

**798-Alpine County Hazardous
Fuels Reduction &
Healthy Watershed Project
Alpine County**

Markleeville

**STATE OF CALIFORNIA
SIERRA NEVADA CONSERVANCY**

**Sierra Nevada Conservancy Grant Program
Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control,
River and Coastal Protection Bond Act of 2006 (Proposition 84)**

Applicant: Alpine County

Project Title: Alpine County Hazardous Fuels Reduction & Healthy Watershed Project

Subregion: East

County: Alpine County

SNC Funding: \$160,600.00

Total Project Cost: \$225,000.00

Application Number: 798

Final Score: 88

PROJECT SCOPE

The Alpine County Hazardous Fuels Reduction & Healthy Watershed Project will administer fuel treatments in four targeted areas within the Upper Carson River Watershed that are located in Alpine County's right of way and have been identified as high wildfire severity zones by CalFire. Additionally, the project will include a community outreach component that will promote fuels treatment among private land owners and develop a school-based educational program to promote wildfire prevention and personal responsibility while emphasizing the role of fire in a healthy ecosystem.

The project is a partnership between Alpine County and the Alpine Watershed Group (AWG) along with six other supporting partners including the Carson Ranger District of the Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest, Eastern Alpine County Volunteer Fire Department, Alpine Fire Safe Council, Woodfords Community of the Washoe Tribe, Carson Water Subconservancy District and American Rivers.

The four targeted areas selected include Blue Lakes Project Area (41.7-acres), Diamond Valley Project Area (34.9-acres), Woodfords Project Area (27.6-acres) and Hot Springs Creek Project Area (12.4-acres). These sites were selected using the following criteria:

- Collaboration opportunity with the Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest to leverage fuels reduction projects underway and adjacent to targeted sites;
- Sites will serve as strategically placed breaks to hold fires and prevent them from expanding; and,

- Sites will help reduce the risk of catastrophic fires spreading to surrounding communities and public lands.

The treatments will vary from site to site but include mastication of sage, small pine and other shrubs as well as mowing in areas dominated by grasses and forbs. Hand crews will work in areas equipment can't reach. Pruning of tree branches and other ladder fuels within the County right of way will occur.

The community outreach and education component of the project will include outreach activities that will raise awareness of modern fuels reduction practices on public lands, and watershed protection and opportunities to reduce fuel on privately-owned lands. Town hall meetings will be held to provide this information and press releases, flyers and educational brochures will be developed and distributed in neighborhoods and at the meetings. A school-based educational program will be developed and implemented at the Diamond Valley School, intended to provide students with information regarding fuels reduction and how to be "fire smart."

The budget for the project covers both the fuel treatments and the community outreach component. The budget for the treatment portion of the project is \$154,700. The community outreach budget is \$5,900.

California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA): Alpine County, acting as Lead Agency under the CEQA will produce a "Notice of Exemption" (NOE) and will have the categorical document developed and filed before the project is approved for funding.

PROJECT SCHEDULE

DETAILED PROJECT DELIVERABLES	TIMELINE
Education Program Planning and Outreach	November 2014 – February 2015
Education Program Implementation	February – June 2015
Fuels Contractor Hiring	April 2015
Six Month Progress Report	May 2015
Fuels Treatments	May – October 2015
Public Information Meeting	June 2015
Six Month Progress Report	November 2015
Final Report	January 2016
FINAL PAYMENT/FINAL PAYMENT REQUEST	February 15, 2016

PROJECT COSTS

PROJECT BUDGET CATEGORIES	TOTAL SNC FUNDING
Direct*	.
Fuels Reduction Contractor	\$130,000
Community Outreach & School Education Administration	\$4,900
Agency/Partner Coordinator & Monitoring	\$4,800
Total Direct	\$139,700
Indirect**	
Project Materials Supplies – printing, copies	\$1,000
Total Indirect	\$1,000
Administrative***	
Grant Management & Reporting	\$14,900
Operations & Overhead	\$5,000
Total Administrative	\$19,900
GRAND TOTAL	\$160,600

* Direct: Direct costs are expenses necessary to acquire, construct, or to adapt property to a new or different use, or to improve property including land, buildings and equipment. The property/expense must have a useful life longer than one year.

** Indirect: Expenses involve ongoing operations, repair or maintenance costs, regardless of whether the repair or maintenance may last more than one year.

*** Administrative: Expenses associated with the administration of a project and may not exceed 15 percent of the total SNC grant request for direct and indirect costs.

PROJECT LETTERS SUPPORT

- Support
 - Roderick Alfred, Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest
 - Kris Hartnett, Alpine Fire Safe Council
 - Geoffrey Ellis, Woodfords Washoe Community Council
 - Luke Hunt, American Rivers
 - Hal Bird, South Tahoe Public Utility District

PROJECT PERFORMANCE MEASURES

There are four Performance Measures common to all grants. In addition, grantees are required to include between one and three project-specific measures. Performance Measures listed here represent those proposed by applicants and may be modified through further discussion with SNC Staff.

- Acres of Land Improved or Restored
- Number of People Reached
- Resources Leveraged for the Sierra Nevada

Notice of Exemption

Appendix E

To: Office of Planning and Research
PO Box 3044, 1400 Tenth Street, Room 212
Sacramento, CA 95812-3044

From: (Public Agency) Sierra Nevada Conservancy
11521 Blocker Drive, Suite 205
Auburn, CA 95603

Project Title: Alpine County Hazardous Fuels Reduction and Healthy Watershed Project (SNC 798)

Project Location – Specific:

The project is located on a total of approximately 120-acres, along 25 miles of roadway and within Woodfords Cemetery, entirely within Alpine County property/right-of-way, along eight roadways (Blue Lakes Road, Diamond Valley Road, Scossa Road, Airport Road, Foot Hills Road, Emigrant Trail Road, Hot Springs Road, Shay Creek Road), and at Diamond Valley School. The project is within the Carson River Watershed, near Woodfords and Markleeville, and portions of roadway traverse the Toiyabe National Forest, in Alpine County, California. Approximate Latitudes/Longitudes: 38.769503/-119.822243 and 38.691958/-119.805682

Project Location – City: Woodfords and Markleeville

Project Location – County: Alpine

Description of Nature, Purpose and Beneficiaries of Project:

Alpine County is requesting \$170,700 in funding from the Sierra Nevada Conservancy's Proposition 84 Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Grant Program to reduce fuel loads and the threat of wildfire within the County's right-of-way on approximately 25 miles of road right-of-way, involving eight County Roads in Alpine County. The proposed project is designed to treat dense fuel loads that have built up within the County's right-of-way, which extends 30 feet beyond the centerline of the roadways. The proposed treatment locations are dominated by easily ignitable light fuel (sage, grasses and thickets of young pine). The dense fuel loads that are located within County right-of-way are adjacent to larger forested areas. Human-caused ignitions of wildfire often occur as a result of accidents, over-heated vehicles, tow chains, or discarded cigarettes. The reduction in fuel loads along the roadway right-of-way would reduce the threat of catastrophic wildfires. In addition, the reduced fuel loads along County roadways not only provide fuel breaks, but safer work areas for fire suppression crews. The proposed project is specifically located as follows:

- *Blue Lakes Area* (41.7-acres): Within the right-of-way on Blue Lakes Road, beginning at the intersection with SR-88 and continuing on both sides of the road for 11.5 miles
- *Diamond Valley Area* (34.9-acres): Within the rights-of-way along Diamond Valley Road, Scossa Road, and Airport Road, as well as on approximately one (1) acre of open space at Diamond Valley School.
- *Woodfords Area* (27.6-acres): Within the rights-of-way along Foot Hills Road and Emigrant Trail Road, as well as on approximately two (2) acres of open space at Woodfords Cemetery.
- *Hot Springs Creek Area* (12.4 acres): Within the rights-of-way along Hot Springs Road and Shay Creek Road.

The proposed project would include four main treatment techniques including mechanical treatments, hand thinning, pruning, and removing large fuel. Mechanical treatments include mastication and mowing of brush to create fuel breaks. Hand thinning of brush and small conifer trees would occur in areas of high fuel loads, or where mechanical equipment would not be beneficial to the fuel reduction task. Pruning would involve the removal of tree branches and other ladder fuels. Removing fuel includes moving the large fuels that cannot be masticated to the County's burn pile, which is off-site at Turtle Rock Park. Treatment activities for each of the

four treatment areas include mastication of sage and other shrubs, mowing in areas dominated by grasses and phorbs, and hand treatments in areas equipment cannot reach or be effective.

Prior to any treatment activities, the proposed project would use California Department of Fish and Wildlife data and adjacent U.S. Forest Service surveys, as well as the County Geographic Information Systems (GIS) wetland delineation data to identify special status species and sensitive areas within the project site. These areas would be required to either use hand treatment only or avoid the area entirely. No known cultural resources are within the proposed project area.

The project would provide fuels reduction in areas that are considered high or very high wildfire severity zones as defined by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CalFire). The project would protect wildlife habitat, the Carson River Watershed, and local homeowners in the area. The project reduces the threat of human-caused fire ignition along roadways and ultimately reduces the threat of catastrophic wildfire that spreads from roadside ignition. Ultimately, less severe wildfires protect the forest and the watershed.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: Sierra Nevada Conservancy

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: Alpine County

Exempt Status: *(check one)*

- Ministerial (Sec. 21080(b)(1); 15285);
- Declared Emergency (Sec 21080(b)(3); 15269(2));
- Emergency Project (Sec. 21080(b)(4); 15269(b)(c));
- Categorical Exemption. State type and section number: Section 15304, "Minor Alterations to Land"
- Statutory Exemptions. State code number: _____

Reasons why project is exempt:

The proposed Alpine County Hazardous Fuels Reduction and Healthy Watershed Project is categorically exempt from the provisions of California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15304, Class 4, which permits minor public or private alterations in the condition of the land, water, and/or vegetation which do not involve removal of healthy, mature, scenic trees except for forestry or agricultural purposes. The project consists of minor land alterations (mechanical and hand treatments of fuel [sage, grasses and thickets of young pine]) to maintain and reduce the threat of catastrophic wildfire spreading from roadside areas into adjacent forests. The project would protect local homeowners, protect wildlife habitat, and protect the Carson River Watershed. The project reduces the threat of human-caused fire ignition along roadways and ultimately reduces the threat of catastrophic wildfire that spreads from roadside ignition. No significant adverse impacts to natural or cultural resources will occur as a result of the project.

