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State of California **The Natural Resources Agency**

M e m o r a n d u m

To: Mike van Loben Sels
Southern Region Chief
1234 E Shaw Ave,
Fresno, CA 93710

Date: 3/10/2026

Telephone: (951) 235-2785

Website: www.fire.ca.gov

From: Liza Iegorova
Senior Environmental Scientist
CAL FIRE Southern Region
(951) 235-2785 – Cell

California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE)

Subject: TCU Belleview Kewin Mill Fuels Reduction Project: Recommended approval

I have reviewed the Belleview Kewin Mill Fuels Reduction Project Notice of Exemption (NOE). This is a 145 acre fuels reduction project. This project meets the requirements of a Class 4 Categorical Exemption “15304 Minor Alterations to Land”. Review by CAL FIRE staff confirmed that no exceptions apply which would preclude finding the project to be categorically exempt as discussed in CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2.

The NOE is attached for your signature. Please sign page 2 and return the document to me, and I will process it for the Unit and Sacramento files.

Thank you.

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NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

State of California
The Natural Resources Agency
California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

PROJECT TITLE:	Belleview/Kewin Mill Fuels Reduction Project		
PROJECT LOCATION	T2N, R15E, Sections 11,12 &13; T2N, R16E Section 6 & 7, MDBM	**COUNTY**	Tuolumne
LEAD AGENCY	California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE)		
CONTACT	Roger Petersen, Unit Forester CAL FIRE Tuolumne-Calaveras Unit		
ADDRESS	785 Mountain Ranch Rd., San Andreas, CA 95249	**PHONE**	(209) 754-3831

Project Description: The proposed project will reduce hazardous fuel loading within approximately 300-feet of portions of Kewin Mill Road, Big Hill Road and around Belleview Elementary School in the Cedar Ridge Area. Both Kewin Mill and Big Hill Road are critical ingress and egress routes for the community. The project area is approximately 145 acres in size. The project area ranges in elevation from approximately 3,200 to 3,600 feet above sea level. Vegetation at the site would best be described as a mixture of Sierra Mixed Conifer and oak woodland. Overstory tree species consist primarily of ponderosa pine, sugar pine, white fir, incense cedar, California black oak, canyon live oak, and interior live oak. Surface and ladder fuels will be reduced or modified by mastication, chipping, or by hand cutting, piling and burning or lopping and scattering. Mastication may be conducted by a variety of track laying type tractors. Hand work for chipping, as well as piling and burning or lopping and scattering will be conducted by hand crews using chainsaws and other hand tools. Trees less than 12-inches in diameter at breast height (dbh), surface fuels and ladder fuels will be treated to achieve a target residual tree spacing of 25 to 30-feet between stems. Residual trees will be pruned to a height of approximately 8 to 10-feet above ground level. Dead trees of any size may be felled and chipped, piled and burned, or masticated. Masticated or chipped material will be left on site. The reduction in vegetation will create a shaded fuel break condition that will minimize fire behavior and create a stand structure that is resistant to stand replacing fires.

EXEMPTION STATUS

- ☒ Categorical Exemption Type and Section: Class 4, §15304 Minor Alterations to Land
- ☐ Statutory Exemption (state code section):
- ☐ Ministerial (§21080(b)(1); 15268)
- ☐ Declared Emergency (§21080(b)(3); 15269(a))
- ☐ Emergency Project (§21080(b)(4); 15269(b)(c))

REASONS PROJECT IS EXEMPT

The class of exemption to be used is 15304- minor alterations to land. The project will consist of removing surface and ladder fuels to maintain a shaded fuel break condition. The project is located in an urban interface area. The project will create a shaded fuel break condition. The project will not involve the removal of mature or scenic trees. Stand health will be improved by removing dead, dying, and suppressed trees and brush, and increasing growing space for mature, healthy dominant and co-dominant trees. Sensitive species will not be impacted by the proposed project. The project was designed to avoid adverse impacts to watercourses. Mastication and chipping will leave a layer of organic material that will provide for excellent erosion control. The project was carefully designed to avoid adverse impacts to archaeological and biological resources. The project was designed to reduce hazardous fuel loading in a strategic area around the community of Cedar Ridge, and will make Tuolumne County more resilient regarding wildfires.

Review by CAL FIRE staff confirmed that no exceptions apply that 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, energy, geology and soils, greenhouse gas emissions, hazards and hazardous materials, hydrology and water quality, land use planning, mineral resources, noise, populations and housing, public services, recreation, transportation/ traffic, utilities and service systems, or to wildfire. Documentation of the environmental review completed by the Department is kept on file at the Tuolumne-Calaveras Unit Headquarters in San Andreas.

DATE RECEIVED FOR FILING

DocuSigned by:
Mike Van Loben Sels 3/10/2026
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Mike Van Loben Sels, Southern Region Chief Date:
California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

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California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection
Environmental Review Report for an Exempt Project

Note: This report form is intended for use by California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) staff to document a limited environmental impact analysis supporting the filing of a notice of exemption document for a proposed CAL FIRE project. Although the project appears to fit within the descriptions for allowable categorical exemptions, this report presents CAL FIRE's review for possible exceptions that would preclude finding the project to be categorically exempt as discussed in CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2. This report will be filed with the CEQA administrative record for this project to document the environmental impact analysis conducted by CAL FIRE. Revised 01/01/2020.

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Project Name:	Belleview/Kewin Mill Fuels Project
Project Number:	5GG23220
Program Type:	CCI Fire Prevention Grant
CAL FIRE Unit:	Tuolumne-Calaveras Unit
County:	Tuolumne
Acres:	145
Legal Location:	T2N, R15E, Sections 11,12 &13; T2N, R16E Section 6 & 7, MDBM
Name of USGS 7.5'Quad Map(s):	Columbia SE

☒Project Vicinity Map Attached ☒Project Location Map Attached ☐Photos Attached

Other Public Agency Review or Permit Required:

Would the project result in:	YES	NO
Alterations to a watercourse (DFW - Lake and Stream Alteration Agreement)	☐	☒
Conversion of timberland (CAL FIRE - Conversion Permit or Exemption)	☐	☒
Demolition (Local Air District - Demolition Permit)	☐	☒
Soil disturbance over 1 acre (RWQCB - SWPPP)	☐	☒
Fill of possible wetlands (404 Permit - USACE)	☐	☒
Other:	☐	☒

Discuss any above-listed topic item checked Yes and consultation with agencies:

Project Description and Environmental Setting (describe the project activities, project site and its surroundings, its location, and the environmental setting): The proposed project will reduce hazardous fuel loading within approximately 300-feet of portions of Kewin Mill Road, Big Hill Road and around Belleview Elementary School in the Cedar Ridge Area. Both Kewin Mill and Big Hill Road are critical ingress and egress routes for the community. The project area is approximately 145 acres in size. The project area ranges in elevation from approximately 3,200 to 3,600 feet above sea level. Vegetation at the site would best be described as a mixture of Sierra Mixed Conifer and oak woodland. Overstory tree species consist primarily of ponderosa pine, sugar pine, white fir, incense cedar, California black oak, canyon live oak, and interior live oak. Surface and ladder fuels will be reduced or modified by mastication, chipping, or by hand cutting, piling and burning or lopping and scattering. Mastication may be conducted by a variety of track laying type tractors. Hand work for chipping, as well as piling and burning or lopping and scattering will be conducted by hand crews using chainsaws and other hand tools. Trees less than 12-inches in diameter at breast height (dbh), surface fuels and ladder fuels will be treated to achieve a target residual tree spacing of 25 to 30-feet between stems. Residual trees will be pruned to a height of approximately 8 to 10-feet above ground level. Dead trees of any size may be felled and chipped, piled and burned, or masticated. Masticated or chipped material will be left on site. The reduction in vegetation will create a shaded fuel break condition that will minimize fire behavior and create a stand structure that is resistant to stand replacing fires.

Environmental Impact Analysis

Aesthetics

☐ This topic does not apply to this project and was not evaluated further.

☒ This topic could apply to this project, and results of the assessment are provided below:

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The project is located along Big Hill Road and Kewin Mill Road and will be visible from both roads. The project will create a stand structure that will improve aesthetics and resemble a more natural open stand condition with healthy dominant and co-dominant trees. The proposed project will not result in negative visual impacts.

Agriculture and Forest Resources

☐ This topic does not apply to this project and was not evaluated further.
☒ Yes ☐ No Would any trees be felled? If yes, discuss protection of nesting birds, if necessary.
☐ Yes ☒ No Would the project convert any prime or unique farmland?
☐ Yes ☒ No Would the project result in the conversion of forest land or timberland to non-forest use?
☒ This topic could apply to this project, and results of the assessment are provided below:

Trees less than 12-inches dbh will be removed to create a shaded fuel break condition. Tree removal will primarily concentrate on shrubs that are regrowing in the existing fuel break. While conducting field work in the project area from September to December 2025, no nesting birds were observed. A query of the California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB) did not indicate the presence of any rare, threatened or endangered bird species within the proposed project area, and none were detected during pre-project field work. If any special status species are detected during operations, they will be protected through maintaining a 5-acre buffer while the nest is occupied. Removal of competing vegetation will increase growing space for residual trees and will protect habitat by making the stand resistant to stand replacing type fires. There will be no adverse impacts to agriculture and forest resources.

Air Quality

☐ This topic does not apply to this project and was not evaluated further.
☐ Yes ☒ No The local Air Quality Management District guidelines for dust abatement and other air quality concerns were reviewed for this project.
☒ This topic could apply to this project, and results of the assessment are provided below:

The majority of the project area will be treated through mastication and chipping; however, portions of the project area may be treated through piling and burning. All burning will be conducted in accordance with a permit from the Tuolumne County Air Pollution Control District. The project will not result in adverse impacts to air quality.

Biological Resources

☐ This topic does not apply to this project and was not evaluated further.
☐ Yes ☒ No Will the project potentially effect biological resources?
☒ Yes ☐ No Was a current California Natural Diversity Database review completed? Results discussed below:
☒ Yes ☐ No Was a biological survey of the project area completed? Results discussed below:
☒ This topic could apply to this project, and results of the assessment are provided below:

A 9-quadrangle search of the California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB) was conducted for the Columbia SE quadrangle, and a biological scoping was completed to evaluate the potential for sensitive species to be located within the proposed project area. The results of the biological scoping for this project have been included as an attachment to this report. A query of the CNDDB did not indicate the presence of any rare, threatened or endangered species within the proposed project area, and none were detected during pre-project field work, or during previous projects on the site.

Great gray owl (*Strix nebulosa*): An historic occurrence of a great gray owl from 1989 was documented approximately ¾ of a mile west of the project area. An additional historic occurrence of a great gray owl from 2003 is documented approximately 0.9 miles northwest of the project area. The project area provides potential habitat for this species. There is a grassy opening greater than 10-acres in size within the project area as well as a historic apple orchard that is approximately 25-acres in size that is adjacent to the project area. Outside the project area, but nearby, the oak fire scar from 2015 provides a large open grassy area that could provide foraging habitat for this species. Additionally, the Sierra Glen Apple Ranch, outside the project area, provides a large opening of grass and apple orchards that could provide potential foraging habitat. No occurrences have been documented in the project area. No great gray owls were observed during field work for this project. This is a fuel reduction project consisting of masticating brush and small trees that will improve habitat for this species. **Because there are documented occurrences within a mile of the project area, and portions of the project area contain potential habitat for this species operations with ¼ mile of the grassy opening at Robertson Ranch Road and within ¼ mile of the historic Abbott apple orchard will only be conducted outside of the critical period for this species. Operations in these two areas shall be limited to the period of time between September 1 and February 15.**

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California spotted owl (*Strix occidentalis*): Usually found from 3,000 to 7,600 feet in elevation in dense, mature conifer forests, and multi layered stands with a canopy closure greater than 40 percent. They are intolerant of high temperatures and prefer north facing slopes in shady, steep canyons. They typically nest in cavities of large trees or abandoned raptor nests. The project area is primarily young oak stands and does not provide the structural characteristics preferred by this species, such as large, overstory trees with a lot of dead trees and logs. An occurrence of this species was documented in 2023 approximately 0.69 miles northwest of the project area. No California spotted owls were detected within the project area. **If this species is discovered nesting within or adjacent to the project area, the operator shall cease operations within ¼ mile of the nest and notify the project manager and forester immediately. Operations within ¼ mile of the nest may resume once it is confirmed by a registered professional forester or wildlife biologist the nest is no longer occupied.**

Crotch's bumble bee *(Bombus crotchii)* On September 30, 2022, the Crotch's bumble bee was given Candidate status under the California Endangered Species Act (CESA). Candidate species are given protection under CESA until a determination is made on their listing status. The Crotch's bumble bee primarily persists in southern coastal areas and a few areas around Sacramento. The historic distribution included the southern two-thirds of the state. The largest population declines have been documented in the center of its range, the Central Valley. In California the Crotch's bumble bee inhabits open grassland and scrub habitats. This bee requires a diverse supply of flowers that bloom throughout the free flying portion of their life cycle from spring to autumn. The project area is Sierra Mixed Conifer and oak woodland and does not contain open grassland or scrub habitat for this species and does not support robust floristic resources throughout the free flying period. The proposed project is expected to improve habitat for bee species by opening up the canopy and creating growing space for floristic resources. **If any occupied bumble bee nests are discovered during operations, they will be protected by a 50-foot buffer where no operations will occur within the buffer while the nest is occupied. No adverse impacts are anticipated as a result of the project.**

Northwestern pond turtle (*Actinemys marmorata*): Habitat includes ponds, deep, slow-moving streams, marshes and lakes. Eggs are laid in loose soil on land in oak woodlands, mixed conifer forests, broad leaf forests and grasslands, usually within 400 feet of ponds, lakes, slow streams and marshes with vegetated borders, rocks or logs. There are ponds within and adjacent to the project area. No turtles of any kind were observed while conducting field work for this project from September to December 2025. Ponds and perennial watercourses will have a 50-foot equipment exclusion zone. The nesting season for this species, when they may have nests within 400-feet of water, is from April to August. **If operations occur within 400 feet of ponds in the period of time between April and August, the project manager or RPF will conduct a pedestrian survey to ensure there are no turtles in that portion of the project area.** No adverse impacts to the species are anticipated as a result of the project.

