



# N·C·S·D

**Northstar Fire Department**  
Northstar Community Services District  
910 Northstar Drive, Northstar, CA 96161  
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## Notice of Exemption

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**PROJECT TITLE:** 2019 Neighboring Forest Fuels Reduction Project

**PROJECT NUMBER:** 19-SFA-143241

**PROJECT LOCATION:** The Northstar Community Services District Boundaries, Martis Camp Community and Northstar California within, Sections 29, 30, 31, T17N, R17E, Sections 5, T16N, R17E MDB&M  
**County:** Placer

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**LEAD AGENCY:** Northstar Fire Department

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**CONTACT:** JOE BARRON (NFD FORESTER, RPF #2984)

**ADDRESS:** 910 Northstar Drive, Truckee, CA 96161

**PHONE:** 530-562-1212 x2

**Project Description:** Project Description: This is a multi-year project that will begin in summer 2020 and expire at the end of October 2021. The project is funded by a 2019 California Fire Safe Council Grant Cycle and is driven by federal funding. The Project has a focus on various forest fuels reduction methods to treat 48.3 acres located within two communities and outside one community with one private landowner. The project focus is as follows:

1. To remove dead, diseased, dying and pest infected trees that are identified as a fire hazard and or are detrimental to forest health.
2. To perform forest fuels reduction within priority areas identified as essential for forest fuels reduction. These essential areas are open common space, privately owned forested areas and are areas existing within and in proximity to residential/commercial structures and or adjacent to evacuation routes or utilities.
3. To strengthen boundaries of respected communities that act as a forest fuels buffer.
4. To perform forest fuels reduction with a CAL FIRE Timber Harvest Plan that is located adjacent to a reservoir. This body of water acts as a source for aerial (helicopter) fire suppression.

The funding from the grant will help subsidize forest fuels reduction for three different entities and treatment will help meet the priorities for the 2017 and upcoming revised 2020 Northstar Fire Department Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP). This project will address a multitude of forest fuels issues that exist within the Very High Fire Severity Zones that are the Community of Northstar and Martis Camp. Additionally, forests are experiencing declining tree and vegetation health, impacted by the previous 5-years of drought and ultimately the 100-plus years of historical timber harvesting practices which altered the composition of forests around the Martis Creek Watershed. Currently, a heavy load of forest fuels exists within open space common areas, buffering residential/commercial properties, and privately-owned forested land which may require a combination of initial and maintenance treatment. The objective of this project is to reduce the overall amount of forest fuels within areas that can burn hot and traveling at an accelerated rate across the topography during a potential wildfire. In addition, addressing the removal of dead, diseased, dying and pest infected trees will help reduce the acceleration of tree mortality before it reaches an epidemic level.

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**Project Activities:** Project work is to be performed by utilizing the four methods described above. This will consist of the following:

1. Project Areas (1 & 2) - To perform 10.67-acres of forest fuels reduction within a forested area on the Northstar Community/Northstar California (Vail Resorts) boundary which will be treated by means of a hand crew (See map for project area's #1 & #2). This area is adjacent to a current 2018 California Fire Safe Council project area and will expand the acres. Disposing of biomass will be by means of chipping and pile burning. Hand crew treatment



methods will be performed by using seven to ten (7-10) person hand crew equipped with one to two (1-3) chainsaws, (1-3) pole saws and various hand tools such as a rakes and shovels. Hand crews will focus on reducing the density of small diameter, non-merchantable conifer trees that are considered suppressed and intermediate class trees. Residual conifer trees will be limbed from a range of 4' to 15' from the highest point of the ground up. Flammable brush will be thinned by means of creating mosaics. Mosaics will be thinned by creating various age classes and spacing adequately based on slope and topography. Ground fuels will be reduced to a range of 1,000 to 3,000 tons per acre. Chipping will be utilized with the Northstar Fire Department (NFD) Track Chipper #31, (C-31). C-31 is a rubber tracked chipper that can operate via remote control through the forest up to 30% slopes. Chipper -31 does not require a road/skid trail system to operate through the forest and has the capability of chipping trees up to 16" Diameter Breast Height, (D.B.H). A computer system is embedded within the chipper that allows the feeding of the chipper to be efficient without clogging the "chute" which is the mechanism to broadcast woodchips. (C-31) is operated with a three to five person crew that consists of an operator who has a remote control in hand for maneuvering the chipper. The operator watches the instrumentation, feeding of the chipper, and safety of the crew. The permitting mechanism is a CAL FIRE 1038 (b) Exemption (2-20EX-00738-PLA). This document is on file through CAL FIRE (CAL TREES) and at the Northstar Fire Department.