Lead Agency Contact Person: Matthew Daley

Area Code/Telephone/Extension: (530) 823-4698

Signature: _____ Date: _____ Title: Executive Officer
Jim Branham

Date Received for Filing at OPR:

Revised 2005

Project Description

Purpose

The Alpine County Hazardous Fuels Reduction & Healthy Watershed Project has been developed to protect Alpine County's natural resources and populated areas within the Carson River's Upper Watershed. Alpine County is known for its superlative landscapes with 96% of the county being public land. They provide a tremendous scenic and recreational resource; however, they also possess a significant fuels treatment problem and wildfire threat. A wildfire in the Upper Carson River Watershed would cause catastrophic damage to fragile watershed resources and impact the Carson River for years into the future. A fire would also threaten past SNC projects including Grant #365 - Markleeville Creek Restoration and Grant #420 Hope Valley Meadow Restoration. Human caused ignition within the County's right of way, which parallels roadsides are a likely vector for catastrophic fire into these areas.

This project addresses Alpine County's wildfire threat by treating fuels within the County's right of way that have been identified by CalFire, the County and expert partners as being at a high risk of carrying wildfire into sensitive watershed resources and populated areas.

All of the proposed fuel treatments are located within high or very high wildfire severity zones as defined by CalFire. Emphasis on fuels along roads is prudent due to past incidence of ignition. Previous human-caused ignitions include accidents, over-heated vehicles, tow chains, and discarded cigarettes. Once cleared of hazardous fuels the County Right-of-Way will be less likely to carry fire from the roadside into valued resources.

Other project benefits include improving survivable space to give fire suppression crews a safer work area and creating a fuel break.

To further watershed protection, AWG and project partners will collaborate to develop presentations and media to increase our community's understanding of fire's natural role in a healthy watershed, its benefits to forest ecology, all while balancing the message with the threat of wildfire. Community education is a critical component of this project, needed to sustain public support for fuels maintenance and to build awareness for future fire related activities. This will be no small task. Years of education decrying the perils of fire, have provided too little on fire's natural role in forest ecology. AWG and partners will have to research and develop new effective programs to meet these objectives. This will take significant staff time, coordination and development.

AWG's community outreach efforts will promote "fuels treatment" and "fire use" activities and inform landowners on how they can manage their private properties to prevent wildfire. A school-based educational program will be developed in parallel to

promote awareness amongst youth on wildfire prevention and personal responsibility, while educating them on the role of fire in a healthy ecosystem.

Fire History of Project Area

Eastern Alpine County has been affected by large fires within the past 25 years. Such fires include the Indian Creek Fire which burned 6,000 acres in 1981; the Fredericksburg Fire which burned 2,000 acres in 1986, and the Acorn Fire, which burned nearly 6,000 acres and twenty-six homes in 1987. Lightning causes the most wildland fire ignitions in this area, with summer thunderstorms bringing erratic winds and lightning to the area. It is common to have a strong southwesterly wind coming over the Sierras in the afternoon during the summer, which helps to drive fires. Most catastrophic fires have occurred during these conditions along the Sierra Front.

The Mesa Vista and Woodsford/Alpine Village neighborhoods have had few frequent fires in the last 20 years. Since 1980, at least three fires have burned in the area, some over the same ground multiple times. Fuels are flashy, making fire difficult to contain on initial attack.

CAL FIRE's Unit Management Plan – Alpine County

Sadly Alpine County's Ignition data is incomplete, with most years lacking statistical cause.

Location & Partners

This project will be based in the Carson River Watershed of Alpine County. All fuels treatment will occur within the County's right of way that extends 30' on either side of the centerline of the road. The right of way runs adjacent to many of the project partners' lands. All partners will see benefits from this project; no fuel treatment activities will occur on private, federal or tribal lands.

The project is a partnership between Alpine County (the County) and Alpine Watershed Group (AWG) with six other supporting partners. These partners include the Carson Ranger District of the Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest, Eastern Alpine County Volunteer Fire Department, Alpine Fire Safe Council, Woodfords Community of the Washoe Tribe, Carson Water Subconservancy District, and American Rivers. Our expert partners have not only written letters of support, but have worked closely with us to ascertain the greatest fire threats to natural resources and human communities.

By working with our partners we have identified 4 proposed project Area:

- Blue Lakes Road Project Area – total 41.7 acres to be treated
- Diamond Valley Project Area - total 34.9 acres to be treated
- Woodfords Project Area - total 27.6 acres to be treated

- Hot Springs Creek Project Area - total 12.4 acres to be treated

These sites were selected because:

- 1) They leverage ongoing Forest Service fuels projects. Collaborations with the Forest service are currently ongoing in order to maximize productivity.
- 2) Sites are strategically placed breaks to hold fires and prevent them from expanding.
- 3) Sites offer protection to communities, or prevent fire from spreading on to Forest Service and BLM lands.
- 4) Sites have continuous fuels allowing fire to spread.
- 5) Sites avoid disagreements with private landowners.

Blue Lakes Project Area: 41.7 Acres

Site: The County's right of way parallels Blue Lakes Road. Treatment will start at the roads intersection with Hwy 88 and continue up both sides of the road for 11.5 miles.

Fuels: Fuels are light and flashy mostly consisting of grasses, and shrubs.

Treatments: Mastication of sage, small pine and other shrubs. Mowing in areas dominated by grasses and phorbs.

Threats: Blue Lakes road winds through the Toiyabe National Forest, any ignition off this road could threaten forest stands, wilderness, wetlands, water supply and SNC Grant #420 Hope Valley Meadow Restoration.

Diamond Valley Project Area: 34.9 Acres

Site: The County's right of way parallels Diamond Valley Road, Scossa Road and Airport Road. The Diamond Valley School has about 1 acre of open space that will also be treated. Only a portion of Diamond Road will be treated, being that some sections don't front continuous fuels.

Fuels: Fuels are mostly light and flashy consisting of grasses and shrubs. Mixed small conifers are also growing up within the right of way.

Treatments: Mastication of sage and other shrubs. Mowing in areas dominated by grasses and phorbs. Hand crews will work in areas equipment can't reach or be effective.

Threats: Scossa and Airport roads cross BLM land. Ignitions off these roads could threaten Curtz Lake and Indian Reservoir. A fire started in the treatment area could threaten the Woodfords Washoe Community. Ignitions could also threaten, forest stands, a local school and important reservoirs.

Woodfords Project Area: 27.6 Acres

Site: The County's right of way parallels Foot Hills Road, and Emigrant Trail Road. The Woodfords Cemetery has about 2.5 acres of open space that will also be treated.

Fuels: Fuels are mostly light and flashy consisting of grasses and shrubs. Mixed small conifers are also growing up within the county owned cemetery and right of way.

Treatments: Mastication of sage and other shrubs. Mowing in areas dominated by grasses and phorbs. Hand crews will work in areas equipment can't reach.

Threats: Foot Hills Road, and Emigrant Trail Road act as a fire break preventing wildfire from burning into communities or escaping into the Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest. Ignitions could bring fire into communities, forest stands, water supply and a canyon fire could threaten SNC Grant #420 Hope Valley Meadow Restoration.

Leverage: The Carson Ranger District is currently implementing the "Manzanita Hazardous Fuels Reduction Project". Approximately 700 acres will be treated within the Wildland Urban Interface in Woodfords, California. Our treatments efforts along the Emigrant Road and within the open space around the cemetery will greatly supplement the Carson Ranger Districts efforts. Our education and outreach efforts will also garner support and understanding for their ongoing project. We are working collaboratively with the Carson Ranger District to combine our effort and capitalize on our outcomes.

Hot Springs Creek Project Area: 12.4 Acres

Site: The County's right of way parallels Hot Springs Road, and Shay Creek Road.

Fuels: Fuels are mostly light and flashy consisting of grasses and shrubs. Mixed small conifers are also growing up within the county right of way.

Treatments: Mastication of sage and other shrubs. Mowing in areas dominated by grasses and phorbs. Hand crews will work in areas equipment can't reach or isn't effective.

Threats: Hot Springs Creek Road, and Shay Creek road winds through the Toiyabe National Forest and Grover State Park. Any ignition off this road could threaten forest stands, wilderness, wetlands, Grover Meadow/Hot Springs, water supply and Grant #365 - Markleeville Creek Restoration.

Leverages: The Carson Ranger District has nearly complete the "Markleevillage Fuels Reduction Project". Approximately 1200 acres have been treated within the Wildland Urban Interface of Markleeville's satellite community, and along Hot Springs Creek. Our fuels treatment efforts along the Hot Springs Road and Shay Creek will greatly complement the Carson Ranger Districts efforts. Our education and outreach efforts will also garner support and understanding for their nearly complete project. We are working collaboratively with the Carson Ranger District to combine our effort and capitalize on our outcomes. Prescribed burns will still be occurring during the timeline of our project.

Project Need

This project is designed to treat dense fuels that have built up within the County's right of way. The U.S. Forest Service (USFS) considers this fuel build up a serious threat and has promoted its "One Less Spark, One Less Fire" campaign for years in Alpine County to bring awareness to this dire issue.

Over the past ten years, a great deal of funding and effort has been invested in natural resource protection of the Upper Carson River Watershed. Organizations such as Alpine Watershed Group, American Rivers and the Carson Water Subconservancy District have spent thousands of hours implementing water quality monitoring and conducting watershed restoration projects. Much of this work has been supported by California's Proposition 84 (Prop 84) funding. These past efforts and the money spent would be jeopardized in the event of a catastrophic fire.

The project's proposed fuel treatment locations are dominated by easily ignitable light fuel (sage, gasses and thickets of young pine). These fuels carry fire extremely well. An ignition could easily be caused by a spark from a loose trailer chain, an overheated vehicle, or a carelessly disposed cigarette. One spark could abolish years of effort in planning and restoration, threaten communities and human lives along with natural resources contained on federal lands.

Goals

The Alpine County Hazardous Fuels Reduction & Healthy Watershed Project will reduce the threat of wild fire on State, BLM and National Forest lands, while also benefiting adjacent lands of the Native American community and private landowners. To ensure long term fuels reduction and community safety, the project will build on existing community outreach and education programs, including the USFS "One Less Spark" campaign.

The project contains three key components and associated goals:

1. The project will treat fuels within the county's right of way. A total of 120.1 acres of the right of way will be treated with a goal of reducing flammable material in these areas by 60-80%. This will reduce the chance of fire being carried from the road into sensitive watershed areas and Alpine communities.
2. The project will involve public outreach, including community meetings and educational forums. Flyers and information materials will be developed and circulated to garner support and a broader understanding of fire management. At least 25% of Alpine County residents will be reached through this outreach effort.

3. School-based educational programs will be developed to promote awareness amongst youth on wildfire prevention and personal responsibility, while educating classrooms on the role of fire in a healthy ecosystem. AWG and partners will have to research and develop new effective programs to meet these objectives.

AWG and partners will work with kindergarten through 8th grade students at Alpine County's Diamond Valley School. This is the major school within Alpine County, and in the Carson River watershed. Nearly all of our high school students go to school out of state, however we will try to reach local youth groups (little scouts), and provide opportunities to learn about fire ecology and the treatment of wildfire.

