



U.S. Department of Housing and Urban
Development

451 Seventh Street, SW
Washington, DC 20410
www.hud.gov

espanol.hud.gov

Environmental Review for Activity/Project that is Categorically Excluded Subject to Section 58.5

Pursuant to 24 CFR 58.35(a)

Project Information

Project Name: Forest and Watershed Health Program, Rangeland Infrastructure Project One

Responsible Entity: California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD)

Grant Recipient (if different than Responsible Entity): Same

State/Local Identifier: HUD Grant # B-13-DS-06-0001

Preparer: Patrick Talbott

Certifying Officer Name and Title: Moira Monahan, Branch Chief

Grant Recipient (if different than Responsible Entity): Same

Consultant (if applicable): None

Direct Comments to: Patrick Talbott

Project Location: Rim Fire Disaster Burn Scar (Stanislaus National Forest), Tuolumne County, California

Description of the Proposed Project:

HCD is using CDBG-NDR funding awarded by HUD to reconstruct and enhance range infrastructure on Stanislaus National Forest land. This project will rebuild and expand rangeland fences and replacement of a cattle water trough. This infrastructure is critical for proper management and protection of forest lands. The repair and extension of this infrastructure will allow the United States Forest Service (USFS) to restore historic grazing rights for permittee ranchers. Fences will allow ranchers to properly manage their cattle across the Rim Fire burn scar area. The goal is to protect sensitive areas of the forest from impacts of grazing cattle. See attached map for locations of each of the ten project activities covered by this review. Also attached is the NEPA review for project activity completed by the USFS.

Level of Environmental Review Determination:

Categorically Excluded per 24 CFR 58.35(a), and subject to laws and authorities at §58.5.

Funding Information

Grant Number	HUD Program	Funding Award
B-13-DS-06 001	CDBG-NDR	\$70,000,000

Estimated Total HUD Funded Project Amount:
\$ 840,000

Estimated Total Project Cost (HUD and non-HUD funds) [24 CFR 58.32(d)]:
\$1,000,000

Compliance with 24 CFR 50.4, 58.5, and 58.6 Laws and Authorities

Record below the compliance or conformance determinations for each statute, executive order, or regulation. Provide credible, traceable, and supportive source documentation for each authority. Where applicable, complete the necessary reviews or consultations and obtain or note applicable permits of approvals. Clearly note citations, dates/names/titles of contacts, and page references. Attach additional documentation as appropriate.

Compliance Factors: Statutes, Executive Orders, and Regulations listed at 24 CFR §58.5 and §58.6	Are formal compliance steps or mitigation required?	Compliance determinations No
STATUTES, EXECUTIVE ORDERS, AND REGULATIONS LISTED AT 24 CFR 50.4 & 58.6		
Airport Hazards 24 CFR Part 51 Subpart D	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	This project is in a rural/forested area. No such sites exist within or near the project area.
Coastal Barrier Resources Coastal Barrier Resources Act, as amended by the Coastal Barrier Improvement Act of 1990 [16 USC 3501]	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Project is in the California Sierra Nevada mountains and there are no Coastal Barrier Resources on the west coast of the United States. Therefore, there will be no impact on any coastal barrier resources.
Flood Insurance	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	There are no occupiable structures associated with the proposed rangeland

<p>Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973 and National Flood Insurance Reform Act of 1994 [42 USC 4001-4128 and 42 USC 5154a]</p>		<p>infrastructure improvements. None of the activities will take place in a floodplain. Therefore, no flood insurance is required.</p>
<p>STATUTES, EXECUTIVE ORDERS, AND REGULATIONS LISTED AT 24 CFR 50.4 & 58.5</p>		
<p>Clean Air Clean Air Act, as amended, particularly section 176(c) & (d); 40 CFR Parts 6, 51, 93</p>	<p>Yes No <input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>None of the proposed activities would impact air quality. Project will not worsen local air quality and will not cause area air quality to exceed federal or state ambient air quality standards. Per consultation with USFS staff.</p>
<p>Coastal Zone Management Coastal Zone Management Act, sections 307(c) & (d)</p>	<p>Yes No <input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Project activity is in the Sierra Nevada mountains. It is not in or near any Coastal Zone as described in the Coastal Act Public Code 30103.</p>
<p>Contamination and Toxic Substances 24 CFR Part 50.3(i) & 58.5(i)(2)</p>	<p>Yes No <input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>This project is in a rural/forested area. No contaminated sites exist within or near the project area. Project activities will not create any hazards. Per consultation with USFS staff.</p>
<p>Endangered Species Endangered Species Act of 1973, particularly section 7; 50 CFR Part 402</p>	<p>Yes No <input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Project activities will not impact threatened and endangered species listed. Per consultation with USFS staff and their NEPA reviews. The project does not lie within a critical habitat unit for the California red legged frog per the Federal Register (March 17, 2010; Volume 75, Number 51) and is not within a proposed critical habitat unit for the Sierra Nevada yellow legged frog per the Federal Register (April 25, 2013; Volume 78, Number 80), the two listed species found within the Rim Fire area. Project site will be monitored for any endangered species and procedures used to ensure standard protection measures are taken.</p>

<p>Explosive and Flammable Hazards</p> <p>24 CFR Part 51 Subpart C</p>	<p>Yes No</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>This project is in a rural/forested area. The project activities are located at an Acceptable Separation Distance (ASD) from any above-ground explosive or flammable fuels or chemicals containers. Per consultation with USFS staff.</p>
<p>Farmlands Protection</p> <p>Farmland Protection Policy Act of 1981, particularly sections 1504(b) and 1541; 7 CFR Part 658</p>	<p>Yes No</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Project will not result in converting farmland to nonagricultural uses. Project will help preserve and restore rangeland agricultural activities. Per consultation with USFS staff.</p>
<p>Floodplain Management</p> <p>Executive Order 11988, particularly section 2(a); 24 CFR Part 55</p>	<p>Yes No</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Project activities will not have an adverse impact on floodplains. Rangeland fencing and watering trough replacement will not take place in floodplain areas or impact structures within a floodplain. Rangeland activities will be beneficial and reduce flood hazards and erosion in the area. Per consultation with USFS staff.</p> <p>Executive Order 11988 applies to Floodplain Management. Floodplains are found along stream channels throughout the project area. Implementation of this decision would maintain or improve the existing condition of these floodplains by maintaining or improving meadow conditions. The intent of Executive Order 11988 would be met since this project would not affect floodplains in the Rim Fire area.</p>
<p>Historic Preservation</p> <p>National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, particularly sections 106 and 110; 36 CFR Part 800</p>	<p>Yes No</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>HCD submitted a letter to SHPO on January 4, 2018 with a determination of no impacts on historic or cultural resources. SHPO had 30 days to respond and did not, therefore they concurred with HCD's determination.</p> <p>For archeological resources, no new post holes may be drilled prior to review by an archaeologist. No post holes may</p>

		be drilled within prehistoric sites. Per USFS staff consolation.
Noise Abatement and Control Noise Control Act of 1972, as amended by the Quiet Communities Act of 1978; 24 CFR Part 51 Subpart B	Yes No <input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	This project is in a rural/forested area. Project activities are not a "noise sensitive use" under HUD regulations. The project area is not urban and no existing residential units will be impacted by noise created from project construction activities.
Sole Source Aquifers Safe Drinking Water Act of 1974, as amended, particularly section 1424(e); 40 CFR Part 149	Yes No <input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No sole source aquifers exist in the project area. Verified per map of sole source aquifers.
Wetlands Protection Executive Order 11990, particularly sections 2 and 5.	Yes No <input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Project activities will not have a negative impact on wetlands. Construction of fences and cattle troughs will help preserve existing wetlands. Per consultation with USFS Staff. Executive Order 11990 requires protection of wetlands. Wetlands within the project area include meadows, stream channels and springs. This project is consistent with Executive Order 11990 since the purpose of this project is to maintain or improve the condition of wetlands in the project area.
Wild and Scenic Rivers Wild and Scenic Rivers Act of 1968, particularly section 7(b) and (c)	Yes No <input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	None of the proposed activities are to be conducted within a mile of the Wild and Scenic Rivers in the Rim Fire area. There is no expected change to the free-flowing quality of any of the designated or proposed Wild and Scenic Rivers. Maintaining high water quality is also needed to maintain Wild and Scenic values and this project is designed to protect water quality. ORVs of each river are expected to be unchanged from any of the proposed activities. Per consultation with USFS staff.

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE		
Environmental Justice Executive Order 12898	Yes No <input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The project activities will not lead to higher concentrations of low income persons or place families into areas that are unhealthy. The project may make job and learning opportunities available to low income persons through California Conservation Corps training programs.

Field Inspection (Date and completed by):

09/23/2017 - USFS Range Staff inspected the project locations.

Summary of Findings and Conclusions:

The project activities will not impact any of the critical resources identified above. Consultation with required state agencies has occurred and concurrence received. Implementation of this project will actually improve the forest landscape and help prevent negative impacts from cattle grazing across this landscape.

Mitigation Measures and Conditions [40 CFR 1505.2(c)]

Summarize below all mitigation measures adopted by the Responsible Entity to reduce, avoid, or eliminate adverse environmental impacts and to avoid non-compliance or non-conformance with the above-listed authorities and factors. These measures/conditions must be incorporated into project contracts, development agreements, and other relevant documents. The staff responsible for implementing and monitoring mitigation measures should be clearly identified in the mitigation plan.

Law, Authority, or Factor	Mitigation Measure
None	None

Determination:

- This categorically excluded activity/project converts to Exempt, per 58.34(a)(12) because there are no circumstances which require compliance with any of the federal laws and authorities cited at §58.5. **Funds may be committed and drawn down after certification of this part** for this (now) EXEMPT project; OR
- This categorically excluded activity/project cannot convert to Exempt because there are circumstances which require compliance with one or more federal laws and authorities cited at

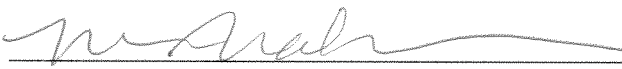
§58.5. Complete consultation/mitigation protocol requirements, **publish NOI/RROF and obtain “Authority to Use Grant Funds”** (HUD 7015.16) per Section 58.70 and 58.71 before committing or drawing down any funds; OR

This project is now subject to a full Environmental Assessment according to Part 58 Subpart E due to extraordinary circumstances (Section 58.35(c)).

Preparer Signature:  **Date:** 2/12/18

Name/Title/Organization: Patrick Talbott, Community Development Representative, HCD

Responsible Entity Agency Official Signature:

 **Date:** 2/13/18

Name/Title: Moira Monahan, Operations Branch Chief

This original, signed document and related supporting material must be retained on file by the Responsible Entity in an Environmental Review Record (ERR) for the activity/project (ref: 24 CFR Part 58.38) and in accordance with recordkeeping requirements for the HUD program(s).

**DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
DIVISION OF FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE**

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P. O. Box 952054
Sacramento, CA 94252-2054
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January 4, 2018

Julianne Polanco
State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO)
Department of Parks and Recreation
P.O. Box 942896
Sacramento, CA 94296-0001

RE: Determination of Impact on Historic and Cultural Resources from Rangeland Infrastructure Project One funded with Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) National Disaster Resilience (NDR) funding.

Dear Ms. Polanco:

The Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) is completing an environmental review of a proposed rangeland infrastructure project located in Tuolumne County within the Stanislaus National Forest (see attached map). The proposed scope of work consists of ten separate activities, most of which consist of replacing existing barbed wire cattle grazing fence, replacing a watering trough which were destroyed in the 2013 Rim Fire Disaster and extending one existing fence.

HCD is administering federal CDBG-NDR funding which has been awarded by the United State Department of Housing and Community Development (HUD) for these activities. The United States Forest Service (USFS) has been granted the CDBG-NDR funding to rebuild the fencing and trough, which will allow sustainable grazing to again take place in the forest.

The USFS has already conducted an environmental review per their National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) regulations, policies and procedures. HCD must conduct its own NEPA review of the proposed activities using HUD environmental review regulations.

