removal and headcut repair will increase sustainability of meadow wetness, downstream baseflows, water quality, and meadow and riparian vegetation condition. Upland forest

thinning around the meadows will increase sustainability of forest health by reducing competition for water resources during drought conditions and increasing resistance of remaining trees to insect outbreaks by increasing tree vigor. The thinning will also increase treated forest resilience to wildfire by reducing likelihood of active crown fire from reduced connectivity of crown and ladder fuels. Through these actions and outcomes, the project will reestablish conditions suitable for safely reintroducing fire onto the landscape to increase sustainability of forest health and ecosystem function.

- B. Improve habitat for sensitive species and Threatened and Endangered species. Includes mitigation and/or minimization measures when treatment in sensitive habitat is unavoidable.

A primary objective of this project is to improve habitat of endangered Sierra Nevada yellow legged frog, endangered Sierra Nevada red fox, threatened Lahontan cutthroat trout, threatened white bark pine, sensitive willow flycatcher, and several sensitive wetland species including Bolander's candle moss and multiple species of moonwort. Resource protection measures developed in the NEPA and ESA compliance processes are designed to optimize the long-term habitat benefits of this project while minimizing short-term impacts during implementation. Additional conservation measures to protect and enhance habitat for white bark pine and Sierra Nevada red fox may be developed during section 7 consultation prior to implementation.

- C. Include broadcast prescribed fire for resource management objectives for sustainable landscapes.

An objective of this project is to reestablish conditions where broadcast prescribed fire can be safely applied to maintain meadow condition. These conditions were successfully achieved at Baldwin meadow when it was thinned, pile burned, and broadcast burned in 2018. This Project includes implementing a broadcast burn in the defense zone at Baldwin meadow to maintain vegetation condition and fuel break function by removing prolific lodgepole pine regeneration.

- D. The method of treatment is fiscally responsible for the project area by balancing resource objectives, values at risk, and cost per acre factors or cost-benefit analysis.

The Project is designed to minimize effects to sensitive resources while optimizing resource benefits. Conducting a broadcast burn at Baldwin meadow in the next five years will maintain desired fuel and vegetation condition at a lower cost than if lodgepole pine were left unmanaged and recruited into size classes that required hand thinning and pile burning. There is no road access to Freel, Hell Hole, and Meiss meadows and all work will be completed by hand. Rather than construct roads to support mechanical treatment and crew access, personnel will hike in and camp on sight and equipment and supplies will be transported on small UTVs and by helicopter. Priority pile burning projects in the Lake Tahoe Basin are focused in the defense zone so contract type two fire crews will be necessary to ensure personnel resources are available during acceptable burn windows to minimize the period these

piles remain on the landscape. The visibility of Freel, Meiss, and Baldwin meadows from heavily visited recreation features (Tahoe Rim Trail, PCT, and developed recreation site) maximizes public exposure to the importance and benefits of fuel reduction projects and how they connect to Fire Adapted Communities, scenic quality, watershed health, and resilient forests. The Project also supports the tourism industry in the Lake Tahoe Basin which attracts visitors from all over the world to access areas of outstanding scenic quality. By increasing the ecosystem resilience to drought and wildfire, this Project will support the sustainability of this industry by enhancing and maintaining scenic quality. Although the remote nature of this Project increases per acre treatment costs, the position of these meadows in the watershed maximizes area of indirect downstream benefits from increased stream base flow, water quality, and improved aquatic habitat.

4. **Demonstrates sound project management and quality control measures.** Respond to each of the following.

- A. Project goals and implementation processes are clear, measurable, achievable, and demonstrable.

This project would implement meadow restoration and fuels reduction treatments on 815 acres in the Lake Tahoe Basin. The environmental analysis for this project was conducted under the National Environmental Policy Act and was designed to prioritize meadows with the greatest need and highest measurable benefit. The LTBMU completes headcut repair in meadows and stream channels routinely and has the expertise and experience to complete these treatments efficiently and effectively. The LTBMU has successfully completed past hazardous fuel reduction and forest health contracts on more than 32,000 acres from 2005 through 2020. Based on this past performance, implementation of this project would be achievable and demonstrable.

- B. Project proponent has the capacity to implement this project in a timely manner (contractor and staff availability, no backlog of current projects, etc.) and within budget.

The LTBMU has completed 50 SNPLMA projects and is actively working on additional projects. The Forest Service has demonstrated over the past 16 years (2005-2021) its capacity to successfully implement SNPLMA projects and has increased in staffing, improved contracting processes, and entered into participating agreements with the National Forest Foundation and Great Basin Institute to support contracting and resource crew hiring efficiencies. The LTBMU has partnered with Calaveras Healthy Impact Product Solutions (CHIPS) to implement meadow restoration and fuels reduction projects including the hand thinning and piling at Star meadow and lodgepole pine removal at Baldwin Meadow. In 2018, LTBMU completed Baldwin meadow hand thinning, piling, and broadcast burning in a single year, demonstrating the ability to complete these types of projects in a timely manner. However, given constraints on contractor availability and safe conditions

for implementing prescribe burns, the Project budget and timeline were developed to allow for constraints on staff and contractor availability and safe conditions for implementing prescribed burns.

C. Is a phase or related component to a previously funded project.

This Project includes four of six priority meadows planned for restoration and fuel reduction under the 2015 Restoration of Fire Adapted Ecosystems Decision Notice. Planning for the Restoration of Fire Adapted Ecosystems project was funded in SNPLMA Round 11 and received \$375,000 for planning and environmental compliance. The SNPLMA Round 18 Nomination for Hazardous Fuels Reduction and Wildfire Prevention, "LTBMU Prescribed Fire Implementation", account F040, awarded \$2,444,225 towards prescribed fire implementation in the Lake Tahoe Basin. These funds will be used, in part, to burn piles at Benwood and Star meadows which are the remaining two of the Restoration of Fire Adapted Ecosystems meadows.

D. Has identified committed non-SNPLMA sources of funding or in-kind contribution in the development and/or implementation of the project.

Answer: N/A

## L. ORDERS AND PRIORITIES

A. Executive Orders (EO):

- ***EO No. 13855: Promoting Active Management of America's Forests, Range Lands to Improve Conditions and Reduce Wildfire Risk***

This project is consistent with Executive Order No. 13855 Promoting Active Management of America's Forests and Rangelands to Improve Conditions and Reduce Wildfire Risk (Executive Order). The Executive Order prescribes three policies to be implemented by the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture, and each align with the activities proposed in the Project.

First, the Executive Order requires DOI and the Forest Service to adopt shared management priorities in partnership with federal land managers, states, tribes, and other landowners. This project implements the 2014 Lake Tahoe Basin Multi-Jurisdictional Fuel Reduction and Wildfire Prevention Strategy as Amended in 2017, which was developed by federal, state, and local government fire agencies and landowners. It shares the same three goals as the National Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy, which are to restore fire resilient landscapes, create fire adapted communities, and enable safe and effective wildfire response.

Second, the Executive Order requires DOI and the Forest Service to coordinate

federal, state, tribal, and local assets for wildfire prevention, suppression, and reducing hazardous fuels. By closely coordinating projects, the Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit is closely coordinating with Tahoe Basin land managers and fire agencies to coordinate the deployment of assets and skills to protect communities and natural resources.

Third, the Executive Order requires DOI and the Forest Service to remove hazardous fuels, increase active management, and support rural economies. The project implements prioritized treatments that protect life and property and support the rural economy of the Basin by providing jobs and utilizing forest restoration byproducts.

- ***EO No. 14005: Ensuring the Future is Made in All of America by All of America's Workers***
- ***EO No. 14063: Use of Project Labor Agreements for Federal Construction Projects (applicable to projects estimated at \$35 million or more)***
- ***EO No. 14072: Strengthening the Nation's Forests, Communities, and Local Economies***
- ***EO No. 14096: Revitalizing Our Nation's Commitment to Environmental Justice for All***

#### B. Secretarial Orders

- ***SO No. 3347: Conservation Stewardship and Outdoor Recreation.***  
Click or tap here to enter text.
- ***SO No. 3356: Hunting, Fishing, Recreational Shooting, and Wildlife Conservation Opportunities and Coordination with States, Tribes and Territories.***  
Click or tap here to enter text.
- ***SO No. 3362: Improving Habitat Quality in Western Big-Game Winter Range and Migration Corridors.***
- ***SO No. 3366: Increasing Recreational Opportunities on Lands and Waters Managed by the U.S. Department of the Interior***
- ***SO No. 3370: Conservation Stewardship and Increasing Public Access to Urban National Wildlife Refuges***
- ***SO No. 3372: Reducing Wildfire Risks on Department of the Interior Land Through Active Management.***

- ***SO No. 3373: Evaluating Public Access in Bureau of Land Management Public Land Disposal and Exchanges (focus is on Sec. 4.b.(3) Potential increased public recreational access to existing public lands resulting from the proposed land acquired through an exchange (acquisition).***
- ***SO No. 3376: Increasing Recreational Opportunities through the use of Electric Bikes.***

C. Department of the Interior Priorities:

1. ***Identifying steps to accelerate responsible development of renewable energy on public lands and waters.*** We are investing in climate research and environmental innovation to incentivize the rapid deployment of clean energy solutions, while reviewing existing programs to restore balance on America's public lands and waters to benefit current and future generations.
2. ***Strengthening the government-to-government relationship with sovereign Tribal nations.*** We understand that tribal sovereignty and self-governance, as well as honoring the federal trust responsibility to Tribal Nations, must be the cornerstones of federal Indian policy.
3. ***Making investments to support the Administration's goal of creating millions of family-supporting and union jobs.*** This includes establishing a new Climate Conservation Corps Initiative to put a new generation of Americans to work conserving and restoring public lands and waters, increasing reforestation, increasing carbon sequestration in the agricultural sector, protecting biodiversity, improving access to recreation, and addressing the changing climate.
4. ***Working to conserve at least 30% each of our lands and waters by the year 2030.*** We will work to protect biodiversity, slow extinction rates, and help leverage natural climate solutions by conserving 30% of America's lands and waters by 2030. This relies on support for local, state, private, and tribally led conservation and restoration efforts that are underway across America.
5. ***Centering equity and environmental justice.*** The impacts of the multiple crises in the United States are not evenly distributed in our society. Communities of color, low-income families, and rural and indigenous communities have long suffered disproportionate and cumulative harm from air pollution, water pollution, and toxic sites. At every step of the way, Interior will engage diverse stakeholders across the country, as well as conduct formal consultation with Tribes in recognition of the U.S. government's trust responsibilities.



D. USDA Forest Service Priorities:

**1. *Controlling the COVID-19 pandemic***

All Federal employees working to support this project are required to be vaccinated against Covid-19. In addition, contractor's hired by the Forest Service will be required to provide proof of vaccination against Covid-19.

**2. *Providing economic relief***

This project will provide jobs to the local Tahoe Basin and surrounding communities through employment of local fire crews, arborist, utility crews, foresters and other forest industry contractors needed to implement forest health and fuels reduction treatments.

**3. *Tackling climate change***

Droughts are a familiar stressor on vegetation in the Lake Tahoe Basin. Climate change is a newly recognized threat to the condition of Sierran meadows that may be a significant contributor to droughts and is likely to exacerbate the problem of meadow drying. Because of their high sensitivity to drying, montane meadows have been suggested as early indicators of environmental changes associated with climate change. Future changes in climate (i.e., increasing temperatures) combined with a change from a snow-dominated to a rain-dominated system will alter the hydrologic regime and impact meadows. Total meadow area may decline and wet meadows may shift to dry meadows, especially small irregularly shaped meadows at low to mid elevations. Climate change will increase stress on meadow systems within the Lake Tahoe Basin. However, by reducing other influencing factors (e.g., channel incision, conifer encroachment) and improving conditions, this project can strengthen meadow resilience to climate change. Increasing meadow resilience to drought will stabilize baseflows in creeks by buffering stormwaters during extreme events and increasing baseflows through increased water storage capacity.

**4. *Advancing racial equity***

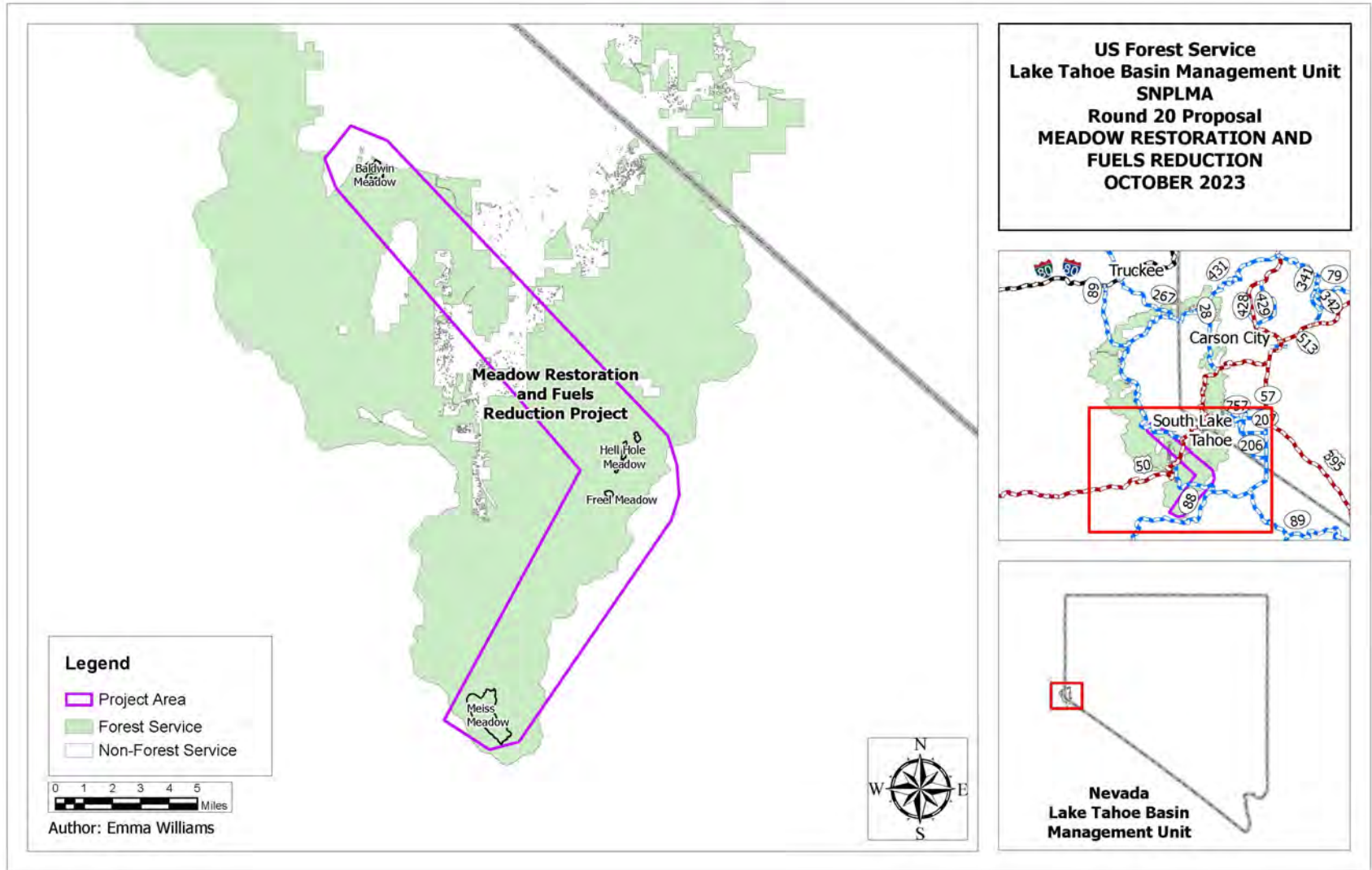
The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or because all or a part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program.

**5. *Improving our workforce and work environment***

The Forest Service is committed to the values of equity, inclusion, and equal opportunity our employees and those we serve. The Forest Service provides equal employment opportunity for all employees and applicants for employment, regardless

of race, religion, color, sex (including pregnancy, gender identity and sexual orientation), national origin, age, genetic information, or disability. All employees have the freedom to compete on a fair and level playing field with equal opportunity for available employment and advancement opportunities. Equal employment opportunity covers all personnel/employment programs, management practices, and decisions, including recruitment/hiring, merit promotion, transfer, reassignments, training and career development, benefits, and separation.

M. MAPS



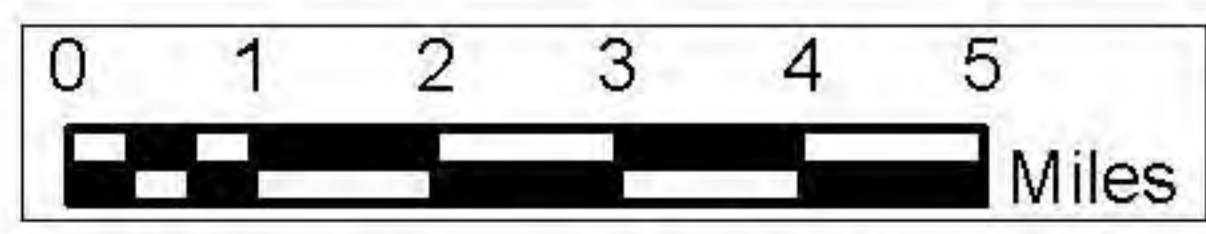
Map: Location of project area

**US Forest Service**  
**Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit**  
**SNPLMA**  
**Round 20 Proposal**  
**MEADOW RESTORATION AND**  
**FUELS REDUCTION**  
**STRATEGIC PLAN VALUES**  
**COMMUNITY**  
**DECEMBER 2023**

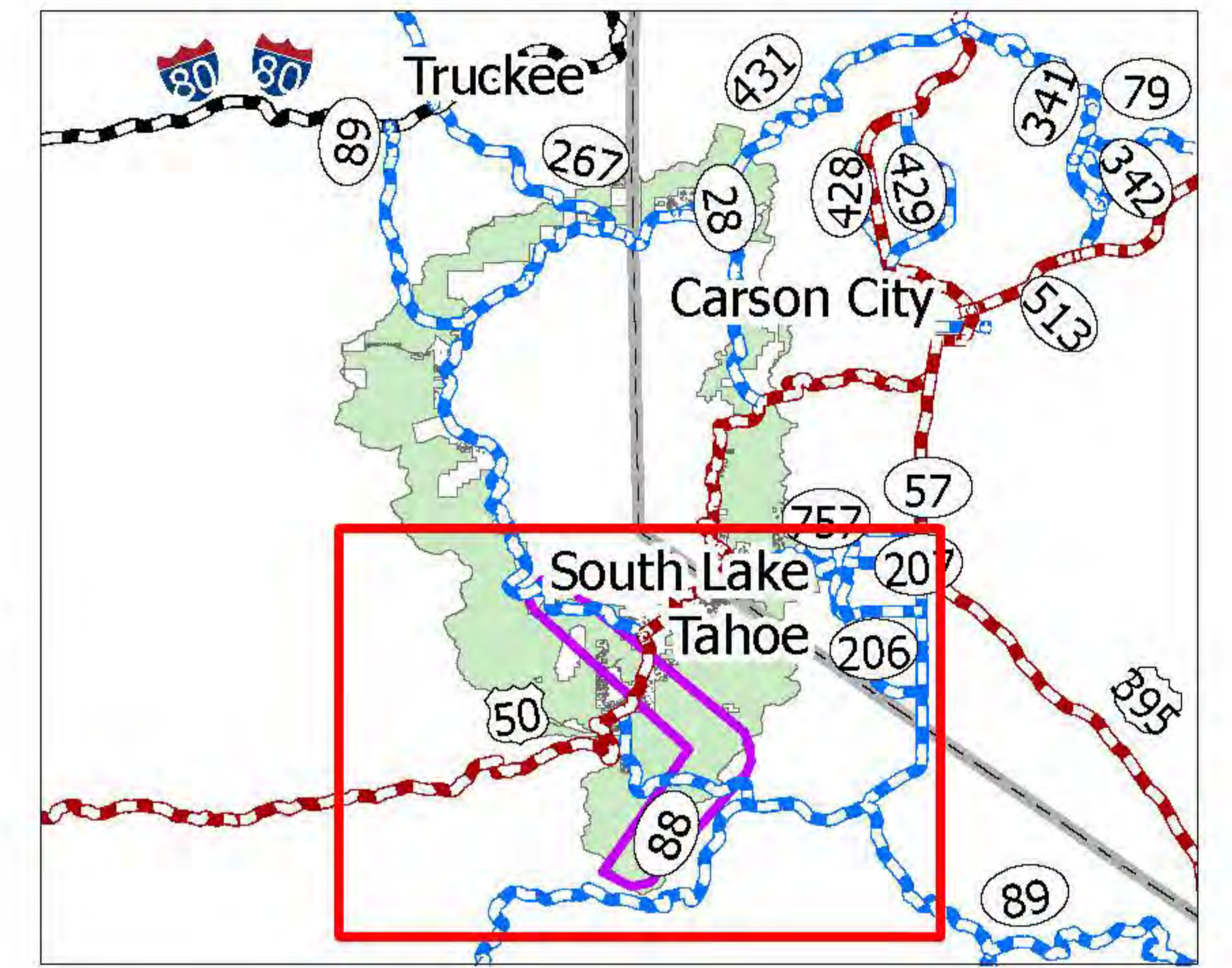
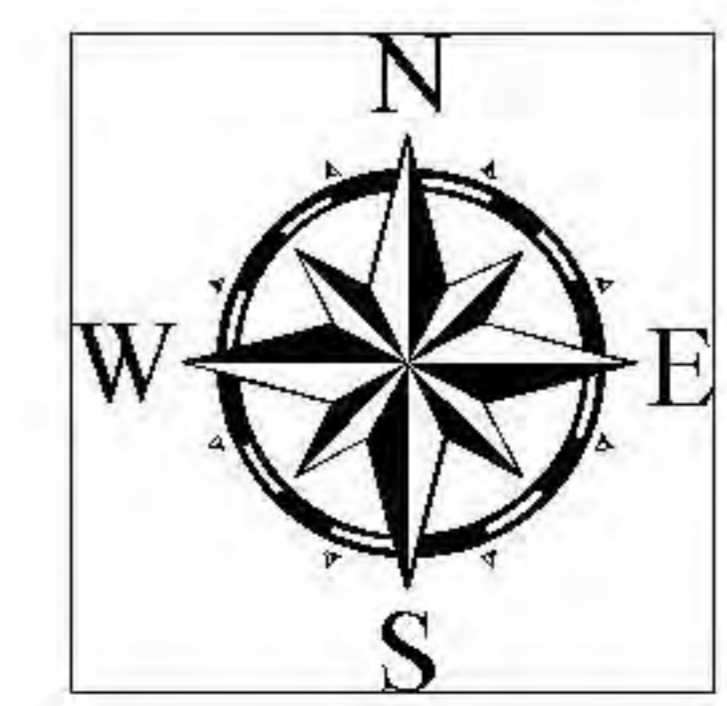