2. Project Area 3 will treat 10.96 acres along the Northstar Reservoir. This project's permitting mechanism is an approved CAL FIRE Timber Harvest Plan (THP) # 2-16-003-PLA. A combination of mechanical logging and hand crew work will be implemented as written in the THP. This project is identified as a "Meadow Restoration" and the prescription is in the approved Timber Harvest Plan.
3. Project Areas 4 & 5 exist within the community of Martis Camp and have a focus of fuels reduction to two purposes. Project Area number four will provide 14.42 acres of fuels reduction on the western boundary of Martis Camp and USFS property. The western boundary is the highest statistical probability of a wildfire occurring. Project Area 5 is 12.26 acres of forested land that will provide a buffer in between residential properties in areas identified as "Open Common Space" and enhance the main evacuation route heading to US Highway 267. Project work will be performed by means of mastication with an emphasis of reducing brush levels between residential properties and evacuation roads. Additionally, ground fuels will be reduced to a level of 2,000 tons per acre and small diameter conifer trees primarily white fir (*Abies concolor*) will be thinned by means of mastication. Permitting for these project areas will be reflected by means of: 14CCR§15304 Minor Alteration to Land and 14CCR§15307, Actions by Regulatory Agencies for Protection of Natural Resources

**Project Goals and Accomplishments:** This project meets the objectives (Priorities) of the 2017 and soon to be updated 2020 Northstar Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP). A copy of the 2017 Northstar CWPP and a draft of the updated can be found from the Placer County Fire Alliance Website: [WWW.placerfirealliance.org](http://WWW.placerfirealliance.org). The goals of the project are as follows:

1. To mitigate forest fuels that have accumulated at an accelerated rate and require an initial and re-entry forest fuels reduction treatments. These treatment areas are within areas that have been identified as being a high statistical threat to wildfire by means of field and computer data.
2. Provide adequate spacing and forest fuels reduction from residential properties and evacuation routes.
3. Reduce the threat of wildfire and maintain forest health by addressing the removal of dead, diseased, dying and pest infected trees to mitigate the spread of tree mortality and can mitigate mortality and a manageable rate.
4. This comprehensive project will help stretch Measure E dollars (District dollars), thus allowing completed projects to be placed on a maintenance schedule and future treatments can be performed at a feasible cost per acre.

**Permitting Method(s):** The project will implement the following as permits to perform the project.

- o The following Exemptions will be applied to the project:
- o 14CCR§15304 Minor Alteration to Land. The project's main emphasis is to reduce the abundance of fuels near or adjacent to residential properties and mitigate the effects of a wildfire occurring within or outside the Northstar Community Services District Boundary which is designated as a Very High Fire Severity Area.
- o 14CCR§15307, Actions by Regulatory Agencies for Protection of Natural Resources - The Northstar Fire Department an entity of the Northstar Community Services District within Placer County and is working under Northstar Ordinance 35-19 which relates to fuel treatments with regards to "Wildland Fire Prevention and

Defensible Space Requirements". This project will help prevent a wildfire from occurring and to protect the cultural resources that exist within the Northstar Community Services District and as a part of the Martis Valley Complex.

- o CAL FIRE 1038 (b) Exemption 2-20EX-00738-PLA
- o CAL FIRE Timber Harvest Plan # 2-16-003-PLA

This project has had an environmental review conducted by the Northstar Fire Department to conform to applicable environmental laws, regulations, and policies under (CEQA). The Environmental Review documents will be available upon request and stored at 910 Northstar Drive, Truckee, CA 96161. This project is a multi-year project and will reflect the life of the project which will officially expire on October 31, 2021.

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

**EXEMPTION STATUS:** Categorical Exemption(s)

14 CCR§15304, Minor Alterations to Land

14CCR§15307, Actions by Regulatory Agencies for the Protection of Natural Resources

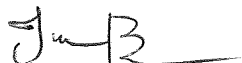
*14CCR§15304, Minor Alteration to Land - The project meets the Categorical Exemption as described under 14CCR§15304 Minor Alteration to Land. The project's main emphasis is to reduce the abundance of fuels near or adjacent to residential properties and will mitigate the effects of a wildfire occurring within or outside the Northstar Community Services District Boundary which is designated as a Very High Fire Severity Area.*

*14CCR§15307, Actions by Regulatory Agencies for Protection of Natural Resources - The project meets the Categorical Exemption as described under Actions by Regulatory Agencies for Protection of Natural Resources 14CCR§15307. This project will help prevent a wildfire from occurring and to protect the cultural resources that exist within the Northstar Community Services District and as a part of the Martis Valley Complex.*

