2020060393

Notice of Exemption

Form D

To: Office of Planning and Research
P.O. Box 3044, Room 212
Sacramento, CA 95812-3044

County Clerk
County of _____

_____

_____

From: (Public Agency) Department of Housing and Community Development
2020 West El Camino Avenue, Suite 200
Sacramento, CA 95833
(Address)

Project Title: NDRC Fuel Breaks Project

Project Location - Specific:
See Section 1.1 in Attachment A, and Figure 1, Vicinity Map, in Attachment B

Project Location – City: _____ Project Location – County: Tuolumne

Description of Nature, Purpose and Beneficiaries of Project:
See Sections 1.2 through 1.4 in Attachment A

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: Department of Housing and Community Development

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: The USFS Stanislaus National Forest (STF)

Exempt Status: **(check one)**

- ☐ Ministerial (Sec. 21080(b)(1); 15268);
- ☐ Declared Emergency (Sec. 21080(b)(3); 15269(a));
- ☐ Emergency Project (Sec. 21080(b)(4); 15269(b)(c));
- ☒ Categorical Exemption. State type and section number: Section 15304, Class 4, Minor Alterations to Land
- ☐ Statutory Exemptions. State code number: Public Resources Code Section 4799.05(d)(1)

Reasons why project is exempt:

Class 4 consists of minor public or private alterations in the condition of land, water, and/or vegetation which do not involve removal of healthy, mature, scenic trees except for forestry or agricultural purposes. Furthermore per Public Resources Code Section 4799.05(d)(1), CEQA does not apply to prescribed fire, thinning, or fuel reduction projects undertaken on federal lands to reduce the risk of high-severity wildfire that have been reviewed under the federal NEPA if the primary role of a state or local agency is providing funding or staffing for those projects (see Section 1.5 in Attachment A).

Lead Agency Contact Person: Patrick Talbott Area Code/Telephone/Extension: 916-263-2297

If filed by applicant:

1. Attach certified document of exemption finding.
2. Has a Notice of Exemption been filed by the public agency approving the project? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Signature: _____ Date: 6/10/2020 Title: Federal Programs Branch Chief

☒ Signed by Lead Agency

☐ Signed by Applicant

Date received for filing at OPR: Governor's Office of Planning & Research

Jun 18 2020

STATE CLEARINGHOUSE

Revised 2005

Attachment A

Additional Information

1.1 PROJECT LOCATION

The project is in the western Sierra Nevada in Tuolumne County, California. The project area consists of eight distinct fuel breaks located between Wagner Ridge in the south and State Highway 108 in the north (Figure 1, Vicinity Map, in Attachment B). The size and location by Township (T), Range (R), Mount Diablo Meridian for each fuel break is listed in Table 1.

Table 1
LOCATION AND SIZE BY FUEL BREAK

Fuel Break	Approximate Size (acres)	USGS Quadrangle	Township, Range and Section
Highway 108	125.7	Twain Harte	T03N, R16E, Sections 25, 34-36 and T02N, R16E, Sections 3-4
Contingency North	102.5	Twain Harte	T02N, R16E, Sections 1, 2, 10, 11, 14, 15
Contingency South	85.6	Twain Harte/Tuolumne	T02N, R16E, Sections 21, 28, 33, 34
Paper Cabin	214.9	Tuolumne	T01N, R16E, Section 20, 21, 27-29
Rim Truck East	405.2	Tuolumne/Groveland/Jawbone Ridge	T01S, R16E, Section 1-4, 12, 25 and T01S, R17E, Sections 7, 17, 18, 20, 28, 33
Corcoran	108	Moccasin	T01S, R15E, Sections 11, 12, 14, 23
Long Shanahan	404.5	Groveland	T01S, R16 E, Section 25, 26, 35, 36 and T01S, R17E, Section 19, 20, 29, 20, 31 and T02 S, R16E, Section 2 and T02S, R17E, Section 5, 6
Wagner Ridge	362	Groveland	T01S, R16E, Section 27, 28, 29, 33, 34, 35, 36 and T02S, R16E, Section 1, 2 and T02 S, R17 E, Section 5-8

1.2 PROJECT BACKGROUND

The proposed project consists of expanding a series of shaded fuel breaks in Tuolumne County on federal lands (U.S. Department of Interior Bureau of Land Management [BLM]- and U.S. Department of Agriculture Forest Service [USFS]-administered land), private lands, and lands controlled by State and local agencies. The project is a collaborative effort under the oversight of the State of California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) and Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC). The USFS Stanislaus National Forest (STF) would be implementing the fuel break activity and California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) staff would be providing support and facilitating STF implementation activities.