Smalls southern clarkia (*Clarkia australis*): This species is found from 2,600 feet to 6,750 feet in elevation in open, coniferous forests, ponderosa pine, canyon live oak, and montane chaparral with disturbed sites, and dry, shallow, rocky soils. This species blooms from May to August. **If this species is detected within the project area, during any year of operations, a 25-foot equipment exclusion zone will be provided, and only hand work shall be conducted within the equipment exclusion zone. The equipment zone shall be designated with blue flagging.** This species thrives on disturbance, and no adverse impacts to the species are anticipated as a result of the project.

Yellow-lip pansy monkeyflower *(Diplacus pulchellus)*: This annual herb is found from 1,950 feet to 6,500 feet in wet meadows, seeps, vernally wet depressions, and run-off areas often in the ponderosa pine zone. Portions of the project area that could provide potential habitat for this species are not targets for fuel reduction work. **If this species is detected within the project area, during any year of operations, a 25-foot equipment exclusion zone will be provided, and only hand work shall be conducted within the equipment exclusion zone. The equipment zone shall be designated with blue flagging**. No adverse impacts to the species are anticipated as a result of the project.

Tuolumne fawn lily *(Erythronium tuolumnense)* This species inhabits moist, light deciduous woodland from 1,716 to 3,656 feet in elevation. This species blooms from March to June and is primarily known from occurrences documented from Italian Bar Road in Columbia to the headwaters of Deer Creek in Tuolumne County. Portions of the project area that provide the moist habitat required by this species (such as along watercourses) will be protected with an equipment exclusion zone (EEZ). Although surveys and field work were conducted after the blooming period for this species, I am familiar with this species and visited reference populations both during and after the blooming period for this species in 2025. I did not observe Tuolumne fawn lily within the project area. **If this species is detected within the project area, during any year of operations, a 25-foot equipment exclusion zone will be provided, and only hand work shall be conducted within the equipment exclusion zone. The equipment zone shall be designated with blue flagging.** No adverse impacts to the species are anticipated as a result of the project.

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Mi-Wuk navarretia *(Navarretia miwukensis)* The project area is within the range of this species. This species is associated with meadows. There are some grassy openings that could provide potential habitat for this species. Open, grassy areas are not targets for fuel reduction, and operations are not likely to occur in portions of the project area that could contain potential habitat for this species. This species blooms from May to August. **If this species is detected within the project area, during any year of operations, a 25-foot equipment exclusion zone will be provided, and only hand work shall be conducted within the equipment exclusion zone. The equipment zone shall be designated with blue flagging.** No adverse impacts to the species are anticipated as a result of the project.

The project has been designed to avoid impacts to biological resources. The project will not result in adverse impacts to biological resources.

Cultural Resources/Tribal Cultural Resources

☐ This topic does not apply to this project and was not evaluated further.
☒ Yes ☐ No Was a current archaeological records check completed? Results discussed below:
☐ Yes ☒ No Was a CAL FIRE staff or contract archaeologist consulted? Results discussed below:
☒ Yes ☐ No Was an archaeological survey of the project area completed? Results discussed below:
☐ Yes ☒ No Will the project effect any historic, archaeological or tribal cultural resources?
☒ This topic could apply to this project, and results of the assessment are provided below:

A current archaeological records check was completed for the project area, and an archaeological survey was completed. An archaeological survey report was prepared for the project. Consultation letters were sent to appropriate Native American contacts. There are archaeological sites within the proposed project area; however, the project was designed to avoid impacts to these resources. An Archeological Survey Report (ASR) has been submitted and reviewed by a professional archeologist. A copy of the approved report is on file at the TCU Headquarters office at 785 Mountain Ranch Rd, San Andreas, CA 95249. The project will not result in adverse impacts to cultural resources.

Energy

☒ This topic does not apply to this project and was not evaluated further.
☐ This topic could apply to this project, and results of the assessment are provided below:

The project will not result in adverse impacts related to energy.

Geology and Soils

☐ This topic does not apply to this project and was not evaluated further.
☒ This topic could apply to this project, and results of the assessment are provided below:

The project area consists of moderate to gentle slopes. Masticated and chipped material will provide effective surface cover. Residual trees will provide approximately 50% overstory canopy coverage. Tractors will be limited to slopes of 45% or less, except for isolated pitches. The project area does contain areas where slopes are greater than 50% that will be treated by hand. The project has been carefully designed to protect soil resources. The proposed project will not result in adverse impacts to geology and soils.

Greenhouse Gas Emissions

☐ This topic does not apply to this project and was not evaluated further.
☐ Yes ☒ No Would the project generate significant greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions?
☐ Yes ☒ No Would these GHG emissions result in a significant impact on the environment? Discuss below:
☐ Yes ☒ No Would the project conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases? Discuss below:

Reduction of surface and ladder fuels will primarily be conducted through mastication. It is estimated that the various equipment used to complete the project including vehicles, equipment transports, tractors, chippers, and chain saws would generate approximately 48.47 metric tons of CO2e. The Greenhouse Gas Emissions Worksheet has been included as an attachment to this report.

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A portion of the project area may require treatment by piling and burning due to steep slopes or other limiting factors. It is estimated that approximately 30 acres may be treated through hand piling and burning. A Piled Fuels Biomass and Emissions Calculator estimated the burning would produce approximately 19.01 metric tons of CO2e. The total project would produce an estimated 67.48 metric tons of CO2e. The proposed project will not result in a significant effect regarding greenhouse gas emissions. The project will also have positive benefits such as improved growth for residual trees, creating stand conditions that are resistant to stand replacing fires, and creating a strategic fuel break to assist in minimizing large, stand replacing type fires.

The estimated GHG emissions from this project do not meet the significance threshold CAL FIRE uses (California Air Pollution Control Officers Association) to assess significant impacts with regard to GHG emissions (900MT/yr). The proposed project will not result in adverse impacts to greenhouse gas emissions.

Hazards and Hazardous Materials

☒ This topic does not apply to this project and was not evaluated further.
☐ This topic could apply to this project, and results of the assessment are provided below:

The project will not have any adverse impacts regarding hazards or hazardous materials.

Hydrology and Water Quality

☐ This topic does not apply to this project and was not evaluated further.
☐ Yes ☒ No Will the project potentially affect any watercourse or body of water?
☒ This topic could apply to this project, and results of the assessment are provided below:

The proposed project contains seasonal watercourses that do not provide aquatic habitat. A 25-foot equipment limitation zone (ELZ) has been provided adjacent to these watercourses. The ELZ has been designated by centerline flagging these watercourses with blue and white striped ribbon. No equipment shall enter the ELZ except to cross at existing crossing locations, or to cross in a single location at a right angle to the channel. Masticators on a boom may reach into the ELZ to masticate surface and ladder fuels. Surface and ladder fuels may be cut by hand within the ELZ. No pile burning shall be conducted within the bed, bank or channel of the watercourses. These watercourses are labeled on the attached map as Class III watercourses.

The project contains watercourses that could provide habitat for non-fish aquatic species. An approximate 50-foot equipment exclusion zone (EEZ) has been provided for these watercourses. A portion of the north fork of Sullivan Creek meanders through a broad flat that has been historically mined. The EEZ designated for this portion of the watercourse follows the banks of the historic mining and the distance to the actual channel varies from less than 50 feet to 100 feet. The EEZ is designated with red and blue flagging or solid blue flagging. In the northern portion of the project area, an approximate 50-foot EEZ has been designated with solid blue ribbon. Vegetation within the EEZ for these watercourses may be cut by hand and removed from the EEZ or lopped and scattered to a depth of less than 18-inches above the ground. No burn piles will be constructed within the EEZ. These watercourses are shown as Class II watercourses on the attached map.

There is one pond within the project area and ponds. An approximate 50-foot EEZ has been flagged around the pond. Vegetation within the EEZ for the pond may be cut by hand and removed from the EEZ. No burn piles will be constructed within the EEZ. The location of the pond is shown on the attached map.

There is one wet area within the project area. An approximate 50-foot EEZ has been flagged around the pond. Vegetation within the EEZ for the wet area may be cut by hand and removed from the EEZ or lopped and scattered to a depth of no more than 18-inches above the ground. No burn piles will be constructed within the EEZ. The location of the wet area is shown on the attached map.

Masticated and chipped material outside of the flagged EEZs will provide effective erosion control. The project has been carefully designed to avoid potential impacts to water quality. There will not be adverse impacts to water quality.

Land Use and Planning

☒ This topic does not apply to this project and was not evaluated further.
☐ This topic could apply to this project, and results of the assessment are provided below:

There will not be impacts to Land Use and Planning.

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Mineral Resources
☒ This topic does not apply to this project and was not evaluated further.
☐ This topic could apply to this project, and results of the assessment are provided below:

There will not be adverse impacts to mineral resources.

Noise
☐ This topic does not apply to this project and was not evaluated further.
☒ This topic could apply to this project, and results of the assessment are provided below:

Operations will be conducted during normal business hours between 7:00 A.M and 5:00 P.M. There will not be adverse impacts related to noise.

Population and Housing
☒ This topic does not apply to this project and was not evaluated further.
☐ This topic could apply to this project, and results of the assessment are provided below:

There will be no adverse impacts related to population and housing.

Public Services
☒ This topic does not apply to this project and was not evaluated further.
☐ This topic could apply to this project, and results of the assessment are provided below:

There will not be adverse impacts regarding public services.

Recreation
☒ This topic does not apply to this project and was not evaluated further.
☐ This topic could apply to this project, and results of the assessment are provided below:

With the exception of Belleview Elementary School, the project area is on private property. The project area does not provide for any public recreational opportunities. The proposed project will not have a negative impact on recreation.

Transportation and Traffic
☐ This topic does not apply to this project and was not evaluated further.
☒ This topic could apply to this project, and results of the assessment are provided below:

The project area is accessed from Big Hill Road and Kewin Mill Road. There are adequate areas for support vehicles to park off the roadway during work hours and to off-load equipment. Some traffic control may be required to chip along certain road segments. Any traffic control for roadside chipping will be consistent with operations that occur frequently on county roads and will not have a significant impact on the flow of traffic.

The proposed project will not result in any adverse impacts regarding transportation or traffic.

Utilities and Service Systems
☒ This topic does not apply to this project and was not evaluated further.
☐ This topic could apply to this project, and results of the assessment are provided below:

The proposed project will not result in adverse impacts to utilities and service systems.

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Wildfire

☐ This topic does not apply to this project and was not evaluated further.

☒ This topic could apply to this project, and results of the assessment are provided below:

The proposed project will have a positive impact by reducing hazardous fuel loading and minimizing potential fire behavior in the area. The proposed project is expected to increase the safety of residents in the immediate area by minimizing potential fire behavior. Big Hill Road and Kewin Mill Road are critical ingress and egress routes for the community of Cedar Ridge. Reducing hazardous fuel loading around Belleview Elementary School is expected to reduce potential fire behavior in the event of a fire. The project will improve the fuel break network around communities of Tuolumne County which is expected to make Tuolumne County more resilient in the event of wildfires. The proposed project will not result in adverse impacts related to wildfire.

Changes Made to Avoid Environmental Impacts: None. The proposed project was carefully designed to avoid potential adverse impacts. No changes were made.

Mandatory Findings of Significance:	**YES**	**NO**
(a) Does the project have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal, or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?	☐	☒
(b) Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? "Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probably future projects.	☐	☒
(c) Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?	☐	☒

Justification for Use of a Categorical Exemption (discuss why the project is exempt, cite exemption number(s), and describe how the project fits the class): The Class of Exemption to be used is 15304- Minor Alterations to Land. The project will consist of removing surface and ladder fuels to maintain a shaded fuel break condition. The project is located in an urban interface area. The project will create a shaded fuel break condition. The project will not involve the removal of mature or scenic trees. Stand health will be improved by removing dead, dying, and suppressed trees and brush, and increasing growing space for mature, healthy dominant and co-dominant trees. Sensitive species will not be impacted by the proposed project. The project was designed to avoid adverse impacts to watercourses. Mastication and chipping will leave a layer of organic material that will provide for excellent erosion control. The project was carefully designed to avoid adverse impacts to archaeological and biological resources. The project was designed to reduce hazardous fuel loading in a strategic area around the community of Cedar Ridge, and will make Tuolumne County more resilient regarding wildfires.