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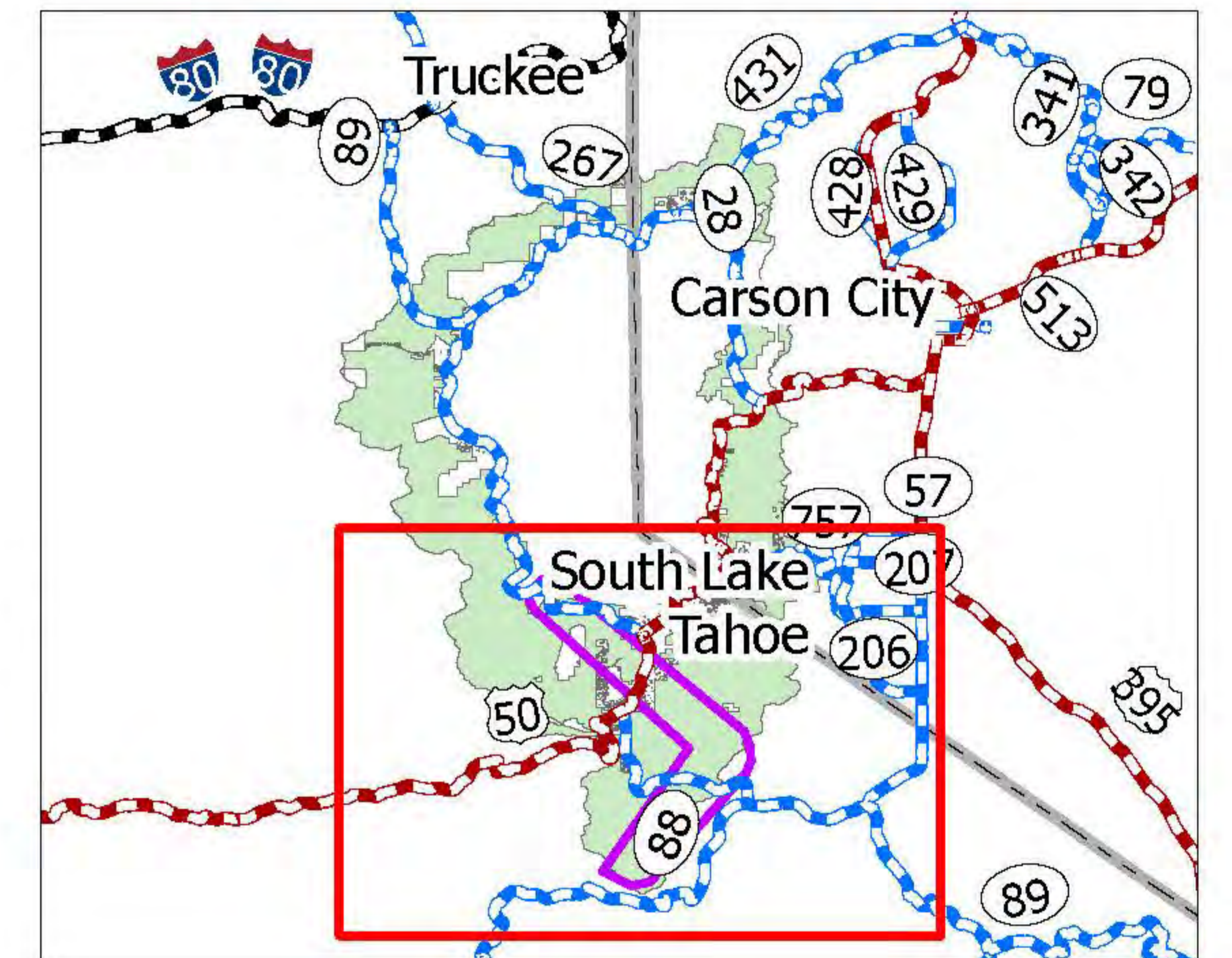
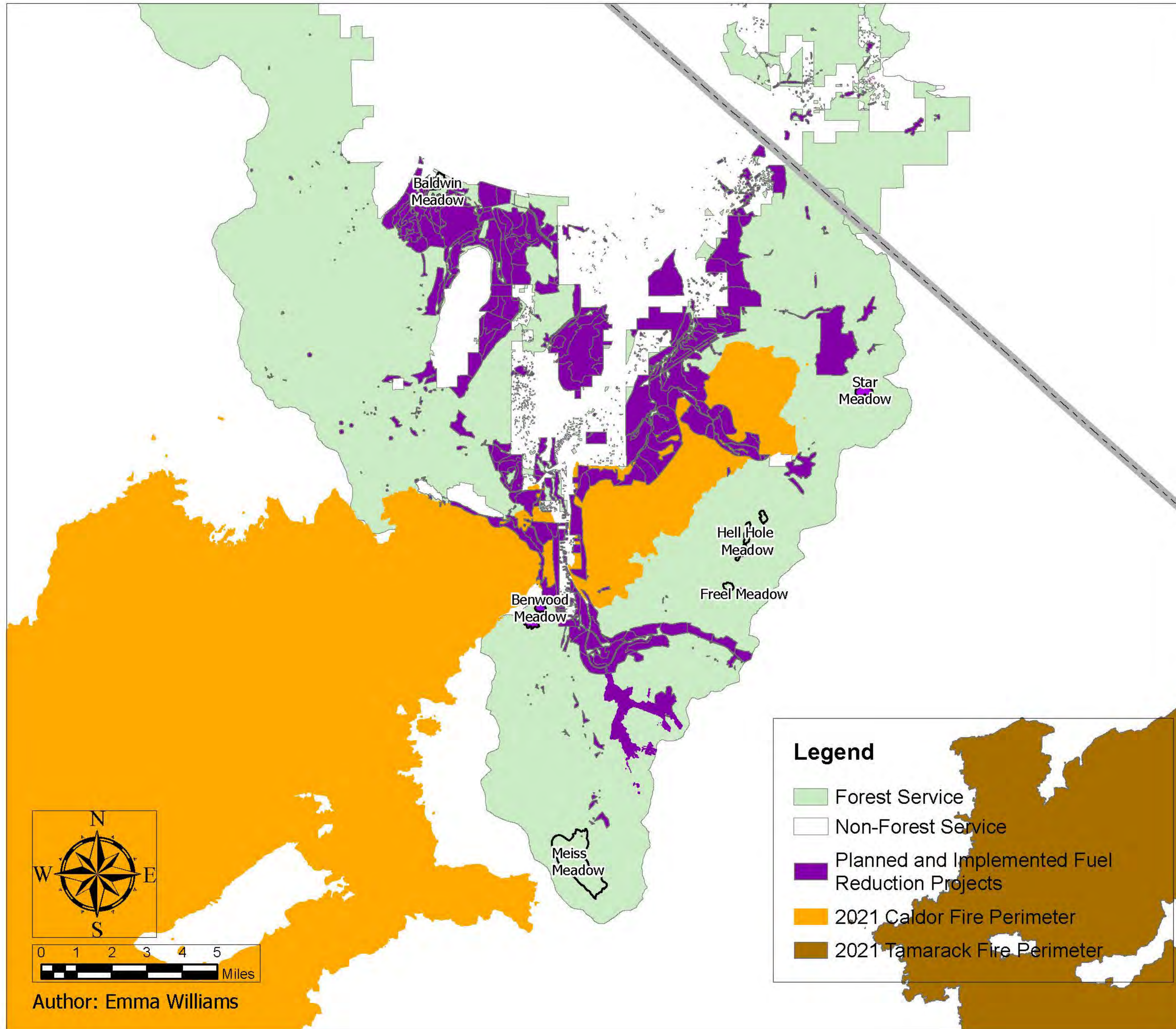
- Forest Service
- Non-Forest Service
- Pacific Crest Trail
- Tahoe Rim Trail
- USFS Trail



Author: Emma Williams



**US Forest Service**  
**Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit**  
**SNPLMA**  
**Round 20 Proposal**  
**MEADOW RESTORATION AND**  
**FUELS REDUCTION**  
**STRATEGIC PLAN VALUES**  
**CONNECTIVITY**  
**DECEMBER 2023**



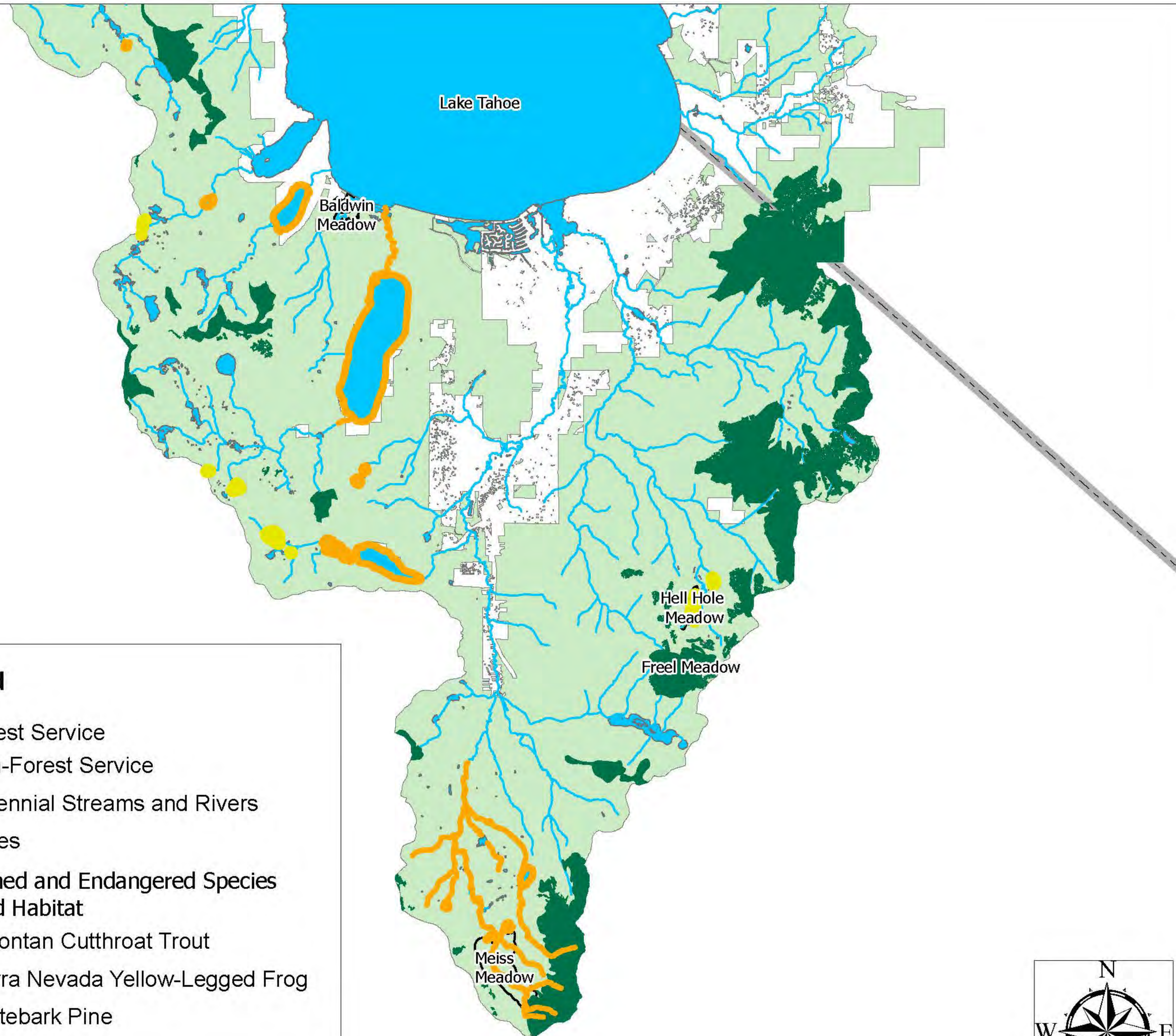
**Legend**

- Forest Service
- Non-Forest Service
- Planned and Implemented Fuel Reduction Projects
- 2021 Caldor Fire Perimeter
- 2021 Tamarack Fire Perimeter



Author: Emma Williams

**US Forest Service  
 Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit  
 SNPLMA  
 Round 20 Proposal  
 MEADOW RESTORATION AND  
 FUELS REDUCTION  
 STRATEGIC PLAN VALUES  
 SUSTAINABILITY  
 DECEMBER 2023**

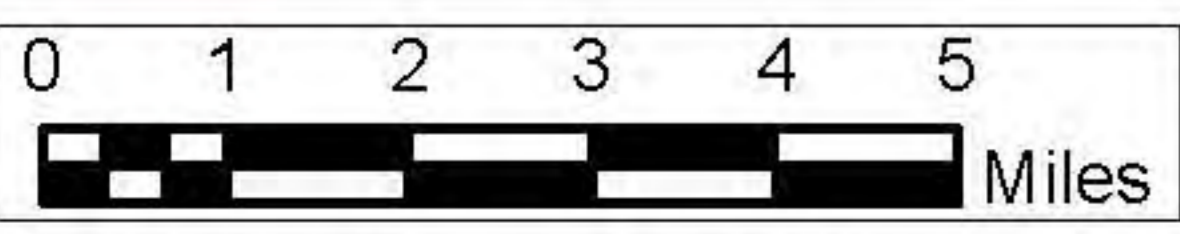


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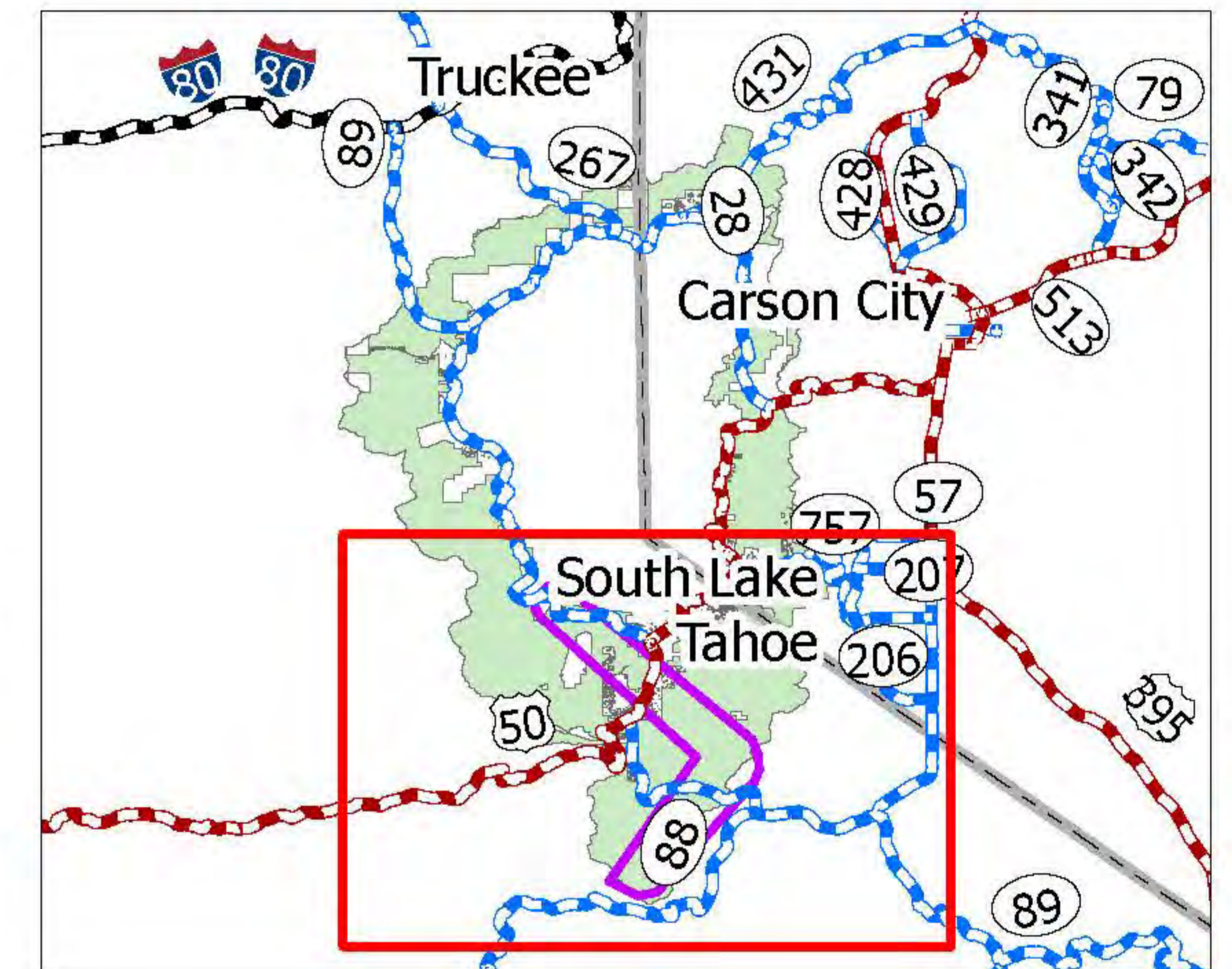
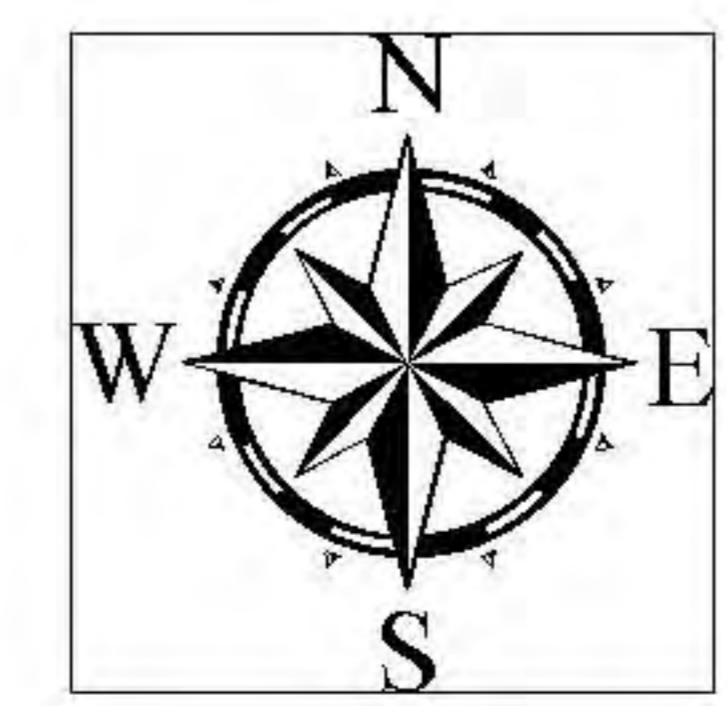
- Forest Service
- Non-Forest Service
- Perennial Streams and Rivers
- Lakes

**Threatened and Endangered Species Occupied Habitat**

- Lahontan Cutthroat Trout
- Sierra Nevada Yellow-Legged Frog
- Whitebark Pine



Author: Emma Williams



## N. PERFORMANCE MEASURES

<b>SNPLMA FY2020-FY2024 STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL 1: Sustain the Quality of the Outdoor Environment by Conserving, Preserving, and Restoring Natural and Cultural Resources</b>		
<b>Performance Measures for Habitat Enhancement</b>	<b>Definition of Performance Measure</b>	<b>Quantity</b>
H9 - Acres of Invasive Plant Species Treated or Restored	<p>Report the number of acres of weed infestation treated with chemical, mechanical, physical, or biological control agents for the purpose of weed control. Include acres treated by fire when fire is used as a physical control agent for weed control rather than as a hazardous fuels treatment. Each acre treated is counted only once during the life of the project, no matter how many re-treatments occurred during the project.</p> <p>Report to the nearest whole acre.</p>	50
<b>Performance Measures for Wildland Fire Management</b>	<b>Definition of Performance Measure</b>	<b>Quantity</b>
F1 - Acres of Hazardous Fuels Treated – Non-Wildland Urban Interface (WUI)	<p>Report the total number of acres of hazardous fuels treated, enhanced, or restored to reduce wildland fuels hazards and to restore or maintain ecosystem resiliency outside the WUI. Where multiple treatments are necessary to meet vegetation management objectives, such as hand thinning followed by re-seeding, each treatment is counted individually.</p> <p>Report to the nearest whole acre.</p>	645
F2 - Acres of Hazardous Fuels Treated – Wildland Urban Interface (WUI)	<p>Report the total number of acres of hazardous fuels treated, enhanced, or restored to reduce wildland fuels hazards and to restore or maintain ecosystem resiliency within the WUI. Where multiple treatments are necessary to meet vegetation management objectives, such as hand thinning followed by re-seeding, each treatment is counted individually.</p> <p>Report to the nearest whole acre.</p>	170
<b>SNPLMA FY2020-FY2024 STRATEGIC PLAN: Other Performance Measures that Also Support the Three Values for SNPLMA Implementation of Sustainability, Connectivity, and Community</b>		
<b>Other Performance Measures</b>	<b>Definition of Performance Measure</b>	<b>Quantity</b>
O5 - Number of Outreach Contacts Made	<p>Report the number of education and outreach contacts made through interpretation and environmental education, such as number of teachers trained, number of participants in workshops, etc.</p> <p>Report each participant as one unit.</p>	5-10

<p>O6 - Number of New Interpretive or Education Publications/Signs/ Kiosks/Displays/etc. Produced</p>	<p>Report the number of new interpretive or education publications produced, signs produced and installed, public informational websites or other electronic media presentations designed and implemented, and informational or interpretive kiosk displays produced and installed.</p> <p>Report each item produced as one unit.</p>	<p>1</p>
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**O. PHOTOS**



Photo 1: Example of headcut requiring repair at Freel meadow. Headcuts reduce meadow wetness and produce erosion of fine wetland soils into stream channels.





Photo 2: Example of current conifer encroachment at Meiss meadow.



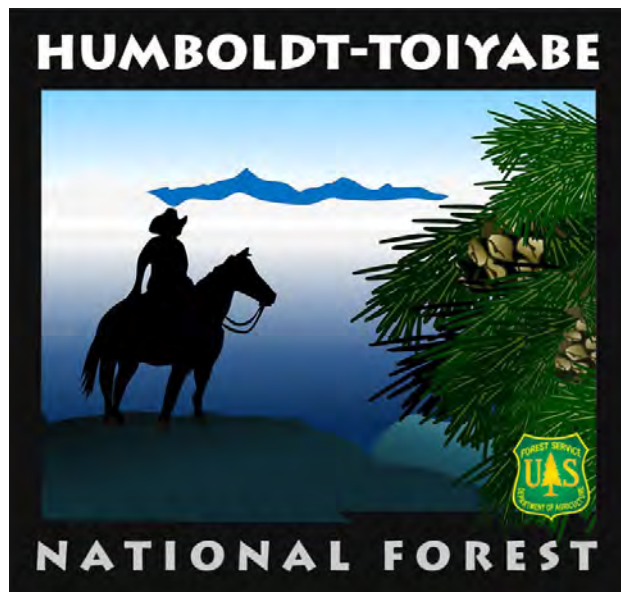
Photo 3: Example of current conifer encroachment at Hell Hole meadow.

**P. SUPPORT LETTERS**

None

**Southern Nevada Public Land Management Act  
Hazardous Fuels Reduction and Wildfire Prevention  
Round 20**

USDA Forest Service  
Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest  
Spring Mountains National Recreation Area



**Mount Charleston Hazardous Fuels Reduction**

**Amount Requested: \$3,192,550**

## A. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

**a. Describe Relationship to prior Approved Phases or Related SNPLMA Projects and Anticipated Future Phases**

This project occurs where many areas of past fuel projects have occurred on the Spring Mountains. The project will run simultaneously with a Round 18 Planning Project: Spring Mountains National Recreation Area (SMNRA) Eastside Planning Project that started in 2022 and is not a phase of that project. The Round 18 project is Phase I consisting of Creating a signed National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) document. This proposal would also run concurrently with the Round 19 SMNRA Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) Prescribed Fire and Noxious Weeds project. The Round 19 project consists of prescribed fire implementation in the WUI, a tribal burn program, and noxious weeds identification, spraying, and monitoring that will start in 2024. The project will connect past SNPLMA funded fuels projects of Round 6 SMNRA WUI, Round 13 Old Mill Hazardous Fuels Treatment project, Round 14 Deer Creek Hazardous Fuels Treatment project. This project proposal will also connect plant and animal corridors a SNPLMA conservation initiative funded Round 18 Butterfly Habitat Restoration. The proposal is consistent with planned areas in the Spring Mountains 10-Year Multijurisdictional Plan to connect previously treated units to create a more continuous network of treated areas.

**b. Describe how the proposed project will protect or enhance wildlife habitat and/or resilience vegetative communities.**

This project is located adjacent to private, county, and state lands, as well as lands managed by the Bureau of Land Management Southern Nevada District. As a result, local residents, the Nevada Division of Forestry, Nevada Division of Wildlife, NUWU Tribal Group, Mount Charleston Fire Protection District, Nevada Energy, Clark County Parks and Recreation Camp Lee, and the communities of Kyle Canyon, Lee Canyons, Mountain Springs, and Trout Canyon all have a great deal of interest in this project. The project is consistent with USDA Forest Service priorities and goals, Humboldt-Toiyabe NF Land Management Plan, the Spring Mountains Multi-Jurisdictional Fuel Reduction and Prevention Strategy Plan. If funded for this implementation project, a significant focus will be to increase connectivity of fuels reduction treatments surrounding the Mount Charleston area creating significant areas of anchor points for suppression resources to safely engage a wildland fire, protect life and property, and if needed to safely evacuate the public and private residences from the many highly used one-way ingress/egress areas. Other aspects will center on reintroducing fire to the landscape using prescribed fire, working with local tribes, public education on the importance of living with fire, and noxious weed treatments. The project is in a very biodiverse area. It is home to 21 endemic species. The implementation of this project will enhance the protection and resilience of those species by opening closed canopy forested areas to create corridors for plants to grow and animal to use. It will also improve the watershed functions in those areas.

**c. Acknowledgement of Stand-Alone Project and no Guarantee of Funding for Future Phases**

The Spring Mountains National Recreation Area recognizes that this is a standalone project (Single Phase) with no guarantee of funding for future phases.

## **B. SNPLMA STRATEGIC PLAN VALUES**

Hazardous Fuels Reduction and Wildfire Prevention projects have two goals identified in the Strategic Plan:

- Goal 1: Sustain the quality of the outdoor environment by conserving, preserving, and restoring natural and cultural resources.
- Goal 2: Improve the quality of life for all publics in urban and rural communities by enhancing recreational opportunities that connect people with the outdoor environment.

Nominated projects should meet these goals by focusing on the three SNPLMA core values, connectivity, sustainability, and community. Every nomination must explain how the three values are promoted by the project.