Scope of Work

The project will reduce hazardous fuels on the landscape with the use of mechanized equipment and hand crews.

Techniques will include:

1. Mechanical treatment - Mastication and mowing of brush will occur, creating fuel breaks by reducing cover 60 to 80 percent.
2. Hand thinning - Hand thinning of brush and small conifer trees will occur in areas of high fuel loads, or where equipment isn't effective.
3. Pruning - Tree branches and other ladder fuels within the County right of way will be pruned.
4. Maintenance – Large fuels that can't be masticated will be moved to the county's burn pile. The County's recently purchased Burn Boss, a self-contained incineration unit, may also be used to complete this project.

The breakdown of treatments by project area.

Blue Lakes Road Project Area – total 41.7 acres to be treated

Fuels on Blue Lakes Road primarily consist of sage, shrubs and conifers. Working adjacent to Forest Service parcels and treatments, also around large pines and rocks is going to require extensive hand crew time. The Hope Valley portion of the fuels treatment is the only area where mowing is an option.

~15% Mowing

~45% Mastication
~40% hand crews.

Diamond Valley Project Area - total 34.9 acres to be treated

Fuels within the Diamond Valley Project Area primarily consist of sage, and grasses. After the site visit by Mark Stanley, we limited the amount of mowing this project will accomplish due to the rapid regeneration of the light fuels. However we've made one exception and that's around the Washoe Tribe's Hung A LeI Ti community. This is a disadvantaged community and protecting this tribal property is a priority for the county and all our partners. Fuels around the community are very flashy and with the expected drought conditions actions to treat these fuels are necessary. Excluding treatments around the Washoe community, other portions of this project area will focus on sage and other woody shrubs.

~35% Mowing
~40% Mastication
~25% hand crews.

Woodfords Project Area - total 27.6 acres to be treated

Fuels within the Woodfords Project Area primarily consist of mature sage, shrubs, juniper and conifers. Working adjacent to Forest Service parcels and treatments is going to require extensive hand crew time.

~5% Mowing
~50% Mastication
~45% hand crews.

Hot Springs Creek Project Area - total 12.4 acres to be treated

Fuels within the Hot Springs Creek Project Area primarily consist of mature pine, with an under story of woody shrubs, sage and young conifers. Working adjacent to Forest Service parcels and treatments is going to require extensive hand crew time.

~0% Mowing
~40% Mastication
~60% hand crews.

In total 32.18 miles of right of way is proposed to be treated. The total acreage of treated areas will be 120.1 acres.

~13% Mowing - Grasses
~39% Mastication – Shrubs, Sage
~48% hand crews – Shrubs, Sage, Pine, Juniper

Alpine County will use standard mechanical treatments implemented by trained and

knowledgeable crews to treat the targeted 120.1 acres. Prescriptions will include removing heavy brush and under story fuels and pruning or removing ladder fuels to create vertical breaks to reduce the potential for fire spread into the canopy.

The County right of way runs parallel to roads of County responsibility. This right of way extends 30' beyond the centerline of the road. Controlling these fuels will keep roadside ignitions from starting fires within the right of way and spreading into high value habitats.

Community Outreach/Education Component

Outreach and Education will be no small task. Years of education decrying the perils of fire, have provided very little on fire's natural role in forest ecology. Often time project involving prescribed burns, fire use or other non- suppression techniques have a hard time garnering support in the community. Fire is a natural part of our watershed, and greatly benefits nutrients cycling and regeneration. AWG and partners will have to research and develop new effective programs to meet these objectives. This type of outreach is very involved and will take staffs time and extensive coordination.

Alpine Watershed Group with the support from other project partners will plan and conduct public outreach and education in both the community and in the school classroom. Outreach activities will help raise the community's awareness of the role of fire, modern fuels practices, prior work funded by Prop 84 work, watershed protection, and opportunities to reduce fuel on local residents' lands.

Town hall meeting will educate our community on the objectives of this project. The meetings will include presentations by experts on land management and fire ecology. The Forest Service will promote their "One Less Spark Campaign" while the Alpine Fire Safe Counsel will provide information on how to reduce fuel on a resident's land.

AWG and partners will develop press releases, flyers and pamphlets to be distributed in neighborhoods and at meetings. These materials are intended to encourage participation in events and to increase public awareness of this project and other fire management activities.

AWG will also conduct school-based educational programs that promote an understanding of fire ecology, restoration and wildfire protection. Youth will learn about how fire works in a natural system and how being fire smart can help protect watersheds. AWG already instruct watershed educational programs in the Diamond Valley School, and will develop natural fire history and protection components to ongoing messaging.

Budget

This application is intended to provide sufficient funding to complete the project. This SNC grant request provides for the hiring of a contractor to complete the fuels treatments within the County right of way. It also provides for program planning and implementation of the Healthy Watersheds Outreach and Education Program conducted by Alpine Watershed Group. Funding will also provide for grant management and reporting by Alpine Watershed Group.

All additional support for project implementation will be in the form of in-kind support from project partners, and leverage from parallel projects. This support includes the following:

Leveraged Partner Project

- Carson Ranger District: "Manzanita Hazardous Fuels Reduction Project 2014-15" – \$150,000

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In-kind Support

- Hazardous Fuels Reduction Project" 14-15 – \$1,000
- Alpine County: project administration and contractor management – \$5,000
- Alpine County: biomass collection site implementation – \$3,000
- Alpine Watershed Group: educational program supervision – \$2,500

Other possible resources that will be pursued include volunteer fire fighter assistance and watershed volunteer involvement.

Compliance

Alpine County has a history of implementing fuel treatment projects along roadways. The county will produce a "Notice of Exemption" Under the California Administrative Code (tit.14, § 15301), such fuels treatment actions are provided an exemption under CEQA that allows the:

"...operation, repair, maintenance, permitting, leasing, licensing, or minor alteration of existing public or private structures, facilities, mechanical equipment, or topographical features, involving negligible or no expansion of use beyond that existing at the time of the lead agency's determination. The types of "existing facilities" itemized below are not intended to be all-inclusive of the types of projects which might fall within Class 1. The key consideration is whether the project involves negligible or no expansion of an existing use."

This includes: "(c) Existing highways and streets, sidewalks, gutters, bicycle and pedestrian trails, and similar facilities". These roadways are county (state) owned and don't fall under NEPA. Alpine County has not had any previous fuel reduction compliance issues under the CEQA exemption.

The County will have the categorical exclusion document developed and filed before the project is implemented.

We will use CDFW data and adjacent USFS surveys to search for rare/sensitive species in the project area and to support the categorical exclusion document.

This project intentionally avoids any impact to wetlands and riparian areas. The County GIS has wetlands delineated. Treatment crews will be directed to use non-mechanized thinning in sensitive areas or exclude treatments completely, to avoid disturbance to riparian bird species, and the vegetative buffers along streams.

According to the Alpine County Community Development Director, "The County has implicit authority to do work within the County right of way. Maintenance of fuels along county roads occurs routinely without special permission of adjacent landowners or agencies."

Restrictions/Agreements

There are no property restrictions or encumbrances that would hinder project completion. All roads within the scope of work are in County jurisdiction. All fuels reduction work will be conducted in the County right of way.

Organizational Capacity

Alpine County will act as the lead agency, managing contracts and supervising treatment crews. The County has successfully completed past fuels reduction projects along County roads and on other County-owned properties. These treatments are standard techniques utilized across the US, and have been proven effective in limiting the spread of fire.

Both Alpine County and Alpine Watershed Group have experience in managing complex projects. Using the combined skills of our partnership and collaborating with experienced land agencies, we have the expertise and capacity to conduct a successful project.

As the educational program coordinator and grant manager for this project, Alpine Watershed Group (AWG) offers strength as a community-based, collaborative organization. AWG has a proven track record for coordinating watershed programs and managing grant funding. AWG has been serving Alpine County in the arena of watershed planning, monitoring and restoration for over ten years. AWG has consistently partnered with Alpine County on numerous projects and activities, and has always received strong support from the County's Board of Supervisors.

Over the years, AWG has developed close partnerships with the Humboldt Toiyabe National Forest, Alpine Fire Safe Council, local fire departments and the Woodfords Washoe Community Council. AWG represents a diverse group of stakeholders with a variety of interests collaborating to preserve and enhance the natural system functions of Alpine County's watersheds for future generations. General members include local landowners, conservationists, recreationists, agency representatives, tribal members, ranchers and local business owners.

Cooperation and Community Support

Fuels reduction projects in rural Alpine County garner broad support throughout the community. In 1987, the Acorn Fire burned 6,500 acres and 26 homes in the community of Woodfords. The 2013 Rim Fire, which occurred just south of Alpine County, destroyed over 200,000 acres. They serve as grim reminders of the devastating effects of wild land fire. The community is definitely aware of the threat that wild fire poses to its cherished landscapes, celebrated streams and communities. There is no known opposition to this project and no likely potential for such, given the overarching community support for fuels reduction.

The Alpine County Hazardous Fuels Reduction & Healthy Watershed Project leverages past SNC-funded watershed programs by tying fuels reduction and fire safety into forest health and watershed condition. Treated lands will directly benefit previous restorations and water quality projects conducted by AWG and other SNC-funded partners, specifically American Rivers. At risk natural resources that will be included in the scope of this project include Hope Valley and Markleeville Creek, the site of current watershed monitoring and restoration planning efforts.

This project builds on past and existing fuels reduction and community education efforts by project partners. Each of the partners involved in this project have been actively working to promote fire safety and healthy watersheds for many years. Alpine Watershed Group will seek input from partner organizations such as the Alpine Fire Safe Council and the Eastern Alpine Fire Department in developing the educational program.

The majority of the acreage to be treated adjoins, or is in close proximity to federal and state lands. By working in parallel with neighboring land agencies, we hope to maximize the effectiveness of past contiguous treatments. This project will also work in conjunction with Alpine County's biomass collection, Burn Boss and disposal site. Residents can take full advantage of this Project by reducing fuel loading on their properties by bringing the material to the biomass collection site.

Long-term Management and Sustainability

Alpine County is primarily responsible for fuels reduction within the County's right of way, and is committed to providing this service in the long-run. The County continues to seek funding to support, and even enhance their fuel treatment capacities.

Presently Alpine County does not have a formal management plan in place for fuels reduction work. Without a formal plan, Alpine County relies on the Toiyabe National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan (1986), as amended by the Sierra Nevada Forest Plan Amendment Record of Decision (2004). This serves as the primary document of record for fuels management in the Upper Carson River Watershed.

Through the statewide Cooperative Fire Management Agreement, the USFS has been given the authority to act on CAL FIRE's behalf as the wildland fire response entity for State Responsibility Area (SRA) lands within Alpine County.