Based on a review of the forested areas where fences are to be rebuilt, it was determined that there are no structures impacted and more importantly no historic structures. In addition, the USFS conducts annual Tribal consultations for proposed projects and the proposed activities were discussed with local Tribes in 2015, see attached USFS flyer on activities covered by the consultation and list of Tribes who were contacted/consulted. The Tuolumne Band of Mi-Wuk requested a field trip of some of the sites where activities were to take place and they requested a draft and final memo of the USFS Decision Memo. The Tribe expressed strong verbal support for the projects under consultation.

Based on the fact that there are no structures in the forest where the fence and trough replacement will take place and based the fact that no cultural resources were identified via tribal consultation, HCD has made the determination that there will be no impact on historic or

cultural resources from the proposed actions. If however, cultural resources are found as part of completing the proposed rangeland improvement activities, then all work will stop until such time as the resources have been properly dealt with.

Pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and specifically to **36 CFR 800.4**, regarding the identification of historic resources, HCD requests that you review our determination and verify that it is correct. If you agree with our determination, then we will proceed with completion of the NEPA review and begin the rangeland improvement project.

If you have questions or comments about the enclosed documentation then feel free to contact me at: Patrick.talbott@hcd.ca.gov or 916-263-2297. We appreciate your attention to this request for verification of our determination.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Patrick Talbott', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Patrick Talbott,
CDBG-NDR Contract Manager

Cc: Karen Patterson, Federal Fiscal Section Chief

Stanislaus National Forest - HUD Range Infrastructure (Project 1)



Number	Proposed Action
1	Repair allotment boundary fence from Thompson Meadow to Marble Mountain
2	Repair existing fence at Thompson Meadow
3	Repair existing fences at John's and Long John's Meadows
4	Repair existing fence at Wet Meadow
5	Repair existing fences at Fermon's Meadows
6	Repair existing drift fence at Jawbone Lava Cap
7	Repair existing fence at Jawbone Station
8	Construct new fence extension at Jawbone Station towards Meyer's Ranch
9	Repair existing fence at Abernathy Meadow
10	Replace existing trough at Pigeon Flat

NEPA Completed

- Facility Maintenance LTF - Existing Fences
- Rim Habitat DM - New Fence
- Facility Maintenance LTF - Existing Trough

Stanislaus National Forest - HUD Range Infrastructure (Project 1)



NEPA Completed

- Facility Maintenance LTF - Existing Fences
- Facility Maintenance LTF - New Fence
- ▲ Facility Maintenance LTF - Existing Trough

- | Number | Proposed Action |
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| 8 | Construct new fence extension at Jawbone Station towards Meyer's Ranch |
| 9 | Repair existing fence at Abernathy Meadow |
| 10 | Replace existing trough at Pigeon Flat |



Forest
Service

Stanislaus National Forest
Groveland Ranger District

24545 Highway 120
Groveland, CA 95321
209-962-7825
TDD: 209-962-6406
FAX: 209-962-7412

File Code: 1950

Date: February 26, 2015

Route To:

Subject: Rim Fire Facility Maintenance

To: Project Files

This memo provides documentation, pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), related to the Rim Fire Facility Maintenance project located on the Groveland and Mi-Wok Ranger Districts in Tuolumne County, CA. In response to facility repair and maintenance needs following the Rim Fire, the Forest Service proposed action includes the activities described below and shown on the attached map. The proposed action also includes the management requirements listed in Appendix A.

- **Administrative Sites:** 1) Replace/repair troughs; 2) Repair water tank at Wet Meadow; 3) Replace/repair fences.
- **Roads and Trails:** 1) Replace undersized culverts that provide barriers to aquatic organism passage and are susceptible to plugging and washouts due to post-fire increased stream flows with culverts that are capable of passing increased flow and aquatic organisms; 2) Hand-treat roadside weeds identified on the attached map by pulling, digging, weed-eating, or tarping; 3) Treat about 1 acre of roadside spotted knapweed with herbicide (glyphosate). 4) Conduct trail maintenance on route 19EV212 to minimize sediment movement into Ike Dye Meadow North and the Middle Fork Tuolumne River; 5) Block unauthorized route FR8612 and maintenance level 1 routes 1S26B and 1N31YB.
- **Recreation Sites:** 1) Plant native plants in Middle Fork Day Use Area, San Jose Camp and Sweetwater Campground and provide for plant protection, where needed; 2) Define the trail to the pool and block user-created trails at Rainbow Pool.

Scoping indicated that anticipated effects of this proposed action would be limited to minimal ground disturbance and no other additional impact on any natural resources will occur with the implementation of this proposed action.

My decision is to implement the proposed action described above including the management requirements. Force account (Forest Service) and/or contract labor will complete the approved work during the 2015 or 2016 field season using hand tools and heavy equipment (backhoe, tractor, truck, etc.).

This action falls within categories of actions that are excluded from documentation in an Environmental Assessment (EA) or Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and no extraordinary circumstances¹ would preclude use of the categories "Repair and maintenance of administrative sites" [36 CFR 220.6(d)(3)], "Repair and maintenance of roads, trails, and landline boundaries" [36 CFR 220.6(d)(4)], and "Repair and maintenance of recreation sites and facilities" [36 CFR

¹ The mere presence of one or more of these resource conditions does not preclude use of a categorical exclusion. It is (1) the existence of a cause-effect relationship between a proposed action and the potential effect on these resource conditions and (2) if such a relationship exists, the degree of the potential effect of a proposed action on these resource conditions that determines whether extraordinary circumstances exist.



APPENDIX A

Management Requirements

The following management requirements apply to the proposed action. The first group (1) applies to all project activities. The remaining groups (2-10) list the specific activities and the requirements that apply that activity (in addition to group 1).

1. All Project Activities

Botany

- a. All equipment, including the earth moving tools and equipment, must be free of soil, mud (wet or dried), seeds, vegetative matter or other debris that could contain seeds in order to prevent new infestations of noxious weeds in the project area. Dust or very light dirt which would not contain weed seed is not a concern.
- b. Any new infestations of moderate to high priority invasive plant species discovered in project units will be evaluated for risk of spread and relevant management requirements will be implemented to prevent weed spread. Requirements could include flagging and avoiding and hand pulling to prevent seed set prior to implementation.
- c. When other projects are combined with these during implementation, either consult with District botanist for measures minimize weed spread or clean equipment between projects.
- d. Do not drive on Road 1S10 if road is moist and spotted knapweed was allow to go to seed or is currently in seed. Do not park in flagged weed sites near the intersection of 1S49 and 1N24.
- e. Except where noted below, all known or newly discovered occurrences of Sensitive Plants will be protected from restoration activities.
- f. When *Clarkia* or *Mimulus* sensitive plants are found in or near projects, activities may take place during the dry, non-growing period for those species in situations which the District Botanist determines.
- g. There are many areas of suitable habitat in this project. Check with the District botanist if implementation must take place before the appropriate identification period for surveys (timing in table to be provided to specialists). Suitable habitat for possible sensible species will be flagged and avoided in this case.

Hydrology/Soils

- h. Prepare a project area Erosion Control Plan approved by the District Ranger prior to the commencement of any ground-disturbing project activities. Prepare a BMP checklist before implementation (Regional BMP 2-13).

Wildlife

- i. Ensure consistency with Forest Plan and Regional Conservation strategies for terrestrial wildlife.
- j. Notify the District Wildlife Biologist if any federally Threatened, Endangered, Candidate species, or any Region 5 Forest Service Sensitive species are discovered during project implementation so that Limited Operating Periods or other protection measures can be applied, if needed.

4. Replace Undersized Culverts

Archaeology

- a. An archaeologist must be present during culvert removal and replacement.

Botany

- b. **Granite Creek 1N96 culvert:** Keep disturbance on east side of creek as much as possible.

Hydrology/Soils

- c. Design the stream crossing to pass the 100-year flood flow plus associated sediment and debris. Armor to withstand design flows and to provide desired passage of fish and other aquatic organisms (Regional BMP 2-8 and National BMP Road-7).
- d. Use temporary filters, berms, barriers or other materials to collect sediment and prevent it from entering surface water. Set the minimum construction limits needed for the project and confine disturbance to within that area (Regional BMP 2-8 and National BMP Road-7).
- e. Minimize streambank and riparian area excavation during construction. Stabilize adjacent areas disturbed during construction using surface cover (mulch) or other stabilization materials. Keep excavated materials out of stream channels and floodplains. As needed, install silt fences or other sediment- and debris-retention barriers between the waterbody and construction material stockpiles and wastes (Regional BMP 2-8 and National BMP Road-7).
- f. To the extent possible, conduct operations during the least critical periods for water and aquatic resources: when streams are dry or during low flow conditions. Divert or dewater stream flow for all live streams during crossing installation. Restore flows to their natural stream course as soon as possible after construction (Regional BMP 2-8 and National BMP Road-7).
- g. Clean equipment used for instream work prior to entering the waterbody. Remove external oil, grease, dirt, and mud from the equipment and repair leaks prior to arriving at the project site (Regional BMP 2-8 and National BMP Road-7).
- h. Stabilize streambanks and other disturbed areas adjacent to the water resource following crossing installation. Use riprap or rock, wood, vegetation, and other native materials as appropriate (Regional BMP 2-8 and National BMP Road-7).
- i. Limit the size and extent of temporary parking and staging areas. Rehabilitate these areas immediately following use and block from unauthorized access (Regional BMP 2-10 and National BMP Road-9).
- j. Refuel and service equipment at least 100 feet from waterbodies. Report spills and initiate appropriate clean-up action in accordance with applicable State and Federal laws, rules and regulations. Remove contaminated soil and other material from NFS lands and dispose of this material in a manner according to controlling regulations (Regional BMP 2-11 and National BMP Road-10).

Recreation

- k. Inform public users when implementation and related temporary closures will occur through website posting, signage, and/or information available at the front desk.

5. Hand-Treat Roadside Weeds

Botany

- a. If *Clarkia australis* or any other sensitive plant is present where weeds will be treated, make a hole in the landscape cloth for it to grow or flag and hand weed if weed whacking. This applies to 16-013F, H, K, M, S and any other location where sensitive plants may be discovered in the future.

- e. Limit the size and extent of temporary parking and staging areas. Rehabilitate these areas immediately following use and block from unauthorized access (Regional BMP 2-10 and National BMP Road-9).
- f. Refuel and service equipment at least 100 feet from waterbodies. Report spills and initiate appropriate clean-up action in accordance with applicable State and Federal laws, rules and regulations. Remove contaminated soil and other material from NFS lands and dispose of this material in a manner according to controlling regulations (Regional BMP 2-11 and National BMP Road-10).

Recreation

- g. When possible, use natural materials for barriers, fencing, etc. that blend with surroundings.
- h. Inform public users when implementation and related temporary closures will occur through website posting, signage, and/or information available at the front desk.

8. Block Unauthorized Routes

Botany

- a. 1S13YB: Clean equipment and clothing, particularly boots and pants, before leaving site.

Hydrology/Soils

- b. Ensure road is effectively drained (e.g. waterbars, dips, outslipping) and treated to return the road prism to near natural hydrologic function. Treat and stabilize road surfaces through subsoiling, scattering slash, and/or revegetation. Reshape and stabilize side slopes as needed (Regional BMP 2-7 and National BMP Road-6).
- c. Do not operate equipment when ground conditions are such that excessive rutting and soil compaction could occur (Regional BMP 5-6).
- d. In rock borrow pits/quarries, limit the area of disturbance to the minimum necessary for efficient operations. Rehabilitate and stabilize sites after operations are complete to minimize risk of off-site movement (Regional BMP 2-12, National BMP Min-5).
- e. Limit the size and extent of temporary parking and staging areas. Rehabilitate these areas immediately following use and block from unauthorized access (Regional BMP 2-10 and National BMP Road-9).
- f. Refuel and service equipment at least 100 feet from waterbodies. Report spills and initiate appropriate clean-up action in accordance with applicable State and Federal laws, rules and regulations. Remove contaminated soil and other material from NFS lands and dispose of this material in a manner according to controlling regulations (Regional BMP 2-11 and National BMP Road-10).

Recreation

- g. Provide space for dispersed camping and parking when available.
- h. When possible, use natural materials for barriers, fencing, etc. that blend with surroundings.
- i. Inform public users when implementation and related temporary closures will occur through website posting, signage, and/or information available at the front desk.