FIELD AND OFFICE REVIEW BY THE NORTHSTAR FIRE DEPARTMENT STAFF CONFIRMED THAT NO EXCEPTIONS APPLY WHICH WOULD PRECLUDE THE USE OF A NOTICE OF EXEMPTION FOR THIS PROJECT. THE DEPARTMENT HAS CONCLUDED THAT NO SIGNIFICANT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT WOULD OCCUR TO AESTHETICS, AGRICULTURE AND FORESTLAND/TIMBERLAND, AIR QUALITY, BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES, CULTURAL RESOURCES, GEOLOGY AND SOILS, GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS, HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS, HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY, LAND USE PLANNING, MINERAL RESOURCES, NOISE, POPULATION AND HOUSING, PUBLIC SERVICES, RECREATION,

TRANSPORTATION/TRAFFIC, OR TO UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS. DOCUMENTATION OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW COMPLETED BY THE DEPARTMENT IS KEPT ON FILE AT NORTHSTAR FIRE DEPARTMENT, STATION #31 IN TRUCKEE, CA.

**DATE RECEIVED FOR FILING** \_\_\_\_\_

 (NFD Forester, RPF # 2984)

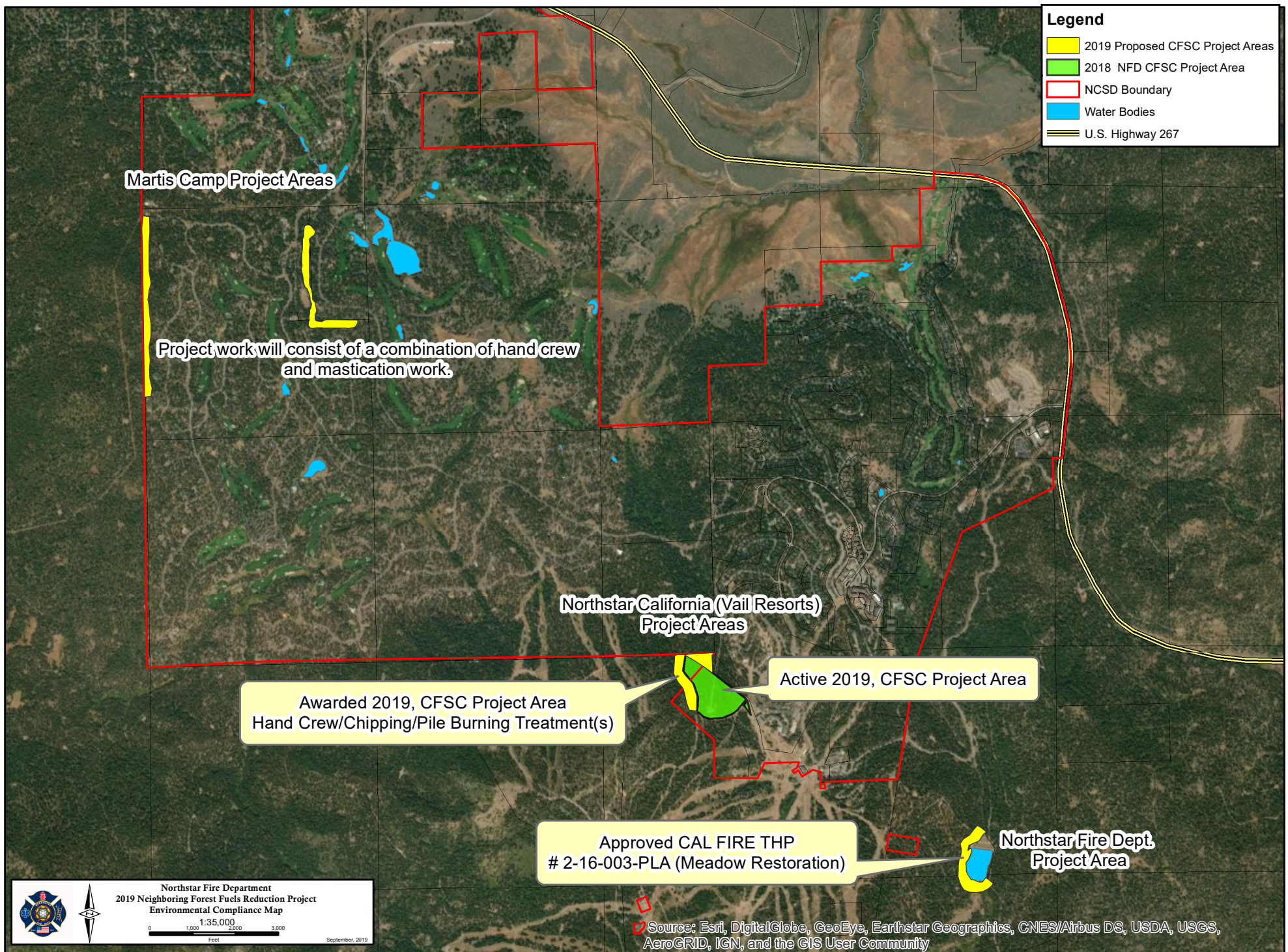
**Joe Barron (Forester, RPF# 2984)**

**DATE** 07-09-2020

**NORTHSTAR FIRE DEPARTMENT**

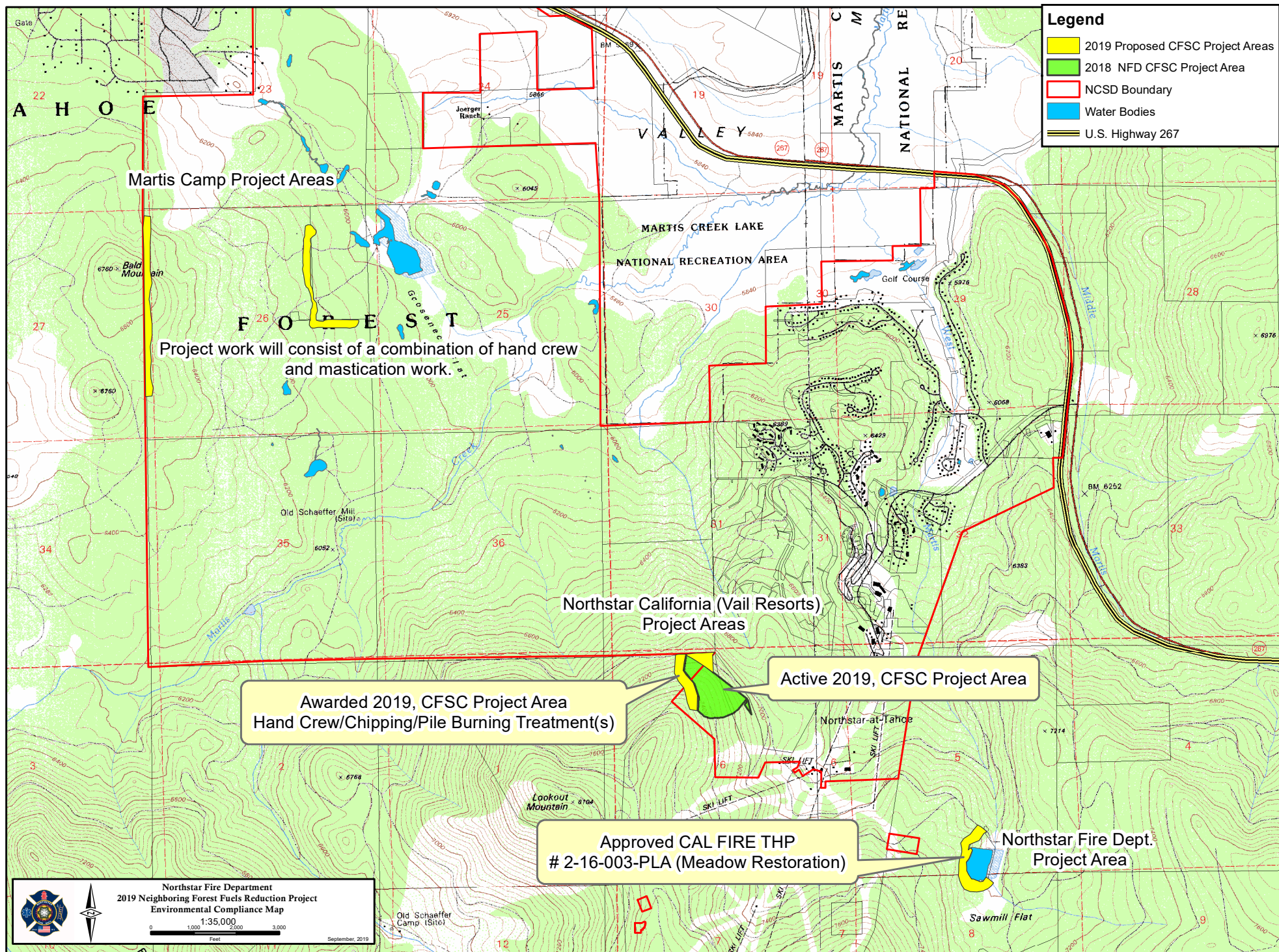


# 2019 Neighboring Forest Fuels Reduction Project "Environmental Compliance Map"





# 2019 Neighboring Forest Fuels Reduction Project "Project Boundary Aerial Topographic Map"





2019 Neighboring Forest Fuels Reduction Project "Project Vicinity Map"