Locally driven, specific terms of this agreement are addressed in an Annual Operating Agreement between the USFS Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest and the CAL FIRE Amador-El Dorado-Sacramento-Alpine Unit. This agreement includes, but is not limited to, information such as tactical frequencies, wildland fire response notification procedures, apparatus and their staffing levels, facilities, prescribed burning procedures, and inspection and enforcement of PRC 4291.

Alpine County Fuels Reduction Project meets the goals and objectives outlined in the the Sierra Nevada Forest Plan Amendment, Attachment 5 – Management Plan).

Sierra Nevada Forest Plan Amendment, Attachment 5

*“Fuels treatments in these zones are designed to reduce wildfire spread and intensity. Strategic landscape features, such as **roads**, changes in fuels types, and topography may be used in delineating the physical boundary of the threat zone.” Page 40 - Record of Decision*

WUI Threat zones are priority area for fuels treatments.

- Fuels treatments in the threat zone provide a buffer between developed areas and wildlands.*
- Fuels treatments protect human communities from wildland fires as well as minimize the spread of fires that might originate in urban areas.*
- The highest density and intensity of treatments are located within the WUI*
Page 46 - Record of Decision

This project will help move the county's right of way towards the desired conditions described within the plan.

The U.S. Forest Service is the primary land holder within Alpine County and has long partnered with the County in the implementation of fuels treatment projects. Presently the Forest Service is conducting fuels treatments projects around Woodfords and Hot Springs Creek. These sites don't include the County's right of way. The implementation of the Alpine County Fuels Reduction Project will greatly increase the effectiveness of these ongoing Forest Service projects.

Monitoring

Retreatment may be necessary in three to five years and will include repeated mowing, mastication, and hand thinning.

Photo Monitoring will be used to assess the regrowth of vegetation. 5 monitoring point will be taken within each project area (a total of 20 points), focusing on different elevations, aspect and vegetation types. This will give a better picture of the overall regeneration of the project areas.

Ideally fuels will be broken up with only 25-30% cover. Photo monitoring will determine if regrowth exceeds trigger point developed by the County and USFS. Presently the County is looking to expand its fuel treatment capacity by purchasing a mower and masticator, and eventually do this type of work internally. Partners will help the county seek funding for this equipment in order to be ready for future fuels treatments.

**SIERRA NEVADA CONSERVANCY
PROPOSITION 84 - DETAILED BUDGET FORM**

Project Name: Proposal for the Alpine County Hazardous Fuels Reduction & Healthy Watershed Project

Applicant: Alpine County / Alpine Watershed Group

SECTION ONE DIRECT COSTS	Year One	Total
Fuels Reduction Contractor	\$130,000.00	\$130,000.00
Community Outreach & School Education Program administration	\$15,000.00	\$15,000.00
Agency/Partner Coordinator and Monitoring Development	\$4,800.00	\$4,800.00
		\$0.00
		\$0.00
DIRECT COSTS SUBTOTAL:	\$149,800.00	\$149,800.00

SECTION TWO INDIRECT COSTS	Year One	Total
Project materials, supplies, printing	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00
		\$0.00
INDIRECT COSTS SUBTOTAL:	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00
PROJECT TOTAL:	\$150,800.00	\$150,800.00

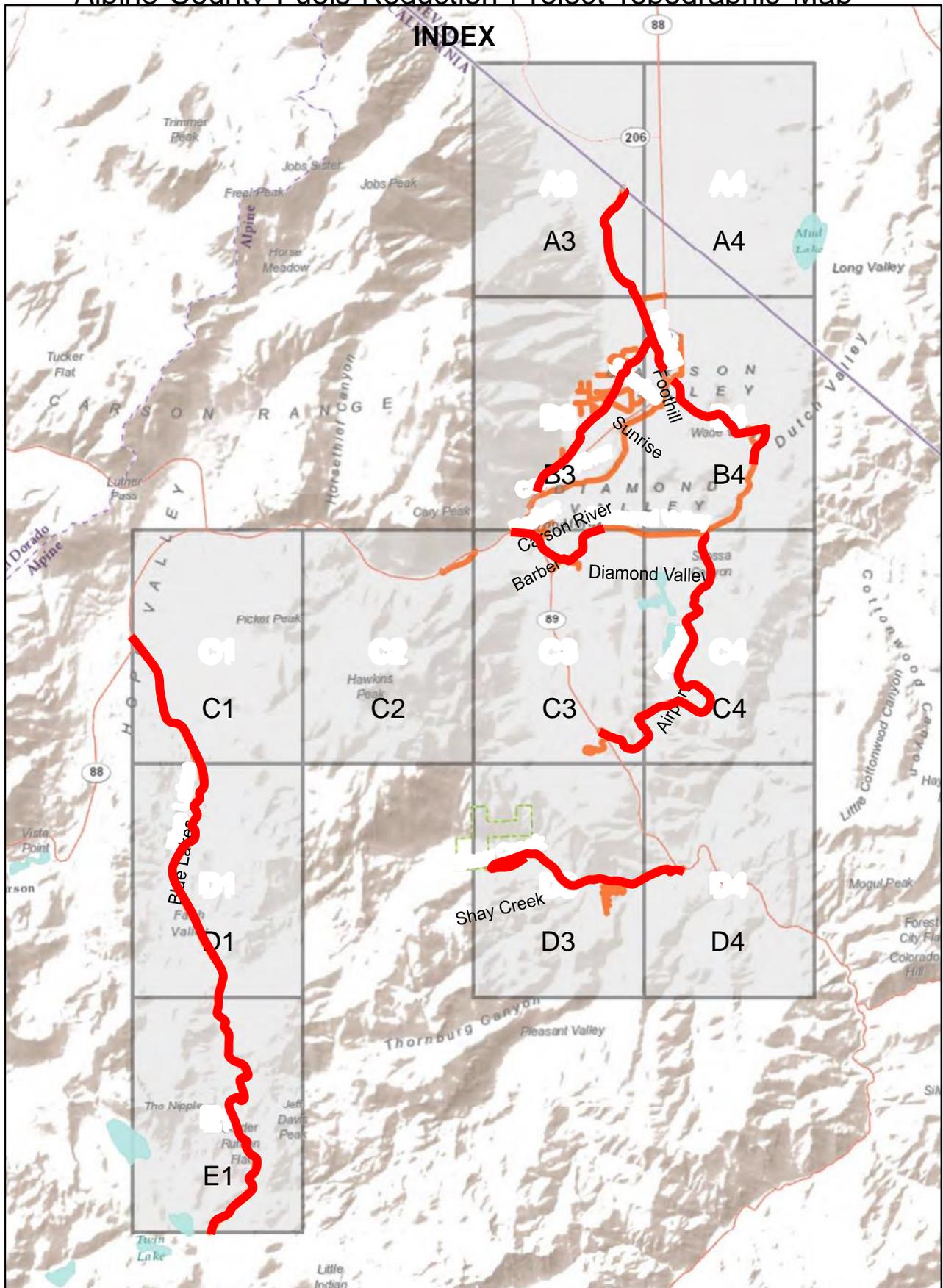
SECTION THREE Administrative Costs (Costs may not to exceed 15% of total Project Cost) :	Total	
Grant management and reporting (10%)	\$14,900.00	\$14,900.00
Operations and overhead (travel, insurance, utilities, rent, communications etc)	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00
		\$0.00
		\$0.00
		\$0.00
ADMINISTRATIVE TOTAL:	\$19,900.00	\$19,900.00
SNC TOTAL GRANT REQUEST:	\$170,700.00	\$170,700.00

SECTION FOUR OTHER PROJECT CONTRIBUTIONS	Year One	Total
Great Basin Air Pollution Control District - purchase of Burn Boss	\$50,000.00	\$50,000.00
Alpine County - project administration and contractor management	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00
Alpine County - Biomass Collection Site implementation	\$3,000.00	\$3,000.00
Alpine Watershed Group - educational program supervision	\$2,500.00	\$2,500.00
		\$0.00
		\$0.00
Total Other Contributions:	\$60,500.00	\$60,500.00

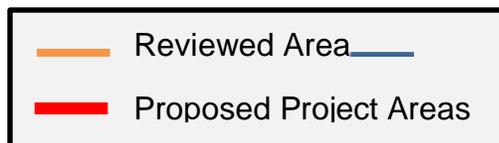
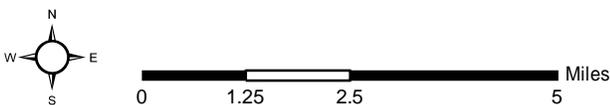
NOTE: The categories listed on this form are examples and may or may not be an expense related to the project. Rows may be added or deleted on the form as needed. Applicants should contact the SNC if questions arise.

* Operating Costs should be allocated to the percentage that is applicable to the grant based on your cost allocation methodology and cannot exceed 15% of your total project costs.