1. Sustainability:

By implementing the Mount Charleston Hazardous Fuels Reduction project, the Spring Mountains National Recreation Area will conserve and restore natural resources, preserve cultural resources, promote connectivity of past implemented fuel reduction projects, sustainability of ecosystems, protect communities and infrastructure.

2. Connectivity:

Because of the locations in this project area, connectivity of fuels reduction projects will be increased across jurisdictional boundaries, increasing community and resource protection. The units in Lee Canyon and Angel connect previous fuel reduction and habitat improvement corridor projects and current planning projects in those areas. The Lovell and Clark units establish new fuel reduction corridors and connect currently implemented butterfly habitat improvement projects.

3. Community:

This project design is meant to engage the public on more resilient landscapes with the hopes of educating people on Living with Fire. This fuels reduction implementation proposal is in heavily used recreation areas and will enhance the safety of the public and private landowners.

## **C. PURPOSE STATEMENT**

The Forest Service, Spring Mountains National Recreation Area, will implement hazardous fuels reduction within 4,486-acres of project area located in 6 different units of the Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest in Clark County, Nevada, on National Forest System lands within the wildland urban interface primarily in both the threat and defense zones. This project will accomplish ecosystem enhancement through fuels treatments for fuel reduction by enhancing connectivity of hazardous fuels treatment projects previous completed within the SMNRA.

## D. PROJECT DELIVERABLES

### 1. Primary Deliverables:

- Implementation of up to 2,200-2,637 acres of fuels reduction treatments.
- Lop and scatter contracts on 250 acres.
- Hand Thinning and piling contracts on at least 1,300 acres.
- Mastication contracts on at least 650 acres.
- Noxious weeds treatments and monitoring, using herbicide treatments on 750-1000 acres.

### 2. Anticipated Deliverables:

- Prescribed fire on 1000-1800 acres.
- At least 500 public contacts on prescribed fire and fuels reduction education.
- Conduct at least 2 presentations in the local communities emphasizing the importance of prescribed fire on the landscape.

### 3. Standard Deliverables:

- Public outreach for Living with Fire.
- SNPLMA Closeout Package, preparation, and submittal.

**Acres:** In the proposed project area,

Defense- 1,288.93

Threat- 2,497.66

General- 699.97

The emphasis zones are the threat zone with 53% of the project area treated and 29% in the defense zone of the project area treated.

## E. PROJECT LOCATION

### **Physical location of project:**

Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest, Spring Mountains National Recreation Area, Clark County Nevada

### **Identify Congressional District(s):**

Nevada's Third and Fourth congressional Districts

### **Latitude and Longitude:**

N36.6521699° / W115.3403897°

## F. PROJECT TIMEFRAME

- Initiating, awarding, and implementing contracting for mechanical treatments.
  - Years 1-3
- Noxious weeds identification, treatments, and monitoring.
  - Years 1-6

- Understory and pile prescribed fire.
  - Years 2-6
- NUWU Tribal agreement to participate in prescribed fire.
  - Years 2-6
- Project Closeout
  - Year 6

## **G. LEVEL OF PROJECT READINESS FOR IMPLEMENTATION**

Is this a shovel-ready project?  Yes  No

The Spring Mountains National Recreation Area has the capacity and structure to begin implementation as soon as funds are available. All required analysis and signed NEPA decisions are completed.

Have you applied, received, or is there the opportunity to obtain funding from another source for this project? Please list the additional funding opportunities received or applied for and indicate whether it is federal or nonfederal funding.

The project funding will be SNPLMA only.

## **H. 10-YEAR MULTI JURISDICTIONAL PLAN**

The area and types of treatments are consistent with areas identified in the Spring Mountains 10-Year Multijurisdictional strategy and the Spring Mountains National Recreation Area land management plan. Reducing areas with high fuel loadings in heavily used areas of the public will increase chances of their safety as well as emergency responders, protect federal, state, and private infrastructure, and sensitive ecosystems by decreasing fire severity. The area being treated connects previous treatments in the wildland urban interface that are occurring or have in the past along the private in Lee Canyon, Clark Canyon, Lovell Canyon, Coal Springs, Valley Electric powerlines, two picnic areas, two very popular dispersed camping areas, three large trail systems, and the scenic byways of Nevada State Route 156 and 158. After the last two very large fires in the area (2013 Carpenter 1 and 2020 Mahogany) burned with such high fire severity, the soils were compromised during rain events that produce catastrophic flooding to the communities and highways as far as 15 miles away from those fires' perimeters. This project applications reduce severity by keeping a wildfire on the ground rather than in the canopies of the trees to help stabilize the soils and the watersheds the units are in. The spring mountains are one of the ten highest biodiverse areas in the lower 48 of the United States. Fuels reduction that opens the canopy and returns low to moderate fire back on the landscape with prescribed fire will not only protect it but enhance those ecosystems that have adapted to fire over millennia.

## **I. PROJECT BUDGET**

### Cost-Benefit Analysis

Cost per acre to implement this project is \$1,451.16/Acre. The cost per acre is for mechanical contracting, prescribed fire operations provided by federal and tribal personnel, and noxious weeds treatments from federal personnel.

Partnership and/or Contributed Funds  
No non-federal contribution funding.

<b>PROJECT BUDGET</b>		
<b>Cost Categories</b>	<b>SNPLMA</b>	<b>Non-Federal Contribution</b>
1. Personnel (labor plus benefits)	\$ 1,405,000.00	\$ -
2. Travel	\$ -	\$ -
3. Training	\$ -	\$ -
4. Equipment	\$ -	\$ -
5. Supplies/Materials	\$ 15,050.00	\$ -
6. Contracts and/or Agreements	\$ 1,637,500.00	\$ -
7. Vehicle Use	\$ 135,000.00	\$ -
8. Other Necessary Expenses	\$ -	\$ -
<b>9. TOTAL PROJECT BUDGET</b>	<b>\$ 3,192,550.00</b>	<b>\$ -</b>

## **J. KEY CONTACTS**

Authorized Officer: Deborah MacNeill, SMNRA Area Manager  
Email: [deborah.macneill@usda.gov](mailto:deborah.macneill@usda.gov)  
Phone Number: 702-305-4954

Project Manager: Josh Thalacker, SMNRA Fuels Specialist  
Email: [joshua.thalacker@usda.gov](mailto:joshua.thalacker@usda.gov)  
Phone Number: 702-515-5441

Budget Officer: Petersam Le, HTF Budget Officer  
Email: [petersam.le@usda.gov](mailto:petersam.le@usda.gov)  
Phone Number: 775-352-1281

## **K. RANKING CRITERIA**

Provide a narrative response to the following Criteria and Factors that apply to the nomination.

- 1. Improves the community within and/or adjacent to the project area.** Projects are only eligible for Factors A1, A2, or A3; select and answer ONLY ONE, depending on the majority of the landscape in the nomination. Answer Factor B and C as they apply to your nomination.



A. Addresses immediate public health and safety and community infrastructure.

1. Project is within the Defense Zone, generally an area within 0.25 mile of life and property, as depicted by the most current Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) map in the applicable plan.

Answer:

2. Project is within the Threat Zone, generally an area between 0.25 mile and 1.50 miles of life and property, as depicted by the most current WUI map in the applicable plan. (Do not answer if you answered A.1. already).

Most of this project area falls within the Wildland Urban Interface Threat Zone. Specifically, this project area is directly adjacent to community infrastructure as well State and private lands. Stand replacing timber and shrub wildland fires have previously occurred in the surrounding area, threatening homes and other private property, recreation sites, high value communication sites, scenic byways, and threatening the safety of the public and firefighters. During those events the public and infrastructure has been evacuated and/or shutdown. By assessing the priority areas within this project area where fuels treatments would provide the most efficient and beneficial results, the eventual implementation of this project will significantly decrease the likelihood that the public will be directly threatened. By planning the appropriate treatments, the effectiveness of any future fire suppression activities will be increased. The reduced fuel loading once implemented will decrease fire intensity therefore increasing the effectiveness of fire suppression and allow firefighters and equipment to safely access the area.

3. Project is within the general forest or other lands beyond the WUI (generally greater than 1.5 miles from life and property), as depicted by the most current map in the applicable plan. (Do not answer if you answered A.1. or A.2. already).

Answer: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

B. Promotes protection of source water (rivers and lakes) or municipal watersheds.

This project will be implemented in many different watersheds that all contribute to the water used in the Las Vegas Valley, Sandy Valley, Pahrump Valley, Amargosa Valley, Indian Springs, and the local communities within the mountain range. The threat of wildland fire to this area causes severe concerns for water impacts such as erosion, flooding, and other impacts to the downstream communities and infrastructure. Property values have the potential to be negatively impacted in the event of a wildland fire within the watershed and the possible resulting flooding and erosion issues. Fuel reduction treatments have the ability to lower the severity of a wildland fire, in turn lowering the possible impacts to stream and water courses by preventing erosion events that would negatively impacting the watersheds found within this project area.

- C. Project includes education and outreach to the community on Living with Fire or Fire Adapted Communities and/or the importance of fuels reduction on federal, state, and local government land.

As a part of the community and partners involvement process for this fuel reduction project, the Forest Service will be conducting public meetings. The communities that will be targeted during the process are the rural communities of Kyle Canyon, Lee Canyons, Mountain Springs, Trout Canyon, Pahrump, and Cold Creek. This project is a part of a cohesive strategy that improves working relationships and project implementation across jurisdictional boundaries, as well as being able to reach a much larger outreach potential by working with several different agencies, state, communities, local entities, and private landowners. The cohesive strategy will include but is not limited to NV Energy, Valley Electric, Mount Charleston Fire Protection District, Clark County Fire Department, NUWU Tribal group, Clark County Parks and Recreation Camp Lee, Las Vegas Ski and Snowboard Resort, Century Link, Nevada Division of Wildlife, Nevada Division of Forestry, Nevada Division of Transportation, Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department, Nevada Highway Patrol, and the Las Vegas Water District. During these interactions, the purpose of this project will be explained to the surrounding communities and interested public. In addition, the University of Nevada, Reno, Cooperative Extension has extensive literature on “Living with Fire”, as well as different types of fuels reduction techniques and the benefits of practicing fuels reduction. This literature is readily available to members of the public. There is already interest from the local news media to do local stories on the activities.

- 2. Improves the connection of fuels reduction activities and wildlife habitat.** Respond to each of the following.

- A. Project protects or enhances wildlife habitat and/or resilient vegetative communities.

The proposal area includes important habitat for several Forest Service Sensitive and Management Indicator Species (Butterflies, Charleston Ant, Bat Species, Palmer’s Chipmunk, and Northern Goshawk). For example, Northern Goshawk, which are a Forest Service Sensitive species, are known to nest in several locations throughout the district. Fuel treatments conducted in this area will help protect this important habitat by reducing the threat of a stand replacing fire from occurring. In addition, treatment prescriptions designed to reduce fuel loading such as thinning dense thickets of conifer in aspen and other areas, also enhances wildlife habitat by promoting aspen growth and reducing overly dense understory vegetation which limits maneuverability and foraging capability of many wildlife species.

- B. Project enhances the effectiveness of other treatments in progress or complete.

The project area will connect past and future planned fuel treatments in the WUI implemented in the past 20 years on the Spring Mountains. This would enhance the effectiveness and sustainability on the landscape to protect many private structures, powerline corridors, communication infrastructure, campgrounds, picnic areas, popular

trails, county infrastructure, multiple watersheds, as well as the ecosystem in a unique sky island. By procuring funding for implementation of this project, it would enable the district to continue working towards management objectives regarding fuels reduction in the Wildland Urban Interface, creating a more fire resilient landscape, and improve ecosystem functions. This project connects a multitude of existing projects in the area and works towards the objectives set forth in the National Cohesive Strategy and the core values of Shared Stewardship with partners.

- C. Project connects previously treated areas to create or increase contiguous blocks of treated land.

This project is a centerpiece of fuel treatment types that are within the urban interface by creating a more resilient landscape. Directly adjacent to and surrounding many of the units in the SMNRA WUI there are three previously treated project areas that were SNPLMA funded on National Forest lands: SMNRA WUI Phase I, Old Mill, and Deer Creek HFRP's. These were all projects treated for hazardous fuels and future treatments. When the Nevada Fire Safe Council was active, that group was responsible for implementing numerous projects on private lands working with homeowners in the area. Treatments on private lands included handwork to reduce ladder fuels, chipping, and prescribed fire done by the Nevada Division of Forestry through grants, leading to even more connectivity of fuels reduction treatments in the future. The units are all part of a butterfly habitat improvement around the district to create corridors of open canopies, nectar, and host plants to help butterflies and pollinators expand their range.

3. **Improves sustainability of the multijurisdictional 10-year plans, environment, and financial resources.** Respond to each of the following.

- A. Improve the sustainability of the forest health and ecosystem function (e.g., stand density, desired species mix and age, tree health, etc.).

A tool used for this project will reintroduce fire to the landscape. The treatments will be specifically designed to promote ecosystem health and long-term sustainability through the challenges of natural climate variability and wildland fire occurrence, but also with the expectation that healthier forests and ecosystems will be better prepared to endure adverse effects from both climate changes and wildland fires. In addition to fuel loading reduction and the reduced risk of catastrophic wildland fire, this project will provide watershed and wildlife habitat protection, recreational and scenic value protection, and support the property values these features of the National Forest enhance all of which are highlighted in the Spring Mountains 10 Year Multi-Jurisdictional Plan.

- B. Improve habitat for sensitive species and threatened and endangered species. Includes mitigation and/or minimization measures when treatment in sensitive habitat is unavoidable.

The project areas have been analyzed and take a thorough look at the potential effects that could occur on sensitive species and threatened and endangered species. There are

four sensitive butterfly species, the Mount Charleston Ant, four bat species, the Palmer's Chipmunk, Northern Goshawk, and the Flammulated Owl. The ongoing threat of stand replacing fire has a very high significant impact on destroying key habitats. Design criteria and biological monitors onsite while implementation occurs will limit the impacts on these sensitive habitats.

- C. Include broadcast prescribed fire for resource management objectives for sustainable landscapes.

Prescribed fire will be used as a tool to achieve resource management objectives. Broadcast prescribed fire will be analyzed as both an initial treatment and maintenance treatment, designed to ensure the longevity of proposed treatments, where appropriate and feasible. In areas that meet this criteria, prescribed fire will be examined as a mechanism to not only reduce fuels and maintain treatments, but also reintroduce fire into the ecosystem to enhance landscape resiliency.

- D. The method of treatment is fiscally responsible for the project area by balancing resource objectives, values at risk, and cost per acre factors or cost-benefit analysis.

The use of prescribed fire on the landscape is most safe and cost-effective treatment. The intent is to bring communities and cooperators together with the use of fire and its ecological benefits. A partnership with local tribes to form a Cultural Burning Network. Treatments will ensure accumulations of under story fuels will reduce the threat of a damaging wildfire protecting all the infrastructure within the SMNRA boundaries. Work will be accomplished through agreements with cooperators, contracts for mechanical work, and a seasonal work force to oversee the contracts and prescribed fire operations. The cost to fight a wildland fire in WUI areas would be extremely high because of the proximity to communities and highly valued recreational properties. The cost to implement this project area for fuels reduction is significantly less than the cost to fight large wildland fires or restore values subsequently damaged in a wildland fire. Following a wildland fire, re-vegetation and recovery of this project area would be slow and occur over many decades. The most recent Mahogany Wildland Fire in the area burned almost 3,000 acres, forced evacuations, and cost over \$8 million (\$2666.67/acre). This project proposal will treat approximately 2,600 acres with a cost per acre of \$635.19.

4. **Demonstrates sound project management and quality control measures.** Respond to each of the following.

- A. Project goals and implementation processes are clear, measurable, achievable, and demonstrable.

The goal for this project is to reintroduce fire into the landscape to reduce under story fuel loading in some of the most highly used areas on the Spring Mountains, protect infrastructure, and protect sensitive ecosystems. To strengthen the alliance with local tribes. To collaborate with local communities and partners on living with fire. These specific objectives for the future conditions and actions of the project area are explicitly expressed in

the Spring Mountains National Recreation Area Forest Plan Amendment of 1996 and guided by the National Forest Management Planning Act and National Environmental Policy Act.

- B. Project proponent has the capacity to implement this project in a timely manner (contractor and staff availability, no backlog of current projects, etc.) and within budget.

Currently the Spring Mountains National Recreation Area has three fuels projects, one NEPA planning and two implementations. All past Fuels Reduction category projects funded by SNPLMA have signed documents and have been closed out. The SMNRA initiated a Round 18 fuels landscape level planning project analyzing 12,000 acres for hazardous fuels reduction and ecosystem improvement, the Round 19 SMNRA WUI/Noxious Weeds Project will be initiated in the spring of 2024 which entails prescribed fire in the urban interface, training local tribal members to meet NWCG qualifications to participate in prescribed fire activities, and public education. A Round 18 habitat improvement project is currently being implemented over 2,600 acres of mechanical contracts the fall and winter of 2023-2024. So far contracts awarded this year consist of 1,000 acres of hand/thin/pile, 1600 acres of mastication, and 500 acres of prescribed fire completed and 1000 acres in the near term with force account personnel. To ensure completion of planning and implementation projects, the district and Forest has a professional, skilled work force which has previously shown the capacity to complete projects in a timely manner. Skills represented on the district include an Area Manager, fuels specialists, a wildlife biologist, a botanist, an archaeologist, a hydrologist, a recreation staff officer, a fire management officer, multiple contracting officer's representative, prescribed fire burn bosses, and fire staff on District. In addition, plant pathologists and entomologists, fuels specialists, fuels planners, as well as other specialists are on staff at either the Forest Supervisor's Office in Sparks, Nevada, or the Regional Office in Ogden, Utah.

- C. Is a phase or related component to a previously funded project.

This project is one phase only. The noxious weed herbicide treatments and monitoring will begin as soon as project initiation. This project is directly related to four Forest planning documents (Forest-wide Noxious Weeds NEPA, Macks, Champion, Lovell Habitat Improvement NEPA, Old Mill Hazardous Fuels Reduction NEPA, and Butterfly Habitat Restoration NEPA) funded by the agency and SNPLMA prior to this nomination. Further detail on some of the district's current SNPLMA funded projects on the Spring Mountains National Recreation Area and their status are described below:

- *Spring Mountain NRA Hazardous Fuels Reduction Phase I Project F020 Priority 11-8 F020:* This Round 11 SNPLMA project has been completed. This planning project included the completion of planning and decision documents for a project analysis area of 1,514 acres. An Environmental Assessment was completed and the Decision Notice/Finding of No Significant Impact was signed June of 2015. The project was closed out in 2015.
- *Old Mill Hazardous Fuels Treatment Project F025 Priority 13-6:* This Round 13 SNPLMA project has been completed and closed out. Contracted Hand

thinning and Mastication were completed on approximately 260 acres. Force account pile burning was completed on 150 acres. Work was accomplished by Force Account and completed in April of 2018. The project was closed out in 2019.

- *Deer Creek Hazardous Fuels Treatment Project F028 Priority 14-6:* This SNPLMA Round 14 project has been completed within timeframes and within budget. The project made use of 143 acres of contracted hand thin and pile. Force account completed the pile burning in December of 2019. The completion letter has been submitted along with request for closeout by the end of summer 2020.
- *Potosi Fuels Reduction Project F033 Priority 15-13:* This Round 15 SNPLMA project is currently closed out. This planning project included the completion of planning, surveys and a signed decision memo for an analysis area of 694 acres in September of 2019. The project used a Forest Service Enterprise TEAM to create the document. The project has since been implemented through use of Forest fuels budgeted money. A contracted hand/thin/pile was completed February 2020 and Force Account completed 150 acres. Pile burning through Forest dollars is slated to be completed by the end of FY21 along with 250 acres of contracted hand/thin/pile. This project was closed out the spring of 2020.
- *Fuels Reduction Planning- SMNRA Eastside Project F043 Priority 18-9:* this Round 18 planning project was initiated in the spring of 2022. Currently field surveys should be completed by the end of the calendar year 2023 and the Interdisciplinary Team initiated in 2024. The project will close 2028.
- *SMNRA WUI Prescribed Fire and Noxious Weeds Project F046 Priority 19-2:* This Round 19 project entails prescribed fire and noxious weeds treatments in the Round 11 WUI project areas. As well as public education on Living with Fire this project will create a Tribal burn program by training and qualify local tribal members to participate in prescribed fire. This project will be initiated the Spring of 2024 and close by 2030.

D. Has identified committed non-SNPLMA sources of funding or in-kind contribution in the development and/or implementation of the project.

Currently, SNPLMA funds are the only funds identified to complete this project. In the future, other funding sources may become available, including timber stand improvement and forest health money if the need to offset costs to the project arise.

## L. ORDERS AND PRIORITIES

A. Executive Orders (EO):

- ***EO No. 13855: Promoting Active Management of America's Forests, Range Lands to Improve Conditions and Reduce Wildfire Risk***

Yes, the core of this project is to do just that. The project intent is to reduce fuel loading, protect watersheds from severe erosion, and promote healthy ecosystems and a more resilient forest to help meet the Department of Agriculture's target of treating 3.3 million acres forest thinning, treating 750,000 acres of invasive species. The identified treatments are in areas of dense vegetation in and near the wildland urban interface by using appropriate fuels reduction treatments available (prescribed fire and mechanical thinning). Treatments will protect the local rural communities, inholdings of private property, reduce the threat of high severity wildfires. Collaboration with Tribal, State, and Local entities is key to the success of this project. This will allow management and private stakeholders to prioritize treatments on the landscape as mentioned in Forest Management Plans, District Management Plans, and the 10-Year Spring Mountains Multi-Jurisdictional Strategy. Resulting in forest health strategies that protect life and property.

- ***EO No. 14005: Ensuring the Future is Made in All of America by All of America's Workers***

Very little supplies are needed by the district to implement this project. Those that are will be procured will be done so by Made in America. Mechanical thinning contracts will target small businesses from the United States of America. When implementing contracts, a contracting officer's representative (COR) will ensure all goods used will be Made in America.

- ***EO No. 14063: Use of Project Labor Agreements for Federal Construction Projects (applicable to projects estimated at \$35 million or more)***

N/A. Mechanical thinning contracts are anticipated to be less than \$1,000,000 for each type of activity.

- ***EO No. 14072: Strengthening the Nation's Forests, Communities, and Local Economies***

Yes, this project will bring communities together through engagement activities and educational events. The implementation will create a resilient landscape to better serve the public. Treatments will target dense areas of younger trees and brush while preserving older trees that exhibit legacy characteristics. The Spring Mountains is home to some of the most biodiverse landscapes in America. Preservation of its old growth trees from stand replacing fire, insect infestation, and disease is key to the long-term forest future for generations to enjoy. Part of this project will use prescribed fire instead of fire exclusion on the landscape. Prescribed fire collaboration with the local tribes (NUWU) is planned to take place creating a

foundation for a tribal prescribed fire program that promotes indigenous traditional ecological knowledge and subsistence practices.

- ***EO No. 14096: Revitalizing Our Nation's Commitment to Environmental Justice for All***

The intent of the project is to harden the landscape to enhance protection of communities, private property, and infrastructure from high intensity wildland fire across the landscape. The outcome will be a resilient landscape for current and future generations to enjoy. Government investment into this fuel's reduction project will protect and restore a healthy environment people live, work, and recreate in the outdoors.

#### B. Secretarial Orders

- ***SO No. 3347: Conservation Stewardship and Outdoor Recreation.***

This project will improve the management of species and their habitats. Current conditions in the project areas are exhibiting closed canopy characteristics which make it difficult for recreational and wildlife activities to occur. By thinning these areas there will be an increase in recreational opportunities as well as improve the habitat of both plant and game animal species. The keystone to this project will be entering into an agreement with the local tribes (NUWU) to engage in prescribed fire activities. This partnership will enhance how the district manages the land for the future.

- ***SO No. 3356: Hunting, Fishing, Recreational Shooting, and Wildlife Conservation Opportunities and Coordination with States, Tribes and Territories.***

The purpose of the proposal is to increase outdoor recreational opportunities for all, improve current habitat conditions, and create resilient landscape corridors from stand replacing fires for this generation and beyond. Opening the overstory canopy and separating old growth canopy distance will allow for an increased abundance of plant diversity and promote the use of animals to use these areas to forage. Not only will it be beneficial for plant and animals, but it will increase physical access to public lands for recreational activities particularly hunting and camping.

- ***SO No. 3362: Improving Habitat Quality in Western Big-Game Winter Range and Migration Corridors.***

A host of animals that migrate on this landscape will benefit from a reduction of thick understories that susceptible of transitioning a ground fire into a canopy fire that will



destroy the overstory. A host of species like rocky mountain elk and mule deer will benefit increased access to food and water sources. Aside from big game the Spring mountains is on a migratory route that is used by many birds in the spring in fall. They prefer a more open canopy to fly through that is easier to find food. Improving the quality of habitat for plants and animals will be a benefit to those ecosystems allowing the public to observe them in their more natural surroundings. Working closely with the Nevada Department of Wildlife to enhance big game and birding habitat is part of the proposal focus.