Wildlife

- j. Consult with a Forest Service biologist before felling trees for blocking unauthorized routes in Protected Activity Centers (PACs). Blocking an unauthorized route is proposed in the Drew Meadow great gray owl PAC.

Rim Fire Facility Maintenance Project

Stanislaus National Forest
 Mt. Wok Ranger District
 Groveland Ranger District

Map Index

Legend



Facility Maintenance Index



Rim Fire Boundary



Replace/Repair Troughs



Repair Water Tank



Herbicide Weeds



Hand-Treat Weeds



Culvert Replacement



Campground Planting



Recreation Site Planting



Rainbow Pool Trail Work



Replace/Repair Fences



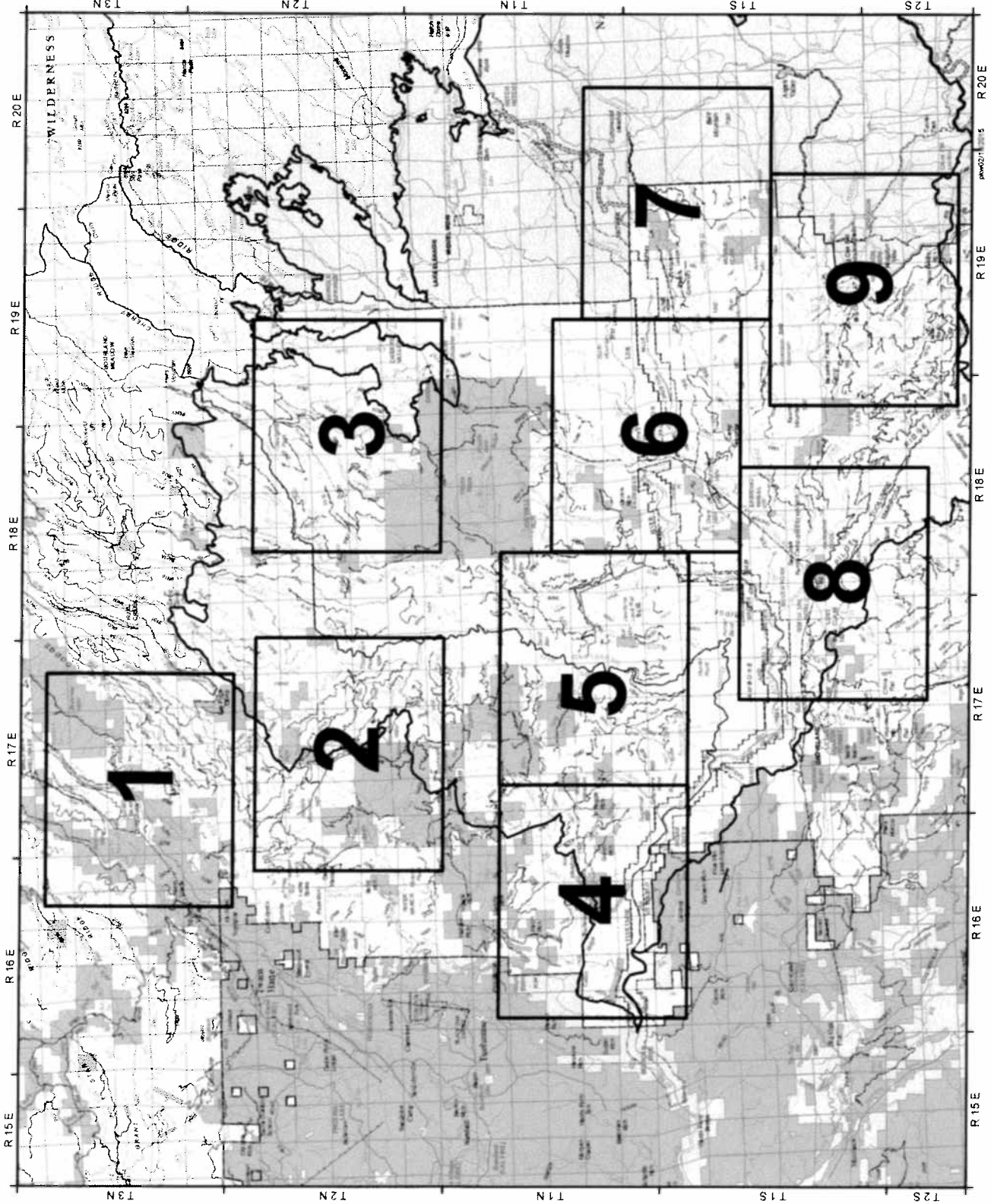
Motorized Trail Maintenance



Block Routes



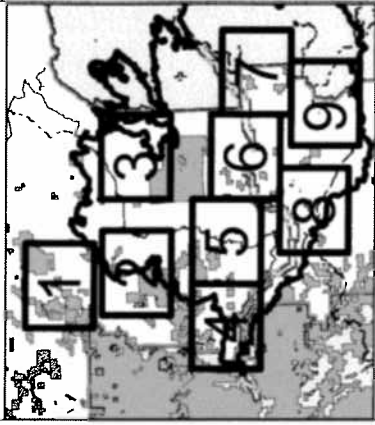
All landlines and symbols are approximate





Rim Fire Facility Maintenance Project

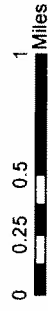
Stanislaus National Forest
 Mi-Wok Ranger District
 Groveland Ranger District

Map 1 of 9

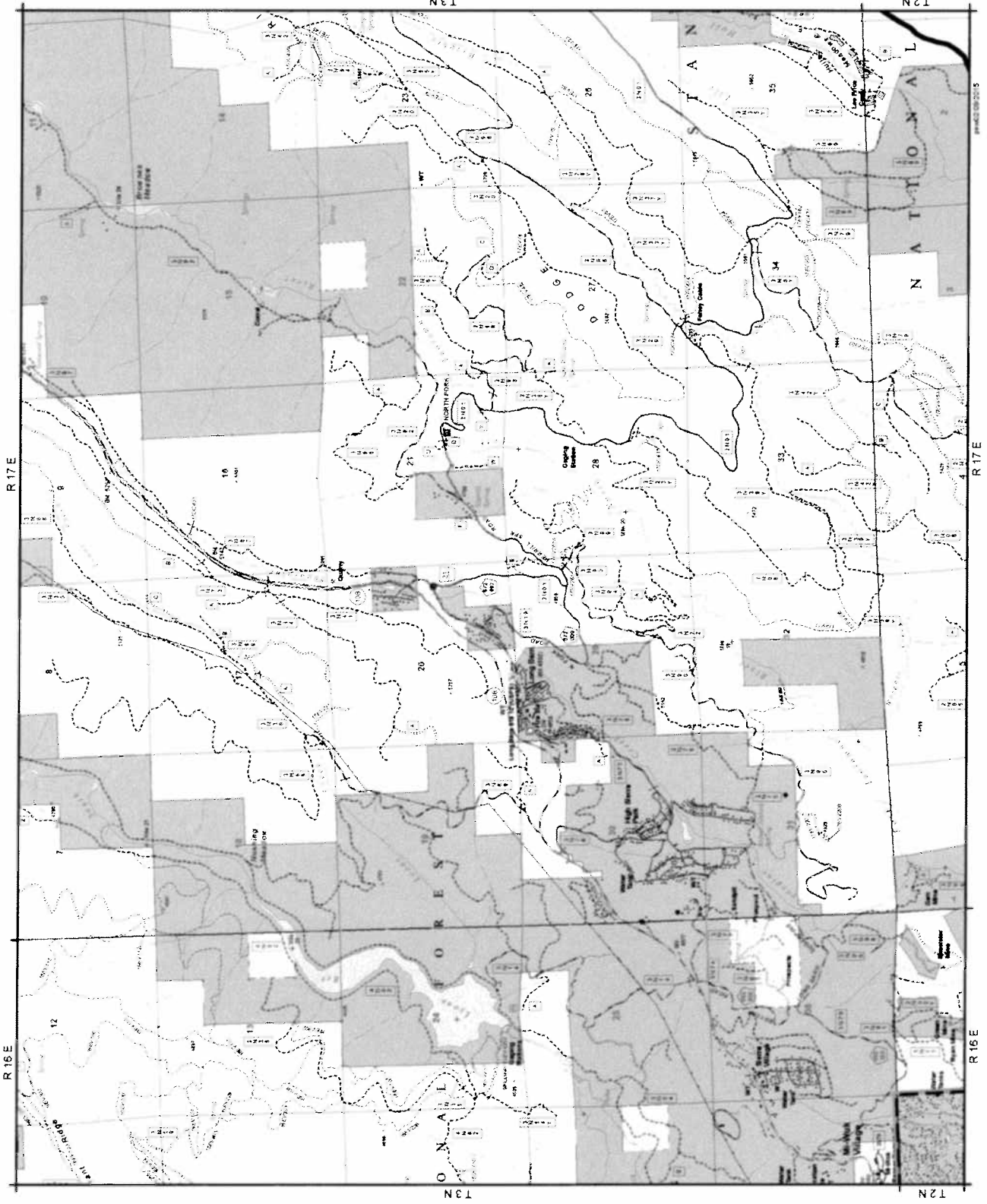


Legend

-  Rim Fire Boundary
-  Hand-Treat Weeds



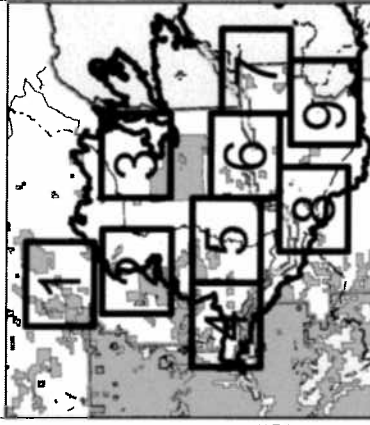
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Rim Fire Facility Maintenance Project