Conclusion:

☒ After assessing potential environmental impacts and evaluating the description for the various classes of categorical exemptions to CEQA, CAL FIRE has determined that the project fits within one or more of the exemption classes and no exceptions exist at the project site which would preclude the use of this exemption. CAL FIRE considered the possibility of (a) sensitive location, (b) cumulative impact, (c) significant impact due to unusual circumstances, (d) impacts to scenic highways, (e) activities within a hazardous waste site, and (f) significant adverse change to the significance of a historical resource. A notice of exemption will be filed at the State Clearinghouse.

☐ After assessing potential environmental impacts and evaluating the description for the various classes of categorical exemptions to CEQA, CAL FIRE has determined that the project does not fit within the description for the various exemption classes or has found that exceptions exist at the project site that precludes the use of a categorical exemption for this project. Additional environmental review will be conducted and the appropriate CEQA document used may be a negative declaration or a mitigated negative declaration.

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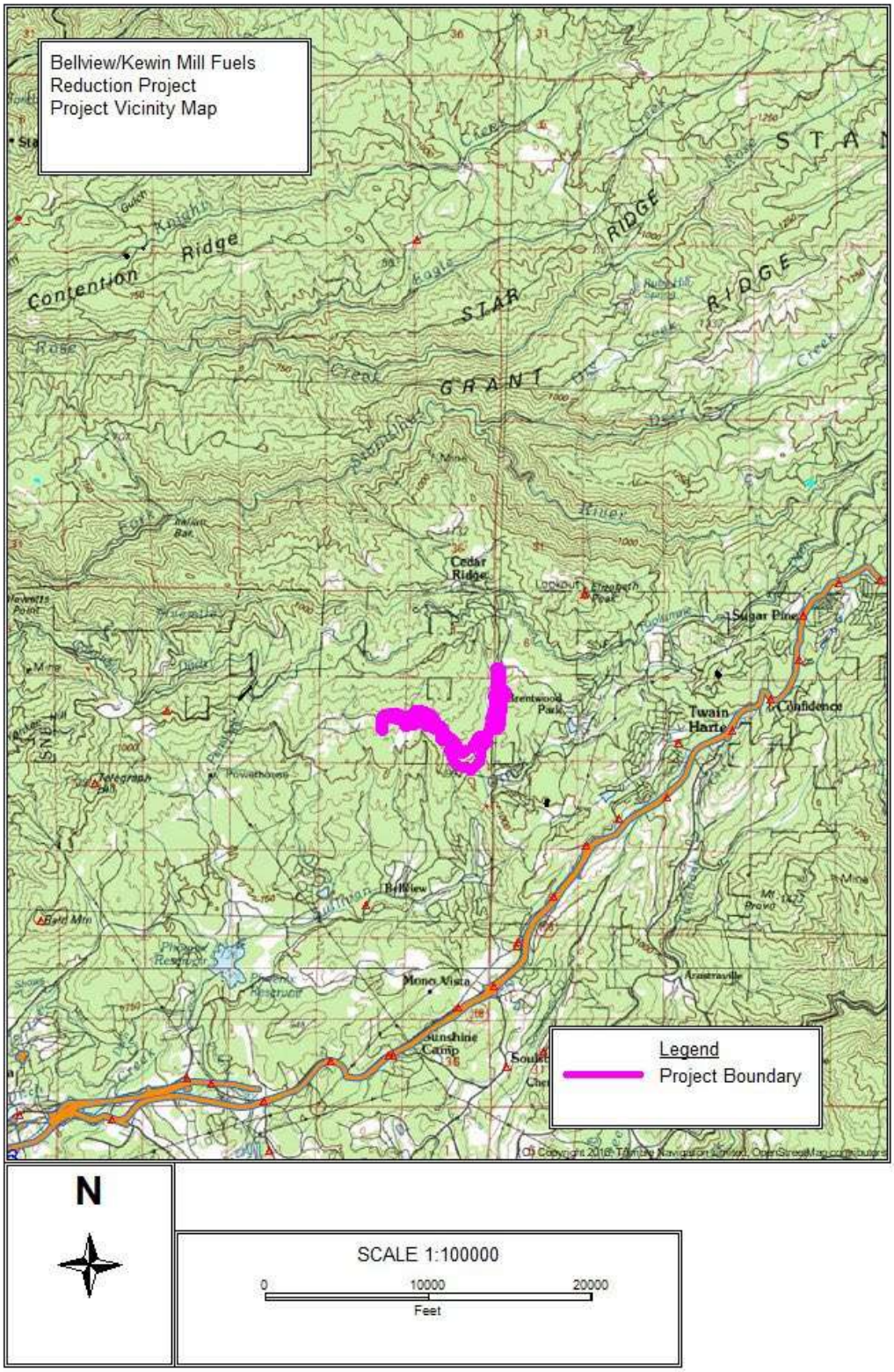


Figure 1.

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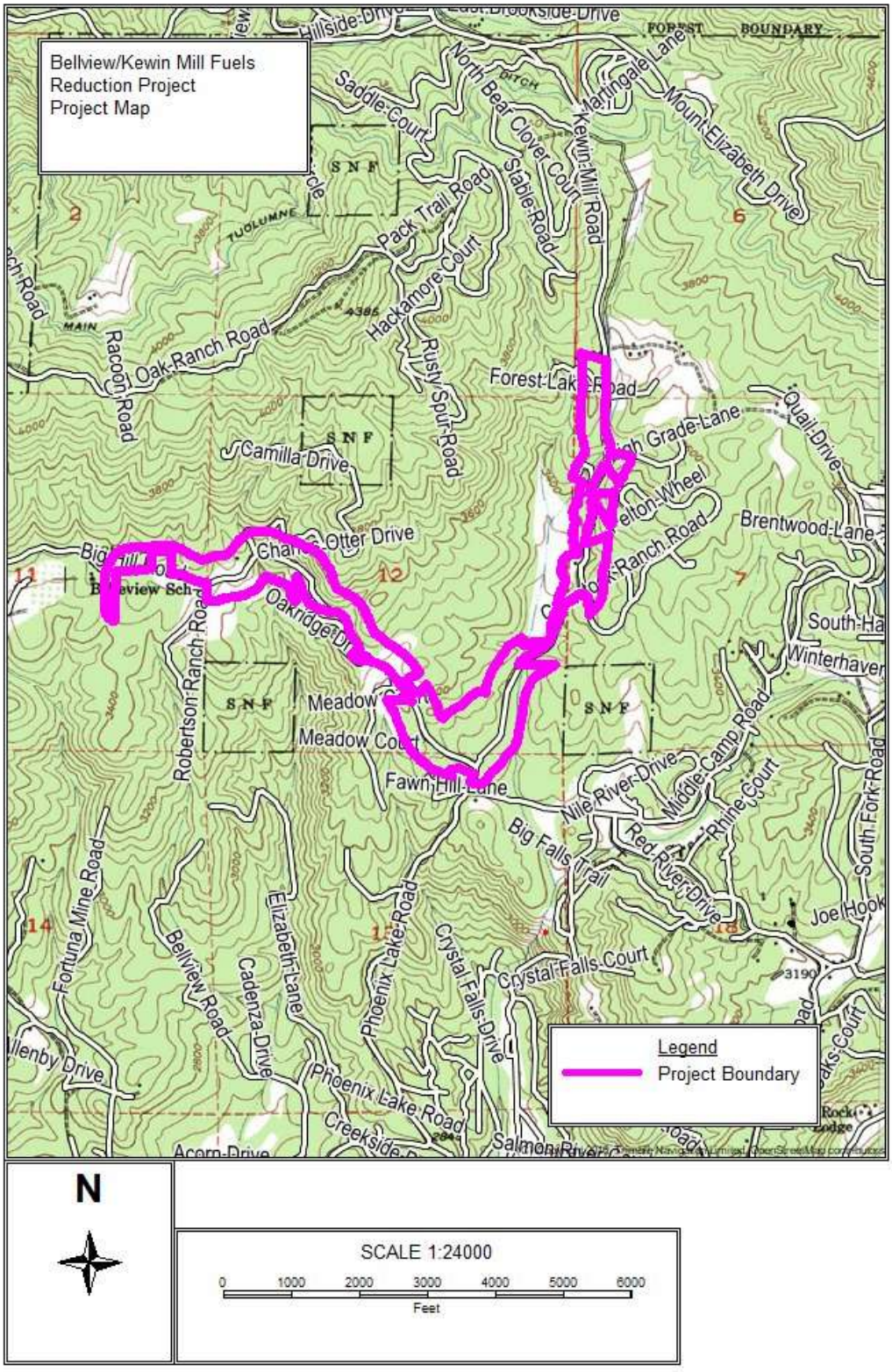


Figure 2.

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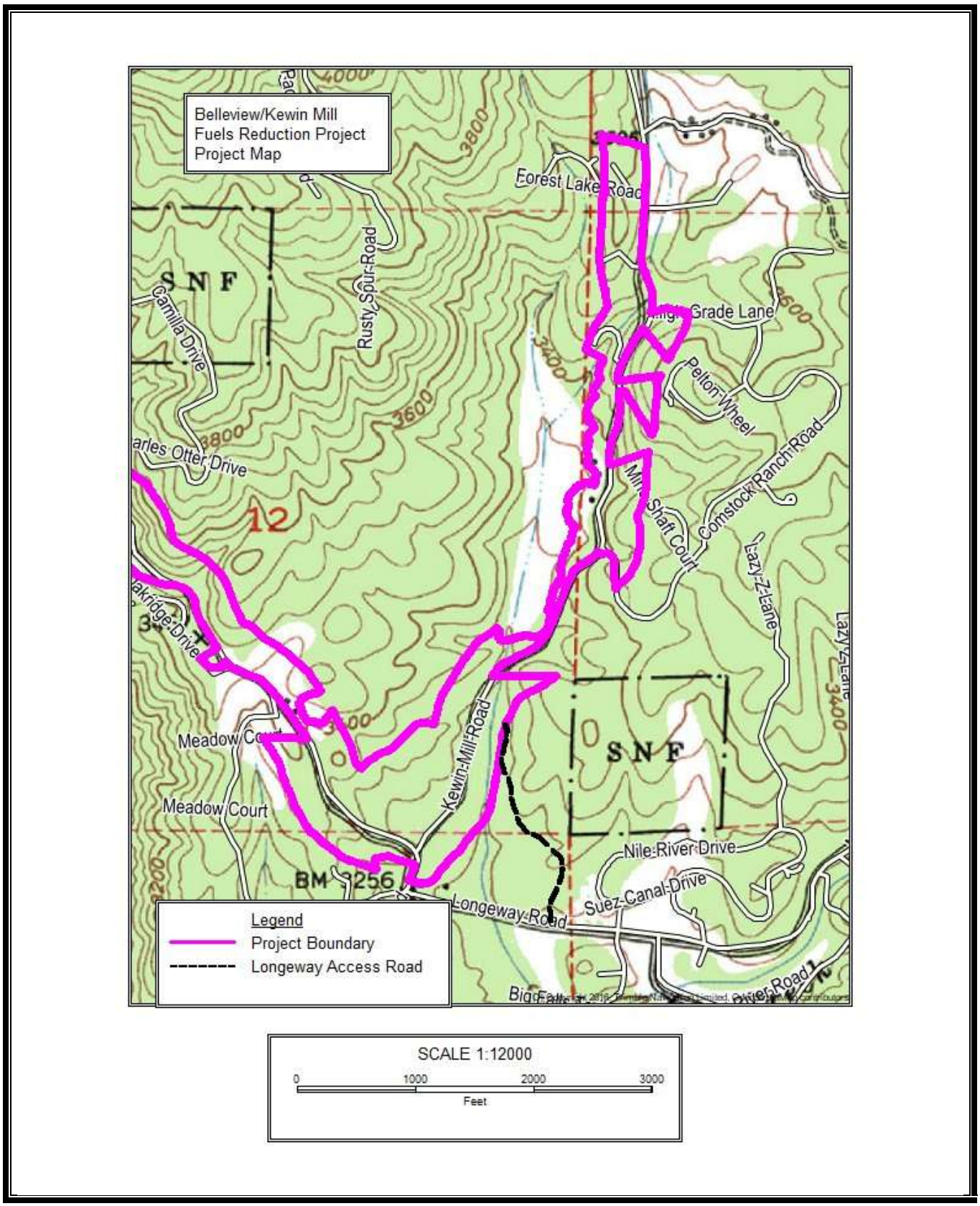


Figure 3.

