
Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board

November 21, 2019

Governor's Office of Planning & Research

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STATE CLEARINGHOUSE

Tim Roide
Bureau of Land Management, Carson City District
5665 Morgan Mill Road
Carson City, NV 89701

Comments on Proposed Action for Alpine Fuels Treatment Project

The proposed Alpine Fuels Treatment Project (Project) consists of approximately 1,154 acres of hazardous fuels modification treatments in the areas of Faye Canyon, Indian Creek Recreation Area, Turtle Rock Park, Poor Boy Ridge, Hot Springs Creek and Monitor Pass in Alpine County, California. Fuel treatments consisting of both new treatments and maintenance treatments will be implemented in 24 strategically located treatment units. It is anticipated that the Project will be implemented over a seven-year period; however, the Project duration will depend on funding and environmental conditions.

This letter provides the Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board's (Lahontan Water Board) support for the Project. To assist the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) with early Project planning, Water Board staff would like to provide the following reminders:

I. Lahontan 2014 Timber Waiver (renewed on March 13, 2019)

The Project tasks involving timber harvest and vegetation management activities will require coverage under the 2014 Timber Waiver. The 2014 Timber Waiver and all attachments may be found on our website at:

http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/lahontan/water_issues/programs/waste_discharge_requirements/timber_harvest/timberwaiver.shtml

Please review the 2014 Timber Waiver criteria and conditions while developing specific resource protection measures and design features for the proposed Project. By understanding the 2014 Timber Waiver's criteria and conditions, you can tailor your project design features to incorporate those requirements, which will streamline your 2014 Timber Waiver application process and avoid project delays.

Please ensure that all BLM staff, contractors, and subcontractors working on the Project understand the 2014 Timber Waiver's criteria and conditions prior to conducting work.

Please note that the 2014 Timber Waiver uses a watercourse classification system which categorizes watercourses according to their biologic habitat and ability to

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transport sediment, as defined by the California Code of Regulations, title 14, rather than just by flow regime. This watercourse classification determines the necessary buffer zone width for that watercourse (see Attachment B of the 2014 Timber Waiver). To expedite review of your Timber Waiver application, please clearly indicate in your waiver application maps the classification of all watercourses in the Project area, and the location of proposed operations and pile burning within Waterbody Buffer Zones (WBBZs). Be sure to clearly state the mitigation measures you will employ in buffer zones where equipment operations are proposed. Examples of design features for pile burning in WBBZs are listed in Attachment Q of the 2014 Timber Waiver; reviewing the Timber Waiver's Category 6 and Attachment N will help you understand certain conditions which must be met to work in WBBZs.

II. California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)

The Lahontan Water Board must comply with CEQA whenever it takes a discretionary action, including issuing a 401 Water Quality Certification or Basin Plan Prohibition Exemption. Based on scoping document Project description, the Water Board anticipates that all of the proposed Project tasks will be implemented under the Lahontan Water Board's 2014 Timber Waiver. In order to obtain CEQA coverage under the 2009 Mitigated Negative Declaration referenced in the 2014 Timber Waiver, the 2014 Timber Waiver enrollee must comply with the General Conditions and all applicable general and category-specific conditions of the 2014 Timber Waiver.

III. Project Information and Mapping

The following information should be included as part of the Project's Timber waiver application:


1. Please provide USGS 7.5-minute topographic (or equivalent or greater scale) Project maps which clearly show the extent of activities in the Project areas.
2. Please include maps which clearly show areas of floodplains, wetlands, and the ordinary high-water mark of any waterbodies where work will occur, if any. For example, if describing improving a watercourse crossing at a re-designated motorized route, clearly show the existing structure in relation to the creek, floodplain, or any associated wetlands. Floodplains and other such features should be delineated by a qualified hydrologist, and the map should be of a scale so that they can be identified in the context of the project area (e.g., 1-inch equals 40 feet). Include a legend or key on all maps so that features can be readily identified.

DOCUMENT SUBMITTAL INSTRUCTIONS

The Water Board has implemented a paperless office system to reduce paper use, increase efficiency, and provide an efficient way for our staff, the public and interested parties to view documents in electronic form. Effective May 1, 2015, please convert all regulatory documents, submissions, materials, data, and correspondence that you would normally submit to us as hard copies in a Portable Document Format (PDF). Since we can no longer receive paper copies of your documents, documents that are less than 50 MB

should be emailed to the Regional Water Board's South Lake Tahoe office at Lahontan@waterboards.ca.gov. Please include your project's WDID No. (if it has been assigned), Project Name and/or Discharger Name, Monitoring Report Name (if it is one) and Staff assigned to your project at the Water Board in the Subject Line. Documents that are 50 MB or larger should be transferred to a thumb drive or compact disk and mailed to the Water Board office at: 2501 Lake Tahoe Blvd. South Lake Tahoe, CA 96150.

Thank you for providing Water Board staff the opportunity to provide comments on this Project. Please contact me at jim.carolan@waterboards.ca.gov or (530) 542-5477 with any questions.



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