The proposed project is part of the Community Watershed Resilience Program (CWRP), which consists of three interconnected sets of activities in Tuolumne County for resilient recovery from the 2013 Rim Fire. The CWRP is funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, and its activities will assist in community recovery efforts and building resiliency to future disaster. The three sets of activities comprised by the CWRP are: (1) Forest and Watershed Health Projects, including a system of strategic fuel breaks to protect communities from future wildfire; (2) Community Resilience Centers that provide shelter and necessary services in the event of a disaster; and (3) Biomass Utilization Facility Projects that utilize forest byproducts. The proposed project is a Forest and Watershed Health Project activity under the CWRP, which is a collaborative effort between the SNC, USFS, and CAL FIRE to restore and protect the Tuolumne River watershed.

The proposed project requires analysis pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) because it is partially on federal land, and because implementation is financed with federal funds from the Community Development Block Grant Program NDRC. Review pursuant to the California Department of Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) is required because the project would partially occur on private lands, and lands controlled by State and local agencies, and because HCD is taking a discretionary action to fund the project activities.

1.3 PURPOSE AND NEED

The purpose of the project is to protect communities in Tuolumne County from wildfire and to minimize the spread of fires originating in developed areas while supporting fire resilient landscapes

The shaded fuel breaks proposed in this project are needed to:

1. Reduce the threat of large, high severity wildfires to communities. These strategically placed fuel breaks would interrupt potential fire spread into the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI).

2. Provide treated areas with low fuel for fire crews to work from and more quickly stop fire spread.

3. Provide safer ingress and egress routes for the public and firefighters during a fire.

4. Protect critical wildlife habitat and forests from wildfires.

1.4 PROPOSED ACTION

The project would reduce ladder fuels and establish eight 300-foot-wide shaded fuel breaks totaling 22 linear miles. The project covers approximately 1,808.4 acres, approximately 882.6 acres of USFS (STF) lands, 161.3 acres of BLM lands, 46.2 acres

of State and local agency lands and/or easements, and 718.3 acres of private lands. Most of the areas proposed for treatment would expand existing fuel breaks. Treatments would begin in 2020 and be completed in 2021.

Treatment prescriptions will be determined for a given area based on vegetation characteristics, proximity to residences and infrastructure, slope, and the presence of sensitive resources. The treatments may include a combination of hand or machine felling of trees, mechanical or hand piling and pile burning, and masticating brush and smaller trees. All standing and fallen dead trees would be treated.

Where economically feasible, on USFS lands, timber would be harvested and removed under a USFS timber contract. On BLM lands, all live and dead trees to be treated would be assessed for highest and best use, and if BLM chooses to not extract the material due to a balance of economic, ecological, and public safety reasons, it would be piled and burned. No timber would be sold from private properties in the project area.

Selected live trees less than 12-inches diameter at breast height (dbh) would be treated and trees up to 16 inches dbh may be extracted from USFS and BLM lands where a timber sale is feasible and required to meet desired spacing and reduction of ladder fuels. The residual trees would be spaced to break up the vertical and horizontal continuity of the fuels, reduce crown contact to less than 10 percent, and to achieve an average crown spacing of between 5 feet and one full crown width. Removal of oaks would generally be avoided.

1.4.1 Mechanical Treatments

Mechanical Mastication

Masticators would be used to grind and chip small diameter trees and brush to increase horizontal spacing of residual trees and remove ladder fuels.

Machine Piling

Bulldozers or grapple pilers may be used to pile small trees and brush for future burning. Piles will be a minimum of 25 feet from residual trees and free of soil to the greatest extent possible. Piles would be constructed at least 25 feet from any sensitive areas such as archaeological sites and all drainages. Piling would include all down logs and standing dead trees. Bulldozers may also be used to rehabilitate staging areas, skid trails, and landings by ripping to reverse the effects of soil compaction.