Alpine County Fuels Reduction Project Topographic Map

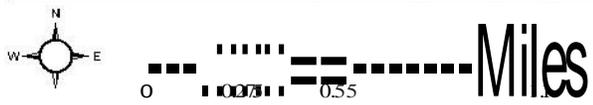
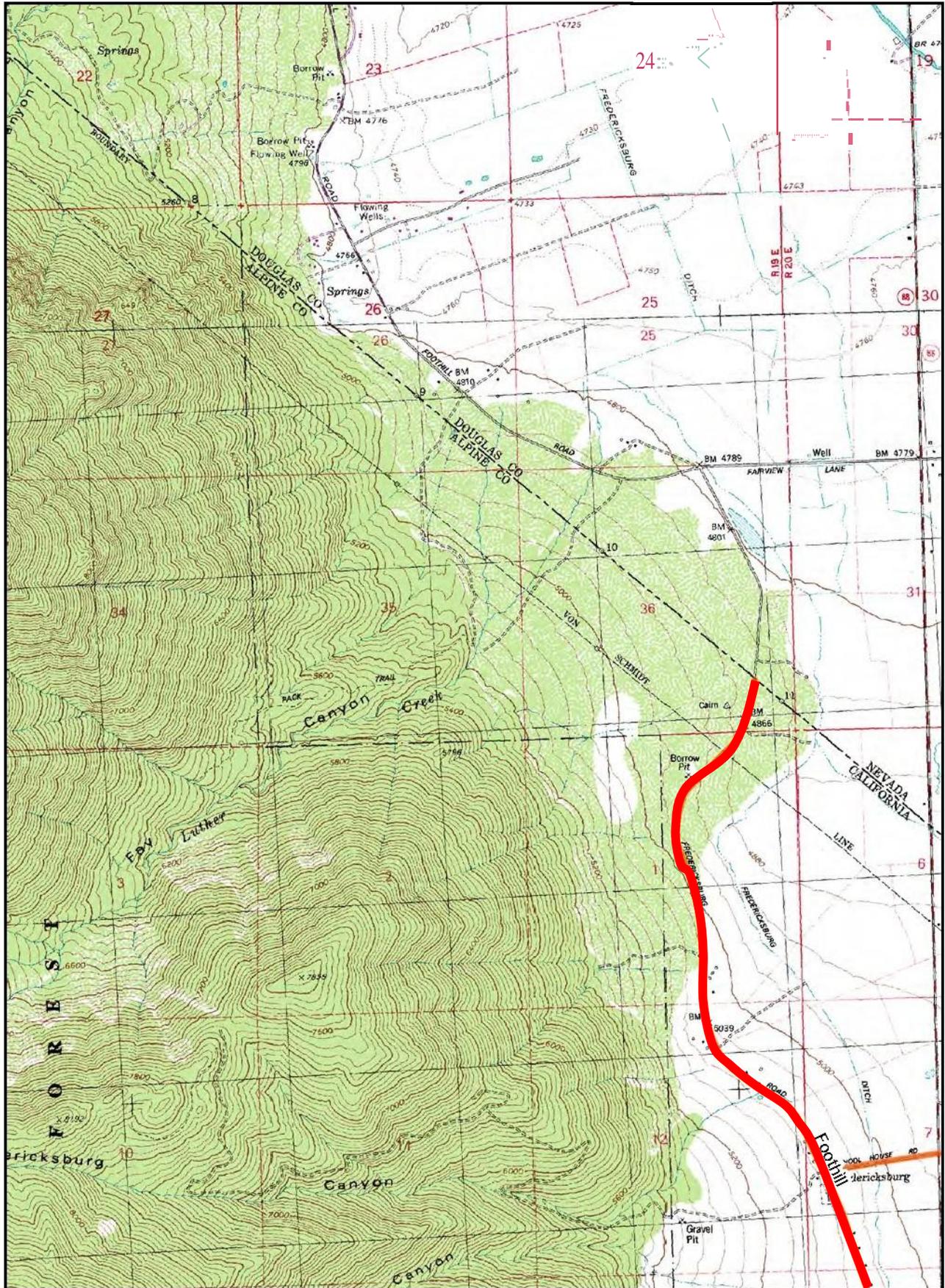


Sources: Esri, DeLorme, USGS, NPS, Sources: Esri, USGS, NOAA



Alpine County Fuels Reduction Project Topographic Map

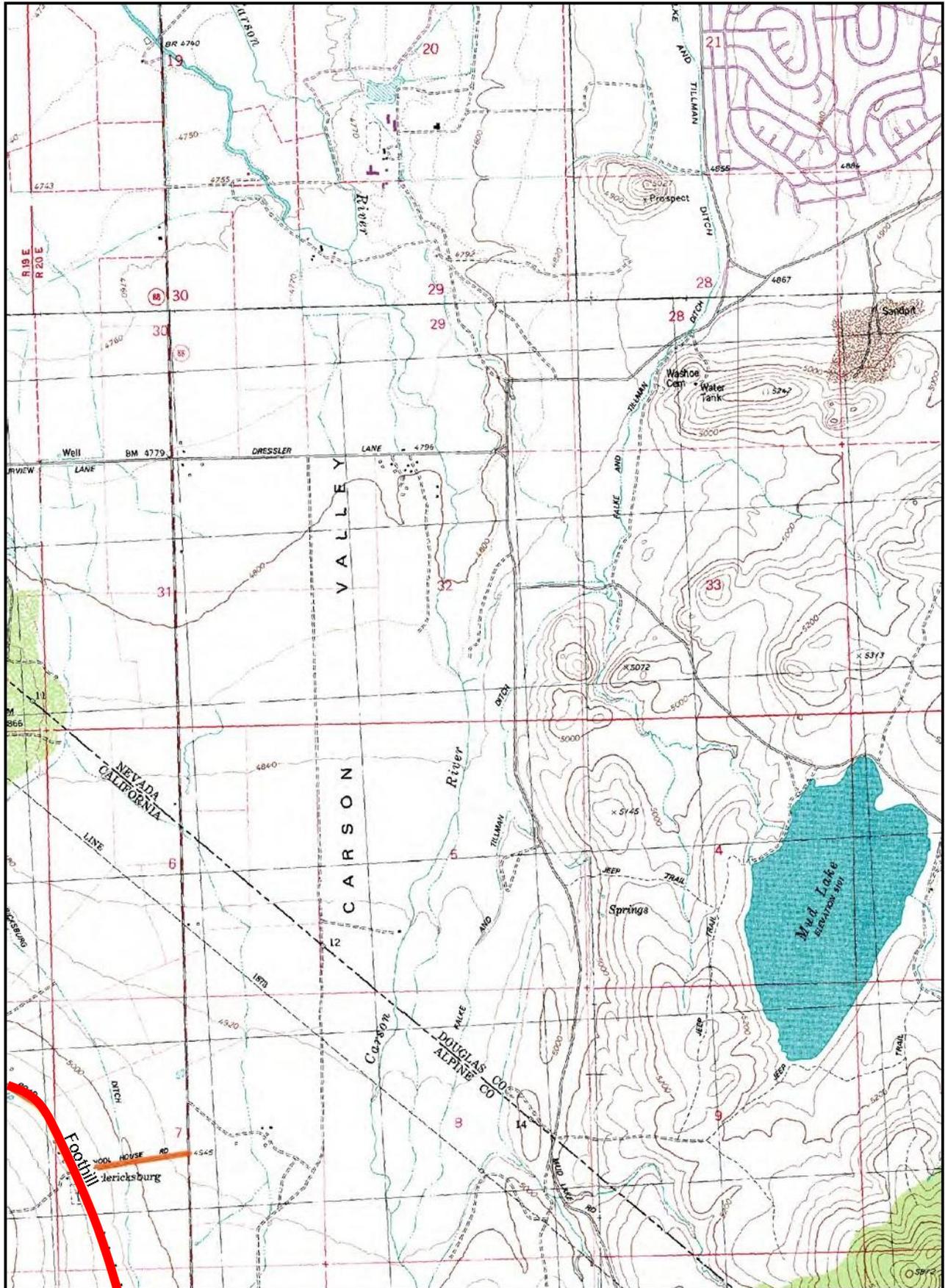
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Alpine County Fuels Reduction Project Topographic Map

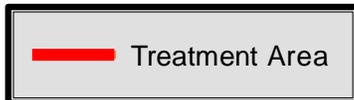
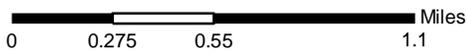
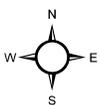
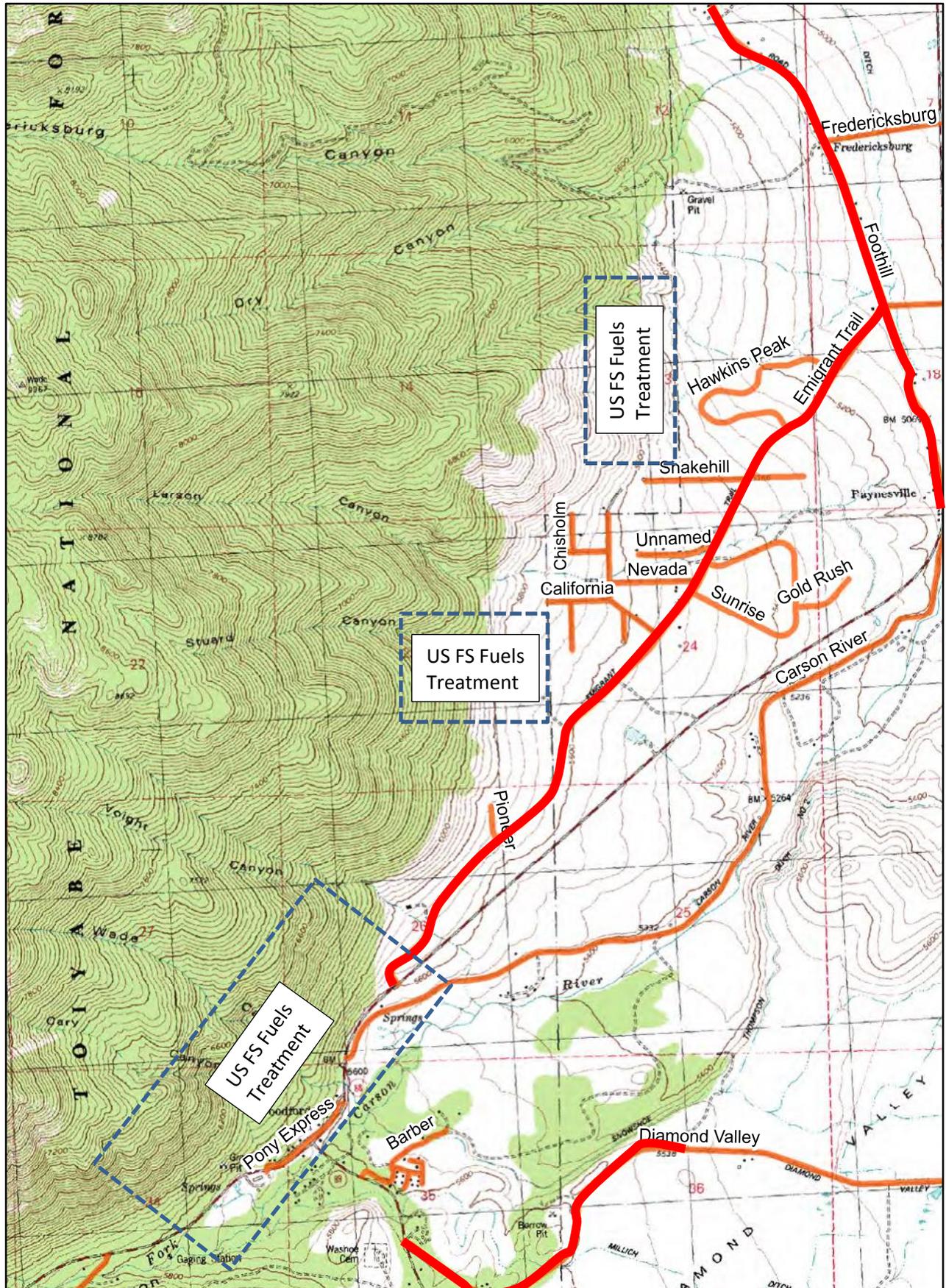
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Alpine County Fuels Reduction Project Topographic Map

