



NOTICE OF CERTIFICATION AND APPROVAL OF THE TAHOE PROGRAM TIMBERLAND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

On April 7, 2021, the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) certified the Tahoe Program Timberland Environmental Impact Report (Tahoe PTEIR or PTEIR) (State Clearinghouse No. 2019069054) and approved the proposed forest management program.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: The PTEIR has been prepared according to the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (Public Resources Code [PRC] Section 21000 et seq.), the State CEQA Guidelines (California Code of Regulations [CCR], Title 14, Section 15000 et seq. [14 CCR Section 15000 et seq.]), Z'berg-Nejedly Forest Practice Act (PRC Section 4511 et seq.), and the California Forest Practice Rules (14 CCR Section 1092.01).

The Tahoe PTEIR addresses a long-term program of forest management and fuel reduction on private, local jurisdiction, federal, and California Tahoe Conservancy (Conservancy) lands primarily within the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) throughout the California side of the Lake Tahoe Basin. The program includes numerous forest treatment activities to reduce the risk of wildfire including mechanical thinning, manual/hand thinning, prescribed understory burning, pile burning, sale and transport of merchantable timber, and the transport and use of biomass for energy generation and other forest products. Herbicide treatment is not proposed. An estimated average of 900 – 1,300 acres of treatments would be implemented each year within the program area.

The program objectives are to:

- ▲ reduce the risk of catastrophic wildfires that could damage Lake Tahoe Basin forests, watersheds, habitats, and communities;
- ▲ increase Lake Tahoe Basin forest resilience to effects of climate change, including prolonged drought, pest and disease outbreaks and increased tree mortality;
- ▲ protect and restore meadow and riparian ecosystems, and forest habitat quality in the Lake Tahoe Basin;
- ▲ develop and implement all-lands fuel reduction, forest health improvement, and restoration projects that deliver multiple community and ecosystem service benefits; and
- ▲ increase the pace and scale of fuel reduction projects to assist in achieving the goals of Executive Order B-52-18.

CAL FIRE prepared the PTEIR to more efficiently and comprehensively evaluate the effects of forest management, and improve the project approval and delivery process for subsequent activities that are consistent with the PTEIR. CAL FIRE served as the lead agency for completion of the PTEIR under CEQA and the California Forest Practices Act. Other public agencies may serve as responsible agencies in approving later treatment activities pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15168, and following California Forest Practice Rules. These responsible agencies, or project proponents, could include CAL FIRE, Conservancy, fire districts, or other public agencies or landowners with land ownership/stewardship responsibilities.

Later treatment activities would be evaluated, using a Project Consistency Checklist that would be used to document the evaluation of the site and the activity to determine whether the environmental effects of the later activity are within the scope of the analysis in the PTEIR. After determining that a proposed treatment activity is within the scope of the analysis in the PTEIR, a project proponent could prepare a Program Timber Harvest Plan or

“within the scope” findings pursuant to 14 CCR Section 1092.01 or State CEQA Guidelines Section 15168(c), respectively.

PROJECT LOCATION: The Tahoe PTEIR program area contains private, local jurisdiction, federal, and Conservancy lands both in the WUI and select contiguous areas of forest outside of the WUI throughout the California side of the Tahoe Basin. The program area covers approximately 17,480 acres in the City of South Lake Tahoe and in unincorporated areas of El Dorado and Placer Counties, including, but not limited to: Meyers, Cascade properties near Cascade Lake, Tahoma, Homewood, Alpine Peaks, Tahoe City, Dollar Point, Carnelian Bay, Tahoe Vista, and Kings Beach.

The program area includes approximately 5,850 acres of the program area are identified as “Community Fuel Reduction Areas.” Community Fuel Reduction Areas include smaller-acreage parcels that are publicly or privately owned and is generally located within the WUI intermix. These areas include developed parcels and undeveloped urban lots within and surrounding developed neighborhoods. The remaining 11,640 acres of land are identified as “Other Fuel Reduction Projects.” Other Fuel Reduction Projects consist primarily of larger-acreage parcels of public land identified for fuel reduction in the Lake Tahoe Basin Community Wildfire Protection Plan. These areas include undeveloped open space within and near developed communities and encompassing portions of the WUI defense zone and WUI threat zone. Approximately 1,315 acres of Other Fuel Reduction Projects are located outside of the WUI.

ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS: The PTEIR identified significant or potentially significant effects associated with aesthetics, air quality, biological resources; cultural resources; greenhouse gases and climate change; recreation; and transportation. The majority of impacts would be mitigated to a less-than-significant level. However, even with the application of feasible mitigation measures, there would be significant and unavoidable impacts related to air quality, greenhouse gas emissions, and transportation. Details on the environmental effects of the program are provided in the Draft and Final PTEIR.

WHERE DRAFT AND FINAL PTEIR MAY BE OBTAINED: A copy of the Draft and Final PTEIR is available for download at the <https://www.ntfire.net/tahoe-pteir>. To prevent the spread of COVID-19, printed copies of the PTEIR will not be available for review at public buildings. Individuals that are unable to access the PTEIR at the website listed above should contact North Tahoe Fire Protection District at TahoePTEIR@ntfire.net or 530-584-2344.

Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15091, all supporting documents for the PTEIR (i.e., record of proceedings) are available for review during normal business hours at 1416 9th Street, Room 1506-14, Sacramento, CA 95814. The custodian of these documents is Bill Solinsky of CAL FIRE.