Ground-Based Extraction

If timber is harvested, it would be only conducted on portions of USFS and/or BLM lands. Conventional logging equipment would be used, which may include feller bunchers and rubber tire skidders. Existing landings along fuel breaks and roads would be used to minimize impacts where possible. Live trees up to 16 inches dbh would be

removed if they are ladder fuels and/or if the desired shaded fuel break structure cannot be attained through the removal of smaller trees and brush alone.

On BLM lands, all potential timber and biomass would be assessed by BLM Forester and sold for highest and best use or disposal, at the discretion of the BLM, by use of BLM permit or contract. Trees deemed too small or defective for timber must be assessed for firewood or biomass use (biomass fuel, particle board, or other non-timber forest product). Whether or not the material is transported, the proponent would still estimate the total green tons cut, to be reported to the BLM.

1.4.2 Hand Treatments

Hand treatments include using chainsaws to cut brush and trees. Hand treatments would primarily be used on steep slopes (generally, slopes greater than 35 percent with pitches up to 40 percent) and other areas where equipment use is not appropriate or possible. Hand piles would be created for burning at a later time and the same buffers listed above would apply. If needed, hand lines would be created around burn piles to increase control over pile burning.

1.4.3 Pile Burning

Pile burning is proposed as a follow-up treatment and would be conducted in accordance with all state and federal laws including air quality regulations and a site-specific burn plan would be developed for the project.

1.4.4 Herbicide Treatments (USFS Lands Only)

On USFS lands only, future maintenance of recolonizing vegetation would be done with the herbicide glyphosate. Directed herbicide applications would target only brush species that could create ladder fuel into the overstory trees and/or high fuel loading within these areas. This would include most ceanothus species and other taller/sprouting species such as manzanita. Herbicides could be used up to three times over a 10-year period after implementation of the initial treatments and would be applied by hand.

1.4.5 Management Requirements and Design Criteria

The proposed treatments were developed by CAL FIRE and the STF, in accordance with the management direction contained in the Stanislaus National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan (STF LRMP; 1991), as amended. Incorporation of the applicable management requirements as design criteria are standard practice by STF to meet the goals and objectives for management of the Forest. While the proposed project also includes non-USFS lands, the project is being implemented as a cooperative effort. Therefore, the management requirements and design criteria identified by the STF would apply for the entire project and are incorporated into the project design. Additional management requirements and design criteria specific to actions on BLM lands are also included to address possible timber harvest on BLM

lands. Standards and guidelines pertinent to resources with the potential to be affected by the project are presented below:

Sensitive Wildlife Species

General Special-Status Species

Notify the District wildlife biologist if any special-status species is discovered during project implementation so that protective measures can be applied, if needed.

Foothill Yellow-Legged Frog and Western Pond Turtle

1. Within 165 feet of Big Creek and 150 feet of Hell's Hollow Creek:

    a. Pre-implementation surveys by a qualified biologist shall be conducted within 14 days prior to all implementation activities or during the breeding season prior to implementation within the 165-foot buffer of Big Creek in the Long Shanahan Fuel Break.

    b. No equipment shall be allowed to cross Big Creek.

    c. Hand felling, hand-piling, and end-lining may be conducted at any time once a qualified biologist confirms foothill yellow-legged frog (*Rana boylii*; FYLF) are not present. If FYLF are present, the aquatic biologist will consult with California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) on appropriate monitoring and protection requirements prior to operations beginning. No mechanical felling within the buffers.

    d. Avoid working within the 165-foot buffer of Big Creek after the first major rains in the fall when FYLF, if present, may be moving upslope toward tributaries and overwintering sites. Work may resume within five days after.

    e. Preference is to hand-pile and burn or end-line material. Burning will only take place when water is in the creek because FYLF and western pond turtles are very likely to be in aquatic habitats and away from burn piles when water is present. If hand-piling or end-lining are not practicable, mechanical piling equipment may be used, but only when water is in the creek. Limit the number of paths used by mechanical piling equipment to the minimum amount necessary to achieve the objective.

2. If FYLF or western pond turtle are observed within the project area, inform the project aquatic biologist of the sighting immediately and cease operations that may impact the animal. The frog will be allowed to leave the work area on its own. The aquatic biologist will notify CDFW within 24 hours if FYLF is found. No FYLF will be handled without first contacting CDFW.

California Mountain Kingsnake

1. Any California mountain kingsnake encountered in the project site during project activities will not be harassed and will be allowed to leave the area of its own accord. A qualified biologist may handle a snake in order to relocate it out of the project site.