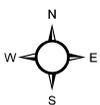
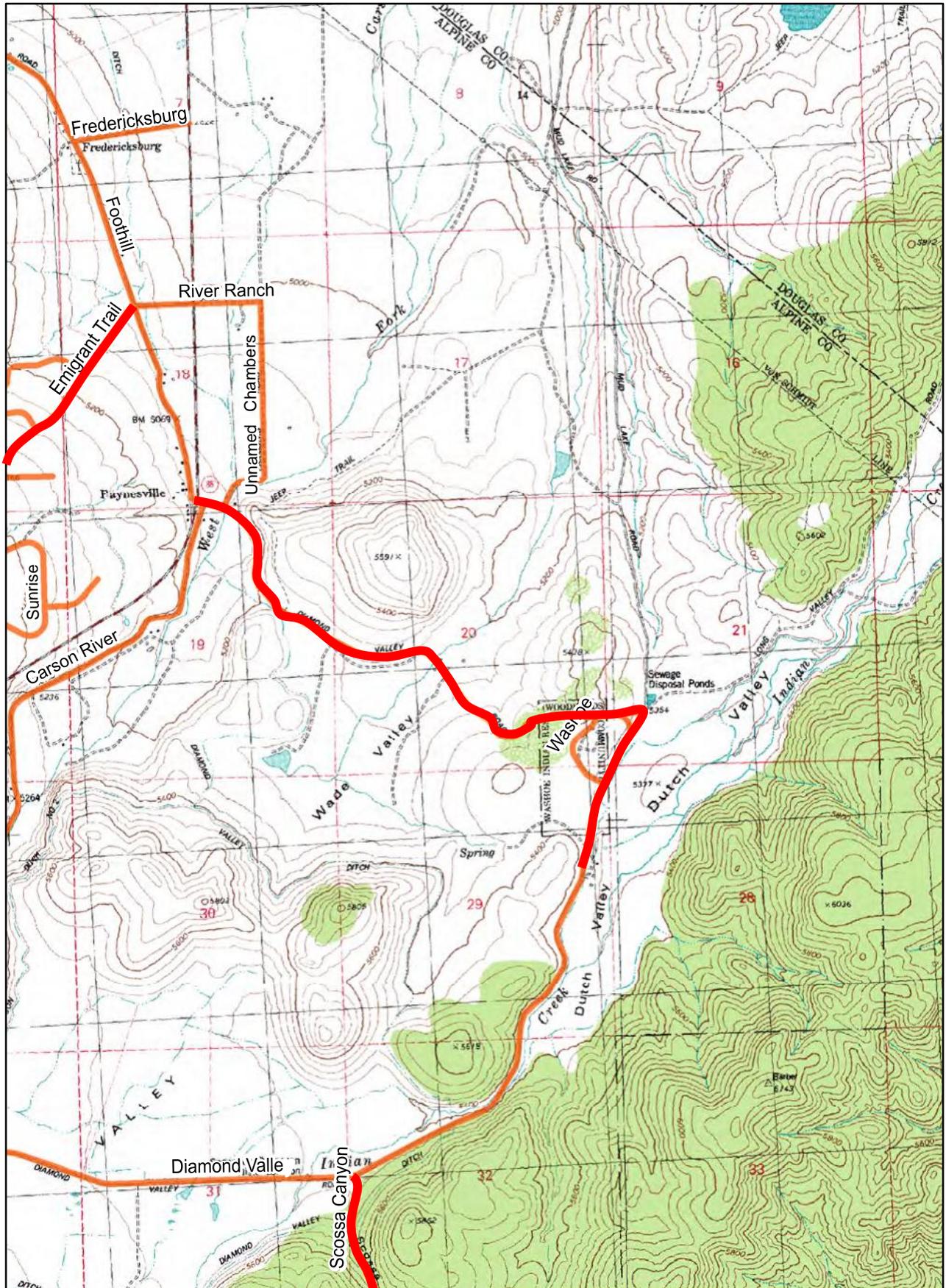
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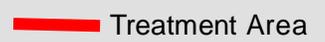


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Alpine County Fuels Reduction Project Topographic Map

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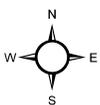
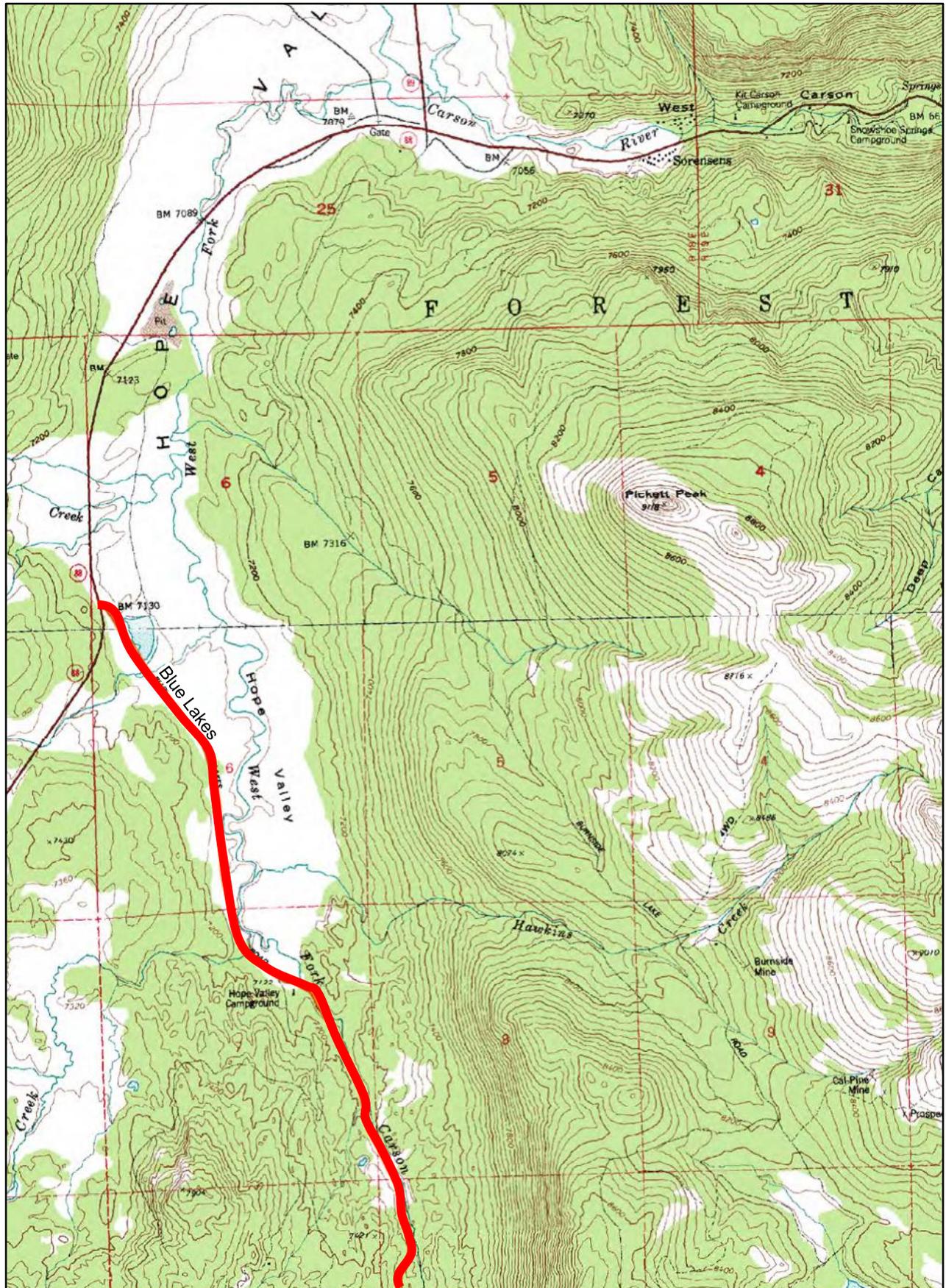


 Treatment Area

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Alpine County Fuels Reduction Project Topographic Map

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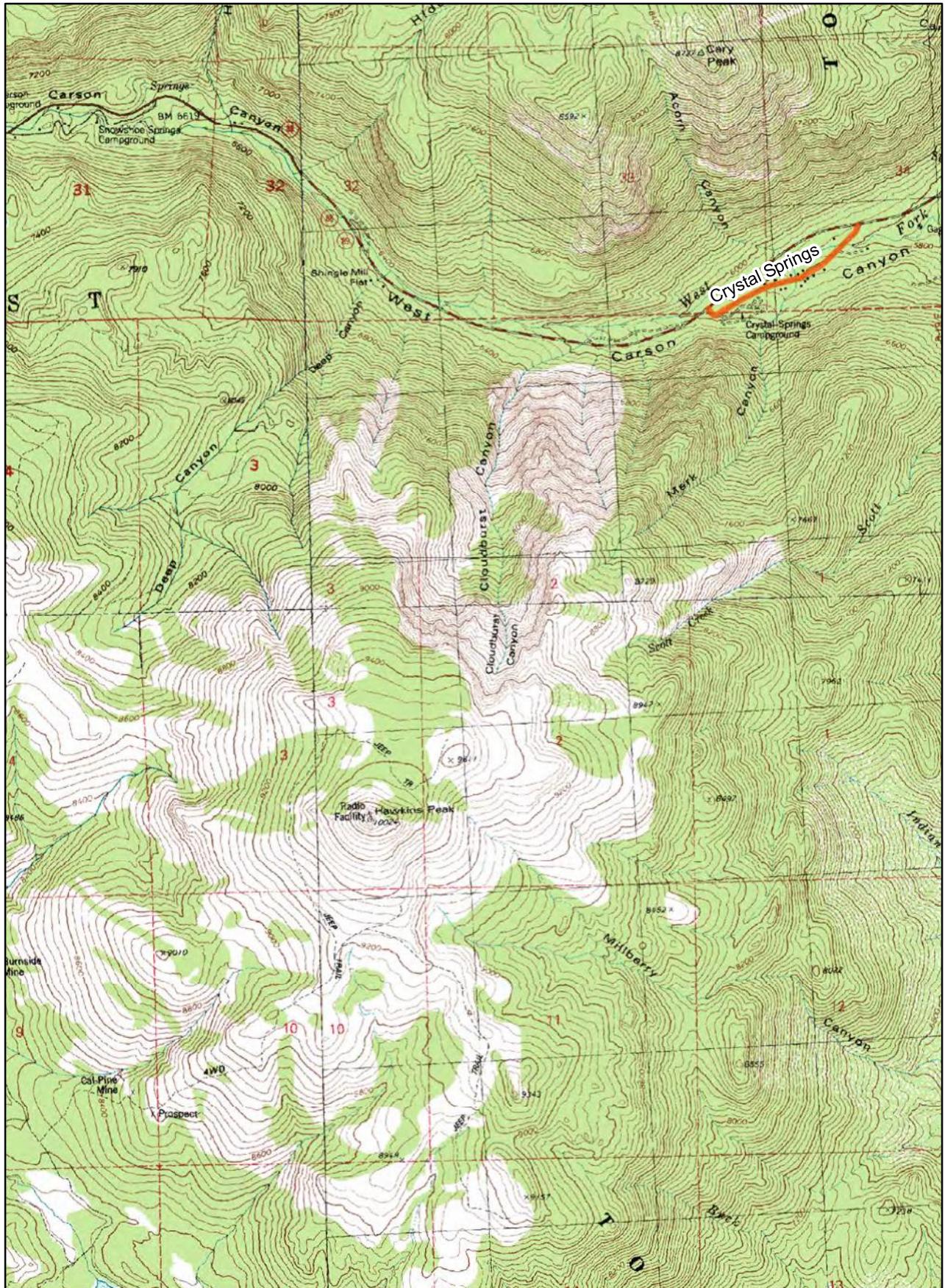