- ***SO No. 3366: Increasing Recreational Opportunities on Lands and Waters Managed by the U.S. Department of the Interior***

This project will enhance the safety of the Forest users and reduce the threat of catastrophic fire to important infrastructure located on the mountain which include private property, state highways, powerlines, communication sites, campgrounds, picnic areas, trails, etc. Protection of the high public use areas enhances the recreational opportunities.

- ***SO No. 3370: Conservation Stewardship and Increasing Public Access to Urban National Wildlife Refuges.***

Access to the Spring Mountains is within 30-60 minutes of travel time from the Las Vegas metropolitan area. Visitation is very popular year-round. In the summer months residents of the valley are trying to escape the heat. During the winter months the mountain provides the closest snow play activities for forest users. The implementation of this proposal will help preserve areas from high severity fire risk, helping to promote wildlife conservation that the public users can enjoy for present and future generations.

- ***SO No. 3372: Reducing Wildfire Risks on Department of the Interior Land Through Active Management.***

This implementation project is intended is to reduce the risk of extreme fire behavior and threat to the public, communities, wildlife habitats, and watersheds which is consistent with the Forest Management Plans, District Management Plans, and the 10-Year Spring Mountains Multi-Jurisdictional Strategy. The project collaborates with tribal, state, and utility partners to reduce the risk of catastrophic fire in and near the wildland urban interface by connecting areas of previous and planned fuel reduction units using the best practices available.

- ***SO No. 3373: Evaluating Public Access in Bureau of Land Management Public Land Disposal and Exchanges (focus is on Sec. 4.b.(3) Potential increased public recreational access to existing public lands resulting from the proposed land acquired through an exchange (acquisition).***

The proposal does not include any disposal or exchange of lands.

- ***SO No. 3376: Increasing Recreational Opportunities through the use of Electric Bikes.***

This proposal doesn't have any component that increases recreational opportunities for use of electric bikes.

### C. Department of the Interior Priorities:

1. ***Identifying steps to accelerate responsible development of renewable energy on public lands and waters. We are investing in climate research and environmental innovation to incentivize the rapid deployment of clean energy solutions, while reviewing existing programs to restore balance on America's public lands and waters to benefit current and future generations.***

There are no components of this proposal that include renewable energy.

2. ***Strengthening the government-to-government relationship with sovereign Tribal nations. We understand that tribal sovereignty and self-governance, as well as honoring the federal trust responsibility to Tribal Nations, must be the cornerstones of federal Indian policy.***

This project would create an Interagency agreement with the local tribes to implement prescribed fire on their ancestral managed lands. The agreement will allow for red carded tribal personnel to help conduct prescribed fire activities. Strengthening the tribal collaboration by moving from a consultation to a participation relationship. This relationship is very important to both the Forest and the tribes on how we can manage this landscape together.

3. ***Making investments to support the Administration's goal of creating millions of family-supporting and union jobs. This includes establishing a new Climate Conservation Corps Initiative to put a new generation of Americans to work conserving and restoring public lands and waters, increasing reforestation, increasing carbon sequestration in the agricultural sector, protecting biodiversity, improving access to recreation, and addressing the changing climate.***

The proposal of reducing vegetative fuels will help preserve and protect the highly biodiverse ecosystems and help improve the recreational experiences of our users. Over the last twenty years the spring mountains has experienced many large high severity fires that has had impacts on the local communities as well as the five youth camps on the mountain when those areas have had to be evacuated during wildfire events. During those closures to protect the public the local economies were affected. Fuels reduction treatments on the landscape will help reduce the impacts of an evacuation order in the event a wildfire threatening the wildland urban interface

**4. *Working to conserve at least 30% each of our lands and waters by the year 2030.***

*We will work to protect biodiversity, slow extinction rates, and help leverage natural climate solutions by conserving 30% of America's lands and waters by 2030. This relies on support for local, state, private, and tribally led conservation and restoration efforts that are underway across America.*

This project will help do the part for the goal of conservation on 30% of public lands by 2030. Project design and implementation heavily relies on the shared stewardship of federal, tribal, state, and local entities to help protect the public and the sensitive ecosystems in the area.

**5. *Centering equity and environmental justice. The impacts of the multiple crises in the United States are not evenly distributed in our society. Communities of color, low-income families, and rural and indigenous communities have long suffered disproportionate and cumulative harm from air pollution, water pollution, and toxic sites. At every step of the way, Interior will engage diverse stakeholders across the country, as well as conduct formal consultation with Tribes in recognition of the U.S. government's trust responsibilities.***

Not only will this proposal engage conversations with the local communities, interested public, tribes, and state agencies it will encourage participation with a common goal of protecting our environment from harm.

**D. USDA Forest Service Priorities:**

**1. *Controlling the COVID-19 pandemic***

Take all safety precautions and follow agency guidelines while implementing this project conserve ecosystems within the landscape and enhance the resiliency of communities.

**2. *Providing economic relief***

This project will enhance the experience of the forest users and improve the safety of that experience. Over the last ten years the communities and prime recreation areas

have been either mandatory or voluntarily evacuated. The district has spent large sums of money to upgrade campgrounds, picnic sites, and hiking trails to make the users experience most enjoyable. This project will help protect those areas to maintain the user experience. During those extreme wildfire scenarios millions of dollars from recreation has been lost. This project will provide relief and reduce the risk of those fires in those areas.

**3. *Tackling climate change***

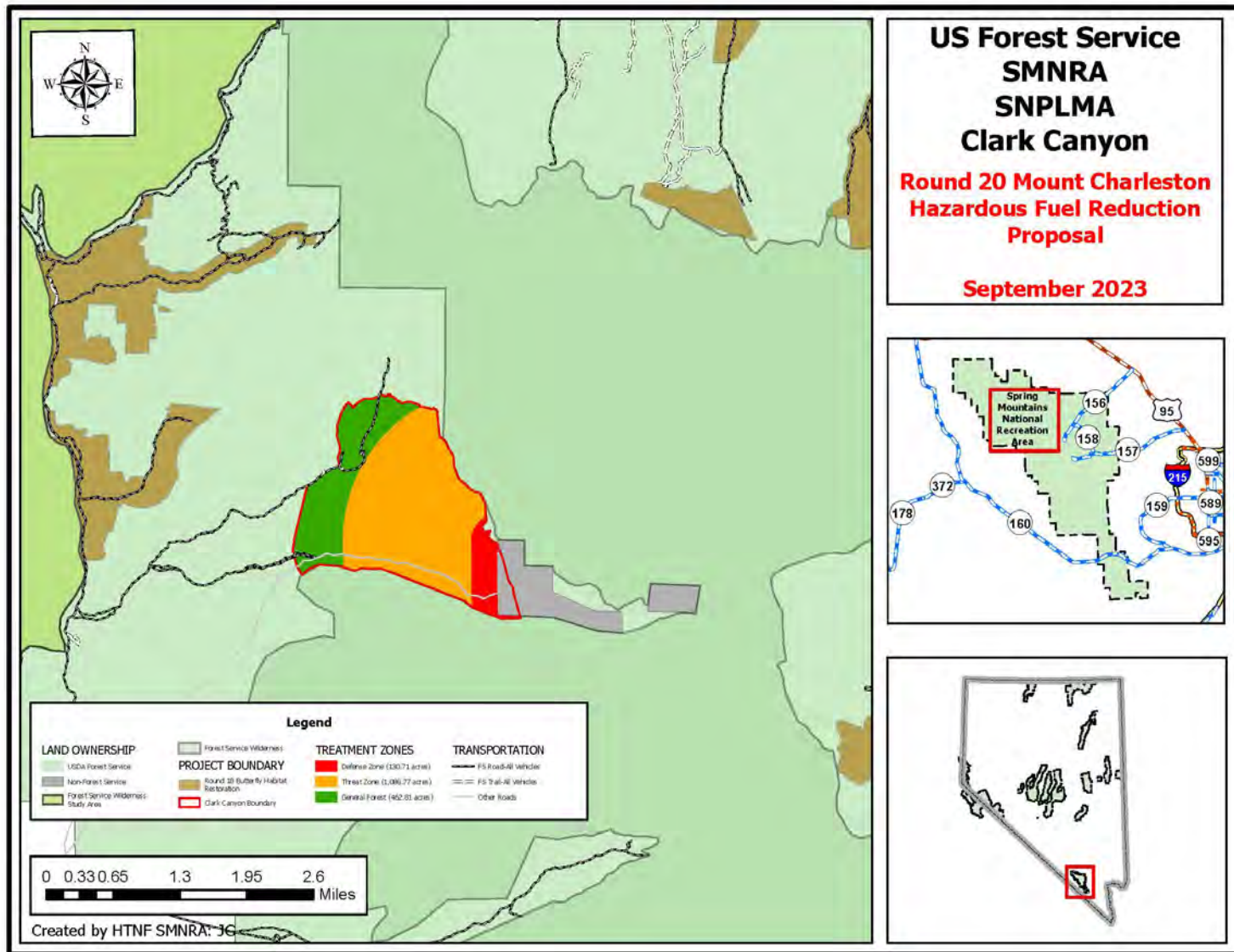
The primary design of this project will be to increase the resiliency and overall health of the ecosystem. By doing this the threat of catastrophic, stand replacing wildfire will be a reduction in fuel loading that will reduce fire behavior from extreme to moderate or low.

**4. *Advancing racial equity***

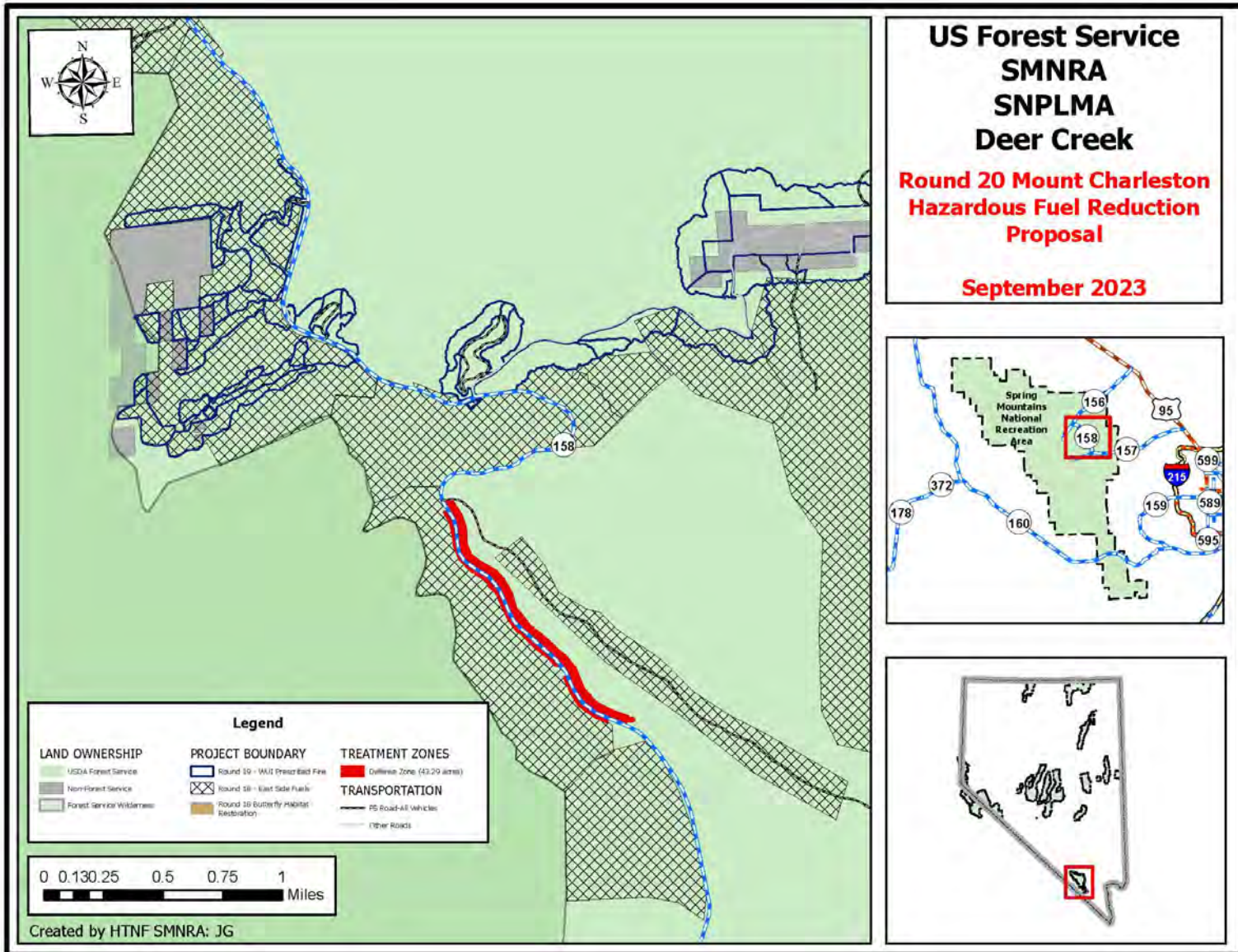
Agency policy and guidelines will be strictly adhered to. The intent of the project is to bring all communities together.

**5. *Improving our workforce and work environment***

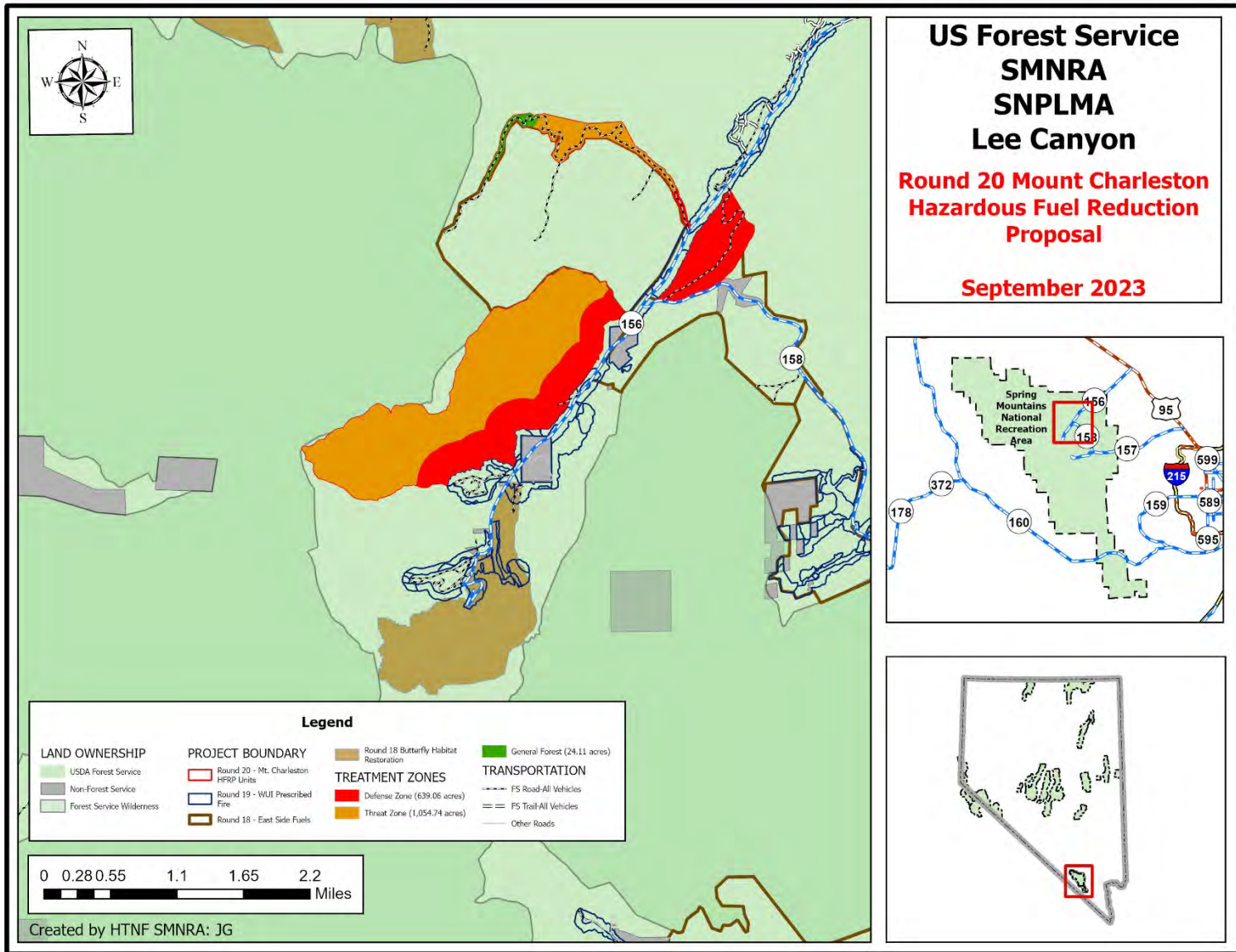
This project will bring all of the disciplines within the district office to work together to achieve a common goal: improving ecosystem conditions and enhancing the resiliency of the landscape. It will involve engagement with partners and the public to unite for a worthy cause for fire protection and preserving functioning ecosystems.



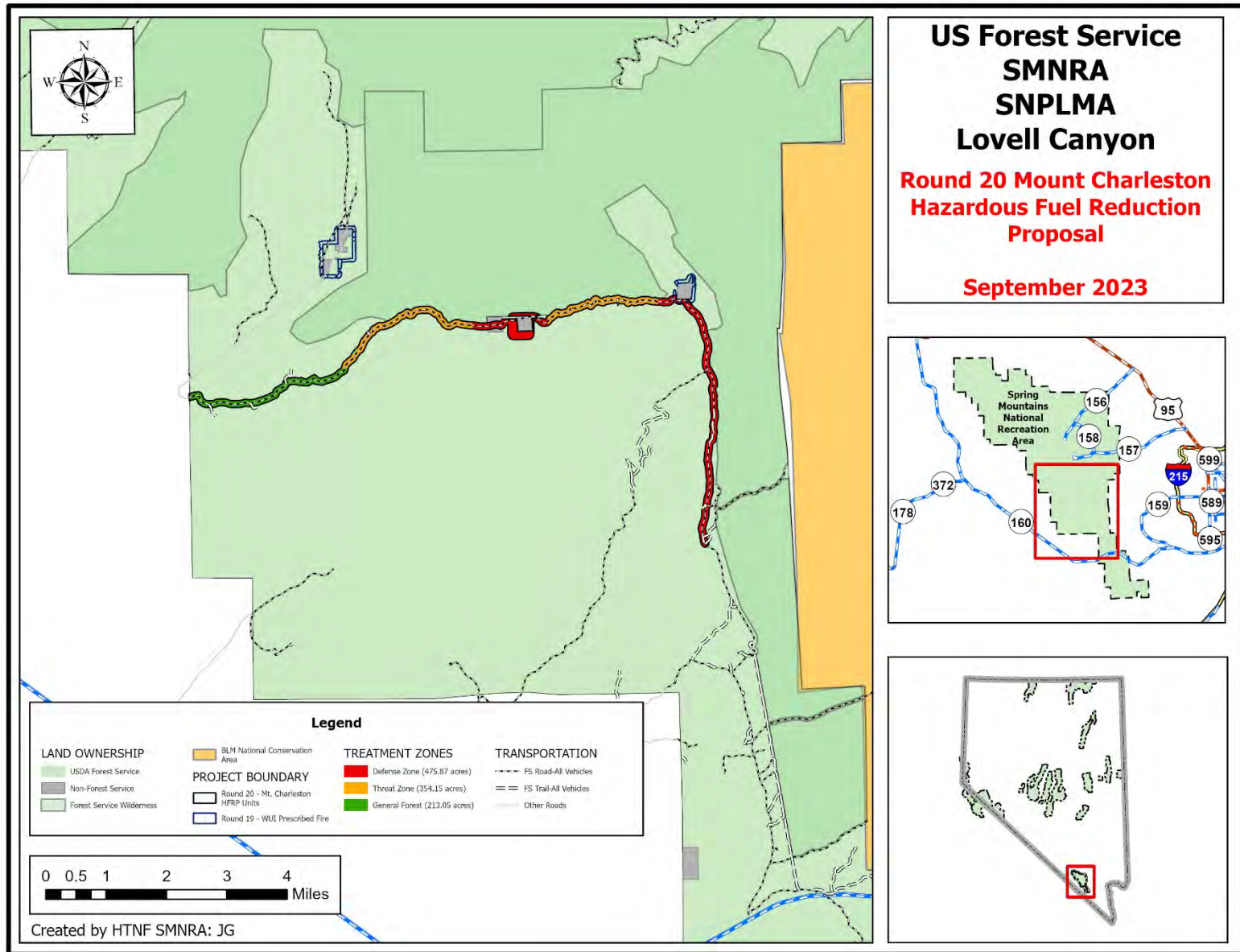
Map 1: Location – Clark Canyon



Map 2: Location - Deer Creek



Map 3: Location – Lee Canyon



Map 4: Location – Lovell Canyon



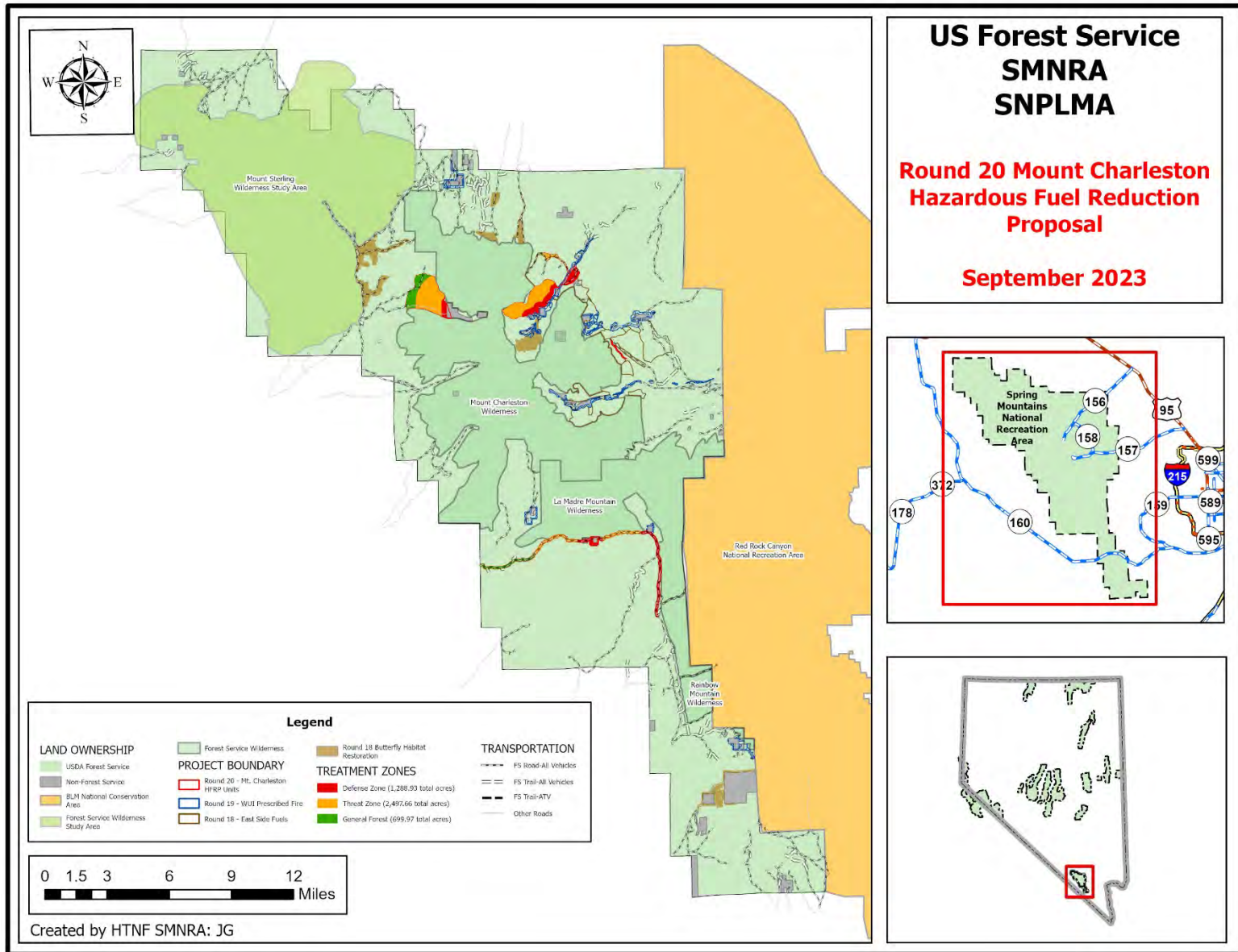


Figure 1: SNPLMA Strategic Values

## N. PERFORMANCE MEASURES

<b>SNPLMA FY2020-FY2024 STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL 1: Sustain the Quality of the Outdoor Environment by Conserving, Preserving, and Restoring Natural and Cultural Resources</b>		
<b>Performance Measures for Habitat Enhancement</b>	<b>Definition of Performance Measure</b>	<b>Quantity</b>
H9 - Acres of Invasive Plant Species Treated or Restored	<p>Report the number of acres of weed infestation treated with chemical, mechanical, physical, or biological control agents for the purpose of weed control. Include acres treated by fire when fire is used as a physical control agent for weed control rather than as a hazardous fuels treatment. Each acre treated is counted only once during the life of the project, no matter how many re-treatments occurred during the project.</p> <p>Report to the nearest whole acre.</p>	750-1000
<b>Performance Measures for Wildland Fire Management</b>	<b>Definition of Performance Measure</b>	<b>Quantity</b>
F1 - Acres of Hazardous Fuels Treated – Non-Wildland Urban Interface (WUI)	<p>Report the total number of acres of hazardous fuels treated, enhanced, or restored to reduce wildland fuels hazards and to restore or maintain ecosystem resiliency outside the WUI. Where multiple treatments are necessary to meet vegetation management objectives, such as hand thinning followed by re-seeding, each treatment is counted individually.</p>	200
F2 - Acres of Hazardous Fuels Treated – Wildland Urban Interface (WUI)	<p>Report the total number of acres of hazardous fuels treated, enhanced, or restored to reduce wildland fuels hazards and to restore or maintain ecosystem resiliency within the WUI. Where multiple treatments are necessary to meet vegetation management objectives, such as hand thinning followed by re-seeding, each treatment is counted individually.</p>	2200-2637
<b>SNPLMA FY2020-FY2024 STRATEGIC PLAN: Other Performance Measures that Also Support the Three Values for SNPLMA Implementation of Sustainability, Connectivity, and Community</b>		
<b>Other Performance Measures</b>	<b>Definition of Performance Measure</b>	<b>Quantity</b>
O5 - Number of Outreach Contacts Made	<p>Report the number of education and outreach contacts made through interpretation and environmental education, such as number of teachers trained, number of participants in workshops, etc.</p>	500
O7 - Number of Interpretive or Education Presentations Given and/or Community Events Participated in or Hosted	<p>Report the number of interpretive or educational presentations given.</p> <p>Report each presentation as one unit.</p>	2

**O. PHOTOS**

None

**P. SUPPORT LETTERS**

None

**SNPLMA Round 20  
Hazardous Fuels Reduction and Wildfire Prevention  
National Resilience Corridors Phase II  
Nomination Addendum**

**Nomination:** Tab 5 National Resilience Corridors Phase II

**Agency:** USDA Forest Service, Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit

**COVER PAGE**

The Title should be renamed from “Phase 4 – National Resilience Corridors” to “National Resilience Corridors Phase II”; this change reflects the appropriate phase of the SNPLMA project segments. The first SNPLMA project of the National Resilience Corridors was approved in Round 19.