Nesting Birds

1. Pre-implementation surveys for northern goshawk, great gray owl, and California spotted owl will be conducted by a qualified biologist prior to implementation when vegetation treatments are planned in suitable nesting habitat during the breeding season (see species specific dates below).

    a. For the northern goshawk, maintain a Limited Operating Period (LOP) prohibiting vegetation treatments within 0.25 miles of active nests during the breeding season (February 15 to September 15).

    b. For the great gray owl and the California spotted owl, maintain a LOP prohibiting vegetation treatments within 0.25 miles of active nests during the breeding season (March 1 to August 15).

    c. The LOPs described above may be waived on a case by case basis if a biologist determines that breeding disturbance is unlikely to occur given the intensity, duration, timing, and specific location of the project activity.

2. Native birds and active nests that are discovered during the above-mentioned nesting bird surveys or during implementation will not be taken, possessed, or destroyed.

3. BLM Managed Lands: As feasible, project implementation on BLM lands will occur between September 16 to February 14 to avoid disrupting nesting birds or their nests during the breeding season. Should project activities occur on BLM lands during the breeding season (February 15 to September 15), a qualified biologist will first survey the project area for migratory birds. The surveys will be conducted within 14 days prior to implementation of the work. If the area surveyed has not been treated within 14 days, the area must be surveyed again. If birds protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act are found nesting in the project site, a 100-foot buffer will be established to avoid disturbance of the nests. The qualified biologist will mark sites to be avoided during vegetation removal or will be on-site during the work. Management requirements and design criteria applicable to the project for protecting raptors and other native birds will apply.

Special-Status Plants

1. Botanical surveys will be conducted during the appropriate blooming season prior to project implementation in suitable habitat that occurs in areas that were not included in the 2019 botanical surveys (e.g., private properties that did not grant permission to enter in 2019).

2. All known sensitive plant occurrences will be flagged for avoidance prior to project implementation. Notify the STF District botanist of any new sensitive plant occurrences discovered during project implementation.

3. Place all burn piles a minimum of 25 feet from known sensitive plant occurrences.

Riparian Conservation Areas and Jurisdictional Waters

1. Table 2 identifies mechanized equipment requirements.

2. No staging, fueling, maintenance, or cleaning of vehicles, equipment, or tools will take place inside a Riparian Conservation Area as defined in Table 2 below.

Noxious Weeds

1. Standard USFS contract provisions for equipment cleaning are applied to mechanized activities, including washing of heavy equipment prior to its arrival at the work site and following completion of work in known infested areas. This serves to reduce the risk of import/export of weed propagules to/from the project site resulting in spread of existing weed populations. All heavy equipment brought to this project that leaves roads must be free of soil, mud (wet or dried), seeds, vegetative matter, or other debris that could contain seeds or propagules. Dust or light dirt is not a concern.

2. Flagged weed populations will be avoided by project activities where feasible, and if unavoidable the weeds will be treated prior to contract initiation. If practicable, burn piles will be placed in existing weed populations to reduce the risk of weed propagules being introduced to adjacent weed-free locations and to suppress the regrowth of weeds.

Table 2
OPERATING REQUIREMENTS FOR MECHANIZED EQUIPMENT OPERATIONS IN RIPARIAN CONSERVATION AREAS

Stream Type[1]	Zone	Width (feet)	MECH[2]	SKID[3]	Operating Requirements
PER/INT/SAF	Exclusion[4]	0-15	Prohibited	Prohibited	N/A
PER/INT/SAF	Exclusion	15-50	Allowed	Prohibited	N/A
PER/INT/SAF	Transition	15-50	Allowed	Prohibited	Remove operation-created debris from stream channels unless prescribed for resource benefit. Retain remaining obligate riparian shrubs and trees (e.g., willows, alder, aspen). Do not damage streambanks with equipment and retain sufficient vegetation to maintain streambank stability.
PER/INT/SAF	Transition	50-100	Allowed	Allowed	Use existing skid trails except where unacceptable impact will result. The number of crossings should not exceed an average of two per mile.
PER/SAF	Outer	100-300	Allowed	Allowed	Density and intensity of skid trails will gradually increase as distance increases from the Transition Zone.
INT	Outer	100-150	Allowed	Allowed	Density and intensity of skid trails will gradually increase as distance increases from the Transition Zone.
EPH	Exclusion[5]	0-15	Prohibited	Prohibited	N/A
EPH	Exclusion	15-25	Allowed	Prohibited	N/A
EPH	Transition	25-50	Allowed	Allowed	The number of crossings should not exceed an average of three per mile.