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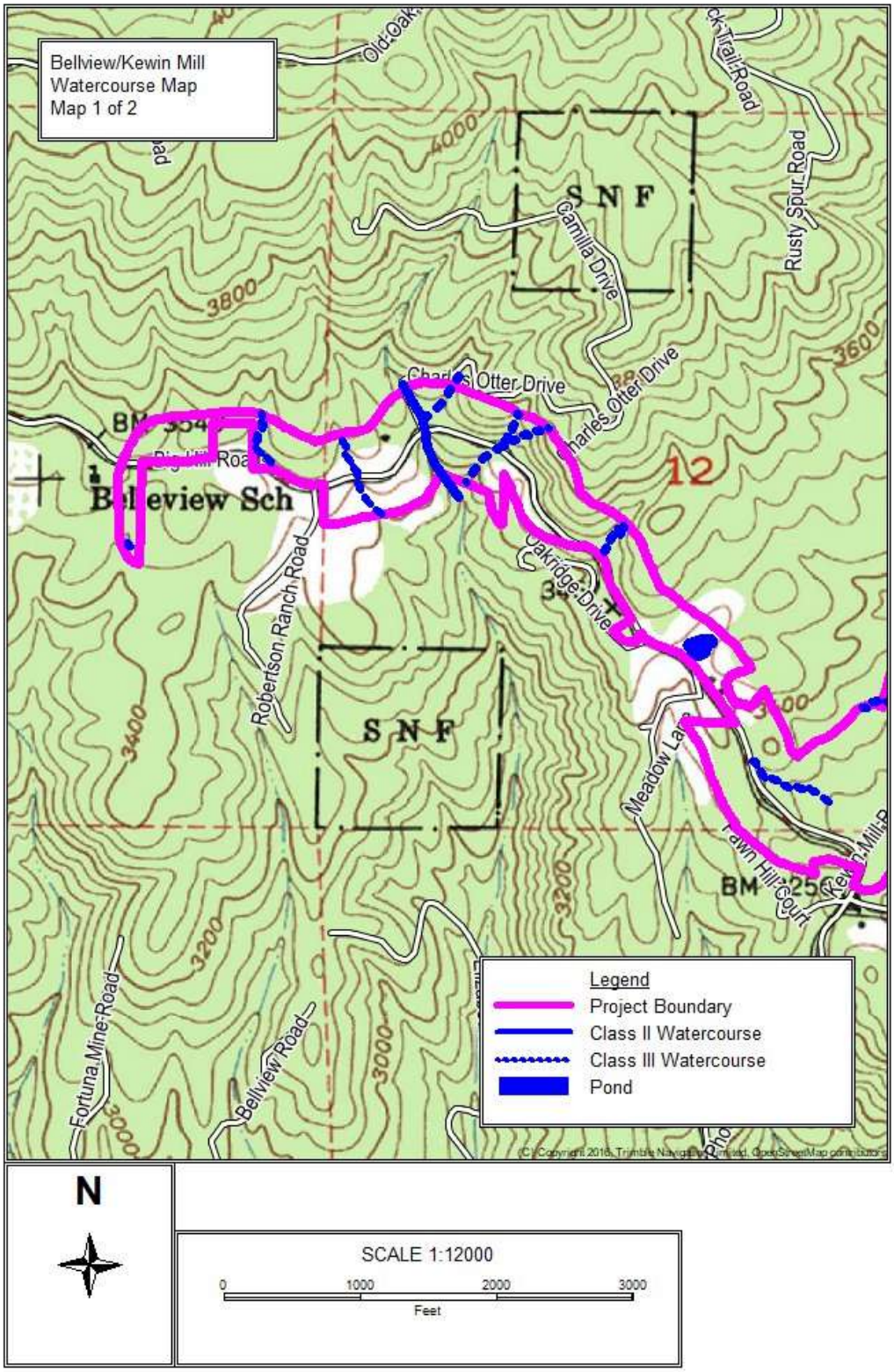


Figure 4.

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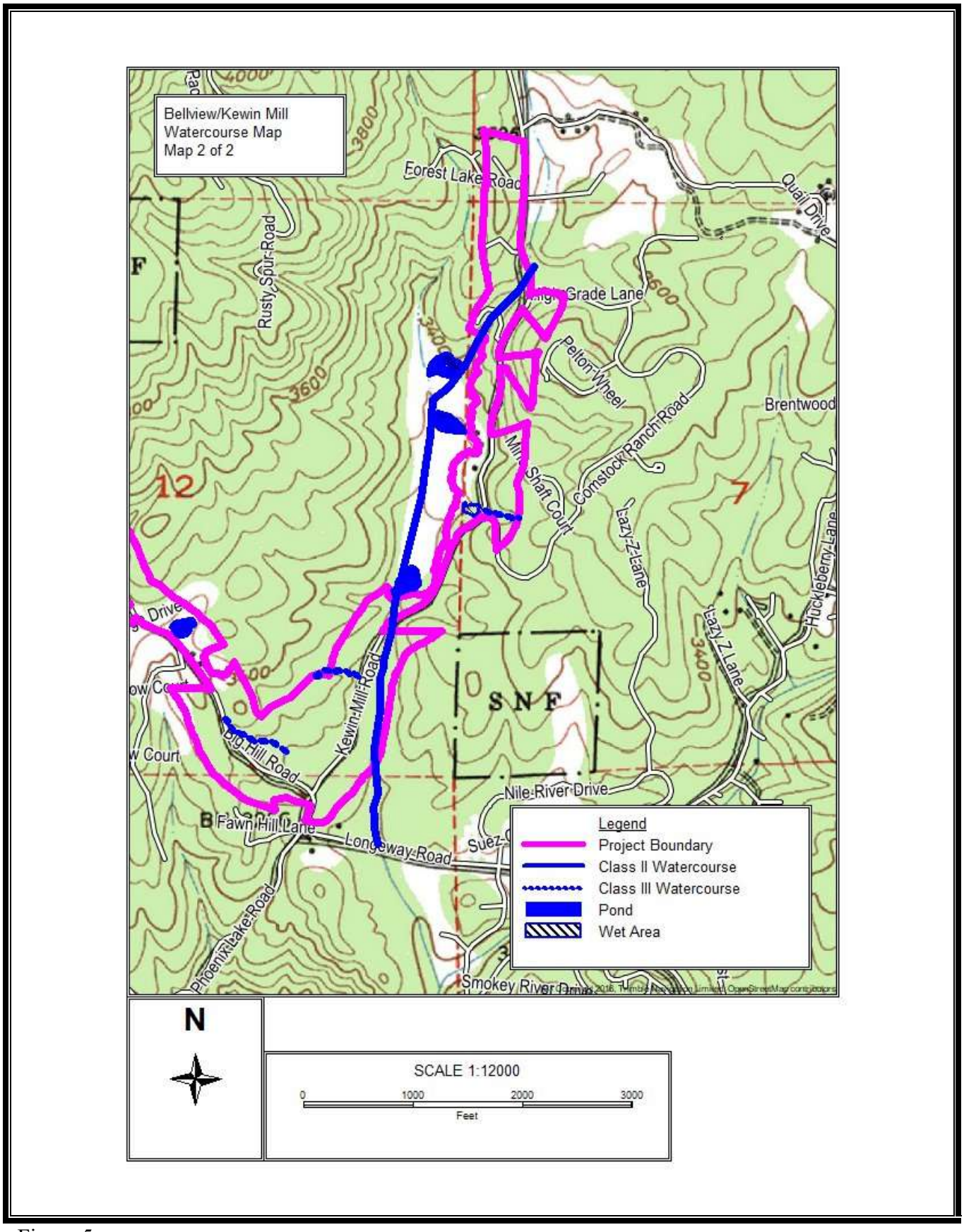


Figure 5.

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Attachments:
CNDDB Results and Species Scoping and Discussion
GHG Emissions Worksheet/ Pile Burn Emissions Calculations
CDFW and WQ Notification

Docusign Envelope ID: 31D58FF8-4591-4299-AD41-5456F0CB2202

CNDDB Results and Species Scoping and Discussion

Species Status/Scoping Summary Tables

Scoping results based on 9 quadrangle CNDDB query and field assessments

Amphibians

Scientific Name	Common Name	ESA	CESA	CDFW Status	BOF Status	Potential Habitat Project Area	Occurrence Project Area	Discussion
Rana boylii pop. 5	foothill yellow-legged frog-south Sierra DPS	FE	SE			No	No	Yes
Rana draytonii	California red-legged frog	FT		SSC		No	No	No
Rana sierrae	Sierra Nevada yellow-legged frog	FE	FT	WL		No	No	No

Birds

Scientific Name	Common Name	ESA	CESA	CDFW Status	BOF Status	Potential Habitat Project Area	Occurrence Project Area	Discussion
Accipiter atricapillus	American goshawk			SSC	S	No	No	No
Agelaius tricolor	tricolored blackbird		ST	SSC		No	No	No
Antigone canadensis canadenis	lesser sandhill crane			SSC		No	No	No
Antigone canadensis tabida	greater sandhill crane		ST	FP		No	No	No
Asio otus	long-eared owl			SSC		Yes	No	Yes
Athene cunicularia	burrowing owl		CE	SSC		No	No	No
Contopus cooperi	olive-sided flycatcher			SSC		No	No	No
Cypseloides niger	black swift			SSC		No	No	No
Haliaeetus leucocephalus	bald eagle	FD	SE	FP	S	No	No	No
Lanius ludovicianus	loggerhead shrike			SSC		No	No	No
Pandion haliaetus	osprey			WL	S	No	No	No
Strix nebulosa	great gray owl		SE		S	Yes	No	Yes
Strix occidentalis occidentalis	California spotted owl Sierra Nevada DPS	FPT		SSC	S	No	No	Yes

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Xanthocephalus xanthocephalus	yellow-headed blackbird			SSC		No	No	No

Crustaceans

Scientific Name	Common Name	ESA	CESA	CDFW Status	BOF Status	Potential Habitat Project Area	Occurrence Project Area	Discussion
Branchinecta lynchi	vernal pool fairy shrimp	FT				No	No	No

Fish

Scientific Name	Common Name	ESA	CESA	CDFW Status	BOF Status	Potential Habitat Project Area	Occurrence Project Area	Discussion
Hesperoleucus symmetricus symmetricus	central California roach			SSC		No	No	No
Lavinia exilicauda exilicauda	Sacramento hitch			SSC		No	No	No
Mylopharodon conocephalus	hardhead			SSC		No	No	No

Insects

Scientific Name	Common Name	ESA	CESA	CDFW Status	BOF Status	Potential Habitat Project Area	Occurrence Project Area	Discussion
Bombus crotchii	Crotchs bumble bee		SCE			No	No	Yes
Bombus occidentalis	western bumble bee		SCE			No	No	No
Desmocerus californicus dimorphus	valley elderberry longhorn beetle	FT				No	No	No

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Mammals

Scientific Name	Common Name	ESA	CESA	CDFW Status	BOF Status	Potential Habitat Project Area	Occurrence Project Area	Discussion
Antrozous pallidus	pallid bat			SSC		No	No	No
Corynorhinus townsendii	Townsends big-eared bat			SSC		No	No	No
Euderma maculatum	spotted bat			SSC		No	No	No
Eumops perotis californicus	western mastiff bat			SSC		No	No	No
Gulo gulo	wolverine	ST	FT	FP		No	No	No
Lasiurus frantzii	western red bat			SSC		No	No	No
Taxidea taxus	American badger			SSC		No	No	No

Reptiles

Scientific Name	Common Name	ESA	CESA	CDFW Status	BOF Status	Potential Habitat Project Area	Occurrence Project Area	Discussion
Actinemys marmorata	northwestern pond turtle	FPT		SSC		Yes	No	Yes
Phrynosoma blainvillii	coast horned lizard			SSC		No	No	No

Plants

Scientific Name	Common Name	ESA	CDFW Status	California Rare Plant Rank	Potential Habitat Project Area	Occurrence Project Area	Discussion
Allium jepsonii	Jepson's onion			1B.2	No	No	No
Allium tribracteatum	three-bracted onion			1B.2	No	No	No
Allium tuolumnense	Rawhide Hill onion			1B.2	No	No	No
Arctostaphylos nissenana	Nissenan manzanita			1B.2	No	No	No
Balsamorhiza macrolepis	big-scale balsamroot			1B.2	No	No	No
Brasenia schreberi	watershield			2B.3	No	No	No
Camissonia lacustris	grassland suncup			1B.2	No	No	No
Castilleja campestris var. succulenta	succulent owls-clover	FT	SE	1B.2	No	No	No
Clarkia australis	Smalls southern clarkia			1B.2	Yes	No	Yes
Clarkia biloba ssp. australis	Mariposa clarkia			1B.2	No	No	No

Docusign Envelope ID: 31D58FF8-4591-4299-AD41-5456F0CB2202

Scientific Name	Common Name	ESA	CDFW Status	California Rare Plant Rank	Potential Habitat Project Area	Occurrence Project Area	Discussion
Claytonia crawfordii	Crawfords spring beauty			1B.2	No	No	No
Cryptantha mariposae	Mariposa cryptantha			1B.3	No	No	No
Cryptantha spithamaea	Red Hills cryptantha			1B.3	No	No	No
Cuscuta jepsonii	Jepsons dodder			1B.2	No	No	No
Diplacus pulchellus	yellow-lip pansy monkeyflower			1B.2	Yes	No	Yes
Eryngium pinnatisectum	Tuolumne button-celery			1B.2	No	No	Yes
Erythranthe marmorata	Stanislaus monkeyflower			1B.1	No	No	No
Erythronium tuolumnense	Tuolumne fawn lily			1B.2	Yes	No	Yes
Horkelia parryi	Parrys horkelia			1B.2	No	No	No
Hosackia oblongifolia var. cuprea	copper-flowered birds-foot trefoil			1B.3	No	No	No
Iris hartwegii ssp. columbiana	Tuolumne iris			1B.2	No	No	No
Lomatium congdonii	Congdons lomatium			1B.2	No	No	No
Lomatium stebbinsii	Stebbins lomatium			1B.1	No	No	No
Lupinus spectabilis	shaggyhair lupine			1B.2	No	No	No
Navarretia miwukensis	Mi-Wuk navarretia			1B.2	Yes	No	Yes
Sagittaria sandfordii	Sanfords arrowhead			1B.2	No	No	No
Senecio clevelandii var. heterophyllus	Red Hills ragwort			1B.2	No	No	No
Verbena californica	Red Hills vervain	FT	ST	1B.1	No	No	No