**Section A. BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

In the background narrative to describe what this phase project is different from the original Phase I project. The maps are identical to the Phase I project. There is no description what is different from Phase I. Only in the Budget spreadsheet could one figure the difference between Phase I and Phase II. Phase II proposal is to work within Zone 3 (Mechanical thinning 225 acres; hand-thinning 525 acres; and pile burning 450 acres). It was also stated under the Project Budget Cost-Benefit Analysis section of the nomination that the project is within Zone 3 for pile burning. A clear description should have been provided in the purpose statement as well as background and deliverables stating this is proposal is only within Zone 3.

**Section D. PROJECT DELIVERABLES AND ACRES**

Under the Anticipated Deliverables, the nomination outlines 525 acres of pile burning but in the project budget spreadsheet it states 450 acres. Unclear the correct acres of pile burning.

**Section F. PROJECT TIMEFRAME**

The timeline bullet was not inserted under the incorrect section. The timeline bullet was insert under “Level of Project Readiness for Implementation” section.

**Section G. LEVEL OF PROJECT RREADINESS FROR IMPLEMENATION**

The question if one applied, received, funding from other opportunities refers to the proposal project not past approved project. One provided information on past projects.

**Section I. PROJECT BUDGET**

Cost-Benefit Analysis, it is unclear how is it a cost benefit to only work in Zone 3; whereby, equipment would be moved more frequently. Rather would it not be a cost saving/benefit to complete Zone 2 and Zone 3 by the same contractor/crew while in the area. Though it be justified if one knows the priority and direction is to treat Zone 2 but unclear based on response.

Partnership and/or Contributed Funds, LTBMU’s funding is not a contribution since it is unallowable to contribute federal funds. Rather the LTBMU work helped to have the Phase I project shovel-ready. Past contribution by NV Energy of Phase I is not necessary to include and

causes a lot of confusion. As well any funds from NV Energy for work across Zone 1 is not a contribution but their responsibility.

One should simply state NV Energy would contribute \$110,000. NV Energy will contribute \$60,000 towards the pile burning and \$50,000 towards the sale preparation and contract preparation. A total of \$110,000.

#### **Section J. KEY CONTACTS**

This section needs to be updated with newly appointed Project Manager. The listed project manager no longer works for the Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit.

#### **Section K. RANKING CRITERIA**

Question 1 Factor A.: The majority of the proposed treatment areas lies within the Threat Zone, 413 acres while 350 acres are within the Defense Zone. The nominee addressed the incorrect ranking criteria question, question 1 factor A.1 (15 points) when the correct question to address is A.2 (10 points), since most of the proposed project lies within the Threat Zone.

#### **Section N. MAPS**

The nomination instructions stated, "In the map legend, identify how many acres of proposed treatment within the defense, threat, and general forest zones." No acres were listed on either maps, Location or Strategic Plan Value map - connectivity map. Phase I project indicated treatment would occur in Zone 3, yet the maps are identical to Phase I project. Phase I is programmed to treat 1000 acres in Zone 3 and 800 acres of pile burning in Zone 2 and 3 plus other work in Zone 2.

Instructions stated to upload maps in the format of jpg. What was uploaded were maps in pdf.

#### **Section P. SUPPORT LETTERS**

There is no **Commitment Letter** provided to support that NV Energy will contribute \$110,000. The NV Energy letter is dated 11/3/2021, prior to SNPLMA Round 20 being available or known when it will open. As outlined in the nomination instructions, "If either an in-kind or cash contribution is identified, a written commitment must be documented on official letterhead or stationery of the contributor and included as a letter of support at the back of the nomination package."

*Under the Contracts and/or Agreement Tab*, a contribution of \$110,000 is listed.

- Stewardship Agreement with partner – sale preparation and contract preparation \$50,000.
- Stewardship Agreement with partner – pile burning in Zone 3 of \$60,000.

**Support Letter** from NV Energy should be a letter that was submitted around the time of the SNPLMA Round 20 opening. The letter received is dated November 3, 2021.

**Southern Nevada Public Land Management Act  
Hazardous Fuels Reduction and Wildfire Prevention  
Round 20**

U.S. Forest Service, Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit



Phase 4 – National Resilience Corridors

**Amount Requested: \$3,818,755**

## A. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Forest Service and NV Energy have long partnered to manage hazard tree threats along powerlines in the Tahoe Basin. This project will build on that partnership by creating healthy forest stands with reduced fuels adjacent to critical infrastructure, reducing the threat of wildfire near powerlines and increasing landscape resilience. There is a present need to reduce the risk of wildland fires that ignite from vegetation contacting utility infrastructure or failures in the infrastructure. Recent destructive fires in California have demonstrated the need to also improve forest health and resilience by reducing fuels and stand density within the forests surrounding the powerline corridors. This project conforms to the 2016 Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit's Land Management Plan and implements fuels reduction treatments in priority areas identified in the 2014 Lake Tahoe Basin Multi-Jurisdictional Fuels Reduction and Fire Prevention Strategy.

### a. Describe Relationship to prior Approved Phases or Related SNPLMA Projects and Anticipated Future Phases

This project is Phase 4 of the National Resilience Corridors project approved in Round 19. This project proposal includes forest health and fuels reduction treatments on the Nevada side of the Tahoe Basin, along utility infrastructure owned and operated by NV Energy. Future phases are anticipated, as Round 19 only funded a portion of the planned treatments and this Phase 4 project will fund only a further portion of the planned treatments on the Nevada side of the Tahoe Basin.

### b. Describe how the proposed project will protect or enhance wildlife habitat and/or resilience vegetative communities.

This project will reduce risk of wildland fire to wildlife habitat and promote resilience in vegetative communities. Vegetation treatments (forest thinning) near powerlines will reduce risk of wildland fire originating from energy infrastructure and protect adjacent wildlife habitat. Vegetation treatments within approximately 1,000 feet will increase forest resilience to disturbances such as fire, drought, insect outbreaks, and climate change – thereby also protecting wildlife habitat.

### c. Acknowledgement of Stand-Alone Project and no Guarantee of Funding for Future Phases

We acknowledge that there is no guarantee for future phases to be funded and can confirm that this Phase 4 project is a viable stand-alone project with specific deliverables that will be accomplished.

## B. SNPLMA STRATEGIC PLAN VALUES

Hazardous Fuels Reduction and Wildfire Prevention projects have two goals identified in the Strategic Plan:

- Goal 1: Sustain the quality of the outdoor environment by conserving, preserving, and restoring natural and cultural resources.

- Goal 2: Improve the quality of life for all publics in urban and rural communities by enhancing recreational opportunities that connect people with the outdoor environment.

Nominated projects should meet these goals by focusing on the three SNPLMA core values, connectivity, sustainability, and community. Every nomination must explain how the three values are promoted by the project.

1. Sustainability:

The project will sustain the quality of the outdoor environment through vegetation management actions that will restore natural and cultural resources. These management actions will maintain or increase the quality of natural resources and protect their ecological integrity and sustainability. Project treatments will decrease stand density levels by thinning trees to appropriate stocking levels resulting in improved tree vigor, forest structure and resiliency to landscape disturbances such as fire, insect outbreaks, and climate change.

2. Connectivity:

This project promotes connectivity and sustainability through integration of multiple resource objectives and by connecting projects across the landscape being implemented by multiple agencies and landowners. This project will implement fuels and forest health treatments under the NV Energy Resilience Corridors Project planning decision. This project compliments similar Round 18 resilience corridor work occurring on the California side of the Tahoe Basin, creating a consistent approach across the Tahoe Region for reducing wildfire risk and improving forest health around utility infrastructure to protect sensitive habitats, cultural resources and the communities that surround Lake Tahoe. These treatments will connect treatments from previously completed and ongoing fuels projects on federal and nonfederal lands resulting in a comprehensive and connected network of treatments across multiple land ownerships in the Wildland Urban Interface. This network of treatments has beneficial impacts at the landscape scale and provides effective protection to communities from wildfire, as demonstrated by the recent Caldor Fire in South Lake Tahoe.

3. Community:

This project will improve the quality of life for those living in and visiting the Lake Tahoe region by reducing wildfire risk to communities and utility infrastructure and by improving the resilience of Lake Tahoe forests to natural disturbances such as wildfire, drought, insect and disease, and climate change. Forests that are resilient to natural disturbance provide sustainable recreational opportunities and reduced risk of wildfire to adjoining communities. This project will reduce hazardous fuels by removing ladder fuel and smaller suppressed trees, as well as some overstory trees that contribute to ladder fuels and reduce existing surface and down fuels. The project will also improve forest health through removal of diseased trees and thinning of overly dense forest stands.



## C. PURPOSE STATEMENT

The purpose of this project is Forest Service implementation of fuels reduction and forest health treatments on approximately 650-750 acres that connect past and current projects to create a comprehensive network of treatments that improve the resilience of Tahoe's forests and communities to disturbances such as wildfire, insect and disease, drought, and climate change. This project will protect forest habitats, highly valued recreational landscapes, utility infrastructure and Lake Tahoe communities located on the Nevada side of the Tahoe Basin through treatments that are designed to go beyond routine line clearance vegetation actions (pruning and hazard tree felling) to treatments designed reduce stand density, reduce fuel loads, and create healthy forests resilient forests.

## D. PROJECT DELIVERABLES AND ACRES

### 1. Primary Deliverable:

Reduce hazardous fuels and improve forest health conditions on approximately 650-750 acres of National Forest System lands. The actual acreage treated may be slightly different and will be determined by the costs for conducting hand thinning, service contracts, and mechanical thinning stewardship contracts at the time of project implementation so as not to exceed the approved budget. This will include the contract rates for hand thinning and piling of slash, mechanical thinning, removal of biomass material, and fuels treatments such as mastication or pile burning. The final acres may also change due to circumstances that may not be discovered until implementation, such as changed information on wildlife species, newly discovered heritage resource sites, etc.

### 2. Anticipated Deliverable

The following Anticipated Deliverables are desirable and beneficial:

- Forest products including biomass and timber.
- Pile burning up to 525 acres. We anticipate pile burning will be implemented; however, because of the operational complexity and limited burn windows, we do not expect to burn all slash piles created by thinning treatments in this phase of the project.
- Treatment of terrestrial invasive plants within the project units, 5-100 acres may be treated.
- Conservation Education/Community Outreach through 5-10 social media and public notifications, 1-5 community and classroom events.

### 3. Standard Deliverables:

- Project management and SNPLMA reporting.
- Develop project work plan and budget to support project implementation.
- Prepare, award, and administer hazardous fuels reduction hand thinning service contracts and timber stewardship sale or service contracts.

- Prepare, award, and administer hand thin/pile hazardous fuels reduction contracts including all contract inspections, final payment, and contract close-out.
- Prepare, award and administer mechanical fuels reduction contracts including all contract inspections, final payment and contract closeout.
- Close out all obligations associated with this project.
- Prepare the project closing letter and final financial record.
- Conduct site visit and file review with SNPLMA Division and close out the project in the SNPLMA database.

**Acres:** Calculate specific acres of proposed treatment of each zone (defense, threat, and general forest) and clearly identify the emphasis zone if more than one zone is identified in the nomination.

Approximately 315 acres are in the Defense Zone, 413 acres are in the Threat Zone, and 22 acres are located outside the WUI. The emphasis will be treatment within the Defense Zone.

## E. PROJECT LOCATION

**Physical location of project; identify County (s) and State(s):**

Washoe, Carson City, and Douglas counties, Nevada

**Identify Congressional District(s):**

Nevada's 2nd Congressional District

**Latitude and Longitude:**

**39.006821 / -119.948364**

## F. PROJECT TIMEFRAME

6 years

## G. LEVEL OF PROJECT READINESS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Is this a shovel-ready project?  Yes  No

Project implementation is currently occurring using stewardship authority by partnering with NV Energy. The LTBMU is in discussion with partners to increase our capacity to implement this project.

Year	Task	Est. Acres	Notes
Year 1	Complete whitebark pine consultation with FWS	N/A	Species federally listed after planning was completed in 2022

Year 1	Complete resource surveys for mechanical thinning	175-225	Wildlife, aquatics, botany, and heritage
Year 2	Complete prep for mechanical thinning and award thinning contract	175-225	
Year 2	Complete resource surveys for hand thinning	475-525	Wildlife, aquatics, botany, and heritage
Year 3	Complete layout of hand thinning	475-525	
Year 4	Complete implementation of mechanical thinning	175-225	
Year 4	Complete implementation of hand thinning	475-525	
Year 5	Complete pile burning	400-450	
Year 6	Closeout all contracts/agreements		

Have you applied, received, or is there the opportunity to obtain funding from another source for this project? Please list the additional funding opportunities received or applied for and indicate whether it is federal or nonfederal funding.

A stewardship agreement between the LTBMU and NV Energy was executed in September 2021, including non-SNPLMA, federal funding for the LTBMU and private funding for NV Energy. Additional non-SNPLMA, federal funding and private funding were contributed as part of a second stewardship agreement between the parties in 2023. A third agreement between LTBMU is in development with Round 19 SNPLMA funding.

## **H. 10-YEAR MULTI-JURISDICTIONAL PLAN**

Addresses whether the nomination is consistent with its 10-year multi-jurisdictional strategy and how important the proposed project would be in achieving the strategy of the plan. Describe how the proposed project relates to the specific elements of its multi-jurisdictional plan.

This project is consistent with the 2014 Lake Tahoe Basin Multi-Jurisdictional Fuel Reduction and Wildfire Prevention Strategy, as amended 28 April 2017, as the project targets the WUI, emphasizing the WUI Defense Zone, and will contribute toward desired conditions identified in the plan, including low densities of large trees, low growing and scattered understory, increased structural diversity, and variable age classes of woody riparian vegetation. This project will reduce fuels in the WUI and the risk of potential wildland fire in and adjacent to communities as part of a comprehensive strategy (e.g., hardening homes, reducing fuels on private lands, providing ingress/egress from communities, and reducing fuels adjacent to communities). The

project will benefit forest health over time by increasing resilience to climate change, forest pathogens, and other sources of perturbation and result in corresponding long-term benefits to watershed health and function.

This project is supported by Tahoe Douglas Fire Protection District, the Multi-Agency Coordination (MAC), the Tahoe Fire and Fuels Team, and the California and Nevada Tahoe Basin Fire Commission (Fire Commission) and their recommendations to the Governors of California and Nevada.

## **I. PROJECT BUDGET**

### Cost-Benefit Analysis

Estimated cost for forest restoration and fuels reduction treatments for this Phase 4 project is \$333/acre for sale and contract preparation, \$5,200/acre of mechanical treatment, \$2,250/acre of hand treatment, and \$750/acre of pile burning in Zone 3. The cost of the proposed treatments, at less than \$4 million, is significantly less than the cost of fighting large wildland fires or potential damages to homes, infrastructure, or the environment from wildland fire. This project is intended to reduce the risk of wildland fire as demonstrated by similar vegetation treatments that contributed to reduced Caldor Fire suppression costs (not needing to suppress structural fires in the Pawnee/Iroquois Circle neighborhood) and damage to infrastructure (see 3. D. below). Large wildland fire suppression can often exceed \$1,000,000 per day, especially when aircraft are required. This project would be equivalent to less than four days of large wildland fire suppression at that rate. There are also additional costs of wildland fire suppression repair, burned area emergency response, and restoration. Post-Caldor restoration costs are already in excess of \$5 million and are expected to increase.

### Partnership and/or Contributed Funds

The NV Energy Resilience Corridor Project is a partnership project between the LTBMU, Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest and NV Energy. To date, NV Energy has provided funding for environmental planning, resource surveys, treatment preparation, implementation, and project management. Total NV Energy investment on forest system lands on the LTBMU is approximately \$5,000,000 to date. The LTBMU also provided staffing and/or funding for the project, investing approximately \$1,200,000 to date. As this grant application is specific to the LTBMU, the following project details and partner contributions are specific to work within the Lake Tahoe Basin. There are approximately 3,500 acres planned for treatment with the Tahoe Basin (97 acres in Zone 1, 930 acres in Zone 2 and 2,473 acres in Zone 3), with an estimated cost to complete work of \$20,000,000. To date, through stewardship agreement between NV Energy and the LTBMU, the following contributions/commitments have been made:

Stewardship agreement #1 - The LTBMU provided \$1,159,000 in funding received under the Lake Tahoe Restoration Act to support up to 280 acres of implementation in Zone 2 and Zone 3. NV Energy provided \$4,665,000 in support of project implementation, including project layout, pre-implementation surveys, technical felling and fuels treatments in Zone 1 and Zone 2.

Stewardship agreement #2 - The LTBMU has committed \$1,500,000 in funding received under the Lake Tahoe Restoration Act to support up to 250 acres of implementation in Zones 2 and 3. NV Energy has committed \$6,035,450 in support of project implementation in Zones 1 and 2.

Stewardship agreement #3 – In development with NV Energy with similar partner contributions as in agreements #1 and #2.

Estimated cost for forest restoration and fuels reduction treatments for this Phase 4 project is \$5,200 per acre of mechanical treatment, \$2,250 per acre of hand treatment, and \$750 per acre of pile burning in Zone 3.

<b>PROJECT BUDGET</b>		
<b>Cost Categories</b>	<b>SNPLMA</b>	<b>Non-Federal Contribution</b>
1. Personnel (labor plus benefits)	\$ 800,570.00	\$ -
2. Travel	\$ 30,000.00	\$ -
3. Training	\$ -	\$ -
4. Equipment	\$ -	\$ -
5. Supplies/Materials	\$ 27,700.00	\$ -
6. Contracts and/or Agreements	\$ 2,938,750.00	\$ 110,000.00
7. Vehicle Use	\$ 21,735.00	\$ -
8. Other Necessary Expenses	\$ -	\$ -
<b>9. TOTAL PROJECT BUDGET</b>	<b>\$ 3,818,755.00</b>	<b>\$ 110,000.00</b>

## **J. KEY CONTACTS**

Authorized Officer: Erick Walker, Forest Supervisor

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Project Manager: Azad Henareh Khayani

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Budget Officer: Tegan Shermikas

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Phone Number: (541) 603-8321

## K. RANKING CRITERIA

Provide a narrative response to the following Criteria and Factors that apply to the nomination.

**1. Improves the community within and/or adjacent to the project area.** Projects are only eligible for Factors A1, A2, or A3; select and answer ONLY ONE, based on where most of the proposed project are lies within. Answer Factors B and C as they apply to the nomination.

A. Addresses immediate public health and safety and community infrastructure.

1. Project is within the Defense Zone, generally an area within 0.25 mile of life and property, as depicted by the most current Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) map in the applicable plan.

This project will reduce fuels in the WUI and the risk of potential wildland fire in and adjacent to communities as part of a comprehensive strategy (e.g., hardening homes, reducing fuels on private lands, providing ingress/egress from communities, and reducing fuels adjacent to communities). This project will reduce fuels adjacent to communities and contribute toward desired forest conditions, including low densities of large trees, low growing and scattered understory, increased structural diversity, and variable age classes of woody riparian vegetation.

2. Project is within the Threat Zone, generally an area between 0.25 mile and 1.50 miles of life and property, as depicted by the most current WUI map in the applicable plan.

Answer: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

3. Project is within the general forest or other lands beyond the WUI (generally greater than 1.5 miles from life and property), as depicted by the most current map in the applicable plan.

Answer: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

B. Promotes protection of source water (rivers and lakes) or municipal watersheds.

This project implements fuels reduction and forest health treatments in areas of the WUI that pose the greatest risk for wildfire. The project transects the following 16 major watersheds: Stateline Point-First/Second Creek-Wood Creek Frontal, Third Creek, Incline Creek-Mill Creek Frontal, Tunnel Creek-Sand Harbor Frontal, Marlette Creek, Bliss Creek, Secret Harbor Creek-Skunk Harbor, Slaughter House Creek, Glenbrook Frontal, Logan House Frontal, Skyland-Cave Rock-Lincoln Creek Frontal, Zephyr Frontal, McFaul Creek, Burke Creek and Edgewood Creek are located within the project area and drain into the Lake Tahoe. The Daggett Creek watershed is located within the project area and drains into the Carson River (outside the Lake

Tahoe Basin). These watersheds support extremely high resource values, including forest and plant communities that protect source headwaters in California and Nevada. Several creeks within the project area are currently in a degraded condition. A wildfire of any size in this area may potentially lead to excessive sediment and nutrient loading and an increase in water temperature for streams and the lake. Consequently, water supply systems and source water for recreation, fishing, and municipal water supply could be impaired. The hazardous fuels and vegetation treatments identified from the project would reduce this risk of a severe wildfire, therefore protecting water supply systems and source water.

- C. Project includes education and outreach to the community on Living with Fire or Fire Adapted Communities and/or the importance of fuels reduction on federal, state, and local government land.

This project includes community outreach and education with programs targeting K-12 grade students. Programs are designed to inform students on the importance of conducting fuels reduction and forest health treatments in and adjacent to the community. Programs include education on forest health, the role fire plays in maintaining ecosystem function, and how to maintain a fire safe landscape around homes (defensible space) in accordance with Living with Fire and Fire Adapted Communities.

- 2. **Improves the connection of fuels reduction activities and wildlife habitat.** Respond to each of the following.

- A. Project protects or enhances wildlife habitat and/or resilient vegetative communities.

The project promotes a healthy and sustainable landscape that increases the forest's resistance and resilience to disturbances such as wildfire, insect outbreaks, and diseases through thinning of dense conifer stands and reduction of forest fuels. The project will thin 750 acres of dense conifer stands. Project completion would provide the following benefit: the ability for fire and fuel managers to use prescribed fire under burns to restore low intensity surface fire back to the landscape and enhance the ecological benefits that are dependent and adapted to frequent low intensity fire. Once prescribed under burns take place it may not be necessary to conduct future large-scale forest thinning when prescribed burning would safely and effectively meet fuel and vegetation objectives in the WUI.

- B. Project enhances the effectiveness of other treatments in progress or complete.

The treatments being implemented under this project connect directly to completed and ongoing fuels treatments occurring within the adjacent communities on both federal and nonfederal lands. The completion of these planned activities is a comprehensive and connected network of treatments across multiple land ownerships in the defense zone (community extending into the wildland) and the threat zone.