Stanislaus National Forest
 Mt-Wok Ranger District
 Groveland Ranger District

Map 2 of 9

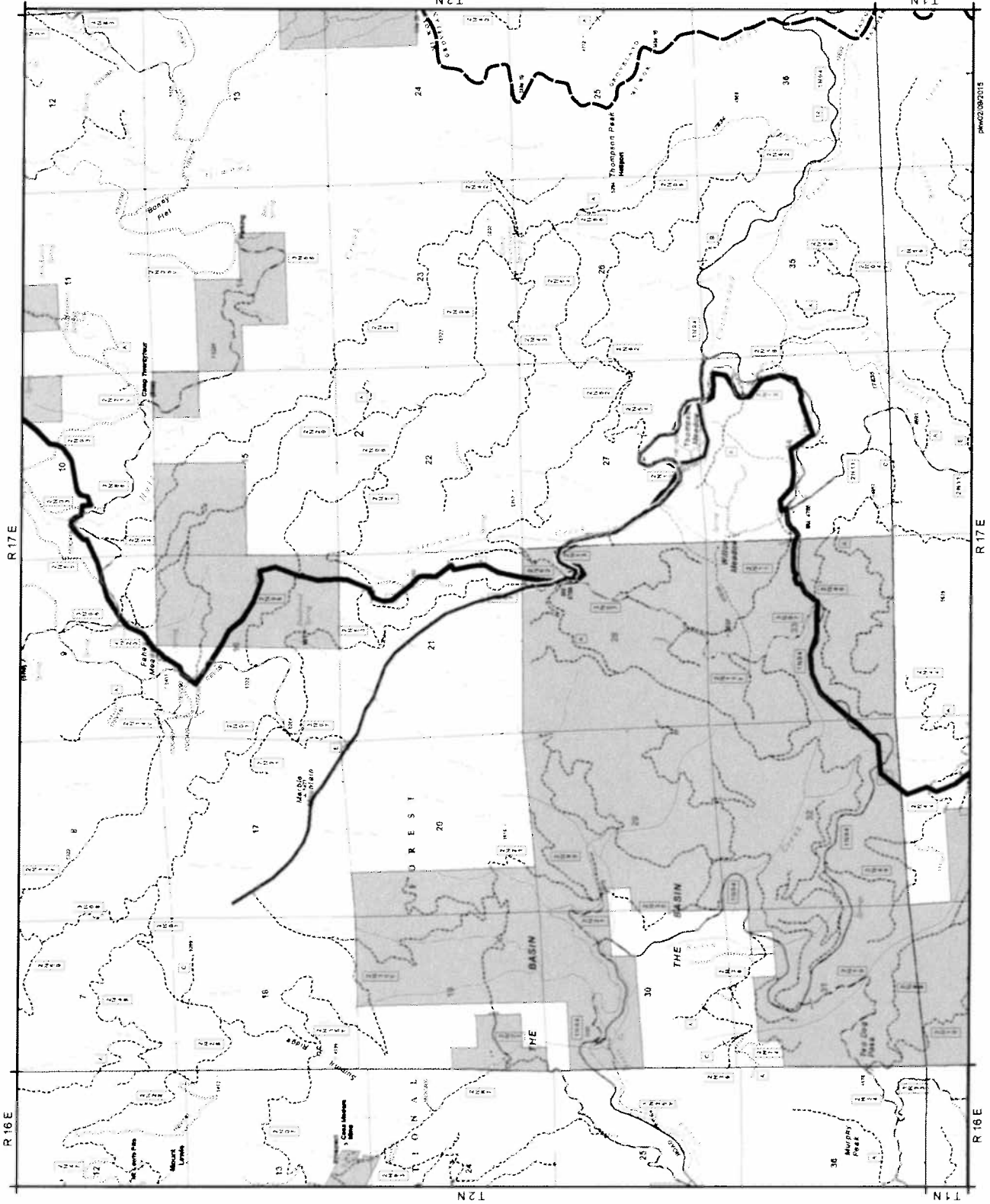


Legend

-  Rim Fire Boundary
-  Replace/Repair Fences



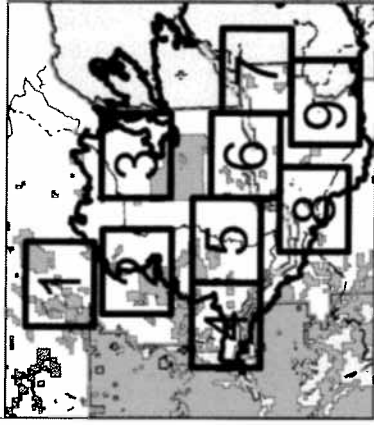
All landlines and symbols are approximate






Rim Fire Facility Maintenance Project

Stanislaus National Forest
Mi-Wok Ranger District
Groveland Ranger District

Map 3 of 9

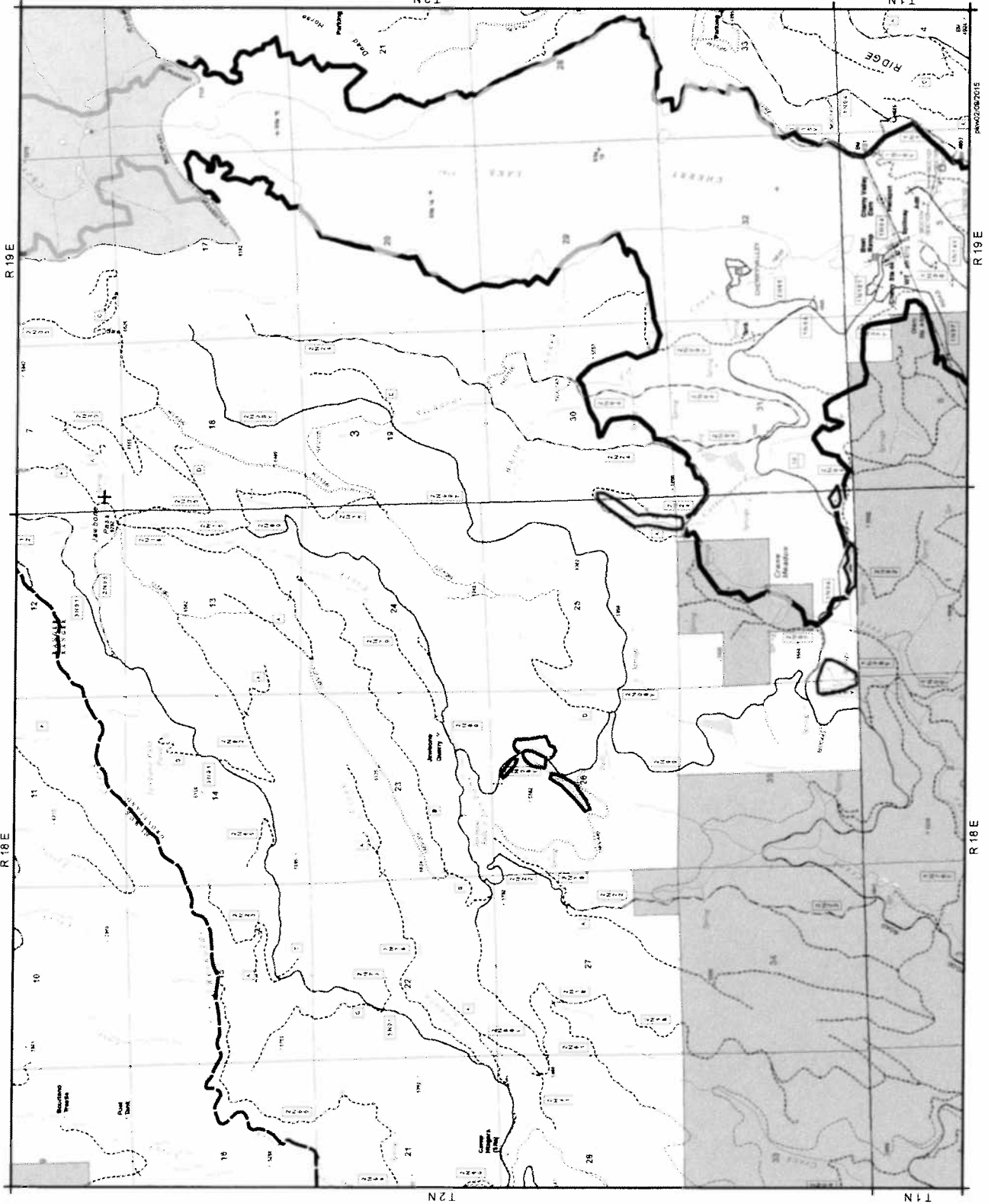


Legend

-  Rim Fire Boundary
-  Replace/Repair Troughs
-  Replace/Repair Fences



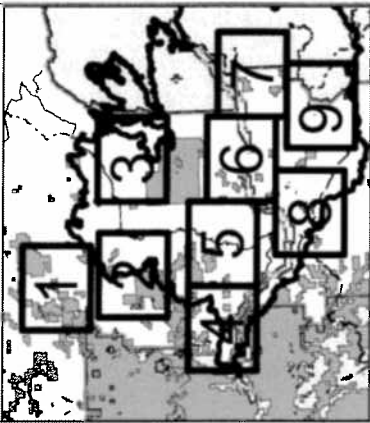
All landlines and symbols are approximate



Rim Fire Facility Maintenance Project

Stanislaus National Forest
 Mt-Wok Ranger District
 Groveland Ranger District

Map 4 of 9

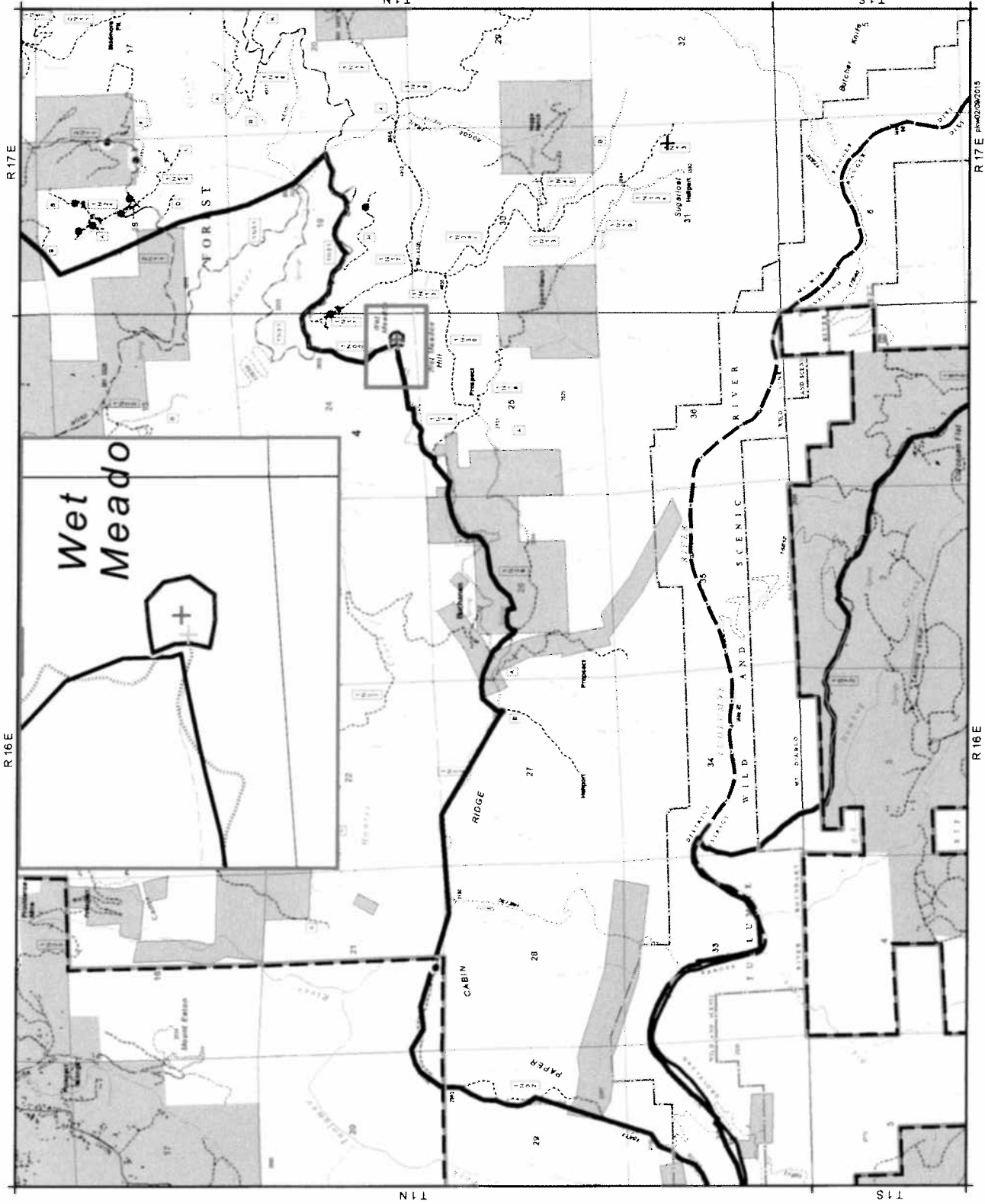


Legend

- Rim Fire Boundary
- Replace/Repair Troughs
- Repair Water Tank
- Hand-Treat Weeds
- Replace/Repair Fences