Species Status Identifiers

Federal Endangered Species Act (ESA) (16 USC §§1531-1544; 50 CFR §§17.1-17.108)

FT – Federal Threatened **FD** – Federal Delisted

FPT – Federal Proposed Threatened

California Endangered Species Act (CESA) (Title 14, CCR, Chapter 6, §§783.0-787.0)

NOTE: State listed plants pursuant to Native Plant Protection Act (NPPA) of 1977 (FGC §1900 et seq.) **and** CESA

ST – State Threatened **SE** – State Endangered

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SCT – State Candidate Threatened **SCE** – State Candidate Endangered

California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) Status

SSC – Species of Special Concern **WL** – Watch List

FP – Fully Protected

Board of Forestry Status (Title 14, CCR, Chapter 4, Subchapter 1, §895.1)

S – Sensitive

California Rare Plant Rank (CRPR)

1A. – Presumed extirpated in California and either rare or extinct elsewhere

1B. – Rare or Endangered in California and elsewhere

2A. – Presumed extirpated in California, but more common elsewhere

2B. – Rare or Endangered in California, but more common elsewhere

3. – Plants for which we need more information

Threat Code Extensions

.1 – Seriously threatened in California

.2 – Moderately threatened in California

.3 – Not very threatened in California

Bellview/Kewin Mill Fuel Break Maintenance Project – Species Scoping and Discussion

Based on results of a 9 Quadrangle California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB) query around the Columbia SE Quadrangle, together with research and knowledge of sensitive species in and adjacent to the project area, the above tables were created to determine potential presence of federally and state listed, as well as federally proposed for listing or state candidate species; species designated as sensitive by CDFW; California Board of Forestry designated “Sensitive” species; and CRPR plants ranging from 1-3.2. This query resulted in identification of 61 species that meet the criteria listed above, 50 of which were eliminated from the species discussion due to lack of potential habitat, negative occurrences within the project area, and a final determination that potential adverse impacts to the species may be ruled out. Eleven species are included in species discussions, below, based on: potential habitat, potential or known occurrence, sightings, or history of the species occurring locally. The project has been thoughtfully designed to avoid and/or minimize adverse impacts to all species included in the Species Discussion.

A notification letter was emailed on September 10, 2025 to the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) and the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board

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(WQ). The Regional Water Quality Control Board responded and stated they had no concerns regarding the project. A generic response letter received from CDFW has been included as an attachment. On December 15, 2025, I emailed Austin Fisher of CDFW a copy of the completed scoping for this project along with the proposed protection measures. In a follow-up phone conversation on December 15, 2025, Austin Fisher acknowledged receipt of the document and said he would keep the information in the project file but did not have any comments regarding the project.

Amphibians

Foothill yellow-legged frog (*Rana boyii*) Found in foothill woodlands and chaparral near streams and ponds, riparian woodlands, wet meadows, also inhabits mixed conifer forest streams, slow streams and rivers with sunny, sandy, rocky or gravelly banks. This species is rarely encountered (even on rainy nights) far from permanent water. They spend most of their time in or near streams at all seasons. The north fork of Sullivan Creek bisects a portion of the project area and contains water long enough to provide habitat for non-fish aquatic species. This watercourse was heavily impacted by historic mining operations. There was intermittent flow in mid-September. The watercourse does not contain rocky substrate in the segment within the project area. I did not see any significant pool formation. The watercourse is very shaded and does not provide habitat for this species. Dense blackberries and other vegetation are growing along the banks of the watercourse. The watercourse would not be considered habitat for this species due to the heavy shading, minimal flow, and lack of sandy, rocky or gravelly banks. The CNDDB does not document any occurrences of this species near the project area. No adverse impacts to this species are anticipated as a result of the project.

Birds

Long-eared owl (*Asio otis*): This species is generally found below 5,000 feet in elevation and is usually associated with wet meadows or riparian woodlands from blue oak woodlands to ponderosa pine and black oak woodlands. Owls usually nest in dense foliage in abandoned hawk nests. The project area contains some riparian habitat where the north fork of Sullivan Creek bisects the project area. No operations will occur within this riparian area, and habitat for this species will be retained. No long-eared owls were observed during field work, and no large nests were observed along the north fork of Sullivan Creek. No adverse impacts to this species are anticipated as a result of the project.

Great gray owl (*Strix nebulosa*): A historic occurrence of a great gray owl from 1989 was documented approximately ¾ of a mile west of the project area. An additional historic occurrence of a great gray owl from 2003 is documented approximately 0.9 miles northwest of the project area. The project area provides potential habitat for this species. There is a grassy opening greater than 10-acres in size within the project area as well as a historic apple orchard that is approximately 25-acres in size that is adjacent to the project area. Outside the project area, but nearby, the oak fire scar from 2015 provides a large open grassy area that could provide foraging habitat for this species.

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Additionally, the Sierra Glen Apple Ranch, outside the project area, provides a large opening of grass and apple orchards that could provide potential foraging habitat. No occurrences have been documented in the project area. No great gray owls were observed during field work for this project. This is a fuel reduction project consisting of masticating brush and small trees that will improve habitat for this species. **Because there are documented occurrences within a mile of the project area, and portions of the project area contain potential habitat for this species operations with ¼ mile of the grassy opening at Robertson Ranch Road and within ¼ mile of the historic Abbott apple orchard will only be conducted outside of the critical period for this species. Operations in these two areas shall be limited to the period of time between September 1 and February 15.**

California spotted owl (*Strix occidentalis*): Usually found from 3,000 to 7,600 feet in elevation in dense, mature conifer forests, and multi layered stands with a canopy closure greater than 40 percent. They are intolerant of high temperatures and prefer north facing slopes in shady, steep canyons. They typically nest in cavities of large trees or abandoned raptor nests. The project area is primarily young oak stands and does not provide the structural characteristics preferred by this species, such as large, overstory trees with a lot of dead trees and logs. An occurrence of this species was documented in 2023 approximately 0.69 miles northwest of the project area. No California spotted owls were detected within the project area. **If this species is discovered nesting within or adjacent to the project area, the operator shall cease operations within ¼ mile of the nest and notify the project manager and forester immediately. Operations within ¼ mile of the nest may resume once it is confirmed by a registered professional forester or wildlife biologist the nest is no longer occupied.**

Insects:

Crotch's bumble bee *(Bombus crotchii)* On September 30, 2022, the Crotch's bumble bee was given Candidate status under the California Endangered Species Act (CESA). Candidate species are given protection under CESA until a determination is made on their listing status. The Crotch's bumble bee primarily persists in southern coastal areas and a few areas around Sacramento. The historic distribution included the southern two-thirds of the state. The largest population declines have been documented in the center of its range, the Central Valley. In California the Crotch's bumble bee inhabits open grassland and scrub habitats. This bee requires a diverse supply of flowers that bloom throughout the free flying portion of their life cycle from spring to autumn. The project area is Sierra Mixed Conifer and oak woodland and does not contain open grassland or scrub habitat for this species and does not support robust floristic resources throughout the free flying period. The proposed project is expected to improve habitat for bee species by opening up the canopy and creating growing space for floristic resources. **If any occupied bumble bee nests are discovered during operations, they will be protected by a 50-foot buffer where no operations will**

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occur within the buffer while the nest is occupied. No adverse impacts are anticipated as a result of the project.

Reptiles

Northwestern pond turtle (*Actinemys marmorata*): Habitat includes ponds, deep, slow-moving streams, marshes and lakes. Eggs are laid in loose soil on land in oak woodlands, mixed conifer forests, broad leaf forests and grasslands, usually within 400 feet of ponds, lakes, slow streams and marshes with vegetated borders, rocks or logs. There are ponds within and adjacent to the project area. No turtles of any kind were observed during field work for this project. Ponds and perennial watercourses will have a 50-foot equipment exclusion zone. The nesting season for this species, when they may have nests within 400-feet of water, is from April to August. **If operations occur within 400 feet of ponds in the period of time between April and August, the project manager or RPF will conduct a pedestrian survey to ensure there are no turtles in that portion of the project area.** No adverse impacts to the species are anticipated as a result of the project.

Plants

Smalls southern clarkia (*Clarkia australis*): This species is found from 2,600 feet to 6,750 feet in elevation in open, coniferous forests, ponderosa pine, canyon live oak, and montane chaparral with disturbed sites, and dry, shallow, rocky soils. This species blooms from May to August. **If this species is detected within the project area, during any year of operations, a 25-foot equipment exclusion zone will be provided, and only hand work shall be conducted within the equipment exclusion zone. The equipment zone shall be designated with blue flagging.** This species thrives on disturbance, and no adverse impacts to the species are anticipated as a result of the project.

Yellow-lip pansy monkeyflower *(Diplacus pulchellus*): This annual herb is found from 1,950 feet to 6,500 feet in wet meadows, seeps, vernally wet depressions, and run-off areas often in the ponderosa pine zone. Portions of the project area that could provide potential habitat for this species are not targets for fuel reduction work. **If this species is detected within the project area, during any year of operations, a 25-foot equipment exclusion zone will be provided, and only hand work shall be conducted within the equipment exclusion zone. The equipment zone shall be designated with blue flagging**. No adverse impacts to the species are anticipated as a result of the project.

Tuolumne button-celery (*Eryngium pinnatisectum*) This species is associated with wetland habitat and vernal pools. The Calflora site shows the project area as within the range of this species; however, the project area does not contain habitat for this species.

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Tuolumne fawn lily *(Erythronium tuolumnense)* This species inhabits moist, light deciduous woodland from 1,716 to 3,656 feet in elevation. This species blooms from March to June and is primarily known from occurrences documented from Italian Bar Road in Columbia to the headwaters of Deer Creek in Tuolumne County. Portions of the project area moist habitat required by this species (such as along watercourses) will be protected by an equipment exclusion zone (EEZ). Although surveys and field work were conducted after the blooming period for this species, I am familiar with this species and visited reference populations both during and after the blooming period for this species in 2025. I did not observe Tuolumne fawn lily within the project area. **If this species is detected within the project area, during any year of operations, a 25-foot equipment exclusion zone will be provided, and only hand work shall be conducted within the equipment exclusion zone. The equipment zone shall be designated with blue flagging.** No adverse impacts to the species are anticipated as a result of the project.

Mi-Wuk navarretia *(Navarretia miwukensis)* The project area is within the range of this species. This species is associated with meadows. There are some grassy openings that could provide potential habitat for this species. Open, grassy areas are not targets for fuel reduction, and operations are not likely to occur in portions of the project area that could contain potential habitat for this species. This species blooms from May to August. This species was not observed within the project area during surveys and field work. **If this species is detected within the project area, during any year of operations, a 25-foot equipment exclusion zone will be provided, and only hand work shall be conducted within the equipment exclusion zone. The equipment zone shall be designated with blue flagging.** No adverse impacts to the species are anticipated as a result of the project.

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Piled Fuels Biomass and Emissions Calculator

Last updated: 3/26/2014

1. DATA ENTRY MODE: **MANUAL (USE ONLINE FORM)** [Start over/change measurement system/use batch mode] [Help]

2. MEASUREMENT SYSTEM: **ENGLISH**

Pile Group Data: (Click on Group No./Name to edit given group) [Export inputs to text]

Group No.	Group Name	No. Piles	Pile Type	Pile Shape	Pile Dimensions (ft)	Soil %	Packing Ratio	Pile Composition	Pile Quality	Consumption	
1	PileGroup1	300	Hand	Paraboloid	W1: 5 H1: 5	N/A	N/A	Shrub/Hardwood	N/A	90%	[Remove]

Add more piles | Start over (clear all piles)

Pile Group Results: [Print-friendly report] [Export results to text]

Pile Group No.	Pile Group Name	Species Comp.	Wtd. Wood Density	Gross Volume (cubic ft)	Adjusted* Volume (cubic ft)	Pile Biomass (tons)	Consumed Fuel (tons)	Emissions by pollutant (tons)						
								PM	PM_{10}	$PM_{2.5}$	CO	CO_2	CH_4	NMHC
1	PileGroup1	Shrub/HW	na	14,726.22	16,847.63	12.7021	11.4319	0.1252	0.0886	0.0772	0.4343	19.0194	0.0320	0.0259
TOTAL				**14,726.22**	**16,847.63**	**12.7021**	**11.4319**	**0.1252**	**0.0886**	**0.0772**	**0.4343**	**19.0194**	**0.0320**	**0.0259**

**Adjusted volume for hand piles is corrected to account for the difference between the gross volume of a geometric shape and the actual volume of the pile. Machine pile adjusted volume of solid wood is determined by subtracting the amount that is soil from the gross volume and applying the appropriate packing ratio.*

Fire and Environmental Research Applications Team
Pacific Wildland Fire Sciences Laboratory
USDA Forest Service Pacific Northwest Research Station
400 N 34th Street, Suite 201, Seattle, WA 98103 (206) 732-7800
Contact: P.C. Eagle

We acknowledge funding from the Joint Fire Science Program under Projects JFSP 07-2-1-57 and JFSP 10-S-02-2.