- C. The project is planning for or implementing a treatment that is strategically located to connect to planned or existing projects on the landscape.

This project implements fuels reduction and forest health treatments planned under the National Resilience Corridors Project. This project is located adjacent to current and past fuels treatments located on federal and nonfederal lands implemented in coordination with the Tahoe Fire and Fuels Team and identified in the 2014 Lake Tahoe Basin Multi-Jurisdictional Fuels Reduction and Fire Prevention Strategy. This project will connect treatments across the landscape, increasing the overall effectiveness of the fuel reduction and forest health efforts.

**3. Improves sustainability of the multijurisdictional 10-year plans, environment, and financial resources.** Respond to each of the following.

- A. Improve the sustainability of the forest health and ecosystem function (e.g., stand density, desired species mix and age, tree health, etc.).

The objective of this project is not only to reduce hazardous fuels, but to increase forest health and resiliency to disturbance within treated areas. Proposed vegetation treatments would focus on thinning over story trees, removing shade-tolerant understory trees, and reducing other shrubby vegetation to appropriate stocking. Stands that are overstocked would be thinned to levels that would improve tree vigor, thus reducing the widespread threat of bark beetle outbreaks, dwarf mistletoe, root disease, and other pests and pathogens. Treatments implemented under this project will improve the vegetation condition of forest stands through the creation of a forest stand structure that promotes species richness, pattern, and abundance and that has a high resilience to fire.

- B. Improve habitat for sensitive species and Threatened and Endangered species. Includes mitigation and/or minimization measures when treatment in sensitive habitat is unavoidable.

The project environmental planning includes the objective to protect or improve habitat for Forest Service Management Indicator Species (MIS) as well as threatened, endangered, or sensitive species. Stands have been identified for reducing high fuel loads within California spotted owl and Northern goshawk Protected Activity Centers (PACs) - areas identified for nesting and foraging habitat. Using an active management approach for treating these PACs, small trees (less than 14" diameter at breast height) would be hand thinned and surface fuel loads treated to a level that would reduce predicted fire behavior so that treated stands would continue to provide optimal nesting and foraging habitat and likely survive a wildfire. In this manner, the risk of a wildfire destroying the nest or habitat surrounding the nest is minimized. Mechanical thinning would occur in stands that are accessible with a modified prescription to meet the PAC requirements. Consultation with the Fish and Wildlife Service has been re-initiated in response to the 2023 listing of whitebark pine. The



LTBMU is seeking FWS guidance for implementation in areas of whitebark pine or its habitat.

- C. Include broadcast prescribed fire for resource management objectives for sustainable landscapes.

This project does not include prescribed fire as a primary deliverable, including broadcast prescribed fire, however, pile burning is an anticipated deliverable. In addition, an overarching project goal is to move the forest stands to a condition where the use of broadcast prescribed fire is a possible tool for achieving fuels reduction objectives in the future. The project decision includes prescribed pile burning to remove excess fuels and broadcast fire treatments as post thinning treatment options. The long-term goal for the entire project area is to allow for the use of broadcast burning for the purpose of sustaining landscape level resiliency to a host of possible disturbance mechanisms such as fire, insects, and climate change.

- D. The method of treatment is fiscally responsible for the project area by balancing resource objectives, values at risk, and cost per acre factors or cost-benefit analysis.

This WUI project will consider cost savings approaches to accomplish the planned treatments, including the use of stewardship contracting and service contracts to treat forest vegetation and hazardous fuels, as well as utilize biomass products. Stewardship contracting authority includes agreements with nonprofit organizations to offer best-value and long-term contracts where costs to implement the project are offset by the value of material that is removed. Strategies to reduce costs for mechanically treated areas would include the use of competitive bidding among contractors to assure the lowest price available. Recent stewardship contract awards have come in with higher than anticipated government estimates due to a glut of post-fire materials on the market, and abundance of projects to bid on, and a limited number of facilities to take treatment products. As evidenced by treatments completed within and around the community impacted by the Angora Fire implementing hazardous fuels and vegetation treatments strategically in portions of the forest and the WUI helps ensure that damage to Lake Tahoe values (homes and businesses) are avoided or minimized (<http://www.fs.fed.us/r5/angorafuelsassessment/>, 2007). In 2019, the median sale price for homes in the North Lake Tahoe area was \$745,000 with a density of 532 homes per square mile. The median sale price of a home in the South Lake Tahoe area is \$758,000 with a density of 1,396 homes per square mile. The costs associated with implementing fuel reduction treatments for this project is small when compared to the estimated value of homes at risk. The proposed project would treat fuel conditions using the best combination of treatments including mechanical thin, machine pile, mastication, biomass removal on both upland and riparian areas, hand thinning on steeper slopes and pile burning. The proposed project would help to protect and promote water quality, wildlife habitat, heritage and cultural resources, local tourism, the economy, and private property/capital improvements around residential areas and the urban interface. The cost associated with treating the forest vegetation and hazardous fuels is difficult to quantify when

compared to the costs of not having a living forest present after a wildfire, increased sedimentation in lakes and streams, and a loss of fish and wildlife habitat or water supply for drinking and recreation. The Lake Tahoe area has many historical properties and Native American cultural sites. Once consumed by wildfire these properties and sites are generally irreplaceable. The economy in the Lake Tahoe Basin is also dependent on tourism, scenic visual quality and outdoor recreational activities in the forest both in the summer and the winter. There are several species of wildlife that are at risk for loss of habitat from wildfire. These species include but are not limited to California Spotted Owl, Northern Goshawk, Osprey, Bald Eagle, and Willow Flycatcher. The Angora Fire, for example, destroyed or displaced three Northern Goshawk and one California Spotted Owl Protected Activity Centers. Communities in the Lake Tahoe area are in the WUI. These communities are at risk of a wildfire and the risk to the communities is reduced significantly when hazardous fuels and vegetation treatments take place. The recent Caldor Fire provides clear evidence of the effectiveness of forest thinning and fuels reduction treatments at modifying fire behavior and providing protection to communities in the path of wildfire. The cost of the proposed treatments is also significantly less than the cost of fighting large wildland fires, which can often exceed \$1,000,000 per day especially when aircraft are required.

4. **Demonstrates sound project management and quality control measures.** Respond to each of the following.

- A. Project goals and implementation processes are clear, measurable, achievable, and demonstrable.

This project is implementing treatments from the National Resilience Corridors Project. The environmental analysis for this project was conducted under the National Environmental Policy Act to implement hazardous fuels reduction and forest health treatments, with approximately 3,500 acres on NFS lands located in the needing treatment. This project will complete 750 acres not yet funded or treated. This project continues a long history of fuels reduction and forest health projects conducted by the LTBMU, which began in the late 1990s. Past hazardous fuel reduction and forest health contracts have been successfully completed on more than 32,000 acres from 2005 through 2020. Based on this past performance, implementation of this project would be achievable and demonstrable.

- B. Project proponent has the capacity to implement this project in a timely manner (contractor and staff availability, no backlog of current projects, etc.) and within budget.

The LTBMU has demonstrated the capability to implement and complete previous hazardous fuels reduction projects on time and within budget. The LTBMU has completed 50 SNPLMA projects and is actively working on additional projects. The Forest Service has demonstrated over the past 16 years (2005-2021) its capacity to successfully implement SNPLMA projects and has increased in staffing, improved

contracting processes, and entered into participating agreements with the Tahoe Douglas, Lake Valley and North Lake Tahoe Fire Protection Districts, the Nevada Conservation Corps – Great Basin Institute, and the Denver, Colorado-based Veteran Green Jobs - Veterans Green Corps Program partnered with the California Conservation Corps all in an effort to continue to successfully implement projects in a timely and cost effective manner. In addition, new contract preparation methods have been undertaken. The LTBMU has also utilized new authorities to enter into long term agreements with partners to increase capacity and implement more projects. For this project, the LTBMU has partnered with NV Energy through a stewardship agreement, and is in conversation with another partner, to implement National Resilience Corridor treatments.

C. Is a phase or related component to a previously funded project.

This project is Phase 4 of a multi-phased project and will consist of forest thinning and fuels reduction treatments located along powerline utility corridors identified in National Resilience Corridors Project.

Phase 1 was accomplished through stewardship agreement #1 - The LTBMU provided \$1,159,000 in funding received under the Lake Tahoe Restoration Act to support up to 280 acres of implementation in Zone 2 and Zone 3. NV Energy provided \$4,665,000 in support of project implementation, including project layout, pre-implementation surveys, technical felling and fuels treatments in Zone 1 and Zone 2.

Phase 2 is underway under stewardship agreement #2 - The LTBMU committed \$1,500,000 in funding received under the Lake Tahoe Restoration Act to support up to 250 acres of implementation in Zones 2 and 3. NV Energy committed \$6,035,450 in support of project implementation in Zones 1 and 2.

Phase 3 is planned with \$7,715,630 in SNPLMA Round 19 funds to treat approximately 1,930 acres in Zones 2 and 3. NV Energy is also expected to contribute funding in support of implementation in Zone 2. We anticipate that future phases may be needed to fully fund National Forest Corridor projects.

D. Has identified committed non-SNPLMA sources of funding or in-kind contribution in the development and/or implementation of the project.

Phase 1 was accomplished through stewardship agreement #1 - The LTBMU committed \$1,159,000 in funding received under the Lake Tahoe Restoration Act to support up to 280 acres of implementation in Zone 2 and Zone 3. NV Energy committed \$4,665,000 in support of project implementation, including project layout, pre-implementation surveys, technical felling and fuels treatments in Zone 1 and Zone 2.

Phase 2 is underway under stewardship agreement #2 - The LTBMU committed \$1,500,000 in funding received under the Lake Tahoe Restoration Act to support up to 250 acres of implementation in Zones 2 and 3. NV Energy committed \$6,035,450 in support of project implementation in Zones 1 and 2.

## L. ORDERS AND PRIORITIES

### A. Executive Orders (EO):

- ***EO No. 13855: Promoting Active Management of America's Forests, Range Lands to Improve Conditions and Reduce Wildfire Risk***

This project is consistent with Executive Order No. 13855 Promoting Active Management of America's Forests and Rangelands to Improve Conditions and Reduce Wildfire Risk (Executive Order). The Executive Order prescribes three policies to be implemented by the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture, and each align with the activities proposed in the Project.

First, the Executive Order requires DOI and the Forest Service to adopt shared management priorities in partnership with federal land managers, states, tribes, and other landowners. This project implements the 2014 Lake Tahoe Basin Multi-Jurisdictional Fuel Reduction and Wildfire Prevention Strategy as Amended in 2017, which was developed by federal, state, and local government fire agencies and landowners. It shares the same three goals as the National Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy, which are to restore fire resilient landscapes, create fire adapted communities, and enable safe and effective wildfire response.

Second, the Executive Order requires DOI and the Forest Service to coordinate federal, state, tribal, and local assets for wildfire prevention, suppression, and reducing hazardous fuels. By closely coordinating projects, the Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit is closely coordinating with Tahoe Basin land managers and fire agencies to coordinate the deployment of assets and skills to protect communities and natural resources.

Third, the Executive Order requires DOI and the Forest Service to remove hazardous fuels, increase active management, and support rural economies. The project implements prioritized treatments that protect life and property and support the rural economy of the Basin by providing jobs and utilizing forest restoration byproducts.

- ***EO No. 14005: Ensuring the Future is Made in All of America by All of America's Workers***

- *EO No. 14063: Use of Project Labor Agreements for Federal Construction Projects (applicable to projects estimated at \$35 million or more)*
- *EO No. 14072: Strengthening the Nation's Forests, Communities, and Local Economies*
- *EO No. 14096: Revitalizing Our Nation's Commitment to Environmental Justice for All*

B. Secretarial Orders

- *SO No. 3347: Conservation Stewardship and Outdoor Recreation.*
- *SO No. 3356: Hunting, Fishing, Recreational Shooting, and Wildlife Conservation Opportunities and Coordination with States, Tribes and Territories.*
- *SO No. 3362: Improving Habitat Quality in Western Big-Game Winter Range and Migration Corridors.*
- *SO No. 3366: Increasing Recreational Opportunities on Lands and Waters Managed by the U.S. Department of the Interior*
- *SO No. 3370: Conservation Stewardship and Increasing Public Access to Urban National Wildlife Refuges.*
- *SO No. 3372: Reducing Wildfire Risks on Department of the Interior Land Through Active Management.*
- *SO No. 3373: Evaluating Public Access in Bureau of Land Management Public Land Disposal and Exchanges (focus is on Sec. 4.b.(3) Potential increased public recreational access to existing public lands resulting from the proposed land acquired through an exchange (acquisition)).*
- *SO No. 3376: Increasing Recreational Opportunities through the use of Electric Bikes.*

C. Department of the Interior Priorities:

1. *Identifying steps to accelerate responsible development of renewable energy on public lands and waters. We are investing in climate research and environmental innovation to incentivize the rapid deployment of clean energy solutions, while*

- reviewing existing programs to restore balance on America's public lands and waters to benefit current and future generations.*
2. ***Strengthening the government-to-government relationship with sovereign Tribal nations.*** *We understand that tribal sovereignty and self-governance, as well as honoring the federal trust responsibility to Tribal Nations, must be the cornerstones of federal Indian policy.*
  3. ***Making investments to support the Administration's goal of creating millions of family-supporting and union jobs.*** *This includes establishing a new Climate Conservation Corps Initiative to put a new generation of Americans to work conserving and restoring public lands and waters, increasing reforestation, increasing carbon sequestration in the agricultural sector, protecting biodiversity, improving access to recreation, and addressing the changing climate.*
  4. ***Working to conserve at least 30% each of our lands and waters by the year 2030.*** *We will work to protect biodiversity, slow extinction rates, and help leverage natural climate solutions by conserving 30% of America's lands and waters by 2030. This relies on support for local, state, private, and tribally led conservation and restoration efforts that are underway across America.*
  5. ***Centering equity and environmental justice.*** *The impacts of the multiple crises in the United States are not evenly distributed in our society. Communities of color, low-income families, and rural and indigenous communities have long suffered disproportionate and cumulative harm from air pollution, water pollution, and toxic sites. At every step of the way, Interior will engage diverse stakeholders across the country, as well as conduct formal consultation with Tribes in recognition of the U.S. government's trust responsibilities.*

D. USDA Forest Service Priorities:

1. ***Controlling the COVID-19 pandemic***  
All Federal employees working to support this project are required to be vaccinated against Covid-19. In addition, contractor's hired by the Forest Service will be required to provide proof of vaccination against Covid-19.
2. ***Providing economic relief***  
This project will provide jobs to the local Tahoe Basin and surrounding communities through employment of local fire crews, arborist, utility crews, foresters and other forest industry contractors needed to implement forest health and fuels reduction treatments. In addition, forest products such as saw timber and biomass will be removed from the project, providing jobs needed to transport, process and sale forest products.

**3. *Tackling climate change***

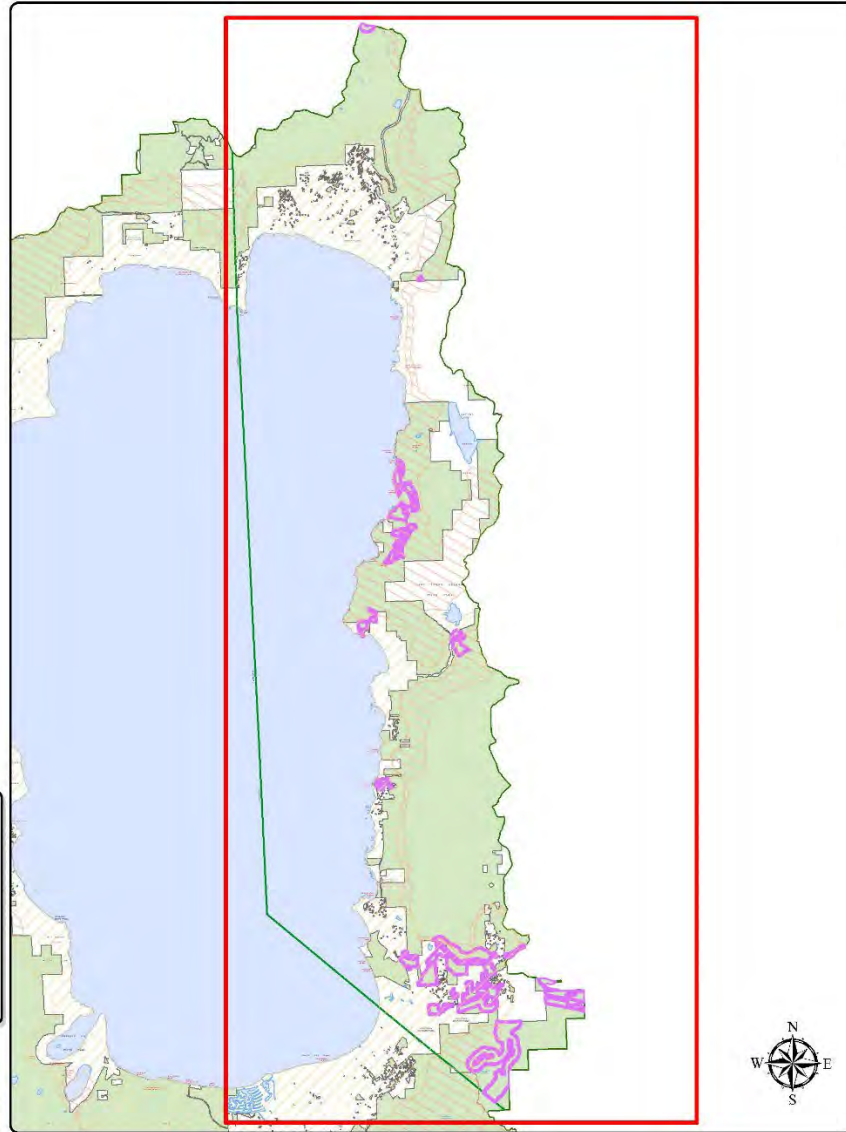
This project will improve the health of Tahoe's forests and its resilience to natural disturbances such as wildfire, drought, insect and disease outbreaks and climate change. The project will remove biomass off site for processing and utilization in mechanical treatment units, reducing the amount of prescribed fire pile burning required to meet project objectives and reducing associated greenhouse gas emissions.

**4. *Advancing racial equity***

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or because all or a part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program.

**5. *Improving our workforce and work environment***

The Forest Service is committed to the values of equity, inclusion, and equal opportunity our employees and those we serve. The Forest Service provides equal employment opportunity for all employees and applicants for employment, regardless of race, religion, color, sex (including pregnancy, gender identity and sexual orientation), national origin, age, genetic information, or disability. All employees have the freedom to compete on a fair and level playing field with equal opportunity for available employment and advancement opportunities. Equal employment opportunity covers all personnel/employment programs, management practices, and decisions, including recruitment/hiring, merit promotion, transfer, reassignments, training and career development, benefits, and separation.



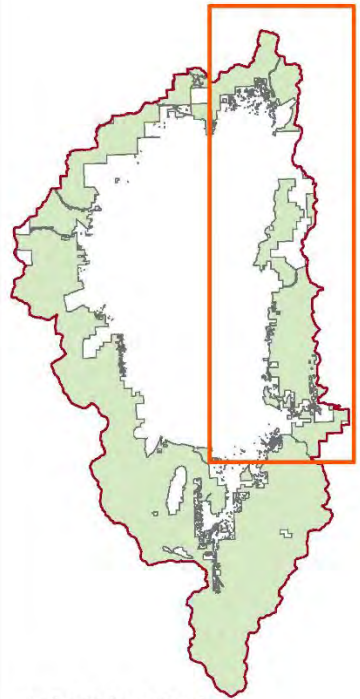
**Legend**

- Treatment Units
- WUI**
- WUI Defense Zone
- WUI Threat Zone
- Forest Service Land
- Other Ownership

0 0.5 1 2 3 4  
Miles  
Map created by Brian Garrett

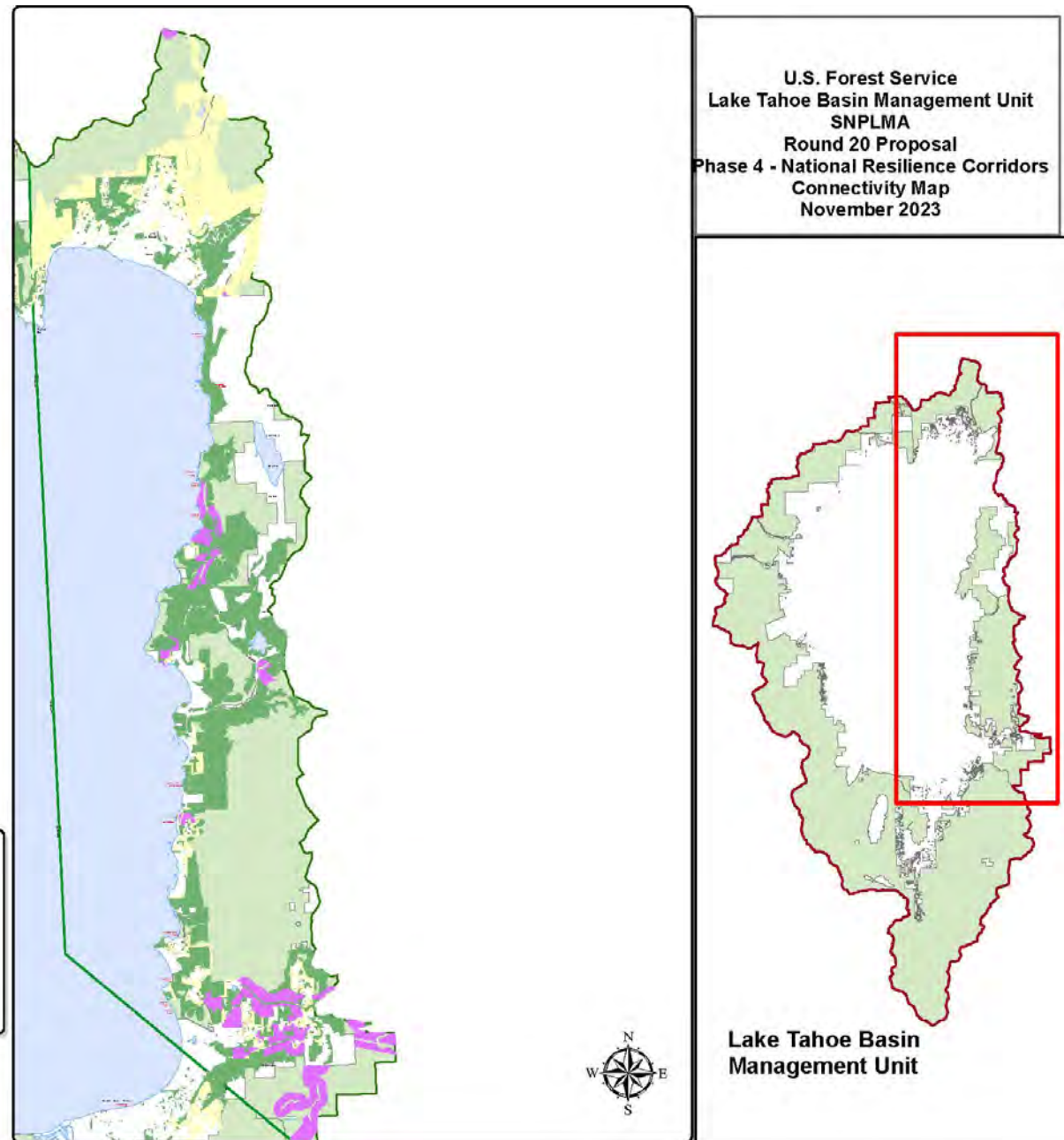


U.S. Forest Service  
Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit  
SNPLMA  
Round 20 Proposal  
Phase 4 - National Resilience Corridors  
Location Map  
November 2023



Lake Tahoe Basin  
Management Unit





## N. PERFORMANCE MEASURES

<b>SNPLMA FY2020-FY2024 STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL 1: Sustain the Quality of the Outdoor Environment by Conserving, Preserving, and Restoring Natural and Cultural Resources</b>		
<b>Performance Measures for Habitat Enhancement</b>	<b>Definition of Performance Measure</b>	<b>Quantity</b>
H9 - Acres of Invasive Plant Species Treated or Restored	Report the number of acres of weed infestation treated with chemical, mechanical, physical, or biological control agents for the purpose of weed control. Include acres treated by fire when fire is used as a physical control agent for weed control rather than as a hazardous fuels treatment. Each acre treated is counted only once during the life of the project, no matter how many re-treatments occurred during the project.	5- 100 acres
<b>Performance Measures for Wildland Fire Management</b>	<b>Definition of Performance Measure</b>	<b>Quantity</b>
F1 - Acres of Hazardous Fuels Treated – Non-Wildland Urban Interface (WUI)	Report the total number of acres of hazardous fuels treated, enhanced, or restored to reduce wildland fuels hazards and to restore or maintain ecosystem resiliency outside the WUI. Where multiple treatments are necessary to meet vegetation management objectives, such as hand thinning followed by re-seeding, each treatment is counted individually.	0-22
F2 - Acres of Hazardous Fuels Treated – Wildland Urban Interface (WUI)	Report the total number of acres of hazardous fuels treated, enhanced, or restored to reduce wildland fuels hazards and to restore or maintain ecosystem resiliency within the WUI. Where multiple treatments are necessary to meet vegetation management objectives, such as hand thinning followed by re-seeding, each treatment is counted individually.	650-750
<b>SNPLMA FY2020-FY2024 STRATEGIC PLAN: Other Performance Measures that Also Support the Three Values for SNPLMA Implementation of Sustainability, Connectivity, and Community</b>		
<b>Other Performance Measures</b>	<b>Definition of Performance Measure</b>	<b>Quantity</b>
O5 - Number of Outreach Contacts Made	Report the number of education and outreach contacts made through interpretation and environmental education, such as number of teachers trained, number of participants in workshops, etc.	5-10
O7 - Number of Interpretive or Education Presentations Given and/or Community Events Participated in or Hosted	Report the number of interpretive or educational presentations given.  Report each presentation as one unit.	1-5

**O. PHOTOS**

None

**P. SUPPORT LETTERS**

- NV Energy (Support Letter)



November

Robert Wandel  
Assistant District Manager – SNPLMA Division  
Bureau of Land Management  
47 N. Torrey Pines Dr.  
Las Vegas NV 89

Dear Mr. Wandel

As NV Energy's Wildfire Mitigation Specialist/Fire Chief I direct NV Energy's hazardous fuels reduction and wildfire prevention activities including work within the Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit (LT MU). NV Energy unequivocally supports LT MU and their Utility Corridors Resilience Project Phase (Nevada) grant application.