 Treatment Area

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Alpine County Fuels Reduction Project Topographic Map

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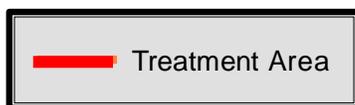
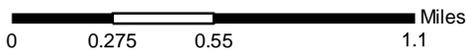
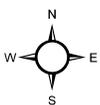
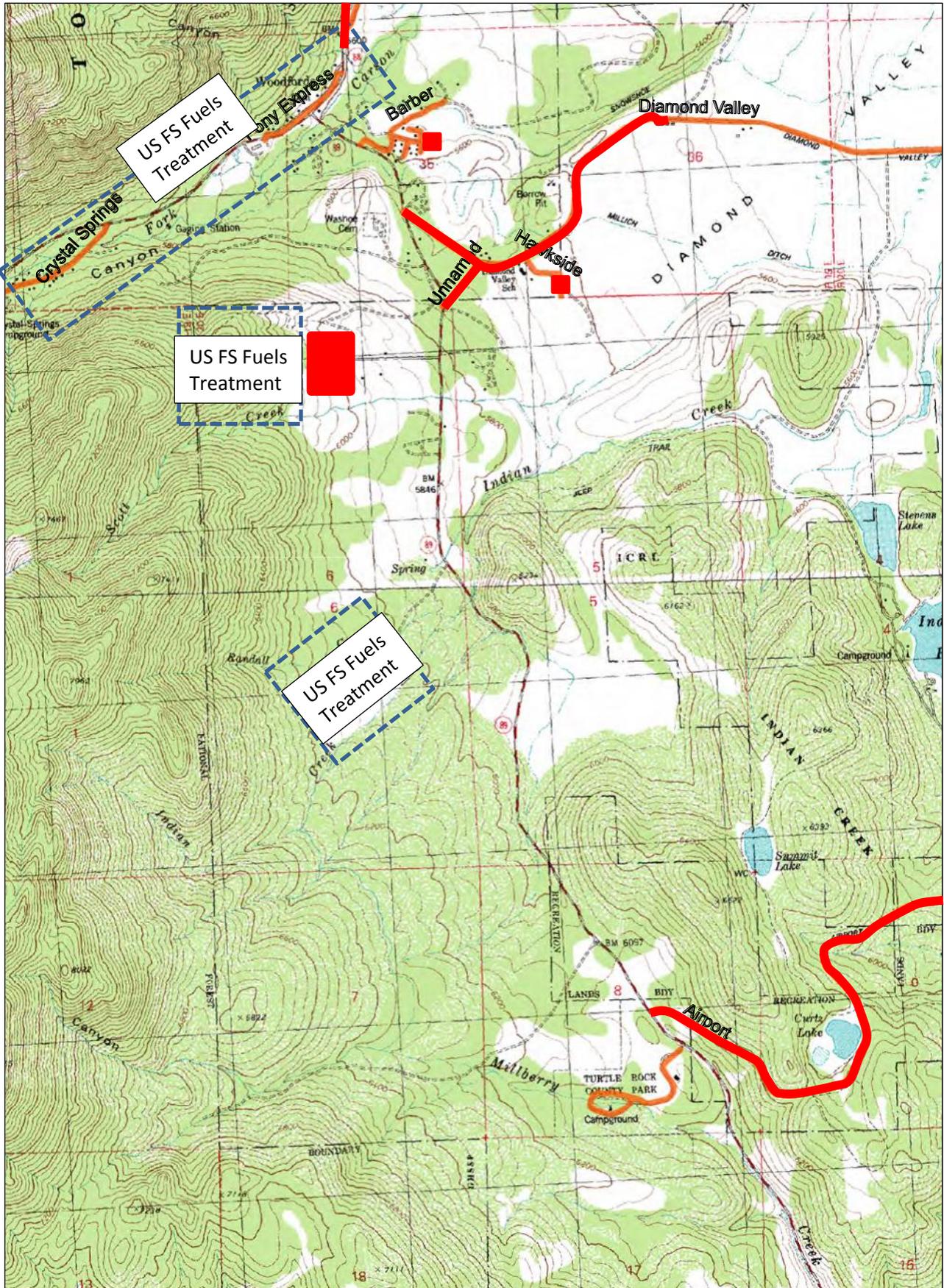
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 Treatment Area

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Alpine County Fuels Reduction Project Topographic Map

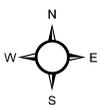
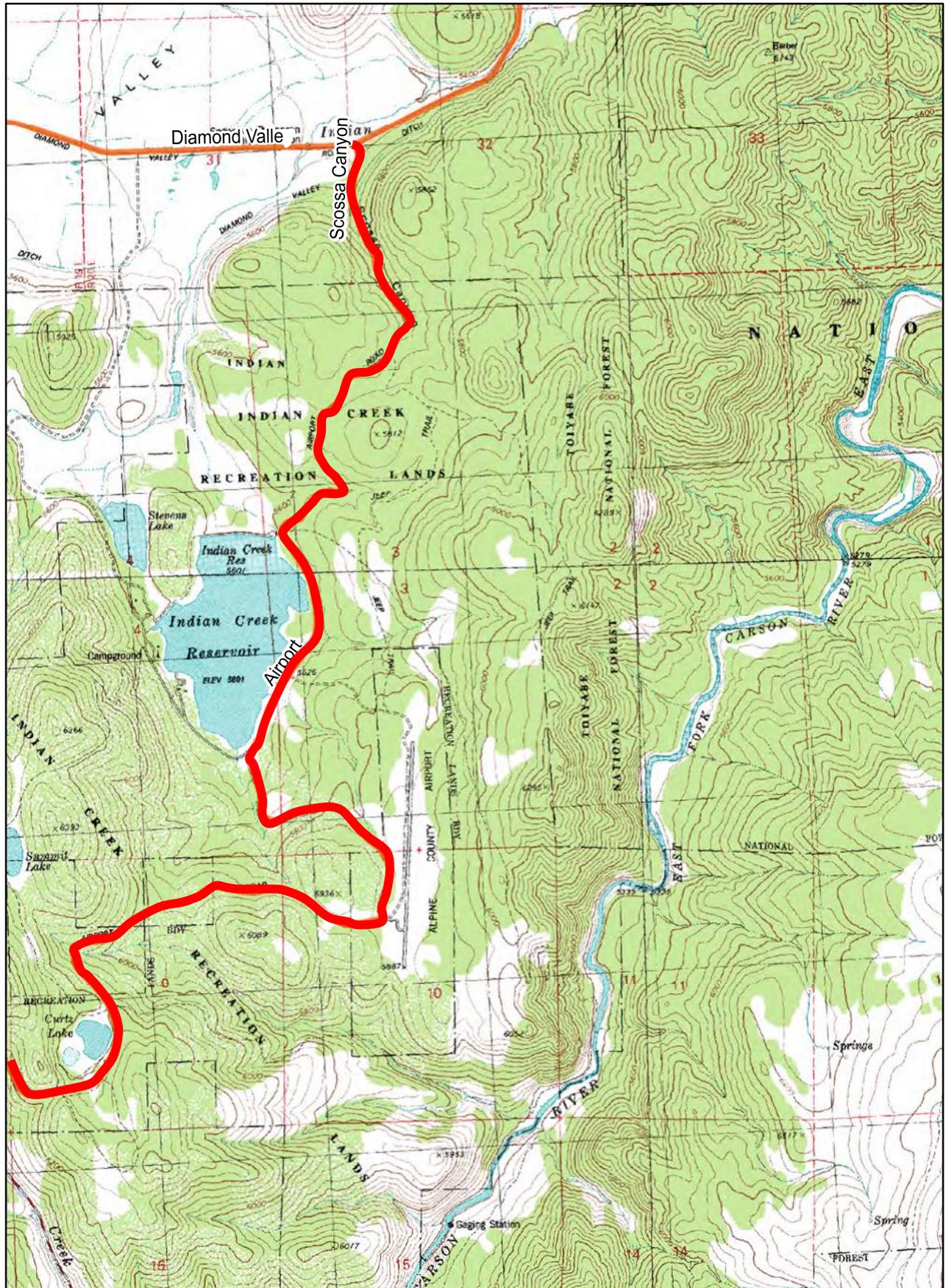
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Alpine County Fuels Reduction Project Topographic Map