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Transportation Vehicles	Year 1			Years 2 - 5		
	Number of Trips	Miles Roundtrip	Total	Number of Trips per year	Total	Total Miles
Staff Vehicle - Gas	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other Vehicle - Gas	80	36	2880			
Other Vehicle - Gas	0	0	0	0	0	0
Staff Vehicle - Diesel	0	0	0	0	0	0
Dozer Transport - Diesel	4	36	144	0	0	
Crew Vehicle - Diesel	0	0	0	0	0	0
Stake Side Truck - Diesel	0	0	0	0	0	0
Fire Engine - Diesel	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other Vehicle - Diesel	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other Vehicle - Diesel	0	0	0	0	0	0

Construction Equipment	Year 1			Years 2 - 5		
	Number of Days	Hours Per Day	Total Hours	Number of Days Per Year	Total	Total Hours
Dozer/Loader/Grader	0	0	0	0	0	0
Misc. Equipment - Diesel	55	8	440	0	0	0
Misc. Equipment - Gas		8	0	0	0	0
Chainsaw /Weedeater/ Etc.	40	8	320	0	0	0
Misc. Handheld gas	0	0	0	0	0	0

Requires user inputted values

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Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions Worksheet			
Transportation Vehicles	**MILES**	**MPG**	**GAL. OF FUEL**
Staff vehicle - Gas	0	15	0.0
Other Vehicle Gas	2,880	10	288.0
Other Vehicle Gas	0	10	0.0
Staff vehicle - Diesel	0	15	0.0
Dozer Transport - Diesel	144	10	14.4
Crew Vehicle - Diesel	0	10	0.0
Stake Side Trk. - Diesel	0	10	0.0
Engine FTH- Diesel	0	10	0.0
Other Vehicle Diesel	0	10	0.0
Other Vehicle Diesel	0	10	0.0
Construction Equipment	**HOURS**	**GPH**	**GAL. OF FUEL**
Dozer/Loader/Grader - Diesel	0.00	8	0.00
Misc. Equipment - Diesel	440.00	10	4,400.00
Misc. Equipment - Gas	0.00	1.5	0.00
Chainsaw /Weedeater/ Ect.	320.00	0.5	160.00
Misc. Handheld gas	0.00	2	0.00
	TOTALS	**CF**	**KILOGRAMS**
Total Gasoline Consumption	448.0	8.18	3,664.64
Total Diesel Consumption	4,414.4	10.15	44,806.16

Total Metric Tons CO2e - Gas	3.66
Total Metric Tons CO2e - Diesel	44.81
Total Metric Tons CO2e	**48.47**

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Adam Frese <adam@westsideforestryconsulting.com>

Belleview/Kewin Mill Fuels Reduction Project

10 messages

Adam Frese <adam@westsideforestryconsulting.com> Wed, Sep 10, 2025 at 4:42 PM
To: "Fisher, Austin@Wildlife" <Austin.Fisher@wildlife.ca.gov>, "Gordus, Margarita@Wildlife" <Margarita.Gordus@wildlife.ca.gov>, "Meurer, Jonathan R.@Waterboards" <jonathan.meurer@waterboards.ca.gov>, "Aaron@Waterboards" <aaron.rachels@waterboards.ca.gov>

Margarita, Austin, Jonathan and Aaron

I am preparing a fuels reduction project in Tuolumne County. This project will consist of reducing brush, trees less than 12-inches diameter at breast height, and surface fuels to create a shaded fuel break along Kewin Mill Road, Big Hill Road and around Belleview School near the community of Cedar Ridge. Target spacing for residual trees will be 25 to 35 feet between stems. Residual trees will be pruned to a height of 8-feet above the ground. Operations will consist primarily of mastication and hand crews cutting, piling and burning or chipping brush and small trees. The project area is approximately 269 acres in size. The intent of the operation is to reduce hazardous fuels within 300-feet of Kewin Mill and Big Hill Roads, which are the primary ingress and egress routes for the community of Cedar Ridge, and to reduce hazardous fuel loading around the elementary school.

The purpose of this email is to notify you of the project and to provide you an opportunity to ask questions or provide comments regarding the proposed project.

The project is located approximately 7 miles northeast of the community of Sonora and immediately south of the community of Cedar Ridge. The project area is in Township 2 North, Range 15 East in portions of Sections 11, 12 and 13, and Township 2 North, Range 16 East in portions of Sections 6 and 7, Mount Diablo Base Meridian. The project is in the Columbia SE quadrangle. Two maps have been enclosed to show the precise location of the project area. The first map is a project vicinity map that shows the project in relation to Sonora and Cedar Ridge. The second map provides a more detailed view of the project location. These maps show the boundary of the project area and include a map legend and scale.

If you have comments, questions or other information please contact me at the address and telephone number provided below. I am requesting you respond within 30 days of the postmark date so any information you provide can be incorporated into the plan. Thank you.

Adam Frese
209.768.0216
Westside Forestry Consulting Inc.
PO Box 832
Tuolumne, CA 95379

2 attachments

Belleview_KewinMill_24k_ProjectArea (1).pdf
697K

Docusign Envelope ID: 31D58FF8-4591-4299-AD41-5456F0CB2202

Belleview_KewinMill_100k_ProjectArea (1).pdf
892K

Meurer, Jonathan R.@Waterboards <Jonathan.Meurer@waterboards.ca.gov> Fri, Sep 12, 2025 at 10:35 AM
To: Adam Frese <adam@westsideforestryconsulting.com>

Good Morning Adam,

I don't have any water quality concerns with the plan as proposed.

Thanks,

Jonathan

From: Adam Frese <adam@westsideforestryconsulting.com>
Sent: Wednesday, September 10, 2025 4:42 PM
To: Fisher, Austin@Wildlife <Austin.Fisher@Wildlife.ca.gov>; Gordus, Margarita@Wildlife <Margarita.Gordus@wildlife.ca.gov>; Meurer, Jonathan R.@Waterboards <Jonathan.Meurer@Waterboards.ca.gov>; Rachels, Aaron@Waterboards <Aaron.Rachels@Waterboards.ca.gov>
Subject: Belleview/Kewin Mill Fuels Reduction Project

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Adam Frese <adam@westsideforestryconsulting.com> Fri, Sep 12, 2025 at 11:04 AM
To: "Meurer, Jonathan R.@Waterboards" <Jonathan.Meurer@waterboards.ca.gov>

Thank you Jonathan.

Adam Frese
209.768.0216
209.928.5502
Westside Forestry Consulting Inc.
PO Box 832
Tuolumne, CA 95379

[Quoted text hidden]

Fisher, Austin@Wildlife <Austin.Fisher@wildlife.ca.gov> Wed, Sep 24, 2025 at 7:16 AM
To: Adam Frese <adam@westsideforestryconsulting.com>

Hello,

I am starting the review of this project and I was wondering if you have done any biological scoping, if said scoping is available, and what species-specific protection measures might be proposed for any anticipated listed or special status species? This information would expedite my review and hopefully avoid some of our common concerns.

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Thanks,

Austin Fisher

Environmental Scientist – Timberland Conservation and Fire Resiliency

(559) 974-5380

austin.fisher@wildlife.ca.gov

From: Adam Frese <adam@westsideforestryconsulting.com>
Sent: Wednesday, September 10, 2025 4:43 PM
To: Fisher, Austin@Wildlife <Austin.Fisher@Wildlife.ca.gov>; Gordus, Margarita@Wildlife <Margarita.Gordus@wildlife.ca.gov>; Meurer, Jonathan R.@Waterboards <Jonathan.Meurer@Waterboards.ca.gov>; Rachels, Aaron@Waterboards <Aaron.Rachels@Waterboards.ca.gov>
Subject: Belleview/Kewin Mill Fuels Reduction Project

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Margarita, Austin, Jonathan and Aaron

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Adam Frese
209.768.0216
Westside Forestry Consulting Inc.
PO Box 832
Tuolumne, CA 95379

Adam Frese <adam@westsideforestryconsulting.com> Wed, Sep 24, 2025 at 7:37 AM
To: "Fisher, Austin@Wildlife" <Austin.Fisher@wildlife.ca.gov>

Hello Austin,

This morning is my first day in the field on this project. I have not started the scoping yet. I am aware of a historic great gray occurrence from 1989 west of the project area. I will reach out when I have more information. Thanks.

Adam Frese
209.768.0216
209.928.5502
Westside Forestry Consulting Inc.
PO Box 832
Tuolumne, CA 95379

[Quoted text hidden]

Fisher, Austin@Wildlife <Austin.Fisher@wildlife.ca.gov> Wed, Sep 24, 2025 at 7:39 AM
To: Adam Frese <adam@westsideforestryconsulting.com>

Sounds great, thanks.

Austin Fisher

Environmental Scientist – Timberland Conservation and Fire Resiliency

(559) 974-5380

austin.fisher@wildlife.ca.gov

From: Adam Frese <adam@westsideforestryconsulting.com>
Sent: Wednesday, September 24, 2025 7:38 AM

Docusign Envelope ID: 31D58FF8-4591-4299-AD41-5456F0CB2202

To: Fisher, Austin@Wildlife <Austin.Fisher@Wildlife.ca.gov>
Subject: Re: Belleview/Kewin Mill Fuels Reduction Project

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Hello Austin,

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Adam Frese

209.768.0216

209.928.5502

Westside Forestry Consulting Inc.

PO Box 832

Tuolumne, CA 95379

[Quoted text hidden]

Fisher, Austin@Wildlife <Austin.Fisher@wildlife.ca.gov> Thu, Oct 9, 2025 at 9:55 AM
To: Adam Frese <adam@westsideforestryconsulting.com>

Hello,

We are just about at the end of that 30-day window so you will soon be seeing a template email from Margarita about our current staffing levels and review capacity. If you could still provide the scoping information once it's complete I will add it to our records for this project regardless of the "deadline", we just send out that template email around the 30-day mark since it's just me in R4 right now.

Thanks,

Austin Fisher

Environmental Scientist – Timberland Conservation and Fire Resiliency

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(559) 974-5380

austin.fisher@wildlife.ca.gov

From: Adam Frese <adam@westsideforestryconsulting.com>
Sent: Wednesday, September 24, 2025 7:38 AM
To: Fisher, Austin@Wildlife <Austin.Fisher@Wildlife.ca.gov>
Subject: Re: Belleview/Kewin Mill Fuels Reduction Project

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Adam Frese

209.768.0216

209.928.5502

Westside Forestry Consulting Inc.

PO Box 832

Tuolumne, CA 95379

[Quoted text hidden]

Gordus, Margarita@Wildlife <Margarita.Gordus@wildlife.ca.gov> Thu, Oct 9, 2025 at 10:15 AM
To: Adam Frese <adam@westsideforestryconsulting.com>

Hi Adam,

Thank you for contacting CDFW for consultation and review related to the Belleview/Kewin Mill Fuels Reduction Project. Unfortunately, due to state budget cuts, the position that reviews wildfire resiliency projects have been eliminated in my region, and due to ongoing workloads for the regional Timberland Conservation staff, we are unable to review this project at this time. Despite this lost position, we intend to refill the position in the future when the budget recovers. Please continue to send me and Austin Fisher via email any wildfire resiliency project review requests so I can track the work that

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is impacted and inform you when we have staff capacity restored. Please see below for additional resources and guidance for your project.

Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreement Notification

If the project activities may substantially alter the bed, bank, or channel of a watercourse, substantially divert or obstruct the natural flow of a river, stream, or lake, or substantially change or use any material from the bed, channel, or bank of a river, stream, or lake; a Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreement (LSAA) Notification pursuant to Fish and Game Code Section 1602 is required. The notification requirement applies to any work undertaken in or near a river, stream, or lake that flows at least intermittently through a bed or channel. This includes ephemeral streams and watercourses with subsurface flow. Please see the two attached guidance documents for additional information.
This agreement process can be initiated by visiting https://wildlife.ca.gov/Conservation/Environmental-Review/LSA and registering for an Environmental Permit Information Management System (EPIMS) account https://epims.wildlife.ca.gov/index.do.

CA Endangered Species Act (CESA) Consultations

- For information on CESA species: https://wildlife.ca.gov/Conservation/CESA
- For CESA consultation requests, please contact me at, Margarita.Gordus@wildlife.ca.gov and/or R4Timber@wildlife.ca.gov.