[1] **PER**=Perennial; INT=Intermittent; EPH=Ephemeral; SAF=Special Aquatics Features (lakes, meadows, bogs, fens, wetlands, vernal pools, and springs).

[2] **MECH**=Mechanical Harvesting or Shredding (low ground pressure track-laying machines such as feller bunchers and masticators).

[3] **SKID**=Skidding (rubber-tired skidders and track laying tractors).

[4] The exclusion zone for perennial/intermittent streams starts at: A. The edge of the active channel where slopes rise uniformly from the stream, or at the outer edge of the following features, whichever is the furthest from the stream. B. The first slope-break adjacent to the stream (e.g., stream bank, inner gorge). C. Flat or nearly flat ground adjacent to the channel (e.g., floodplain or terrace). D. Obligate riparian shrub and/or tree communities associated with any of the above. The exclusion zone for SAFs begins at: A. The outer edge of obligate trees, shrubs or herbaceous plants in wet meadows, bogs, fens and springs, or the high-water line of lakes and vernal pools. B. The top of the first slope-break immediately adjacent to the special aquatic feature if further than the obligate vegetation or high-water line.

[5] The exclusion zone for ephemeral streams begins at the edge of the channel where slopes rise uniformly or at the edge of the stream bank, whichever is furthest from the stream.

Cultural Resources

1. The following Standard Protection Measures from Appendices E and H of the 2013 Forest Service Region 5 Programmatic Agreement will be implemented for all cultural sites documented in the project site (resources of interest):

   Flag and Avoid:

   a. Property location conveyed to contractors and employees responsible for implementation; flag for avoidance/protection (Regional PA Standard Protection Measure E.1).

   b. All cultural properties within the Area of Potential Effects (APEs) shall be clearly delineated prior to implementing any associated activities that have the potential to affect historic properties. (1) Cultural property boundaries shall be delineated with coded flagging and/or other effective marking (Regional PA Standard Protection Measure E.1.3).

   c. Monitoring by Heritage Program Specialist required when work is required within cultural sites (Regional PA Standard Protection Measure E.1.5).

   d. Vegetation to be burned shall not be piled within the site boundary unless locations have been specifically approved by qualified Heritage Program staff (Regional PA Standard Protection Measure E.2.2(b)(1)(H)).

   e. Trees may be directionally felled away from flagged cultural properties.

2. In accordance with Appendix H.3.1(b) of the Regional PA, inventory efforts in areas of the project site of impenetrable brush or obscured visibility were deferred until after project implementation. As required by and in accordance with the Regional PA, after implementation and within one year of completion of the project activities, the STF will survey areas, determined to be warranted based on the area's historic property sensitivity, that have been cleared of the brush or that have improved visibility. The timing of the surveys will be based on the progress of the implementation in contingent locations so that new surveys can be grouped together as much as possible. The Field Operator will inform the STF Heritage Program Manager (HPM)/Delegated Heritage Program Staff (DHPS) of various stages of the project so that subsequent field work can proceed in a timely fashion.

3. Prior to project implementation in areas that were not included in the 2019 cultural resource surveys for the project (e.g., private properties that did not grant permission to enter in 2019), protocol-level cultural resource surveys will be conducted by a qualified archaeologist. Standard Protection Measures will apply for any resources that are located.

4. Should any previously unrecorded cultural resources be encountered during project implementation, all work will immediately cease in that area and the STF HPM will be notified immediately. Work may resume after approval by the STF HPM providing any Standard Protection Measures are implemented. Should any cultural resources become damaged in unanticipated ways by project activities, the steps described in the Regional PA for inadvertent discoveries will be followed.

Noise

1. Except where the Field Operator has determined that no disturbance will result to the occupants of dwellings, the use of power equipment and machinery within 300 feet of an occupied structure will be restricted to between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m., and will be prohibited on Saturdays, Sundays, and nationally designated legal holidays. This requirement may be waived by the effected property owner(s).