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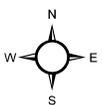
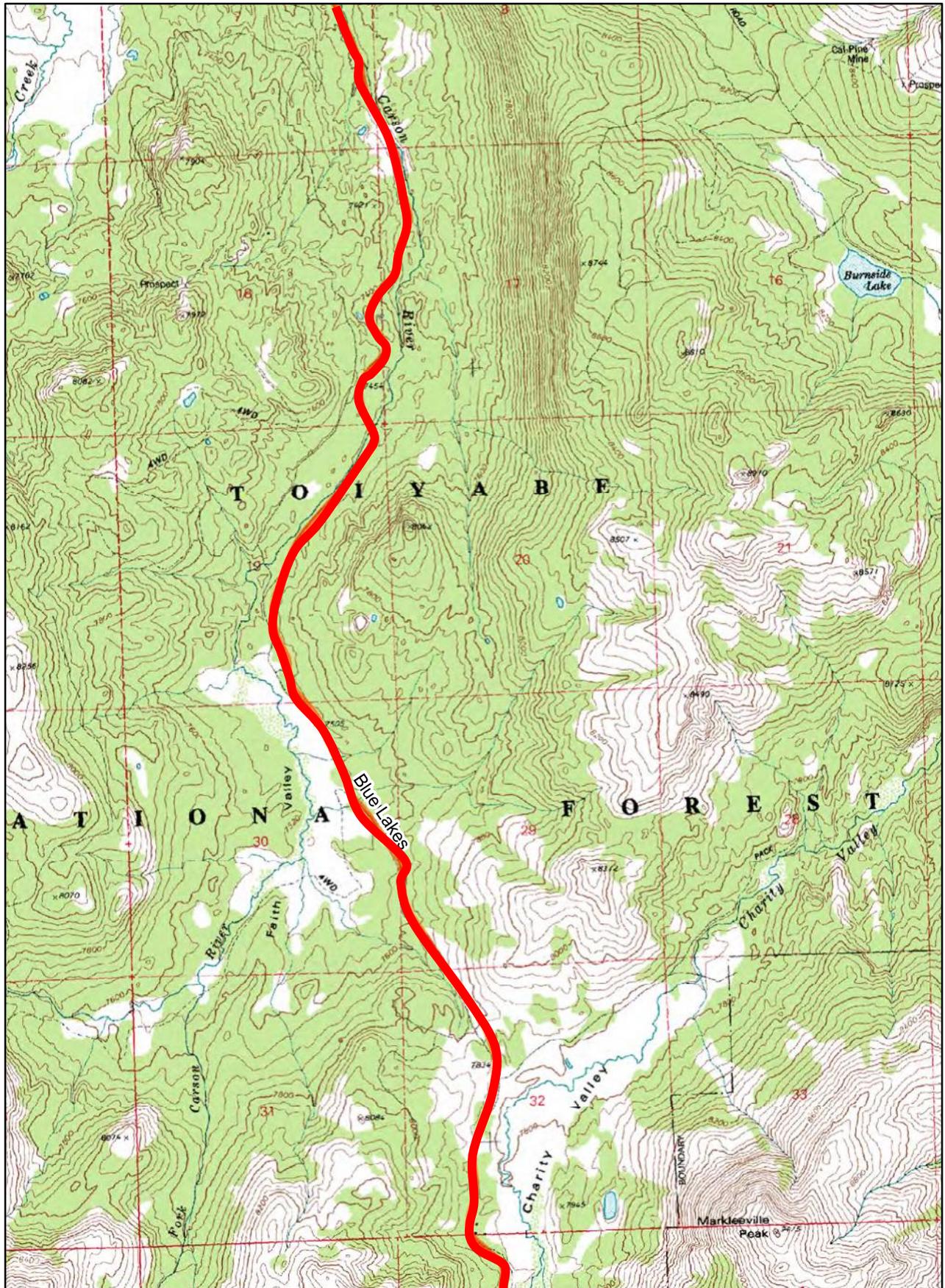


 Treatment Area

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Alpine County Fuels Reduction Project Topographic Map

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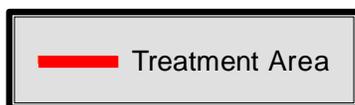
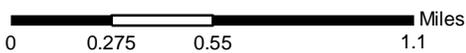
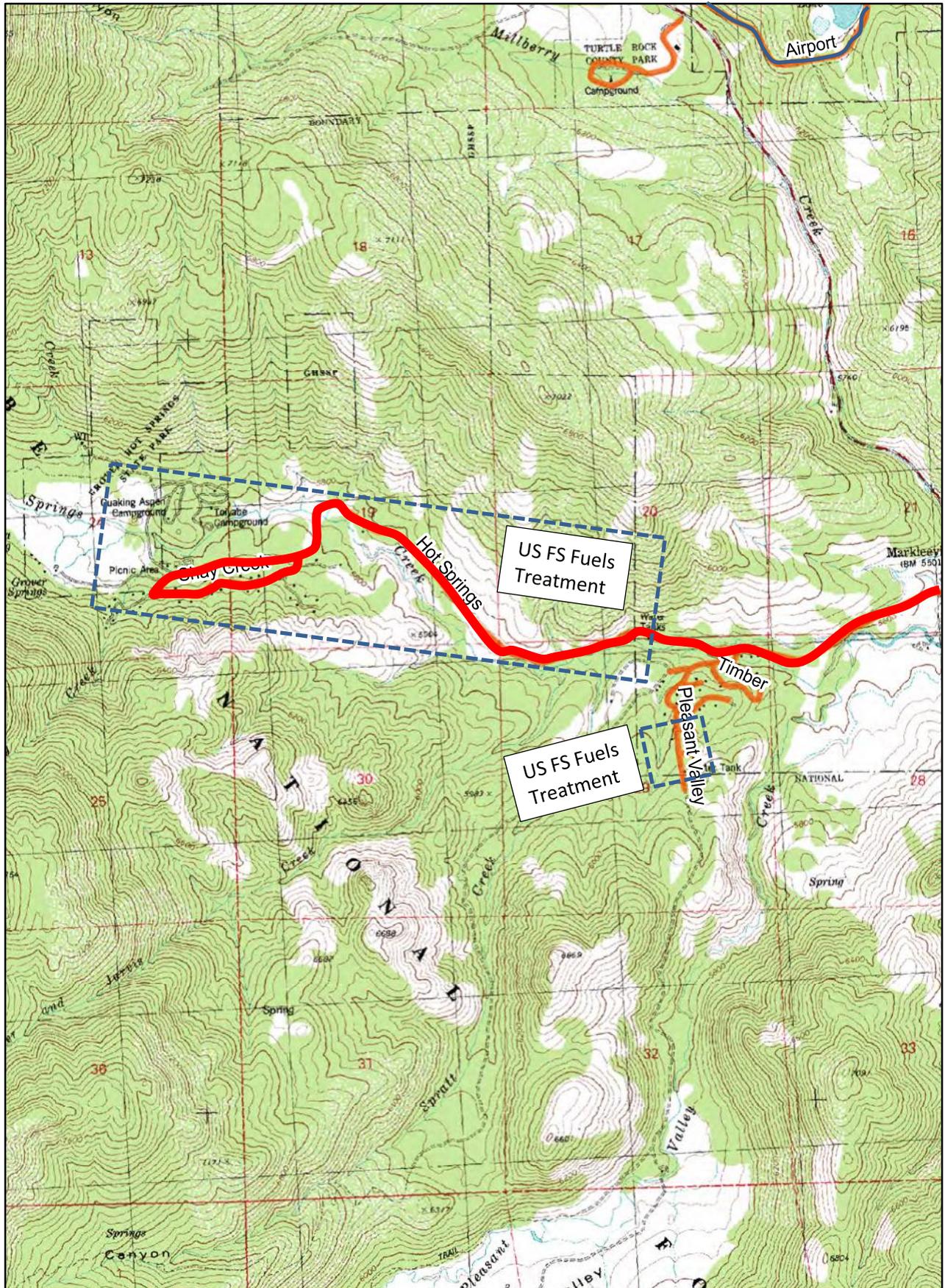
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Alpine County Fuels Reduction Project Topographic Map

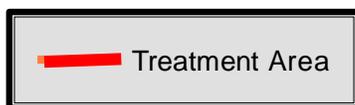
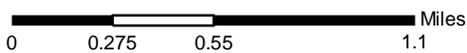
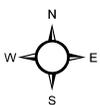
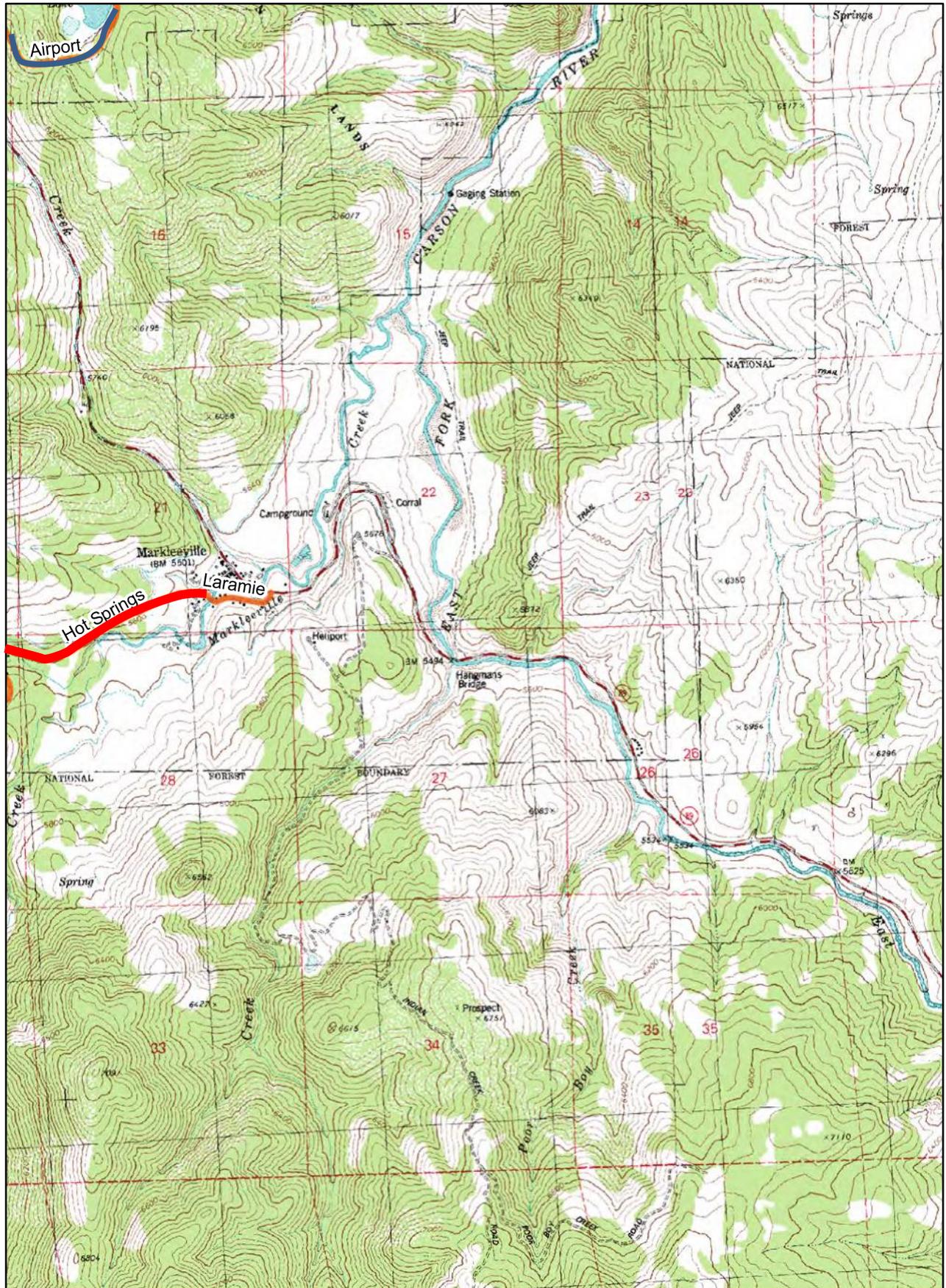
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Alpine County Fuels Reduction Project Topographic Map

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Alpine County Fuels Reduction Project Topographic Map

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Treatment Area

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