The USDA Forest Service and NV Energy have long partnered to manage hazard tree threats along power lines in the Lake Tahoe Basin and surrounding areas. This project will build on that partnership by creating healthy forest stands with reduced fuels adjacent to critical infrastructure; reducing the threat of wildfire near powerlines and increasing landscape resilience. The project will also further implementation of NV Energy's Natural Disaster Prevention and Protection Plan a plan filed with the Public Utilities Commission of Nevada per Senate Bill 9 that outlines how the company plans to help protect the public from the impacts of natural disasters on its electric infrastructure. Wildfire is a primary threat to the company's infrastructure.

I encourage the selection committee to support the Utility Corridors Resilience Project Phase as it will enhance forest health reduce the risk of high severity fire along critical electrical infrastructure and protect communities within the LT MU. NV Energy views the LT MU Utility Corridors Resilience Project Phase as an innovative partnership effort and is in full support of the project.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mark Regan".

Mark Regan  
Wildfire Mitigation Specialist/Fire Chief – NV Energy

**SNPLMA Round 20  
Hazardous Fuels Reduction and Wildfire Prevention  
Utility Corridors Zone 2 and Zone 3 Phase II  
Nomination Addendum**

**Nomination:** Tab 6 Utility Corridors Zone 2 and Zone 3 Phase II

**Agency:** USDA Forest Service, Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit

**COVER PAGE**

The Title should be renamed from “Phase 2 – Utility Corridors Zone 2 and Zone 3” to “Utility Corridors Zone 2 and Zone 3 Phase II”. The first SNPLMA project of the Utility Corridors Zone 2 and Zone 3 was approved in Round 18.

**Section I. PROJECT BUDGET**

Partnership and/or Contributed Funds: LTBMU’s funding is not a contribution since it is unallowable to contribute federal funds. Rather the LTBMU work helped to have the Phase I project shovel-ready. Past contribution by utility company of Phase I should not be included.

One should simply state Liberty Utility has committed to contribute \$1,274,000. Liberty Utility would contribute \$624,000 towards mechanical stewardship contracts; \$500,000 towards Rampart mechanical treatment units; and \$150,000 towards Heritage Resource Surveys.

**Section M. MAPS**

The nomination instructions stated, “In the map legend, identify how many acres of proposed treatment within the defense, threat, and general forest zones.” No acres were listed on either maps, Location or Strategic Plan Value map - connectivity map.

Instructions stated to upload maps in the format of jpg. What was uploaded was maps in pdf.

Maps identify the treatment areas are the same locations as the Phase I project. Unclear if this proposal is concentrating on the north or south side of the Tahoe Basin. Mechanical work is being proposed at Tahoe City (north side of the Tahoe Basin) though unclear other treatment areas.

**Section P. SUPPORT LETTERS**

There is no **Commitment Letter** provided from Liberty Utilities of committing the contribution of \$1,274,000. As outlined in the nomination instructions, “If either an in-kind or cash contribution is identified, a written commitment must be documented on official letterhead or stationery of the contributor and included as a letter of support at the back of the nomination package.”

**Southern Nevada Public Land Management Act  
Hazardous Fuels Reduction and Wildfire Prevention  
Round 20**

U.S. Forest Service, Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit



**Phase 2 - Utility Corridors Resilience – Zone 2 and  
Zone 3**

**Amount Requested: \$10,219,650**

## A. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Forest Service and Liberty Utilities have long partnered to manage hazard tree threats along powerlines in the Tahoe Basin. This project will build on that partnership by creating healthy forest stands with reduced fuels adjacent to critical infrastructure; reducing the threat of wildfire near powerlines and increasing landscape resilience. There is a present need to reduce the risk of wildland fires that ignite from vegetation contacting utility infrastructure or failures in the infrastructure. Recent destructive fires within California have demonstrated the need to also improve forest health and resilience by reducing fuels and stand density within the forests surrounding the powerline corridors.

### a. Describe Relationship to prior Approved Phases or Related SNPLMA Projects and Anticipated Future Phases

This project is Phase 2 of the Utility Corridors Resilience Zone 2 and Zone 3 project approved in Round 18. This project proposal includes forest health and fuels reduction treatments on the California side of the Tahoe Basin, along utility infrastructure owned and operated by Liberty Utilities. Future phases are anticipated, as Round 18 only funded a portion of the planned treatments and this Phase 2 project will fund only a further portion of the planned treatments on the California side of the Tahoe Basin.

### b. Describe how the proposed project will protect or enhance wildlife habitat and/or resilience vegetative communities.

This project will reduce risk of wildland fire to wildlife habitat and promote resilience in vegetative communities. Vegetation treatments (forest thinning) within approximately 175 feet of powerlines will reduce risk of wildland fire originating from energy infrastructure and protect adjacent wildlife habitat. Vegetation treatments within approximately 1,000 feet will increase forest resilience to disturbances such as fire, drought, insect outbreaks, and climate change – thereby also protecting wildlife habitat.

### c. Acknowledgement of Stand-Alone Project and no Guarantee of Funding for Future Phases

We acknowledge that there is no guarantee for future phases to be funded and can confirm that this Phase 2 project is a viable stand-alone project with specific deliverables that will be accomplished.

## B. SNPLMA STRATEGIC PLAN VALUES

Hazardous Fuels Reduction and Wildfire Prevention projects have two goals identified in the Strategic Plan:

- Goal 1: Sustain the quality of the outdoor environment by conserving, preserving, and restoring natural and cultural resources.

- Goal 2: Improve the quality of life for all publics in urban and rural communities by enhancing recreational opportunities that connect people with the outdoor environment.

Nominated projects should meet these goals by focusing on the three SNPLMA core values, connectivity, sustainability, and community. Every nomination must explain how the three values are promoted by the project.

1. Sustainability:

The project will sustain the quality of the outdoor environment through vegetation management actions that will restore natural and cultural resources. These management actions will maintain or increase the quality of natural resources and protect their ecological integrity and sustainability. Project treatments will decrease stand density levels by thinning trees to appropriate stocking levels resulting in improved tree vigor, forest structure and resiliency to landscape disturbances such as fire, insect outbreaks, and climate change.

2. Connectivity:

This project promotes connectivity and sustainability through integration of multiple resource objectives and by connecting projects across the landscape being implemented by multiple agencies and landowners. This project will implement fuels and forest health treatments under the Liberty Utilities Resilience Corridors planning decision. This project compliments similar Round 19 resilience corridor work occurring on the Nevada side of the Tahoe Basin, creating a consistent approach across the Tahoe Region for reducing wildfire risk and improving forest health around utility infrastructure to protect sensitive habitats, cultural resources and the communities that surround Lake Tahoe. These treatments will connect treatments from previously completed and ongoing fuels projects on federal and nonfederal lands resulting in a comprehensive and connected network of treatments across multiple land ownerships in the Wildland Urban Interface. This network of treatments has beneficial impacts at the landscape scale and provides effective protection to communities from wildfire, as demonstrated by the recent Caldor Fire in South Lake Tahoe.

3. Community:

This project will improve the quality of life for those living in and visiting the Lake Tahoe region by reducing wildfire risk to communities and utility infrastructure and by improving the resilience of Lake Tahoe forests to natural disturbances such as wildfire, drought, insect and disease, and climate change. Forests that are resilient to natural disturbance provide sustainable recreational opportunities and reduced risk of wildfire to adjoining communities. This project will reduce hazardous fuels by removing ladder fuel and smaller suppressed trees, as well as some overstory trees that contribute to ladder fuels and reduce existing surface and down fuels. The project will also improve forest health through removal of diseased trees and thinning of overly dense forest stands.

## C. PURPOSE STATEMENT

The purpose of this project is for the Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit to implement 1200-1500 acres of fuels reduction and forest health treatments that connect past and current projects to create a comprehensive network of treatments that improve the resilience of Tahoe's forests and communities to disturbances such as wildfire, insect and disease, drought, and climate



change. This project will protect forest habitats, highly valued recreational landscapes, utility infrastructure and Lake Tahoe communities located on the California side of the Tahoe Basin through treatments that are designed to go beyond routine line clearance vegetation actions (pruning and hazard tree felling) to treatments designed reduce stand density, reduce fuel loads, and create healthy forests resilient forests.

## **D. PROJECT DELIVERABLES AND ACRES**

### 1. Primary Deliverables:

Reduce hazardous fuels and improve forest health conditions on 1200-1500 acres of National Forest System lands. The actual acreage treated may be slightly different and will be determined by the costs for conducting hand thinning, service contracts, and mechanical thinning stewardship contracts at the time of project implementation so as not to exceed the approved budget. This will include the contract rates for hand thinning and piling of slash, mechanical thinning, removal of biomass material, and fuels treatments such as mastication or pile burning. The final acres may also change due to circumstances that may not be discovered until implementation, such as changed information on wildlife species, newly discovered heritage resource sites, etc.

### 2. Anticipated Deliverable

The following Anticipated Deliverables are desirable and beneficial:

- Forest products including biomass and timber.
- Pile burning up to 500 acres. We anticipate pile burning will be implemented; however, because of the operational complexity and limited burn windows, we do not expect to burn all slash piles created by thinning treatments in this phase of the project.
- Treatment of terrestrial invasive plants within the project units, 10-250 acres may be treated.
- Conservation Education/Community Outreach through 5-30 social media and public notifications, 2-20 community and classroom events.

### 3. Standard Deliverables:

- Project management and SNPLMA reporting.
- Develop project work plan and budget to support project implementation.
- Prepare, award, and administer hazardous fuels reduction hand thinning service contracts and timber stewardship sale or service contracts.
  - Prepare, award, and administer hand thin/pile hazardous fuels reduction contracts including all contract inspections, final payment, and contract close-out.
  - Prepare, award and administer mechanical fuels reduction contracts including all contract inspections, final payment and contract closeout.
- Close out all obligations associated with this project.
- Prepare the project closing letter and final financial record.
- Conduct site visit and file review with SNPLMA Division and close out the project in the SNPLMA database.

**Acres:** Calculate specific acres of proposed treatment of each zone (defense, threat, and general forest) and clearly identify the emphasis zone if more than one zone is identified in the nomination.

For the Liberty Utilities Resilience Corridors project, approximately 2,043 acres (27%) are in the Defense Zone, 4,833 acres (64%) are in the Threat Zone, and 724 acres (9%) are located outside the WUI. The emphasis zone for this project are the 91% of the project area located within the WUI. Due to the linear nature of the project (utility infrastructure), project units traverse thru defense zone and threat zone areas, making it difficult to prioritize defense zone acres over threat zone acres.

## E. PROJECT LOCATION

### **Physical location of project; identify County (s) and State(s):**

The Liberty Utilities Resilience Corridors Project is located on National Forest System lands administered by the Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit and comprises roughly 55 miles of Liberty Utilities power lines. The project is adjacent to South Lake Tahoe and West Shore communities in El Dorado County and adjacent to West Shore and North Shore communities in Placer County on the California side of the Lake Tahoe Basin.

### **Identify Congressional District(s):**

The project is located within California's 4th Congressional District.

### **Latitude and Longitude:**

Utility Corridors Resilience Project: 39.20058889 / -120.12027778

## F. PROJECT TIMEFRAME

6 years

- Year 1 Conduct resource surveys (primarily heritage) and invasive plant mitigation for thinning, 500-650 acres
  - Complete prep for mechanical thinning #1 and award thinning contract, 250-300 acres
  - Complete layout for hand thinning #1 and award thinning contract, 250-350 acres
- Year 2 Conduct resource surveys (primarily heritage and invasive plants) for thinning, 500-700 acres
  - Complete prep for mechanical thinning #2 and award thinning contract, 250-350 acres
  - Complete layout for hand thinning #2 and award thinning contract, 250-350 acres
  - Hand thinning #1 completed
- Year 3 Conduct resource surveys (primarily heritage and invasive plants) for thinning, 150-250 acres
  - Complete layout for hand thinning #3 and award thinning contract, 150-250 acres
  - Mechanical thinning #1 completed
  - Hand thinning #2 completed
- Year 4 Mechanical thinning #2 completed
  - Hand thinning #3 completed
  - Pile burn hand thinning in area #1, 200-300 acres

- Year 5 Pile burn hand thinning in areas #1 and/or #2, 200-300 acres
- Year 6 Closeout all contracts/agreements

## **G. LEVEL OF PROJECT READINESS FOR IMPLEMENTATION**

Is this a shovel-ready project?  Yes  No

Project environmental planning was completed in October of 2019. FWS consultation was completed; however, whitebark pine became federally listed in 2023 so consultation with FWS has been re-initiated. Project implementation, using stewardship authority, is occurring through partnership with the National Forest Foundation. Implementation of the project began in 2020 and continues in 2023.

Have you applied, received, or is there the opportunity to obtain funding from another source for this project? Please list the additional funding opportunities received or applied for and indicate whether it is federal or nonfederal funding.

A stewardship agreement between the LTBMU and the National Forest Foundation (NFF) was executed in September 2020, including non-SNPLMA, federal funding from the LTBMU and private funding from Liberty Utilities. Round 18 SNPLMA funding and additional Liberty Utilities funding were contributed as part of a second stewardship agreement with NFF in 2022. Additionally, the National Forest Foundation and the LTBMU plan to seek additional non-federal funding to support implementation of treatments in Zone 3.

## **H. 10-YEAR MULTI-JURISDICTIONAL PLAN**

Addresses whether the nomination is consistent with its 10-year multi-jurisdictional strategy and how important the proposed project would be in achieving the strategy of the plan. Describe how the proposed project relates to the specific elements of its multi-jurisdictional plan.

The areas identified under this proposal are prioritized for treatment and consistent with the Amendment of the 2014 Lake Tahoe Basin Multi-Jurisdictional Fuel Reduction and Wildfire Prevention Strategy (April 28, 2017) by addressing critical areas for treatment. This project is supported by The North Tahoe Fire Protection District, The North Lake Tahoe Fire Protection District, The City of South Lake Tahoe and the Lake Valley Fire Protection District which have participated in pre-NEPA collaborative meetings. This project is also fully supported by the Tahoe Fire and Fuels Team (TFFT). The strategy is supported for full implementation by the Multi-Agency Coordination (MAC), the TFFT, the California and Nevada Tahoe Basin Fire Commission (Fire Commission) and their recommendations to the Governors of California and Nevada.

## **I. PROJECT BUDGET**

### Cost-Benefit Analysis

Estimated cost for forest restoration and fuels reduction treatments for this Phase 2 project is \$333/acre for sale and contract preparation, \$5,200/acre of mechanical treatment, \$2,250/acre of hand treatment, and \$750/acre of pile burning in Zone 3. Cost for the Rampart Zone 2 treatment

units near Tahoe City, along Hwy 89 and Fir Craggs Summer Home Tract (approximately 100 acres) are anticipated to be much higher because of geography, access and operational complications, with total cost per acre estimated to be \$25,000 p/acre. The cost of the proposed treatments is significantly less than the cost of fighting large wildland fires or potential damages to homes, infrastructure, or the environment from wildland fire. This project is intended to reduce the risk of wildland fire as demonstrated by similar vegetation treatments that contributed to reduced Caldor Fire suppression costs (not needing to suppress structural fires in the Pawnee/Iroquois Circle neighborhood) and damage to infrastructure (see 3. D. below). Large wildland fire suppression can often exceed \$1,000,000 per day, especially when aircraft are required. This project would be equivalent to about 10 days of large wildland fire suppression at that rate. There are also additional costs of wildland fire suppression repair, burned area emergency response, and restoration. Post-Caldor restoration costs are already in excess of \$5 million and are expected to increase.

#### Partnership and/or Contributed Funds

The Liberty Utilities Resilience Corridor Project is a partnership project between the LTBMU, National Forest Foundation and Liberty Utilities. To date, Liberty Utilities has provided funding for resource surveys, treatment preparation, implementation, and project management. Total Liberty Utilities investment on forest system lands on the LTBMU is approximately \$436,700 to date. The LTBMU also provided staffing and/or funding for the project, investing approximately \$1,950,000 to date. There are approximately 7,600 acres planned for treatment on NFS lands (193 acres in Zone 1, 1,943 acres in Zone 2 and 5,464 acres in Zone 3), with an estimated cost to complete work of \$30,000,000. To date, through stewardship agreements between the National Forest Foundation and the LTBMU, the following contributions/commitments have been made:

Stewardship agreement #1 - The LTBMU provided \$1,950,000 in funding received under the 2016 Lake Tahoe Restoration Act to support up to 212 acres of implementation in Zone 2 and complete layout, marking and contract preparations on 1660 acres of Zone 2. Liberty Utilities provided \$316,000 in support of project implementation, including project layout, pre-implementation surveys, technical felling and fuels treatments in Zone 1 and Zone 2.

Stewardship agreement #2 - The LTBMU plans to commit approximately \$6,000,000 in funding received under the Round 18 SNPLMA grant funding Phase 1 of this project to support up to 1000 -1500 acres of implementation in Zones 2 and 3. Liberty Utilities has committed \$1,945,000 in support of project implementation in Zones 1 and 2. Additionally, the National Forest Foundation is looking for other non-federal funding grants to support project implementation in Zone 3, although at the time of this nomination, no grant applications have been submitted.

<b>PROJECT BUDGET</b>		
<b>Cost Categories</b>	<b>SNPLMA</b>	<b>Non-Federal Contribution</b>
1. Personnel (labor plus benefits)	\$ 1,888,950.00	\$ -
2. Travel	\$ -	\$ -
3. Training	\$ -	\$ -
4. Equipment	\$ -	\$ -
5. Supplies/Materials	\$ 70,900.00	\$ -
6. Contracts and/or Agreements	\$ 7,970,000.00	\$ 1,274,000.00
7. Vehicle Use	\$ 64,800.00	\$ -
8. Other Necessary Expenses	\$ 225,000.00	\$ -
<b>9. TOTAL PROJECT BUDGET</b>	<b>\$ 10,219,650.00</b>	<b>\$ 1,274,000.00</b>

## **J. KEY CONTACTS**

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## **K. RANKING CRITERIA**

Provide a narrative response to the following Criteria and Factors that apply to the nomination.

**1. Improves the community within and/or adjacent to the project area.** Projects are only eligible for Factors A1, A2, or A3; select and answer ONLY ONE, based on where most of the proposed project are lies within. Answer Factors B and C as they apply to the nomination.

A. Addresses immediate public health and safety and community infrastructure.

1. Project is within the Defense Zone, generally an area within 0.25 mile of life and property, as depicted by the most current Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) map in the applicable plan.

Answer:

2. Project is within the Threat Zone, generally an area between 0.25 mile and 1.50 miles of life and property, as depicted by the most current WUI map in the applicable plan.

Approximately 4,833 acres of the Liberty Resilience Corridor project is located within the Threat Zone as depicted by the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) identified in the 2014 Lake Tahoe Basin Multi-Jurisdictional Fuels Reduction and Fire Prevention Strategy. This represents 64% of the acres planned for treatment within the Tahoe Basin. Approximately 2,043 acres (27%) are located within the Defense Zone and the remaining acres, approximately 724 acres (9%), are located outside the WUI.

3. Project is within the general forest or other lands beyond the WUI (generally greater than 1.5 miles from life and property), as depicted by the most current map in the applicable plan.

Answer: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

B. Promotes protection of source water (rivers and lakes) or municipal watersheds.

This project implements fuels reduction and forest health treatments in areas of the WUI that pose the greatest risk for wildfire. The project transects the following 12 major watersheds: Burton Creek, Middle Truckee River, Ward Creek, Blackwood Creek, Eagle Creek, General Creek, Meeks Creek, Taylor/ Trout Creek, Griff Creek, Watson Creek, Carnelian Creek, and the Upper Truckee. These watersheds support extremely high resource values, including forest and plant communities that protect source headwaters in California and Nevada. Several creeks within the project area are currently in a degraded condition. A wildfire of any size in this area may potentially lead to excessive sediment and nutrient loading and an increase in water temperature for streams and the lake. Consequently, water supply systems and source water for recreation, fishing, and municipal water supply could be impaired. The hazardous fuels and vegetation treatments identified from the project would reduce this risk of a severe wildfire, therefore protecting water supply systems and source water.

C. Project includes education and outreach to the community on Living with Fire or Fire Adapted Communities and/or the importance of fuels reduction on federal, state, and local government land.

This project includes community outreach and education with programs targeting K-12 grade students. Programs are designed to inform students on the importance of conducting fuels reduction and forest health treatments in and adjacent to the community. Programs include education on forest health, the role fire plays in maintaining ecosystem function, and how to maintain a fire safe landscape around homes (defensible space) in accordance with Living with Fire and Fire Adapted Communities.

2. **Improves the connection of fuels reduction activities and wildlife habitat.** Respond to each of the following.

A. Project protects or enhances wildlife habitat and/or resilient vegetative communities.

The project promotes a healthy and sustainable landscape that increases the forest's resistance and resilience to disturbances such as wildfire, insect outbreaks, and diseases through thinning of dense conifer stands and reduction of forest fuels. The project will thin 1200-1500 acres of dense conifer stands. Project completion would provide the following benefit: the ability for fire and fuel managers to use prescribed fire under burns to restore low intensity surface fire back to the landscape and enhance the ecological benefits that are dependent and adapted to frequent low intensity fire. Once prescribed under burns take place it may not be necessary to conduct future large-scale forest thinning when prescribed burning would safely and effectively meet fuel and vegetation objectives in the WUI.

B. Project enhances the effectiveness of other treatments in progress or complete.

The treatments being implemented under this project connect directly to completed and ongoing fuels treatments occurring within the adjacent communities on both federal and nonfederal lands. The completion of these planned activities is a comprehensive and connected network of treatments across multiple land ownerships in the defense zone (community extending into the wildland) and the threat zone.

C. The project is planning for or implementing a treatment that is strategically located to connect to planned or existing projects on the landscape.

This project implements fuels reduction and forest health treatments planned under the Liberty Utilities Resilience Corridors Project. This project is located adjacent to current and past fuels treatments located on federal and nonfederal lands implemented in coordination with the Tahoe Fire and Fuels Team and identified in the 2014 Lake Tahoe Basin Multi-Jurisdictional Fuels Reduction and Fire Prevention Strategy. This project will connect treatments across the landscape, increasing the overall effectiveness of the fuels reduction and forest health efforts.

3. **Improves sustainability of the multijurisdictional 10-year plans, environment, and financial resources.** Respond to each of the following.

- A. Improve the sustainability of the forest health and ecosystem function (e.g., stand density, desired species mix and age, tree health, etc.).

The objective of this project is not only to reduce hazardous fuels, but to increase forest health and resiliency to disturbance within treated areas. Proposed vegetation treatments would focus on thinning over story trees, removing shade-tolerant understory trees, and reducing other shrubby vegetation to appropriate stocking. Stands that are overstocked would be thinned to levels that would improve tree vigor, thus reducing the widespread threat of bark beetle outbreaks, dwarf mistletoe, root disease, and other pests and pathogens. Treatments implemented under this project will improve the vegetation condition of forest stands through the creation of a forest stand structure that promotes species richness, pattern, and abundance and that has a high resilience to fire.