Species Scoping and Survey Protocol Information

- Information on fully protected species and bumble bees: https://wildlife.ca.gov/Conservation/CESA
- Information on CDFW species of special concern, Board of Forestry Sensitive Species, CA Rare Plants: https://wildlife.ca.gov/Conservation/Timber/Resources#538172191-sensitive-and-special-status-species
- Scoping using CDFW's BIOS, CNDDB, Spotted Owl Database Viewer, CWHR, ACE:
    - https://wildlife.ca.gov/Data/BIOS
    - https://wildlife.ca.gov/Data/CNDDB
    - https://wildlife.ca.gov/Data/CNDDB/Plants-and-Animals
    - https://wildlife.ca.gov/Data/CNDDB/Spotted-Owl-Info
    - California Wildlife Habitat Relationships (CWHR), includes range maps for special status species: https://wildlife.ca.gov/Data/CWHR
    - Areas of Conservation Emphasis (ACE): https://wildlife.ca.gov/Data/Analysis/ACE

Survey and Monitoring Protocols and Guidance: https://wildlife.ca.gov/Conservation/Survey-Protocols

Additional Resources

- Information for vegetation management/post-fire, water drafting, sensitive & special status species, accelerated wood recruitment: https://wildlife.ca.gov/Conservation/Timber/Resources
- CDFW Timberland Conservation & Wildfire Resiliency Program: https://wildlife.ca.gov/Conservation/Timber

Please let me know if you have any questions or concerns. We appreciate your understanding and patience during this challenging time of staffing shortages.

Thank you,

Margarita Gordus

Senior Environmental Scientist (Supervisor)

Central Region Habitat Conservation Program

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California Department of Fish and Wildlife

1234 East Shaw Avenue

Fresno, California 93710

C: (559) 207-6681

Margarita.Gordus@wildlife.ca.gov

Every Californian should conserve water. Find out how at:

SAVE OUR WATER

SaveOurWater.com · Drought.CA.gov

From: Adam Frese <adam@westsideforestryconsulting.com>
Sent: Wednesday, September 10, 2025 4:43 PM
To: Fisher, Austin@Wildlife <Austin.Fisher@Wildlife.ca.gov>; Gordus, Margarita@Wildlife <Margarita.Gordus@wildlife.ca.gov>; Meurer, Jonathan R.@Waterboards <Jonathan.Meurer@Waterboards.ca.gov>; Rachels, Aaron@Waterboards <Aaron.Rachels@Waterboards.ca.gov>
Subject: Belleview/Kewin Mill Fuels Reduction Project

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Margarita, Austin, Jonathan and Aaron

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Adam Frese
209.768.0216
Westside Forestry Consulting Inc.
PO Box 832
Tuolumne, CA 95379

2 attachments

LSAAInfo.pdf
3900K

CDFWOutreachFlyerTCPV3.pdf
191K

Adam Frese <adam@westsideforestryconsulting.com> Thu, Oct 9, 2025 at 12:38 PM
To: "Gordus, Margarita@Wildlife" <Margarita.Gordus@wildlife.ca.gov>

Thanks Austin,

I am pretty close to having it wrapped up. I would love to have your input on it. Thank you.

Adam Frese
209.768.0216
209.928.5502
Westside Forestry Consulting Inc.
PO Box 832
Tuolumne, CA 95379

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Adam Frese <adam@westsideforestryconsulting.com> Thu, Oct 9, 2025 at 4:14 PM
To: Adam Frese <adam@westsideforestryconsulting.com>

Adam Frese
209.768.0216
209.928.5502
Westside Forestry Consulting Inc.
PO Box 832
Tuolumne, CA 95379

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2 attachments

LSAAInfo.pdf
3900K

CDFWOutreachFlyerTCPV3.pdf
191K

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Adam Frese <adam@westsideforestryconsulting.com>

Scoping for the Belleview/Kewin Mill Fuels Reduction Project

1 message

Adam Frese <adam@westsideforestryconsulting.com> Mon, Dec 15, 2025 at 9:17 AM
To: "Fisher, Austin@Wildlife" <Austin.Fisher@wildlife.ca.gov>

Austin,

Below is a summary of the scoping for the Belleview/Kewin Mill Fuel Reduction Project. The project will consist of mastication, chipping, or hand piling and burning within 300 feet of Big Hill and Kewin Mill Roads, and around the Belleview Elementary School. Because the project proponent had difficulty obtaining right to entry forms from some larger landowners, the project area was reduced to approximately 145 acres. The project area is a mix of Sierra Mixed conifer and oak woodland in an urban interface area. Please let me know if you have any comments or questions. Thank you for your time!

Foothill yellow-legged frog (*Rana boyii*) Found in foothill woodlands and chaparral near streams and ponds, riparian woodlands, wet meadows, also inhabits mixed conifer forest streams, slow streams and rivers with sunny, sandy, rocky or gravelly banks. This species is rarely encountered (even on rainy nights) far from permanent water. They spend most of their time in or near streams at all seasons. The north fork of Sullivan Creek bisects a portion of the project area and contains water long enough to provide habitat for non-fish aquatic species. This watercourse was heavily impacted by historic mining operations. There was intermittent flow in mid-September. The watercourse does not contain rocky substrate in the segment within the project area. I did not see any significant pool formation. The watercourse is very shaded and does not provide habitat for this species. Dense blackberries and other vegetation are growing along the banks of the watercourse. The watercourse would not be considered habitat for this species due to the heavy shading, minimal flow, and lack of sandy, rocky or gravelly banks. The CNDDB does not document any occurrences of this species near the project area. No adverse impacts to this species are anticipated as a result of the project.

Birds

Long-eared owl (*Asio otis*): This species is generally found below 5,000 feet in elevation and is usually associated with wet meadows or riparian woodlands from blue oak woodlands to ponderosa pine and black oak woodlands. Owls usually nest in dense foliage in abandoned hawk nests. The project area contains some riparian habitat where the north fork of Sullivan Creek bisects the project area. No operations will occur within this riparian area, and habitat for this species will be retained. No long-eared owls were observed during field work, and no large nests were observed along the north fork of Sullivan Creek. No adverse impacts to this species are anticipated as a result of the project.

Great gray owl (*Strix nebulosa*): An historic occurrence of a great gray owl from 1989 was documented approximately ¾ of a mile west of the project area. An additional historic occurrence of a great gray owl from 2003 is documented approximately 0.9 miles northwest of the project area. The project area provides potential habitat for this species. There is a grassy opening greater than 10-acres in size within the project area as well as an historic apple orchard that is approximately 25-acres in size that is adjacent to the project area. Outside the project area, but nearby, the oak fire scar from 2015 provides a large open grassy area that could provide foraging habitat for this species. Additionally, the Sierra Glen Apple Ranch, outside the project area, provides a large opening of grass and apple orchards that could provide potential habitat. No occurrences have been documented in the project area. No great gray owls were observed during field work for this project. This is a fuel reduction project consisting of masticating brush and small trees that will improve habitat for this species. **Because there are documented occurrences within a mile of the project area, and portions of the project area contain potential habitat for this species operations with ¼ mile of the grassy opening at Robertson Ranch Road and within ¼ mile of the historic Abbott apple orchard will only be conducted outside of the critical period for this species. Operations in these two areas shall be limited to the period of time between September 1 and February 15.**

California spotted owl (*Strix occidentalis*): Usually found from 3,000 to 7,600 feet in elevation in dense, mature conifer forests, and multi layered stands with a canopy closure greater than 40 percent. They are intolerant of high temperatures and prefer north facing slopes in shady, steep canyons. They typically nest in cavities of large trees or abandoned raptor nests. The project area is primarily young oak stands and does not provide the structural characteristics preferred by this species, such as large, overstory trees with a lot of dead trees and logs. An occurrence of this species was documented in 2023 approximately 0.69 miles northwest of the project area. No California spotted owls were detected within the project area. **If this species is discovered nesting within or adjacent to the project area, the operator shall cease operations within ¼ mile of the nest and notify the project manager and forester immediately. Operations within ¼ mile of the nest may resume once it is confirmed by a registered professional forester or wildlife biologist the nest is no longer occupied.**

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Insects:

Crotch's bumble bee *(Bombus crotchii)* On September 30, 2022, the Crotch's bumble bee was given Candidate status under the California Endangered Species Act (CESA). Candidate species are given protection under CESA until a determination is made on their listing status. The Crotch's bumble bee primarily persists in southern coastal areas and a few areas around Sacramento. The historic distribution included the southern two-thirds of the state. The largest population declines have been documented in the center of its range, the Central Valley. In California the Crotch's bumble bee inhabits open grassland and scrub habitats. This bee requires a diverse supply of flowers that bloom throughout the free flying portion of their life cycle from spring to autumn. The project area is Sierra Mixed Conifer and oak woodland and does not contain open grassland or scrub habitat for this species and does not support robust floristic resources throughout the free flying period. The proposed project is expected to improve habitat for bee species by opening up the canopy and creating growing space for floristic resources. **If any occupied bumble bee nests are discovered during operations, they will be protected by a 50-foot buffer where no operations will occur within the buffer while the nest is occupied. No adverse impacts are anticipated as a result of the project.**

Reptiles

Northwestern pond turtle (*Actinemys marmorata*): Habitat includes ponds, deep, slow-moving streams, marshes and lakes. Eggs are laid in loose soil on land in oak woodlands, mixed conifer forests, broad leaf forests and grasslands, usually within 400 feet of ponds, lakes, slow streams and marshes with vegetated borders, rocks or logs. There are ponds within and adjacent to the project area. No turtles of any kind were observed during field work for this project. Ponds and perennial watercourses will have a 50-foot equipment exclusion zone. The nesting season for this species, when they may have nests within 400-feet of water, is from April to August. **If operations occur within 400 feet of ponds in the period of time between April and August, the project manager or RPF will conduct a pedestrian survey to ensure there are no turtles in that portion of the project area.** No adverse impacts to the species are anticipated as a result of the project.

Plants

Smalls southern clarkia (*Clarkia australis*): This species is found from 2,600 feet to 6,750 feet in elevation in open, coniferous forests, ponderosa pine, canyon live oak, and montane chaparral with disturbed sites, and dry, shallow, rocky soils. This species blooms from May to August. **If this species is detected within the project area, during any year of operations, a 25-foot equipment exclusion zone will be provided, and only hand work shall be conducted within the equipment exclusion zone. The equipment zone shall be designated with blue flagging.** This species thrives on disturbance, and no adverse impacts to the species are anticipated as a result of the project.

Yellow-lip pansy monkeyflower *(Diplacus pulchellus)*: This annual herb is found from 1,950 feet to 6,500 feet in wet meadows, seeps, vernally wet depressions, and run-off areas often in the ponderosa pine zone. Portions of the project area that could provide potential habitat for this species are not targets for fuel reduction work. **If this species is detected within the project area, during any year of operations, a 25-foot equipment exclusion zone will be provided, and only hand work shall be conducted within the equipment exclusion zone. The equipment zone shall be designated with blue flagging**. No adverse impacts to the species are anticipated as a result of the project.

Tuolumne button-celery (*Eryngium pinnatisectum*) This species is associated with wetland habitat and vernal pools. The Calflora site shows the project area as within the range of this species; however, the project area does not contain habitat for this species.

Tuolumne fawn lily *(Erythronium tuolumnense)* This species inhabits moist, light deciduous woodland from 1,716 to 3,656 feet in elevation. This species blooms from March to June and is primarily known from occurrences documented from Italian Bar Road in Columbia to the headwaters of Deer Creek in Tuolumne County. The project area does not provide the moist habitat required by this species. Although surveys and field work were conducted after the blooming period for this species, I am familiar with this species and visited reference populations both during and after the blooming period for this species in 2025. I did not observe Tuolumne fawn lily within the project area. **If this species is detected within the project area, during any year of operations, a 25-foot equipment exclusion zone will be provided, and only hand work shall be conducted within the equipment exclusion zone. The equipment zone shall be designated with blue flagging.** No adverse impacts to the species are anticipated as a result of the project.

Mi-Wuk navarretia *(Navarretia miwukensis)* The project area is within the range of this species. This species is associated with meadows. There are some grassy openings that could provide potential habitat for this species. Open, grassy areas are not targets for fuel reduction, and operations are not likely to occur in portions of the project area that could contain potential habitat for this species. This species blooms from May to August. **If this species is detected within the project area, during any year of operations, a 25-foot equipment exclusion zone will be provided, and only hand work shall be conducted within the equipment exclusion zone. The equipment zone shall be designated with blue flagging.** No adverse impacts to the species are anticipated as a result of the project.

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Adam Frese
209.768.0216
209.928.5502
Westside Forestry Consulting Inc.
PO Box 832
Tuolumne, CA 95379



Docusign Envelope ID: 31D58FF8-4591-4299-AD41-5456F0CB2202

Adam Frese <adam@westsideforestryconsulting.com>

Belleview/Kewin Mill Fuel Reduction Project

Griffith, Cheryl@DOC <Cheryl.Griffith@conservation.ca.gov> Mon, Mar 9, 2026 at 4:11 PM
To: Adam Frese <adam@westsideforestryconsulting.com>
Cc: "Allison, Clay@DOC" <Clay.Allison@conservation.ca.gov>

Hi Adam,

Based on the description provided below and a desktop review, this project appears generally appropriate for site conditions and we have no further questions or comments. We will follow up with a brief descriptive memo stating the same.