All landlines and symbols are approximate



R 17 E photo2013

R 16 E

T 1 N

T 1 S

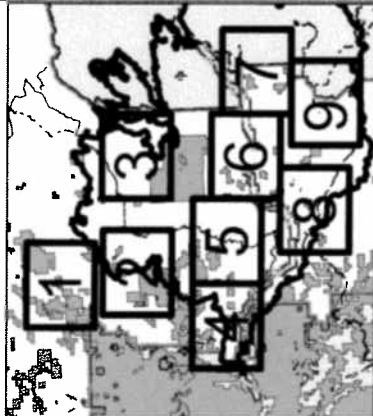
R 17 E

R 16 E

Rim Fire Facility Maintenance Project

Stanislaus National Forest
 Mi-Wok Ranger District
 Groveland Ranger District

Map 5 of 9

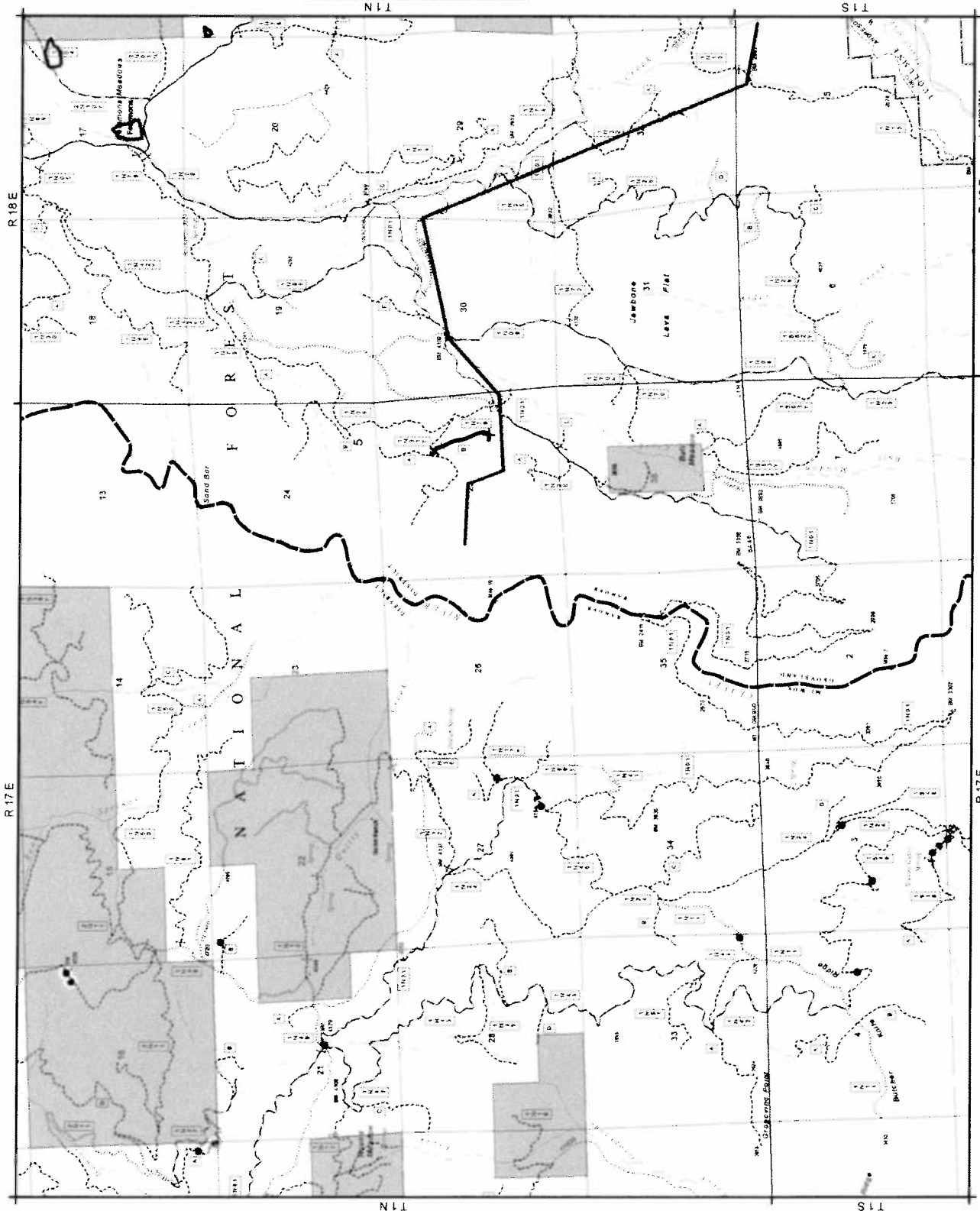


Legend

-  Rim Fire Boundary
-  Herbicide Weeds
-  Hand-Treat Weeds
-  Replace/Repair Fences
-  Block Routes



All landlines and symbols are approximate

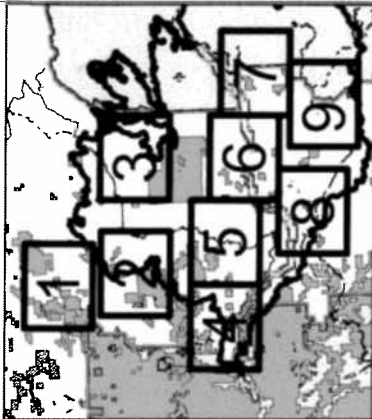


pw02022013

Rim Fire Facility Maintenance Project

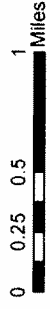
Stanislaus National Forest
 Mt-Wok Ranger District
 Groveland Ranger District

Map 6 of 9

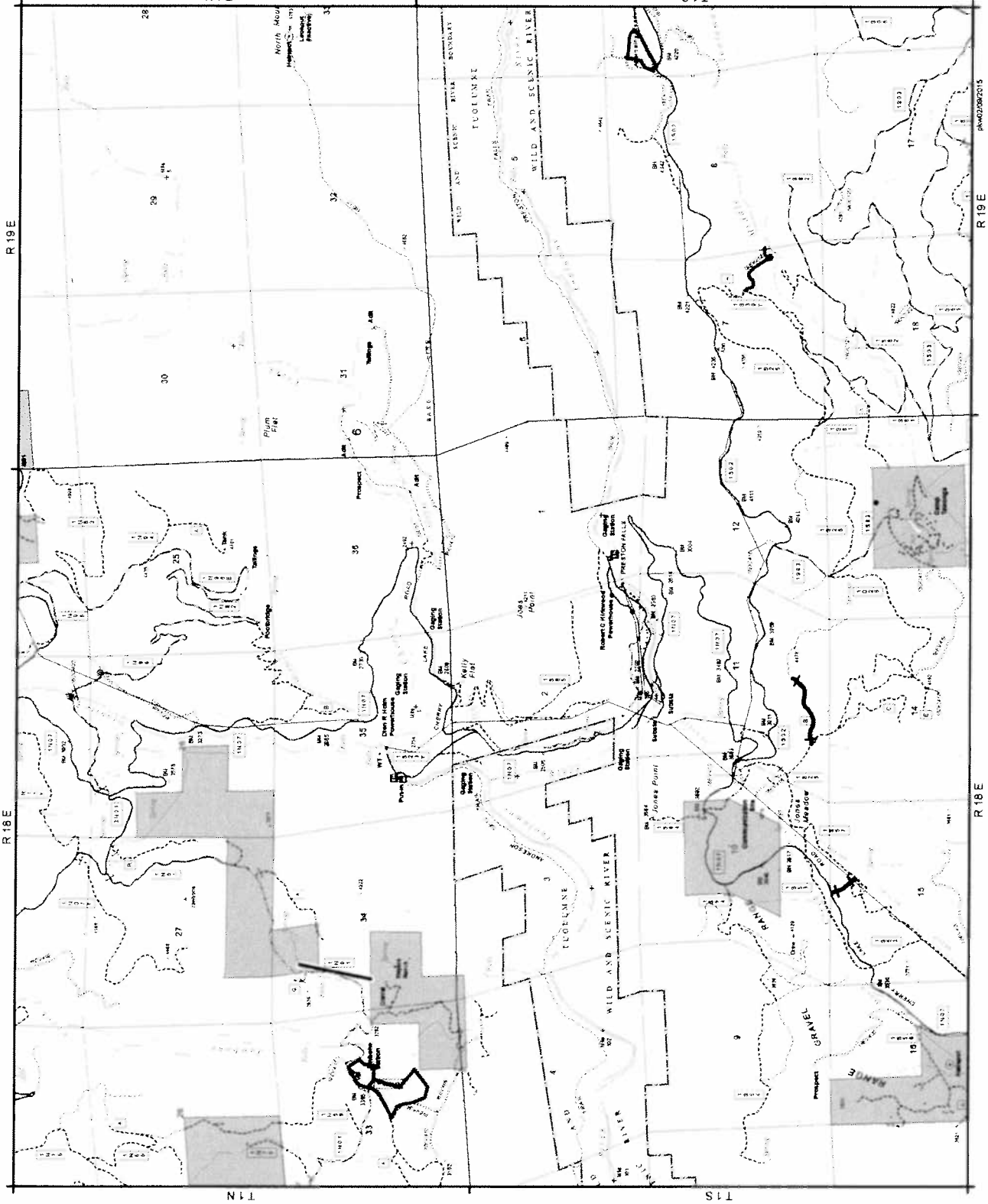


Legend

-  Rim Fire Boundary
-  Culvert Replacement
-  Replace/Repair Fences
-  Motorized Trail Maintenance
-  Block Routes