Timber Harvest on BLM Lands

If a BLM Forester determines that a timber harvest is warranted on BLM-managed lands, the following design criteria will apply:

1. Skid Trails

    a. A designated trail network will be used for ground-based harvesting equipment. The network will incorporate existing skid trails over creating new trails and will consider proper spacing, skid trail direction and location relative to terrain and stream channel features. Old skid trails will not be opened or driven on without the approval of the Field Operator.

    b. Skid trails will be designated in locations that channel water from the trail surface away from waterbodies, floodplains, and wetlands, or unstable areas adjacent to them.

    c. Erosion control measures will be applied at skid trails and other disturbed areas with potential for erosion and subsequent sediment and silt delivery to waterbodies, floodplains, or wetlands. These practices may include mulching, water barring, tillage, and woody debris placement.

    d. Main skid trails will be blocked where they intersect roads and landings with an approved barricade and/or scattered slash to preclude OHV use.

    e. Designated skid roads will be used to limit soil compaction to less than 12 percent of the project area.

    f. Skid trails will be located to minimize disturbance to coarse woody debris. Where skid trails encounter large coarse woody debris, either the log will

be moved out of the way, or a section will be bucked out for equipment access. All sections will remain on site and as undisturbed as possible.

g. Low psi, wide-track vehicles or one-pass operations (one round trip, in and out) will be required for all mechanical harvester (includes felling and bunching) operations. For multiple passes, equipment must walk on at least 12 inches of slash for equipment greater than 6 pounds per square inch or at least 8 inches of slash for equipment less than 6 pounds per square inch. Mechanized equipment must be capable of reaching 20 feet.

h. Specific locations of logging operations must be approved by the STF HPM and BLM Archaeologist prior to skidding of material.

2. Landings and Hauling

   a. Existing landings and turnouts along fuel breaks and roads will be used to minimize impacts wherever possible, or at locations pre-approved by the STF HPM and BLM Archaeologist.

   b. During hauling operations, water will be applied when necessary to reduce dust and buildup of fine sediment that can enter into waterways. No surface water will be drafted for dust control.

3. Restore Existing Roads

   a. Following completion of treatments, existing public and private gravel roads used for project activities would be restored to pre-project conditions. Contractors will be required to document existing conditions of gravel roads planned for project use prior to project initiation and will document restoration of these conditions following project completion.

4. Waterbars

   a. Spacing and construction of waterbars on skid trails and any other location deemed necessary by BLM will be based on gradient and erosion class in compliance with standard BLM guidelines.

   b. The following techniques will be used to construct waterbars:

      i. Open the downslope end of the waterbar to allow free passage of water.

      ii. Construct the waterbar so that it will not deposit water where it will cause erosion.

      iii. Compact the waterbar to prevent water from breaching the berm.

iv. Skew waterbars no more than 30 degrees from perpendicular to the centerline of the trail or road.