Thank you,

Cheryl

Cheryl Griffith, P.G., C.E.G.

Senior Engineering Geologist | California Geological Survey

California Department of Conservation

715 P Street, MS 1901, Sacramento, CA 95814

C: (916) 995-7561

E: Cheryl.Griffith@conservation.ca.gov

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From: Adam Frese <adam@westsideforestryconsulting.com>
Sent: Thursday, February 5, 2026 7:49 AM
To: Griffith, Cheryl@DOC <Cheryl.Griffith@conservation.ca.gov>
Subject: Belleview/Kewin Mill Fuel Reduction Project

You don't often get email from adam@westsideforestryconsulting.com. Learn why this is important

Cheryl,

[Quoted text hidden]
[Quoted text hidden]

Docusign Envelope ID: 31D58FF8-4591-4299-AD41-5456F0CB2202

Adam Frese <adam@westsideforestryconsulting.com>

Belleview/Kewin Mill Fuel Reduction Project

Adam Frese <adam@westsideforestryconsulting.com> Thu, Feb 5, 2026 at 7:48 AM
To: cheryl.griffith@conservation.ca.gov

Cheryl,

Hope all is well. I am preparing a fuels reduction project in Tuolumne County. This project will consist of reducing brush, trees less than 12-inches diameter at breast height, and surface fuels to create a shaded fuel break along Kewin Mill Road, Big Hill Road and around Belleview Elementary School near the community of Cedar Ridge. Target spacing for residual trees will be 25 to 35 feet between stems. Residual trees will be pruned to a height of 8-feet above the ground. Operations will consist primarily of mastication and hand crews cutting, piling and burning or chipping brush and small trees. The project area is approximately 145 acres in size. The intent of the operation is to reduce hazardous fuels within 300-feet of Kewin Mill and Big Hill Roads, which are the primary ingress and egress routes for the community of Cedar Ridge, and to reduce hazardous fuel loading around the elementary school.

The purpose of this email is to notify you of the project and to provide you an opportunity to ask questions or provide comments regarding the proposed project.

The project is located approximately 7 miles northeast of the community of Sonora and immediately south of the community of Cedar Ridge. The project area is in Township 2 North, Range 15 East in portions of Sections 11, 12 and 13, and Township 2 North, Range 16 East in portions of Sections 6 and 7, Mount Diablo Base Meridian. The project is in the Columbia SE quadrangle. Two maps have been enclosed to show the precise location of the project area. The first map is a project vicinity map that shows the project in relation to Sonora and Cedar Ridge. The second map provides a more detailed view of the project location.

During the field work for this project, I identified a fill failure along the fill slope of Big Hill Road. This feature is approximately 12-feet across and 20-feet long. I excluded this feature from the project area. Additionally, a large hydraulic mining feature with steep banks was found along the North Fork of Sullivan Creek which parallels Kewin Mill Road. The project boundary was revised to exclude this feature as well.

If you have comments, questions or other information please contact me at the address and telephone number provided below. I am requesting you respond within 30 days of the postmark date so any information you provide can be incorporated into the plan. Thank you.

Adam Frese
209.768.0216
209.928.5502
Westside Forestry Consulting Inc.
PO Box 832
Tuolumne, CA 95379

2 attachments



Project Map.jpg
275K



Project Vicinity Map.jpg
267K

Docusign Envelope ID: 31D58FF8-4591-4299-AD41-5456F0CB2202

From: CALFIRE SAC CEQA
To: Salazar, Marisa@CALFIRE; CALFIRE SAC CEQA; Buitenhuys, Connor@CALFIRE
Subject: RE: ASR Review Request for 5GG23220 Belleview-Kewin Mills TCU
Date: Tuesday, February 3, 2026 11:11:41 AM
Attachments: image006.png
image007.png
image008.png
image009.png
image010.png
image011.png

Hi Marisa – Sorry about that. The ASR is good and accepted. No further comments.

Connor Buitenhuys
Senior Environmental Scientist
Cultural Resources Specialist
Environmental Protection
715 P St., Sacramento, CA 95814
(916) 708-5264 Cell

From: Salazar, Marisa@CALFIRE <Marisa.Salazar@fire.ca.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, February 3, 2026 11:09 AM
To: CALFIRE SAC CEQA <SacCEQA@fire.ca.gov>; Buitenhuys, Connor@CALFIRE <Connor.Buitenhuys@fire.ca.gov>
Subject: RE: ASR Review Request for 5GG23220 Belleview-Kewin Mills TCU

Hi Connor,

I see you're Out of Office for a while, but I just wanted to circle back on this ASR (before I forget) to see if we've got approval after the updates were made.

Thank you!

Marisa Salazar
Unit Environmental Scientist
Tuolumne-Calaveras Unit
18464 Striker Ct. Sonora, CA 95370
Office: (209) 532-7424 #121
Cell: (209) 419-1858

Docusign Envelope ID: 31D58FF8-4591-4299-AD41-5456F0CB2202

From: Salazar, Marisa@CALFIRE
Sent: Monday, January 26, 2026 7:33 AM
To: CALFIRE SAC CEQA <SacCEQA@fire.ca.gov>; Buitenhuys, Connor@CALFIRE <Connor.Buitenhuys@fire.ca.gov>
Subject: RE: ASR Review Request for 5GG23220 Belleview-Kewin Mills TCU

Hi Connor,

I just uploaded the latest update to this ASR from Adam.

Best,

Marisa Salazar
Unit Environmental Scientist
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Cell: (209) 419-1858

From: CALFIRE SAC CEQA <SacCEQA@fire.ca.gov>
Sent: Thursday, January 22, 2026 2:29 PM
To: Buitenhuys, Connor@CALFIRE <Connor.Buitenhuys@fire.ca.gov>; Salazar, Marisa@CALFIRE <Marisa.Salazar@fire.ca.gov>; CALFIRE SAC CEQA <SacCEQA@fire.ca.gov>
Subject: RE: ASR Review Request for 5GG23220 Belleview-Kewin Mills TCU

Thank you Marisa,

The ASR looks good, except that Kewin Site 7 still is described in the report and site record as multicomponent. If he wants he can simply revise it to say “historic site comprised of multiple features”. Saying it’s multicomponent suggests there is a prehistoric component present. Once he revises that it will be good.

Connor Buitenhuys
Senior Environmental Scientist

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From: Buitenhuys, Connor@CALFIRE <Connor.Buitenhuys@fire.ca.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, January 21, 2026 9:47 AM
To: Salazar, Marisa@CALFIRE <Marisa.Salazar@fire.ca.gov>; CALFIRE SAC CEQA <SacCEQA@fire.ca.gov>
Subject: RE: ASR Review Request for 5GG23220 Belleview-Kewin Mills TCU

That was a very quick turnaround. Thank you Marisa. I'll take a look.

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From: Salazar, Marisa@CALFIRE <Marisa.Salazar@fire.ca.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, January 21, 2026 9:44 AM
To: Buitenhuys, Connor@CALFIRE <Connor.Buitenhuys@fire.ca.gov>; CALFIRE SAC CEQA <SacCEQA@fire.ca.gov>
Subject: RE: ASR Review Request for 5GG23220 Belleview-Kewin Mills TCU

Hi Connor,

I just submitted the updated ASR for this project. Here's the comments from Adam:

Attached is the revised ASR package for Belleview/Kewin Mill. The project description has been revised to describe anticipated disturbance. Kewin 7 was changed to a multi-featured site rather than a multi-component site. Protection measures were revised to clarify some sites are now outside the project area because the project boundary was revised, rather than the site boundaries. Protection measures were revised to state that the integrity of the sites would not be diminished. Section 10 was revised to include a statement that the project would not result in adverse impacts to archaeological

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resources. One update was moved to the original record in the package; however, Kewin 1 was left in the same spot because the original site record does not provide any meaningful information, but only makes a vague reference to a possible site in the area. Please let me know if you have any questions or need any additional information.

Best,

Marisa Salazar
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From: Buitenhuys, Connor@CALFIRE <Connor.Buitenhuys@fire.ca.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, January 20, 2026 2:44 PM
To: Salazar, Marisa@CALFIRE <Marisa.Salazar@fire.ca.gov>; CALFIRE SAC CEQA <SacCEQA@fire.ca.gov>
Subject: RE: ASR Review Request for 5GG23220 Belleview-Kewin Mills TCU

Good Afternoon Marisa,

I only have a couple of questions and requests about the report. In general it's a good report but it just needs a few tweaks.

1. Project Description:
   - Is there any ground disturbance associated with any of these activities? If so, what activities and what is the extent of their ground disturbance (approximately how deep)?

6. Survey Results
   - Kewin Site 7 is listed as multicomponent but I don't see any prehistoric component listed. Is this an error? Otherwise, it should be a historic-era resource.

8. Protection Measures:
   - There is confusing language in the protection measures for some resources. For instance, P-

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55-003115 states that the original site boundary was revised and this site is now well outside the project area. Similar language is present for P-55-006357 and P-55-009840. I don't see any justification for revising the resource boundaries, and I believe this to be an error where the author meant to say the project boundary was revised to exclude the sites. Can the author confirm? If the resource boundary was revised I need more information on that justification and their logic. And a site record update would need to be prepared.

- Work is proposed to a degree in most if not all the resources. Can the author provide a brief assessment in either Section 8 or Section 10 (Other Applicable Information) describing and arguing how project activities would not diminish the integrity of each resource and therefore still be able to convey their significance? Would handwork result in any ground disturbance whatsoever? If not, that's fine, they just need to articulate what the project activities are, and how they can be conducted within the site without diminishing their significance.
- Please provide a conclusion for the project such as "Therefore, the project as proposed would not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource" or something to that effect. I think that is where the author is headed with these measures but I don't want to assume their intent on their behalf.

Attachments:

- Site Record Updates – In general, please attach the update to the top of the original site record as it is easier to track and compare the original with the update without scrolling across the report.

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From: Salazar, Marisa@CALFIRE <Marisa.Salazar@fire.ca.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, January 20, 2026 12:05 PM
To: Buitenhuys, Connor@CALFIRE <Connor.Buitenhuys@fire.ca.gov>; CALFIRE SAC CEQA <SacCEQA@fire.ca.gov>
Subject: RE: ASR Review Request for 5GG23220 Belleview-Kewin Mills TCU

No worries, thank you!

Marisa Salazar
Unit Environmental Scientist
Tuolumne-Calaveras Unit

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From: Buitenhuys, Connor@CALFIRE <Connor.Buitenhuys@fire.ca.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, January 20, 2026 11:44 AM
To: CALFIRE SAC CEQA <SacCEQA@fire.ca.gov>; Salazar, Marisa@CALFIRE <Marisa.Salazar@fire.ca.gov>
Subject: RE: ASR Review Request for 5GG23220 Belleview-Kewin Mills TCU

Hi Marisa,

I'm slightly behind today but I intend to get to the review tomorrow or Thursday if that is okay.

Connor Buitenhuys
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From: CALFIRE SAC CEQA
Sent: Wednesday, January 14, 2026 8:39 AM
To: Salazar, Marisa@CALFIRE <Marisa.Salazar@fire.ca.gov>; CALFIRE SAC CEQA <SacCEQA@fire.ca.gov>
Subject: RE: ASR Review Request for 5GG23220 Belleview-Kewin Mills TCU

Got it Marisa! I'll be the reviewer for this one. I'll reach out if I have any questions.

Connor Buitenhuys
Senior Environmental Scientist
Cultural Resources Specialist
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From: Salazar, Marisa@CALFIRE <Marisa.Salazar@fire.ca.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, January 14, 2026 8:32 AM
To: CALFIRE SAC CEQA <SacCEQA@fire.ca.gov>
Subject: RE: ASR Review Request for 5GG23220 Belleview-Kewin Mills TCU

Thanks Connor,

I just uploaded it.

Best,

Marisa Salazar
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From: CALFIRE SAC CEQA <SacCEQA@fire.ca.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, January 13, 2026 8:06 AM
To: Salazar, Marisa@CALFIRE <Marisa.Salazar@fire.ca.gov>; CALFIRE SAC CEQA <SacCEQA@fire.ca.gov>
Subject: RE: ASR Review Request for 5GG23220 Belleview-Kewin Mills TCU

Hi Marisa,

I'll circle back with an assignment for this one. It will either be Carrie or me.

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In the meantime, feel free to upload the document here and let us know once it goes through so we can download it on our end for review.

https://calfire.app.box.com/f/1a272932f8714b2688a713504c6268b4

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From: Salazar, Marisa@CALFIRE <Marisa.Salazar@fire.ca.gov>
Sent: Monday, January 12, 2026 2:03 PM
To: CALFIRE SAC CEQA <SacCEQA@fire.ca.gov>
Subject: ASR Review Request for 5GG23220 Belleview-Kewin Mills TCU

Hello,

I need an ASR reviewed for a Greenhouse Gas Reduction Funded Grant: 5GG23220 Belleview-Kewin Mills in the Tuolumne-Calaveras Unit. CAL FIRE is lead agency and the CEQA document type is an NOE.

I'd like to request a link to upload the file as it is too large to send via email.

Thank you,

Marisa Salazar
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