All landlines and symbols are approximate

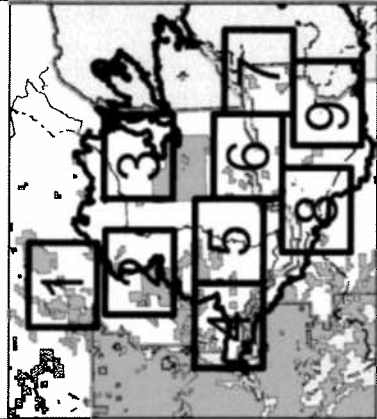


PAW02082015




Rim Fire Facility Maintenance Project

Stanislaus National Forest
 Mi-Wok Ranger District
 Groveland Ranger District

Map 7 of 9

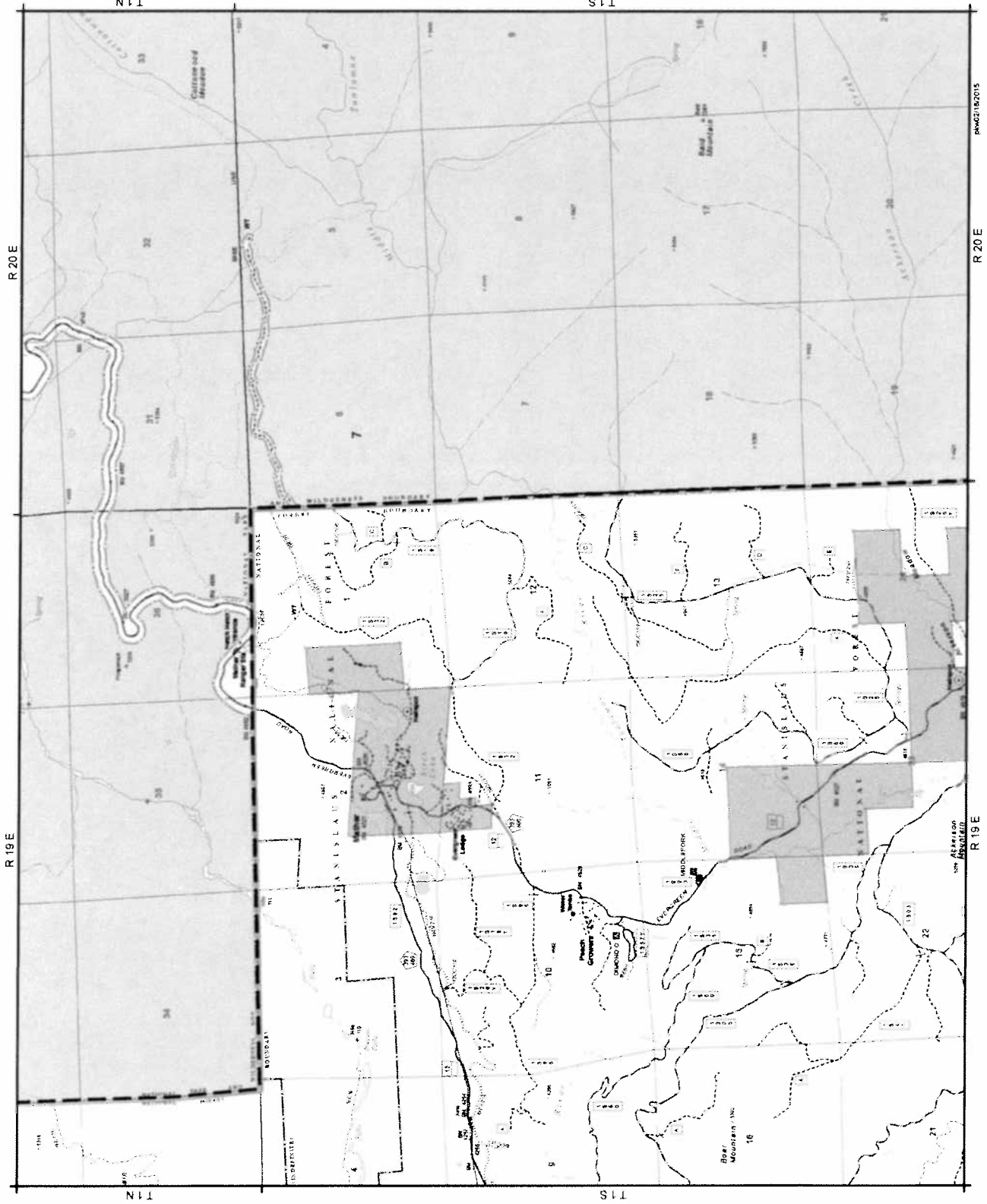


Legend

-  Rim Fire Boundary
-  Campground Planting
-  Recreation Site Planting



All landmarks and symbols are approximate



R 20 E

R 19 E

T 1 N

T 1 S

RMW21182015

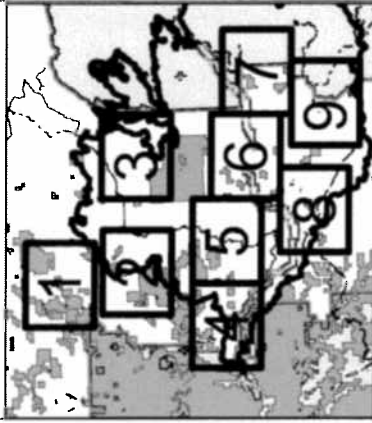
R 20 E

R 19 E

Rim Fire Facility Maintenance Project

Stanislaus National Forest
 Mt-Wok Ranger District
 Groveland Ranger District

Map 8 of 9

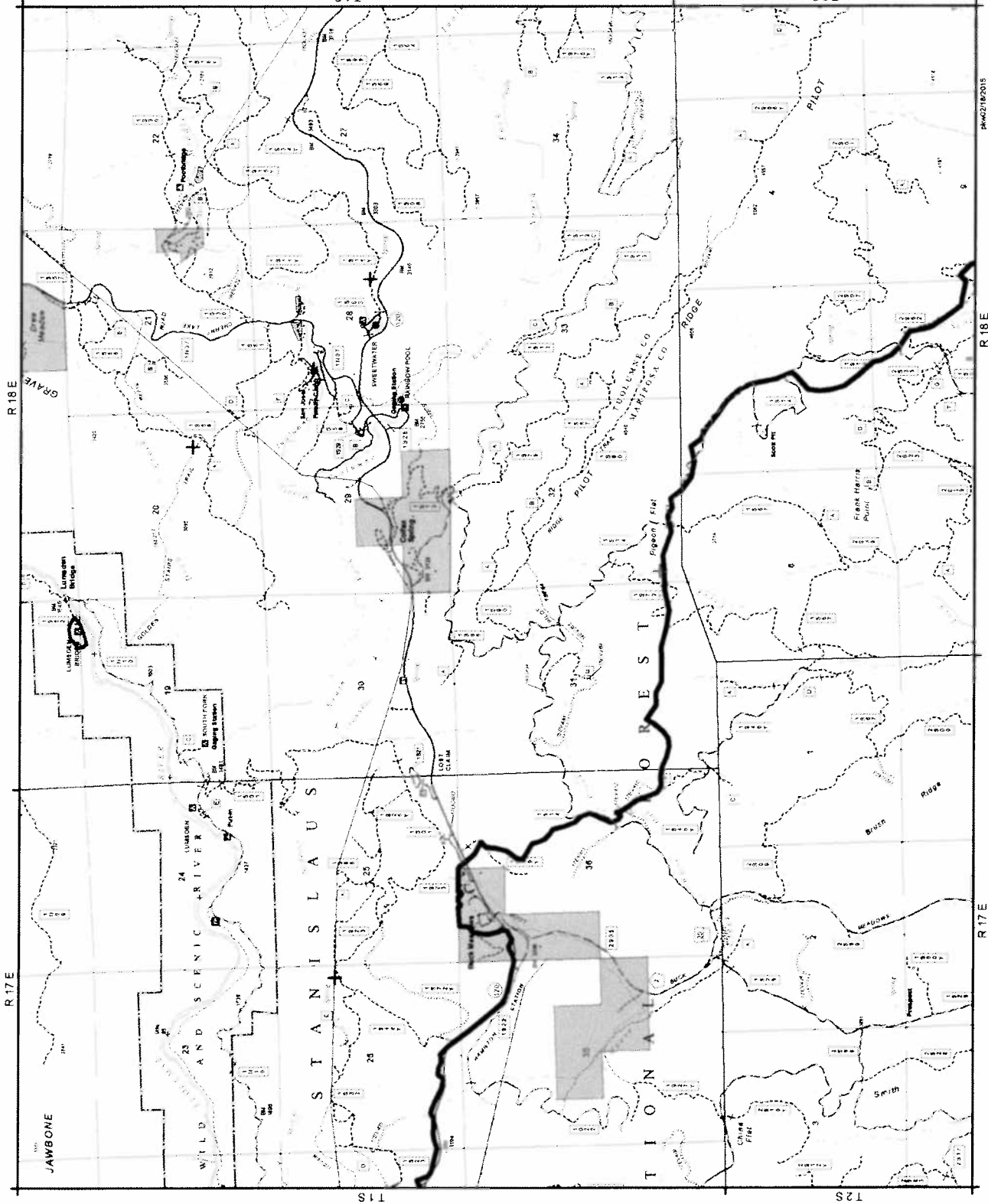


Legend

- Rim Fire Boundary
- Replace/Repair Troughs
- Campground Planting
- Recreation Site Planting
- Rainbow Pool Trail Work
- Replace/Repair Fences



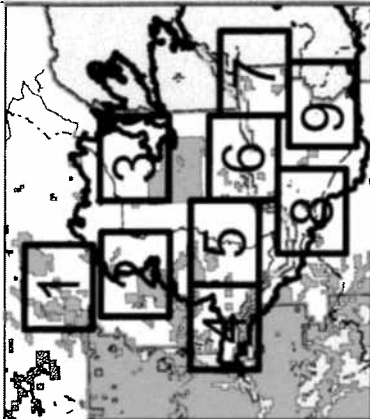
All landlines and symbols are approximate






Rim Fire Facility Maintenance Project

Stanislaus National Forest
 Mi-Wok Ranger District
 Groveland Ranger District

Map 9 of 9

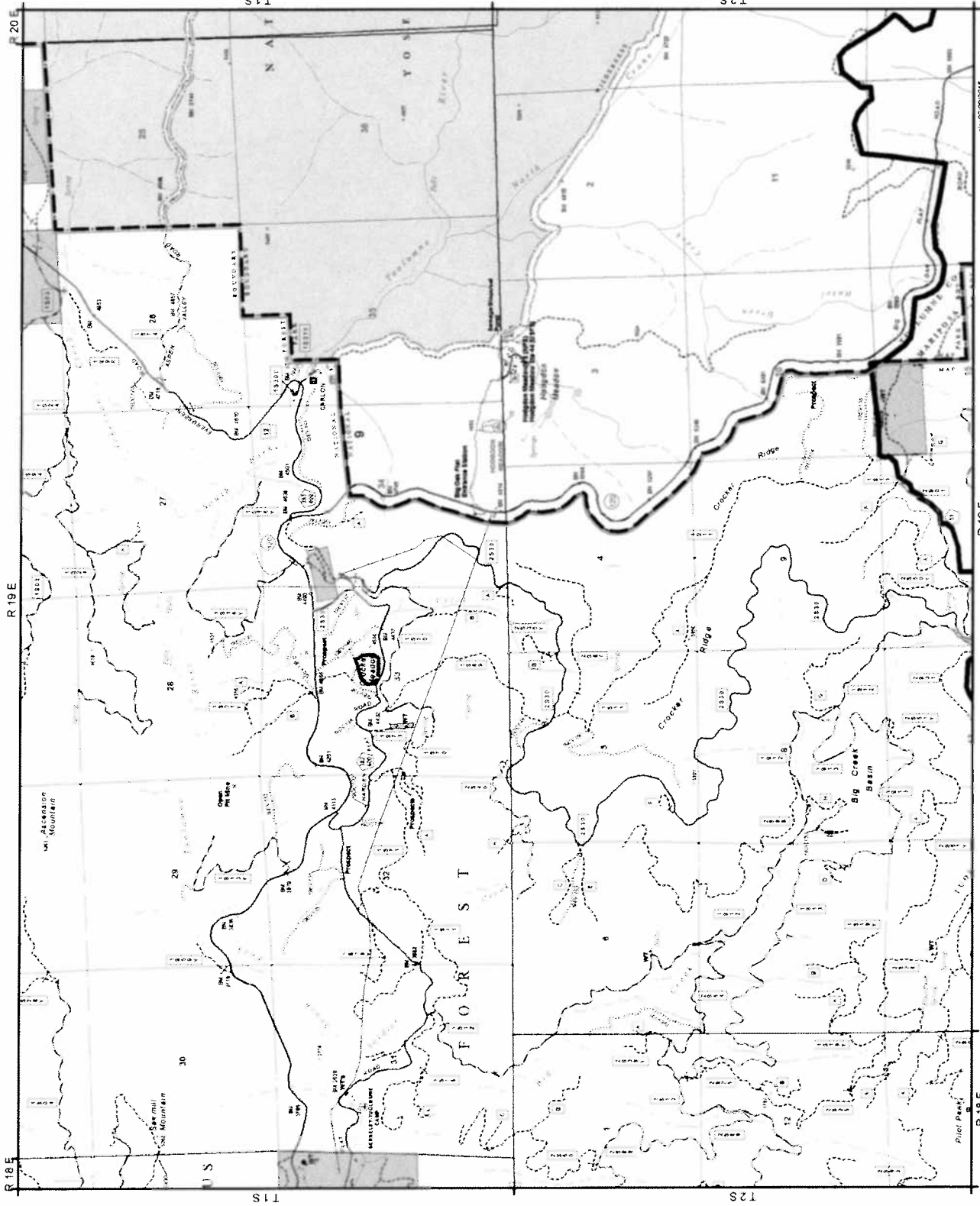


Legend

-  Rim Fire Boundary
-  Culvert Replacement
-  Replace/Repair Fences



All landmarks and symbols are approximate



pw022082015

R 18 E

R 19 E

R 18 E

R 19 E

T 1 S

T 2 S

T 1 S

T 2 S

Rim Fire Rehabilitation Project

Proposed Action - Scoping AND DETERMINATION
NOTIFICATIONS 4/27/15

Hard copies proposed action and maps sent out on 02/09/2015 to:

Tuolumne Band of Me-Wuk Indians
Kevin Day
PO Box 699
Tuolumne, CA 95379

Tuolumne Band of Me-Wuk Indians
Vicki Stone
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Tuolumne, CA 95379

Tuolumne County Planning Department
2 South Green Street
Sonora, CA 95370

Yosemite Stanislaus Solutions
PO Box 555
Sonora, CA 95370

Robert and Sherri Brennan
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Sonora, CA 95370

William and Mary Crook
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Sonora, CA 95370

Tim Erickson
1255 County Road E.
La Junta, CO 81050

Dan Erickson
P.O. Box 207
Snelling, CA 95369

Price Mailoux
9800 Rock River Road
Jamestown, CA 95327

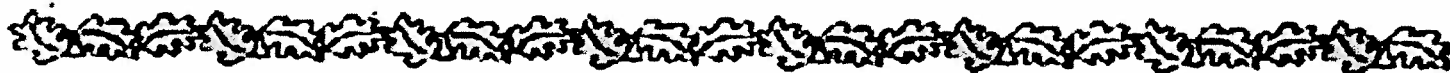
Scott Haydn-Meyer
8347 Valk Road
Oakdale, CA 95361

Randy Williams
P.O. Box 1331
Tuolumne, CA 95379

Brandon Baba
P.O. Box 294
La Grange, CA 95329

Electronic copies sent out on 02/09/2015 to:

