

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

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Governor's Office of Planning & Research

NOV 27 2019

STATE CLEARINGHOUSE

November 27, 2019

**ALP-VAR-PM VAR
NEPA Document
Alpine Fuels Treatment Project
State Clearinghouse No. 2019100562/2**

Mr. Tim Roide
BLM, Carson City District
5665 Morgan Mill Road
Carson City, NV 89701

Dear Mr. Roide:

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) appreciates the opportunity to review and comment on the Notice of Intent to Prepare an Environmental Impact Study (NOI/EIS) NEPA document, dated October 29, 2019, for Alpine Fuels Treatment Project.

The proposed action is to implement up to 1,154 acres of fuels treatments in 24 strategically located treatment units Countywide. Maintenance treatment is to restore treatment effectiveness and new treatments are proposed. It is anticipated the Project would be implemented over a seven-year period; however, the time to complete the Project would depend on funding and environmental conditions. Most treatments are anticipated to be implemented in late summer and fall.

Caltrans has the following comments:

- According to the National Wetlands Indicator (NW) database, there are multiple jurisdictional lakes, reservoirs, and other waterways. Vegetation around these features can be considered riparian which falls under the jurisdiction for California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW). If riparian is impacted or "altered" with Caltrans ROW, we will need to see correspondence with CDFW (1602 Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreement permit).

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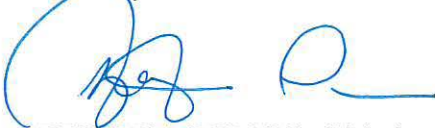
- This is a heavily wooded area inside Alpine County. These trees may provide habitat for nesting birds. If construction will occur with Caltrans ROW during migratory bird season (February 1 – September 30), a pre-construction bird survey will be required. If an active bird nest is observed, a protective buffer will be established to protect the nest until the young have fledged. The size of protective buffers will be determined in coordination with CDFW or using applicable species specific survey and monitoring protocol guidelines. This survey was described in one of the project attachments and we would need to see the results.

Cultural – Cultural resources inventory and evaluation documents will need to be completed for any cultural resources within the project areas occurring in Caltrans ROW. These cultured documents will need to be submitted and reviewed during the Encroachment Permit phase.

- If project construction activities will encroach into Caltrans ROW, the project proponent must submit an application for an Encroachment Permit to the Caltrans Permit Office. Appropriate environmental studies must be submitted with this application. These studies will include an analysis of potential impacts to any cultural sites, biological resources, hazardous waste locations, and/or other resources with Caltrans ROW at the projects site(s). CEQA documentation with supporting technical studies is required when submitting the Encroachment Permit.

If you have any questions or would like to discuss these comments, please contact Janet P. Jaramillo at (209) 942-6022 (jjaramil@dot.ca.gov) or myself at (209) 948-7325 (gregoria_ponce@dot.ca.gov).

Sincerely,



GREGORIA PONCE, Chief
Office of Rural Planning

c: Scott Morgan, State Clearinghouse
Scott Maas, Alpine County LTC