- B. Improve habitat for sensitive species and Threatened and Endangered species. Includes mitigation and/or minimization measures when treatment in sensitive habitat is unavoidable.

The project environmental planning includes the objective to protect or improve habitat for Forest Service Management Indicator Species (MIS) as well as threatened, endangered, or sensitive species. Stands have been identified for reducing high fuel loads within California spotted owl and Northern goshawk Protected Activity Centers (PACs) - areas identified for nesting and foraging habitat. Using an active management approach for treating these PACs, small trees (less than 14" diameter at breast height) would be hand thinned and surface fuel loads treated to a level that would reduce predicted fire behavior so that treated stands would continue to provide optimal nesting and foraging habitat and likely survive a wildfire. In this manner, the risk of a wildfire destroying the nest or habitat surrounding the nest is minimized. Mechanical thinning would occur in stands that are accessible with a modified prescription to meet the PAC requirements. Consultation with the Fish and Wildlife Service has been re-initiated in response to the 2023 listing of whitebark pine. The LTBMU is seeking FWS guidance for implementation in areas of whitebark pine or its habitat.

- C. Include broadcast prescribed fire for resource management objectives for sustainable landscapes.

This project does not include prescribed fire as a primary deliverable, including broadcast prescribed fire, however, pile burning is an anticipated deliverable. In addition, an overarching project goal is to move the forest stands to a condition where the use of broadcast prescribed fire is a possible tool for achieving fuels reduction objectives in the future. The project decision includes prescribed pile burning to remove excess fuels and broadcast fire treatments as post thinning treatment options. The long-term goal for the entire project area is to allow for the use of broadcast burning for the purpose of sustaining landscape level resiliency to a host of possible disturbance mechanisms such as fire, insects, and climate change.



- D. The method of treatment is fiscally responsible for the project area by balancing resource objectives, values at risk, and cost per acre factors or cost-benefit analysis.

This WUI project will consider cost savings approaches to accomplish the planned treatments, including the use of stewardship contracting and service contracts to treat forest vegetation and hazardous fuels, as well as utilize biomass products. Stewardship contracting authority includes agreements with nonprofit organizations to offer best-value and long-term contracts where costs to implement the project are offset by the value of material that is removed. Strategies to reduce costs for mechanically treated areas would include the use of competitive bidding among contractors to assure the lowest price available. Recent stewardship contract awards have come in with higher than anticipated government estimates due to a glut of post-fire materials on the market, and abundance of projects to bid on, and a limited number of facilities to take treatment products. As evidenced by treatments completed within and around the community impacted by the Angora Fire implementing hazardous fuels and vegetation treatments strategically in portions of the forest and the WUI helps ensure that damage to Lake Tahoe values (homes and businesses) are avoided or minimized (<http://www.fs.fed.us/r5/angorafuelsassessment/>, 2007). In 2019, the median sale price for homes in the North Lake Tahoe area was \$745,000 with a density of 532 homes per square mile. The median sale price of a home in the South Lake Tahoe area is \$758,000 with a density of 1,396 homes per square mile. The costs associated with implementing fuel reduction treatments for this project is small when compared to the estimated value of homes at risk. The proposed project would treat fuel conditions using the best combination of treatments including mechanical thin, machine pile, mastication, biomass removal on both upland and riparian areas, hand thinning on steeper slopes and pile burning. The proposed project would help to protect and promote water quality, wildlife habitat, heritage and cultural resources, local tourism, the economy, and private property/capital improvements around residential areas and the urban interface. The cost associated with treating the forest vegetation and hazardous fuels is difficult to quantify when compared to the costs of not having a living forest present after a wildfire, increased sedimentation in lakes and streams, and a loss of fish and wildlife habitat or water supply for drinking and recreation. The Lake Tahoe area has many historical properties and Native American cultural sites. Once consumed by wildfire these properties and sites are generally irreplaceable. The economy in the Lake Tahoe Basin is also dependent on tourism, scenic visual quality and outdoor recreational activities in the forest both in the summer and the winter. There are several species of wildlife that are at risk for loss of habitat from wildfire. These species include but are not limited to California Spotted Owl, Northern Goshawk, Osprey, Bald Eagle, and Willow Flycatcher. The Angora Fire, for example, destroyed or displaced three Northern Goshawk and one California Spotted Owl Protected Activity Centers. Communities in the Lake Tahoe area are in the WUI. These communities are at risk of a wildfire and the risk to the communities is reduced significantly when hazardous fuels and vegetation treatments take place. The recent Caldor Fire provides clear evidence of the effectiveness of forest thinning and fuels reduction treatments at

modifying fire behavior and providing protection to communities in the path of wildfire. The cost of the proposed treatments is also significantly less than the cost of fighting large wildland fires, which can often exceed \$1,000,000 per day especially when aircraft are required.

4. **Demonstrates sound project management and quality control measures.** Respond to each of the following.

- A. Project goals and implementation processes are clear, measurable, achievable, and demonstrable.

This project is implementing treatments from the Liberty Utilities Resilience Corridors Project. The environmental analysis for this project was conducted under the National Environmental Policy Act to implement hazardous fuels reduction and forest health treatments, with approximately 7,600 acres on NFS lands located in the needing treatment. This project will complete 1200-1500 acres not yet funded or treated. This project continues a long history of fuels reduction and forest health projects conducted by the LTBMU, which began in the late 1990s. Past hazardous fuel reduction and forest health contracts have been successfully completed on more than 32,000 acres from 2005 through 2020. Based on this past performance, implementation of this project would be achievable and demonstrable.

- B. Project proponent has the capacity to implement this project in a timely manner (contractor and staff availability, no backlog of current projects, etc.) and within budget.

The LTBMU has demonstrated the capability to implement and complete previous hazardous fuels reduction projects on time and within budget. The LTBMU has completed 50 SNPLMA projects and is actively working on an additional projects. The Forest Service has demonstrated over the past 16 years (2005-2021) its capacity to successfully implement SNPLMA projects and has increased in staffing, improved contracting processes, and entered into participating agreements with the Tahoe Douglas, Lake Valley and North Lake Tahoe Fire Protection Districts, the Nevada Conservation Corps – Great Basin Institute, and the Denver, Colorado-based Veteran Green Jobs - Veterans Green Corps Program partnered with the California Conservation Corps all in an effort to continue to successfully implement projects in a timely and cost effective manner. In addition, new contract preparation methods have been undertaken. The LTBMU has also utilized new authorities to enter into long term agreements with partners to increase capacity and implement more projects. For this project, the LTBMU has partnered with the National Forest Foundation through a stewardship agreement to implement Liberty Utilities Resilience Corridor treatments.

- C. Is a phase or related component to a previously funded project.

This project is Phase 2 of a multi-phased project that originally funded in Round 18 and continues implementation of forest thinning and fuels reduction treatments located along powerline utility corridors identified in Liberty Utilities Resilience Corridors Project. Phase 1 is being implemented thru a Stewardship Agreement with the National Forest Foundation.

- D. Has identified committed non-SNPLMA sources of funding or in-kind contribution in the development and/or implementation of the project.

The Liberty Utilities Resilience Corridor Project is a partnership project between the LTBMU, National Forest Foundation and Liberty Utilities. To date, Liberty Utilities has provided funding for resource surveys, treatment preparation, implementation, and project management. Total Liberty Utilities investment on forest system lands on the LTBMU is approximately \$436,700 to date. The LTBMU also provided staffing and/or funding for the project, investing approximately \$1,950,000 to date. There are approximately 7,600 acres planned for treatment on NFS lands (193 acres in Zone 1, 1,943 acres in Zone 2 and 5,464 acres in Zone 3), with an estimated cost to complete work of \$30,000,000. To date, through stewardship agreements between the National Forest Foundation and the LTBMU, the following contributions/commitments have been made:

Stewardship agreement #1 - The LTBMU provided \$1,950,000 in funding received under the 2016 Lake Tahoe Restoration Act to support up to 212 acres of implementation in Zone 2 and complete layout, marking and contract preparations on 1660 acres of Zone 2. Liberty Utilities provided \$316,000 in support of project implementation, including project layout, pre-implementation surveys, technical felling and fuels treatments in Zone 1 and Zone 2.

Stewardship agreement #2 - The LTBMU plans to commit approximately \$6,000,000 in funding received under the Round 18 SNPLMA grant funding Phase 1 of this project to support up to 1000 -1500 acres of implementation in Zones 2 and 3. Liberty Utilities has committed \$1,945,000 in support of project implementation in Zones 1 and 2. Additionally, the National Forest Foundation is looking for other non-federal funding grants to support project implementation in Zone 3, although at the time of this nomination, no grant applications have been submitted.

## L. ORDERS AND PRIORITIES

### A. Executive Orders (EO):

- ***EO No. 13855: Promoting Active Management of America's Forests, Range Lands to Improve Conditions and Reduce Wildfire Risk***

This project is consistent with Executive Order No. 13855 Promoting Active Management of America's Forests and Rangelands to Improve Conditions and Reduce Wildfire Risk (Executive Order). The Executive Order prescribes three policies to be implemented by the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of

Agriculture, and each align with the activities proposed in the Project.

First, the Executive Order requires DOI and the Forest Service to adopt shared management priorities in partnership with federal land managers, states, tribes, and other landowners. This project implements the 2014 Lake Tahoe Basin Multi-Jurisdictional Fuel Reduction and Wildfire Prevention Strategy as Amended in 2017, which was developed by federal, state, and local government fire agencies and landowners. It shares the same three goals as the National Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy, which are to restore fire resilient landscapes, create fire adapted communities, and enable safe and effective wildfire response.

Second, the Executive Order requires DOI and the Forest Service to coordinate federal, state, tribal, and local assets for wildfire prevention, suppression, and reducing hazardous fuels. By closely coordinating projects, the Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit is closely coordinating with Tahoe Basin land managers and fire agencies to coordinate the deployment of assets and skills to protect communities and natural resources.

Third, the Executive Order requires DOI and the Forest Service to remove hazardous fuels, increase active management, and support rural economies. The project implements prioritized treatments that protect life and property and support the rural economy of the Basin by providing jobs and utilizing forest restoration byproducts.

- ***EO No. 14005: Ensuring the Future is Made in All of America by All of America's Workers***
- ***EO No. 14063: Use of Project Labor Agreements for Federal Construction Projects (applicable to projects estimated at \$35 million or more)***
- ***EO No. 14072: Strengthening the Nation's Forests, Communities, and Local Economies***
- ***EO No. 14096: Revitalizing Our Nation's Commitment to Environmental Justice for All***

B. Secretarial Orders

- ***SO No. 3347: Conservation Stewardship and Outdoor Recreation.***
- ***SO No. 3356: Hunting, Fishing, Recreational Shooting, and Wildlife Conservation Opportunities and Coordination with States, Tribes and Territories.***

- ***SO No. 3362: Improving Habitat Quality in Western Big-Game Winter Range and Migration Corridors.***
- ***SO No. 3366: Increasing Recreational Opportunities on Lands and Waters Managed by the U.S. Department of the Interior***
- ***SO No. 3370: Conservation Stewardship and Increasing Public Access to Urban National Wildlife Refuges.***
- ***SO No. 3372: Reducing Wildfire Risks on Department of the Interior Land Through Active Management.***
- ***SO No. 3373: Evaluating Public Access in Bureau of Land Management Public Land Disposal and Exchanges (focus is on Sec. 4.b.(3) Potential increased public recreational access to existing public lands resulting from the proposed land acquired through an exchange (acquisition)).***
- ***SO No. 3376: Increasing Recreational Opportunities through the use of Electric Bikes.***

C. Department of the Interior Priorities:

1. ***Identifying steps to accelerate responsible development of renewable energy on public lands and waters.*** We are investing in climate research and environmental innovation to incentivize the rapid deployment of clean energy solutions, while reviewing existing programs to restore balance on America's public lands and waters to benefit current and future generations.
2. ***Strengthening the government-to-government relationship with sovereign Tribal nations.*** We understand that tribal sovereignty and self-governance, as well as honoring the federal trust responsibility to Tribal Nations, must be the cornerstones of federal Indian policy.
3. ***Making investments to support the Administration's goal of creating millions of family-supporting and union jobs.*** This includes establishing a new Climate Conservation Corps Initiative to put a new generation of Americans to work conserving and restoring public lands and waters, increasing reforestation, increasing carbon sequestration in the agricultural sector, protecting biodiversity, improving access to recreation, and addressing the changing climate.
4. ***Working to conserve at least 30% each of our lands and waters by the year 2030.*** We will work to protect biodiversity, slow extinction rates, and help leverage natural

*climate solutions by conserving 30% of America's lands and waters by 2030. This relies on support for local, state, private, and tribally led conservation and restoration efforts that are underway across America.*

5. ***Centering equity and environmental justice.*** *The impacts of the multiple crises in the United States are not evenly distributed in our society. Communities of color, low-income families, and rural and indigenous communities have long suffered disproportionate and cumulative harm from air pollution, water pollution, and toxic sites. At every step of the way, Interior will engage diverse stakeholders across the country, as well as conduct formal consultation with Tribes in recognition of the U.S. government's trust responsibilities.*

D. USDA Forest Service Priorities:

1. ***Controlling the COVID-19 pandemic***

All Federal employees working to support this project are required to be vaccinated against Covid-19. In addition, contractor's hired by the Forest Service will be required to provide proof of vaccination against Covid-19.

2. ***Providing economic relief***

This project will provide jobs to the local Tahoe Basin and surrounding communities through employment of local fire crews, arborist, utility crews, foresters and other forest industry contractors needed to implement forest health and fuels reduction treatments. In addition, forest products such as saw timber and biomass will be removed from the project, providing jobs needed to transport, process and sale forest products.

3. ***Tackling climate change***

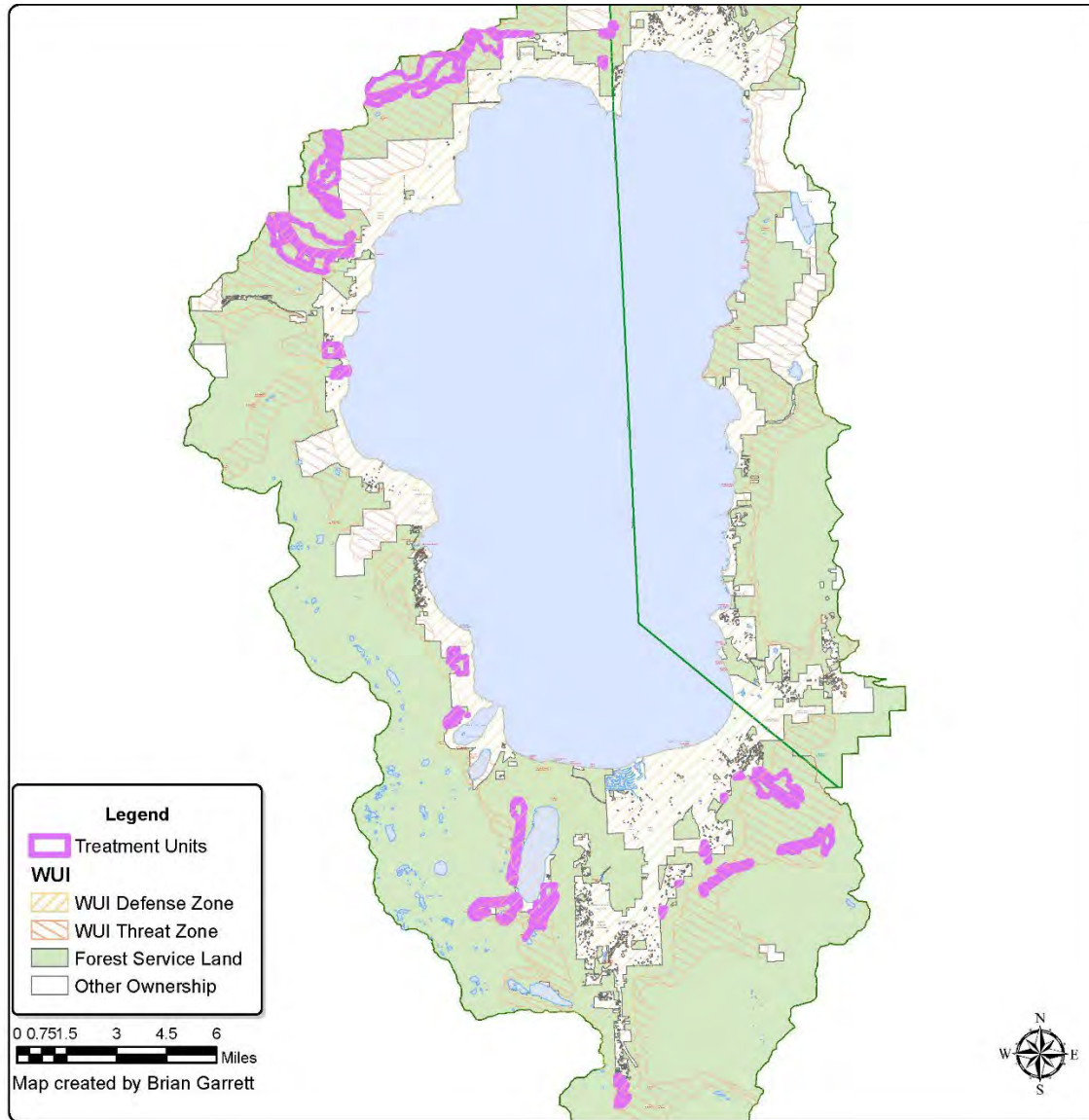
This project will improve the health of Tahoe's forests and it's resilience to natural disturbances such as wildfire, drought, insect and disease outbreaks and climate change. The project will remove biomass off site for processing and utilization in mechanical treatment units, reducing the amount of prescribed fire pile burning required to meet project objectives and reducing associated greenhouse gas emissions.

4. ***Advancing racial equity***

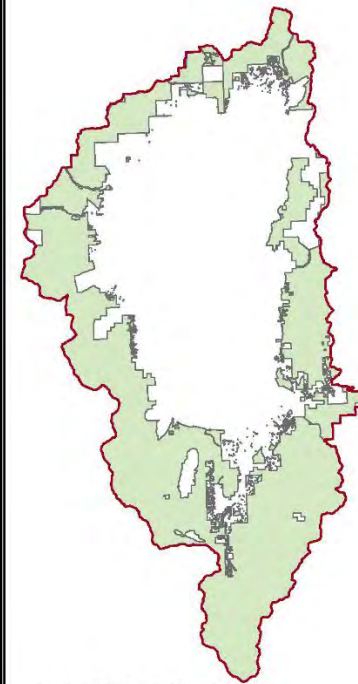
The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or because all or a part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program.

**5. *Improving our workforce and work environment***

The Forest Service is committed to the values of equity, inclusion, and equal opportunity our employees and those we serve. The Forest Service provides equal employment opportunity for all employees and applicants for employment, regardless of race, religion, color, sex (including pregnancy, gender identity and sexual orientation), national origin, age, genetic information, or disability. All employees have the freedom to compete on a fair and level playing field with equal opportunity for available employment and advancement opportunities. Equal employment opportunity covers all personnel/employment programs, management practices, and decisions, including recruitment/hiring, merit promotion, transfer, reassignments, training and career development, benefits, and separation.

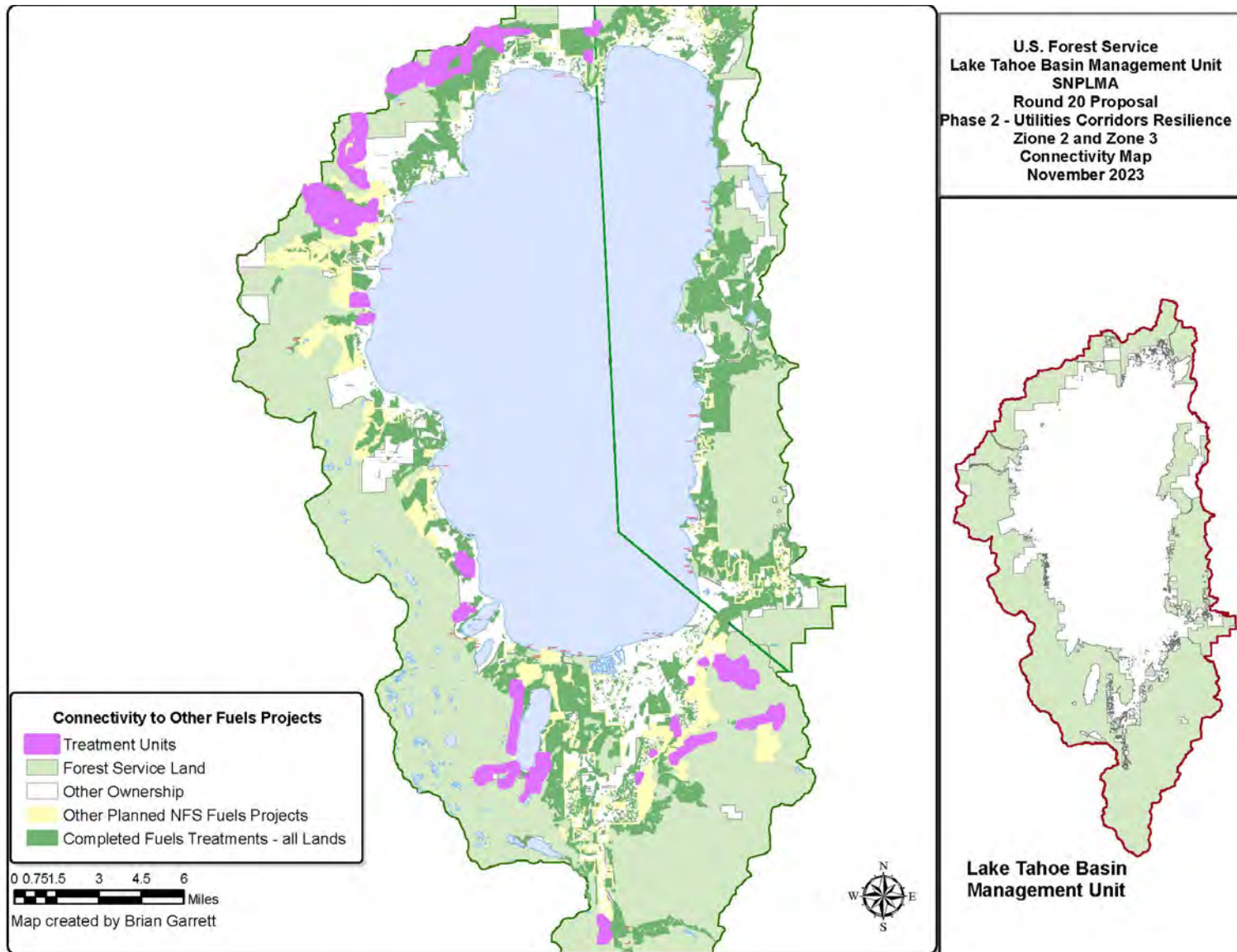


U.S. Forest Service  
Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit  
SNPLMA  
Round 20 Proposal  
Phase 2 - Utilities Corridors Resilience  
Zone 2 and Zone 3  
Location Map  
November 2023



Lake Tahoe Basin  
Management Unit





## N. PERFORMANCE MEASURES

<b>SNPLMA FY2020-FY2024 STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL 1: Sustain the Quality of the Outdoor Environment by Conserving, Preserving, and Restoring Natural and Cultural Resources</b>		
<b>Performance Measures for Habitat Enhancement</b>	<b>Definition of Performance Measure</b>	<b>Quantity</b>
H9 - Acres of Invasive Plant Species Treated or Restored	Report the number of acres of weed infestation treated with chemical, mechanical, physical, or biological control agents for the purpose of weed control. Include acres treated by fire when fire is used as a physical control agent for weed control rather than as a hazardous fuels treatment. Each acre treated is counted only once during the life of the project, no matter how many re-treatments occurred during the project.  Report to the nearest whole acre.	10- 250 acres
<b>Performance Measures for Wildland Fire Management</b>	<b>Definition of Performance Measure</b>	<b>Quantity</b>
F2 - Acres of Hazardous Fuels Treated – Wildland Urban Interface (WUI)	Report the total number of acres of hazardous fuels treated, enhanced, or restored to reduce wildland fuels hazards and to restore or maintain ecosystem resiliency within the WUI. Where multiple treatments are necessary to meet vegetation management objectives, such as hand thinning followed by re-seeding, each treatment is counted individually.  Report to the nearest whole acre.	1200-1500
<b>SNPLMA FY2020-FY2024 STRATEGIC PLAN: Other Performance Measures that Also Support the Three Values for SNPLMA Implementation of Sustainability, Connectivity, and Community</b>		
<b>Other Performance Measures</b>	<b>Definition of Performance Measure</b>	<b>Quantity</b>
O7 - Number of Interpretive or Education Presentations Given and/or Community Events Participated in or Hosted	Report the number of interpretive or educational presentations given.  Report each presentation as one unit.	2-20

## O. PHOTOS

None

## P. SUPPORT LETTERS

None