Tuolumne County Board of Supervisors – bos@tuolumnecounty.ca.gov
Tuolumne County Resource Analysts – ccunha@co.tuolumne.ca.us
Daniel Richardson, Deputy County Administrator – drichardson@co.tuolumne.ca.us
John Keane, Research Ecologist, PSW – jkeane@fs.fed.us
Kristen Shive, regeneration study researcher – kshive@berkeley.edu
Tom Francis, Watershed Forester, SFPUC – TFrancis@sflower.org
Patrick Koepele, Executive Director, Tuolumne River Trust – patrick@tuolumne.org
John Buckley, CSERC – johnb@cserc.org
Karina Silvas-Bellanca, Sierra Forest Legacy - karina@sierraforestlegacy.org
Susan Britting, Sierra Forest Legacy – bitting@earthlink.net
Merlin Jones, Mariposa County Supervisor – mjones@mariposacounty.org
Brian, Wayland, SPI – Bwayland@spi-ind.com
Roger VanHoy, MID – customerservice@mid.org (attn. Roger Van Hoy in subject line)
Mike Vroman, Hetch Hetchy Water and Power – mvroman@sflower.org
Ken Kramarz, Camp Tawonga – ken@tawonga.org

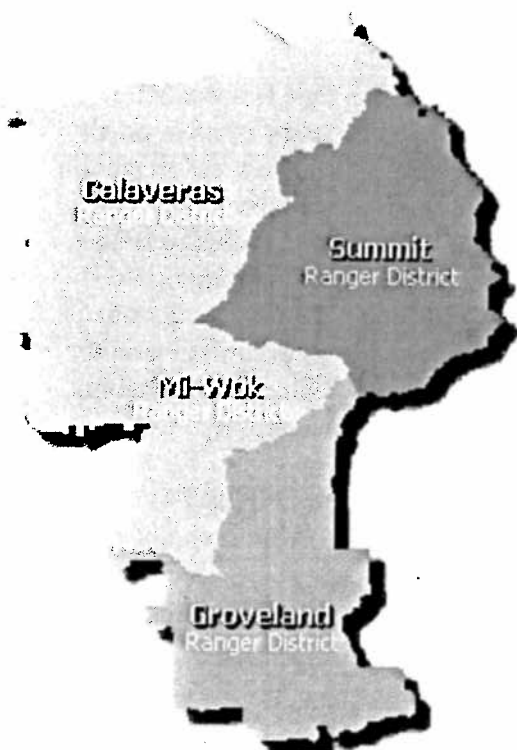


Groveland Ranger District

24545 Highway 120
Groveland, CA 95321
209-962-7825

Jim Junette, District Ranger
209-962-7825, ext. 524, jjunette@fs.fed.us

www.fs.fed.us/r5/stanislaus/groveland



Stanislaus National Forest

Location: The Groveland Ranger District is the southernmost district of the Stanislaus National Forest, and is divided between Tuolumne and Mariposa Counties. The south end of the district is the Merced River and public land administered by the Bureau of Land Management. Yosemite National Park is on the east side. The towns of Coulterville and Groveland are just outside of the southwest boundary, while the Tuolumne River and the Clavey River mark the northwest boundary. The Groveland District borders the Mi-Wok District on the west and north sides. On the north end is Cherry Lake and the Emigrant Wilderness. The Wild and Scenic Tuolumne River and State Highway 120 divide the

District. Over 1,800 cultural resources have been recorded, with much of the district having been surveyed. Three sites are listed on the National Register of Historic Places, including Bower Cave, the Niagara Camp railroad logging area, and the Flume and Siphon of the Golden Rock ditch.

~ 2015 PROJECTS ~

Rim Fire

1. **Rim Fire Hazard Trees EA:** The purpose of the Rim Fire Hazard Tree EA is to abate hazard trees that threaten public safety along Level 4 and 5 roads, private property boundaries, power facilities and campgrounds. The majority of roadside hazard tree contracts have been completed, with the only remaining hazard tree removal to be completed along 2S30 and 1S12. Biomass material created from roadside salvage operations has been contracted to be chipped and removed from the forest. (Groveland District contact John Martin)
2. **Rim Fire Recovery EIS:** Three large Fire Salvage Timber Sales are under contract primarily on the Groveland Ranger District, with some mandatory roadside salvage units on the Mi-Wok Ranger District. Administration for all salvage contracts north of the Tuolumne River are serviced by the Mi-Wok district office, and south by the Groveland district office. Work to be completed over the next six months includes road reconstruction, commercial timber salvage, biomass removal, erosion control work, and mastication. Additional service contracts for fuels reduction and biomass removal are in preparation and will be implemented within the next year. (Groveland District contact



John Martin).

3. **Rim Fire Reforestation Project:** The overall purpose of the Rim Fire Reforestation project is to create a fire resilient mixed conifer forest that contributes to an ecologically healthy and resilient landscape rich in biodiversity. The project will include reforestation, thinning existing plantations that survived the Rim Fire, deer habitat improvement and noxious weed eradication treatments on about 42,000 acres of National Forest System lands within the 2013 Rim Fire. Project activities will include various combinations of mechanical treatments (thinning, shredding, machine piling), prescribed burning, manual application of herbicides, and planting. Treatments are designed to return mixed conifer forest to the landscape, restore old forest for wildlife, reduce fuels, enhance deer habitat, and eradicate noxious weeds. (Supervisors Office contact Maria Benech)
4. **Rim Fire Restoration Project-** NEPA for Rim Restoration activities included one letter to the file and two decision memos (DMs). The following activities were included in these three documents:

Rim Fire Facility Maintenance Letter to the File:

Administrative Sites: 1) Replace/repair troughs; 2) Repair water tank at Wet Meadow; 3) Replace/repair fences. (Supervisors Office contact Tracy Weddle, Hydrologist)

Roads and Trails: 1) Replace undersized culverts that provide barriers to aquatic organism passage and are susceptible to plugging and washouts due to post-fire increased stream flows with culverts that are capable of passing increased flow and aquatic organisms; 2) Hand-treat roadside weeds identified on the attached map by pulling, digging, weed-eating, or tarping; 3) Treat about 1 acre of roadside spotted knapweed with herbicide (glyphosate). 4) Conduct trail maintenance on route 19EV212 to minimize sediment movement into Ike Dye Meadow North and the Middle Fork Tuolumne River; 5) Block unauthorized route FR8612 and maintenance level 1 routes 1S26B and 1N31YB. (Supervisors Office contact Tracy Weddle, Hydrologist)

Recreation Sites: 1) Plant native plants in Middle Fork Day Use Area, San Jose Camp and Sweetwater Campground and provide for plant protection, where needed; 2) Define the trail to the pool and block user-created trails at Rainbow Pool. (Groveland District contact is Dusty Vaughn, Public Service Program Leader)

Rim Fire Habitat Improvement Project DM:

This project was developed to improve habitat for wildlife and sensitive plants as well as protect and improve the function of meadows, streams, and springs affected by the Rim Fire using hand treatments only. Activities include: restoring 10 springs; restoring 32 acres of meadows and streams; installing 30-50 great gray owl nest structures; hand treating 300 acres of weeds; protecting and restoring habitat for mountain lady's slipper in 8 locations; removing encroaching conifers on 397 acres of special aquatic features; reconfiguring a fence near Jawbone station; and, improving western pond turtle habitat on up to 1 acre of upland and 1,600 feet of stream channel. (Supervisors Office contact Tracy Weddle, Hydrologist)

* Denotes projects that take place throughout the district and do not appear on the map.




Rim Fire Rehabilitation Project DM:

This project was developed to repair or improve habitat and natural resources affected by the Rim Fire by installing 2 guzzlers and 21 wildlife-friendly troughs; removing encroaching conifers on 32 acres of aspen stands; planting conifers on 569 acres; decommissioning 2 miles of unauthorized routes; and, restoring 157 acres of meadows and streams. This project includes both hand work and heavy equipment. (Supervisors Office contact Tracy Weddle, Hydrologist)

Rim Restoration Project 2015 Implementation:


- a. **Meadow Restoration at Wilson Meadow and Upper, Middle, and Lower of Three Meadows on Tributary to Cherry Creek:** The purpose of this project is to stabilize headcuts that are located at the downstream extent of the meadows in order to prevent them from advancing into the meadows. Adding large woody debris to meadow surface, removing encroaching conifers, hand-treatment of non-native plant species, and planting with native species would also occur. In 2015, design and permitting will occur. Implementation is planned for late summer/early fall 2016. (Supervisors Office contact Tracy Weddle, Hydrologist)
- b. **Spring Restoration:** Design of restoration at ten springs in the Granite Creek area is planned for 2015. Activities may include geomorphic restoration (such as spreading channelized flow), hand-pulling noxious weeds, planting native species, removing encroaching conifers, and blocking cattle access. Implementation is planned for 2016. (Supervisors Office contact Tracy Weddle, Hydrologist)
- c. **Culvert Replacement:** Culvert replacement is planned on Granite Creek at Forest System Road 1N96 and on Tributary of Granite Creek Culvert at Forest System Road 1N96. The purpose of the project is to increase culvert capacity to prevent future plugging and diversion, as well as to design the culvert to provide for aquatic organism passage. Design and permitting is planned for 2015 with implementation in 2016. (Supervisors Office contact Tracy Weddle, Hydrologist)
- d. **Upper and Lower Femmons Meadow Restoration:** Hand work is proposed at these meadows, including: hand treatment of noxious weeds, increasing large woody debris on the meadow surface, removing encroaching conifer, and collecting and spreading native seeds. While implementation is currently planned for 2015, funding has not yet been secured, so some or all of implementation could be postponed until 2016. (Supervisors Office contact Tracy Weddle, Hydrologist)
- e. **Pilot/Early Meadow and Stream Restoration:** Three sites within the Pilot/Early footprint (unnamed ephemeral at the end of 1S30,



spring/meadow adjacent to 1S83, and a perennial stream and meadow NW of Sawmill Quarry) are planned for restoration. Activities would include headcut stabilization, adding large woody debris to meadow surface, removing encroaching conifers, hand-treatment of non-native plant species, and planting with native species. Design and permitting is planned for 2015 with implementation in late summer/fall 2016. (Supervisors Office contact Tracy Weddle, Hydrologist)

SILVICULTURE & FUELS / FOREST RESTORATION

5. **Integrated Vegetation Management** – Fuel Reduction projects (Tuolumne and Mariposa Counties): These projects involve fire hazard reduction by thinning trees and reducing ladder and ground fuels. Treatments include shredding, biomass removal, prescribed fire treatments, and mechanical saw-log harvest. (Groveland District contact Jim Junette, District Ranger)
6. **China Flat Fuels Reduction and Forest Health** (Tuolumne and Mariposa County): The project is thinning of small trees and fuels reduction within and around plantations from the 1987 fires. Mastication and under burning are the primary treatments. No mastication has been accomplished since 2013. There are ~400 acres of mastication to be completed, for 2015/2016 78 acres are planned. (Groveland District contact Kim Williams, Siviculturist)
7. **Long Shanahan Fuels Reduction and Forest Health** (Tuolumne County): Hand thinning along Highway 120 and Hells Hollow Road are ongoing, as is fuel break maintenance. The timber sale and plantation mastication work in this project have been completed. Cal Fire Training crews working in cooperation with District Fuels Department are hand grubbing and piling brush for fuel break maintenance by releasing young conifers and controlling re-sprouting brush. (Groveland District contact Kim Williams, Siviculturist)
8. **Reynolds Creek** (Tuolumne County): The environmental analysis was completed in 2012. The 953 acre timber sale had parts that were affected by the Rim Fire. The timber sale will include the burnt timber for salvage and will be sold in 2016. (Groveland District contact Kim Williams, Siviculturist)
9. **Monotti Urban Fuel Reduction and Plantation Thinning** (Tuolumne and Mariposa County): The environmental analysis was completed in 2011. The Wagner Fuel break was complete. A mastication contract was awarded in 2011 and is completed. A 400 acre contract was awarded in 2013 with implementation being completed in 2015. Tracter piling and burning is also included in the contracts. Additional contracts may be awarded in 2015 if funds become available. (Groveland District contact Kim Williams, Siviculturist)
10. **Groovy Timber Sale**: This was part of the Two Mile Project and is currently in contracting for the thinning of 1,436 acres. Part of the timber sale was burned in the Rim