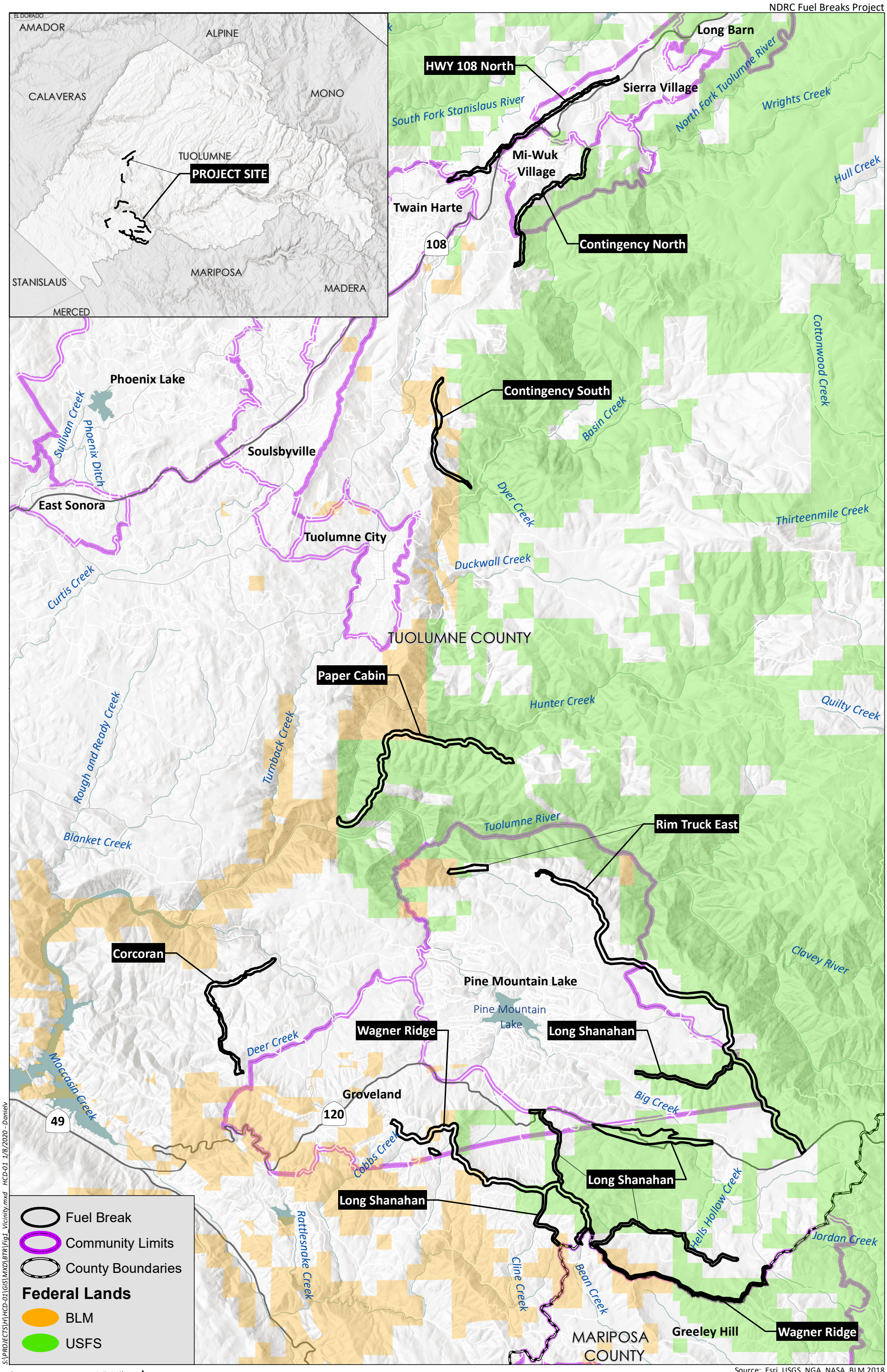
1.5 REASONS WHY PROJECT IS EXEMPT

The project falls under Categorical Exemption Class 4, Minor Alterations to Land (State CEQA Guidelines Section 15304). This exemption applies to projects that are minor public or private alterations in the condition of land, water, and/or vegetation which do not involve removal of healthy, mature, scenic trees except for forestry or agricultural purposes. The proposed project consists of removing small trees and understory vegetation, and dead trees, in support of a fire resilient landscape on private and public lands. The alterations to the vegetation would be minor, and would not involve removal of healthy, mature, or scenic trees.

Portions of the project on federal land are exempt from CEQA pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 4799.05(d)(1) amended by Senate Bill 901. Under this exemption, CEQA does not apply to prescribed fire, thinning, or fuel reduction projects undertaken on federal lands to reduce the risk of high-severity wildfire that have been reviewed under NEPA if the primary role of a state or local agency is providing funding or staffing for those projects. HCD has obtained funding from the Community Development Block Grant Program NDRC and will provide it in partnership with the SNC and CAL FIRE to the USFS to reduce forest fuels on 1,045 acres of federal land in the STF and BLM. The project includes approximately 882.6 acres of USFS (STF) lands and 161.3 acres of BLM lands. The actions to be undertaken by this project on federal lands were analyzed in their entirety pursuant to NEPA through an Environmental Assessment (EA) and a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) and Request for Release of Funds and Certification was signed by the HCD as the NEPA Responsible Entity on behalf of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) on May 1, 2020. HUD issued an Authority to Use Grant Funds on May 20, 2020. Furthermore, STF filed a Decision Memo for the actions on USFS lands on March 11, 2020. BLM also completed an Environmental Assessment for actions on BLM lands and signed a FONSI on May 15, 2020.

Attachment B

Figure



Source: Esri, USGS, NGA, NASA, BLM 2018

HELIX Environmental Planning

Vicinity Map

Figure 1