Fire and will be harvested in 2015. (Groveland District contact Kim Williams, Siviculturist)

11. **Pilot Fire and Early Fire Restoration Projects** (Tuolumne County): Planning continues for restoration within the 4,000 acre Pilot Fire and 2,000 acre Early Fire. Public scoping of proposed activities had been initiated prior to the Rim Fire. Proposed activities include fuels treatments, tree planting, noxious weed treatments, wildlife habitat restoration, and heritage site protection. Some of the restoration treatments that were not for reforestation in this analysis will be re-evaluated and be included in a future NEPA document. The environmental analysis for the reforestation on these two projects is currently being re-analyzed in the Rim Fire Reforestation EIS. (Groveland District contact Kim Williams, Siviculturist)

NOXIOUS WEEDS

12. **Granite Noxious Weed Control** – Hand pull invasive weeds along Cherry Lake Road north of the Mather Road to Road 1N96, and along several of the feeder roads off of Cherry Lake road. Primary species treated are yellow star-thistle, tocalote and Italian thistle.
13. **Noxious Weed Eradication** (Tuolumne and Mariposa Counties): Spotted knapweed and diffuse knapweed are California A-rated noxious weeds. Canada thistle and dyers woad are California B-rated noxious weeds. The California C-rated noxious weeds bull thistle, Italian thistle, puncturevine, yellow star-thistle and tocalote (close cousin to yellow star-thistle) are included in these projects. (Groveland District contact Jennie Haas, Botonist)
 - a. **Groveland A&B Weeds Project** - A spotted knapweed site about 200 square feet is being manually treated in the Mather area, between Evergreen Road and the Yosemite boundary. A population of Dyer's Woad is being manually treated along Cottonwood Road by Reed Creek. Canada thistle will be treated with herbicide application at the Diamond O Campground. One spotted knapweed site will be treated along Forest Roads 1S05YB, within the boundaries of the China Flat HFRA project. (Groveland District contact Jennie Haas, Botonist)
 - b. **Monotti Weed Treatment** - A combination of herbicides, weed whacking and hand pulling and digging will be used in the Monotti weed treatment at Wagner Ridge, Shingle Hill, Diana Pool Trail and a site off of Holtzel Road. (Groveland District contact Jennie Haas, Botonist)
 - c. **Merced Canyon Invasive Plant Control** (Mariposa County) - This is a project in progress using the herbicide glyphosate (active ingredient in Roundup) to treat yellow star-thistle, tocalote and Italian thistle in the vicinity of El Portal. This is a multi-Agency project, with the Sierra National Forest as the lead for the environmental analysis and implementation oversight on National Forest System Lands. (Groveland District contact Jennie Haas; Sierra NF contact Joanna Clines, Bass Lake District).


RECREATION

* Denotes projects that take place throughout the district and do not appear on the map.
Groveland RD 2015 Projects



14. **Non-Motorized Trail Maintenance** (Tuolumne and Mariposa County): General non-motorized trail maintenance for hiking, mountain biking, and horseback riding on the Andresen Mine, Hamby, Mohican Mine, Indian Creek, Tuolumne River Canyon, North Fork of the Merced, and Preston Falls Trails are ongoing. (Groveland District contact is Dusty Vaughn, Public Service Program Leader)
15. **Signs*** (Tuolumne and Mariposa Counties): Installation of way-finding and Travel Management signs for recreation and other activities district-wide is ongoing. These include new site signs for trailheads, road numbers, and trail numbers. (Groveland District contact is Dusty Vaughn, Public Service Program Leader)
16. **OHV Route Designation and Maintenance*** (Tuolumne and Mariposa Counties): Currently working on forest-wide OHV route designation implementation plan. (Groveland District contact Dusty Vaughn, Public Service Program Leader; additional contact Phyllis Ashmead, Travel Management Planning Specialist, SO).
17. **Ferretti Road Non-Motorized Trail Development and OHV Restoration** (Tuolumne County): Planning for new route development, change in road/trail classification, and road/trail maintenance is expected to begin in 2015 with implementation occurring in 2016-2017. The proposed project will decommission unauthorized routes and link new routes with existing routes to provide additional non-motorized and motorized trail opportunities. (Groveland District contact is Dusty Vaughn, Public Service Program Leader)
18. **Reynolds OHV Development** (Tuolumne County): Planning for new route development (0.24 mi.), change in road/trail classification (0.34 mi.), and road/trail maintenance is expected to begin in 2015 with implementation occurring in 2015-2016. The proposed project will link existing routes to provide motorized trail opportunities. (Groveland District contact is Dusty Vaughn, Public Service Program Leader)
19. **Moore Creek OHV Planning*** (Tuolumne County): Planning for new route development, change in road/trail classification, and road/trail maintenance is expected to begin in 2016 with implementation occurring in 2017-2020. The proposed project will link existing routes to provide motorized trail opportunities. (Groveland District contact is Dusty Vaughn, Public Service Program Leader)
20. **Cherry Lake Boat Launch Facility** (Tuolumne County): In partnership with Hetch Hetchy Water and Power as well as California Division of Boating and Waterways, planning for hardening/paving boat launch and parking area as well as replacing restrooms and installing an information kiosk is expected to begin in 2016 with implementation occurring in 2017-2020. (Groveland District contact is Dusty Vaughn, Public Service Program Leader)
21. **Merals Pool Raft/Kayak Launch Facility** (Tuolumne County): In partnership with the California Division of Boating and Waterways, planning for hardening/paving boat launch and parking area as well as installing an information kiosk is expected to begin in

* Denotes projects that take place throughout the district and do not appear on the map.



2016 with implementation occurring in 2017-2020. (Groveland District contact is Dusty Vaughn, Public Service Program Leader)

22. **Cherry Creek Raft/Kayak Launch Facility** (Tuolumne County): In partnership with Hetch Hetchy Water and Power as well as California Division of Boating and Waterways, planning for hardening/paving boat launch and parking area as well as potentially installing a restroom is expected to begin in 2016 with implementation occurring in 2017-2020. (Groveland District contact is Dusty Vaughn, Public Service Program Leader)
23. **Rainbow Pool Day Use Area** (Tuolumne County): Planning for restoring shoreline, hardening beach area, replacing trails, and installing an information kiosk is expected to begin in 2016 with implementation occurring in 2017-2020 . (Groveland District contact is Dusty Vaughn, Public Service Program Leader)
24. **Plant native plants** in Middle Fork Day Use Area, San Jose Camp and Sweetwater Campground and provide for plant protection. (Groveland District contact is Dusty Vaughn, Public Service Program Leader)

ROAD SYSTEM

25. **Annual Road Maintenance*** (Tuolumne and Mariposa Counties): This ongoing annual activity encompasses the Groveland Ranger District transportation system. Annual maintenance includes signing, resurfacing, culvert clearing, brushing and other methods to keep the road system safe and operational. (Groveland District contact is Dusty Vaughn, Public Service Program Leader)

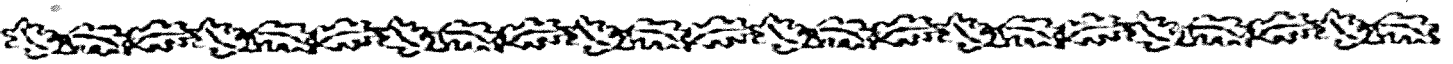
LANDS

26. **P.G.&E. Powerline Clearing Projects*** (Tuolumne and Mariposa Counties): P.G.&E. will be clearing brush and hazard trees from under their powerlines across the district. Work will be done mostly by hand crews, with possibly some small machinery. (Groveland District contact Jason Dierberg, Forester)
27. **Hetch Hetchy Water and Power Transmission Lines / Reliable Power Project*** (Tuolumne County): Hetch Hetchy is in the planning and analysis process to improve the vegetation clearance along the major transmission lines from Early Intake to Moccasin. (Groveland District contact Jason Dierberg, Forester)

SPECIAL USE PERMIT ADMINISTRATION

28. **Special Use Permits*** (Tuolumne and Mariposa Counties): Reissue expired Road or Trail Authorizations as well as Water Transmission (non-power generating) authorizations. These are pre-existing improvements such as public roads used to access private property or water storage tanks and/or small transmission lines used to transport water for domestic use. Note that water transmission permit holders must possess state

* Denotes projects that take place throughout the district and do not appear on the map.



issued water rights prior to reissuance a special use permit. All the permits that will be reissued have been previously authorized on public lands typically for individual use. No new improvements will be approved or authorized. (Groveland District contact Debbie Foote, Resource Assistant, Supervisor's Office Contact: Christine Meyers)).

29. **Recreation Residences** (Tuolumne County): Ongoing inspection and work on cabins to ensure they are in compliance with the terms of their permit. The Peach Growers Recreational Residence Tract is the only tract on the Groveland RD. (Groveland District contact Debbie Foote, Resource Assistant)
30. **Mining Claims*** (Tuolumne and Mariposa Counties): Ongoing administration of Notices of Intent for mining activities, which includes resource surveys and environmental analysis. These are throughout the district, and are part of the program of work on a walk-in basis. (Groveland District contact Debbie Foote, Resource Assistant)
31. **Organizational Camps** (Tuolumne County): Ongoing work with Berkeley Tuolumne Camp and San Jose Camp to bring camps into full compliance with permits, create Master Development Plans, and to prepare for new 20-year term permit issuance. (Groveland District contact is Dusty Vaughn, Public Service Program Leader)

* Denotes projects that take place throughout the district and do not appear on the map.

*NEW
PROPOSED
FENCE
REPLACEMENT
8/2017

Duckwall Fence Extension Project (52218) Decision Memo

Stanislaus National Forest
Mi-Wok Ranger District
Tuolumne County, CA

INTRODUCTION

The existing fence at Duckwall Ridge separating the Duckwall and Hunter Creek grazing allotments extends approximately 2.3 miles. Prior to the Rim Fire, the existing fence was sufficient to keep cattle on their respective allotments because natural barriers (thick brush) were present on the east end of the existing fence. This brush burned in the fire, and cattle trespass has been an issue in subsequent grazing seasons. This decision memo provides documentation, pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), related to the Duckwall Fence Extension Project which would extend an existing fence line at Duckwall Ridge by construction of approximately 1.2 miles of fence (Figure 1).

MANAGEMENT DIRECTION

The Forest Service completed the Stanislaus National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan ("Forest Plan") on October 28, 1991. The Stanislaus National Forest "Forest Plan Direction" (USDA 2017)¹ presents the current direction, based on the original Forest Plan, as amended. The Forest Plan Direction that applies to this project includes forest goals for Range (p. 3); management practices for Range (C. Range Improvements – Structural (p. 20); and forestwide standards and guidelines for Range (Range Improvement Structure (9-C) p. 49). **All proposed actions need to be consistent with the applicable Forest Plan direction.** The following Forest Plan Direction goals, management practices, desired conditions, and standards and guidelines apply to the Duckwall Fence Extension project.

- Manage livestock to utilize available forage while avoiding adverse impacts on soil, vegetation, water quality, wildlife, fisheries and riparian zones.
- New structural improvements designed to achieve Allotment Management Plan (AMP) goals.
- Construct all structural improvement to Regional standards. See Forest Service Handbook (FSH) 2209.22 R5 and the 1988 USDA publication "Fences" for the standards.

PURPOSE AND NEED

The purpose of the Duckwall Fence Extension project is to prevent cattle trespass from adjacent allotments and to facilitate livestock management on National Forest System Lands by minimizing the amount of time grazing permittees spend herding cattle onto their respective allotment. In order to meet this objective, the Stanislaus National Forest has identified the following needs:

- Extend the existing fence at Duckwall Ridge.
- Implement livestock management practices to improve allotment condition or animal distribution.

¹ USDA 2017. Stanislaus National Forest, Forest Plan Direction. Forest Service, Pacific Southwest Region, Stanislaus National Forest. Sonora, CA. March 2017. 192 p.

PROPOSED ACTION

The following action is proposed to meet the purpose and need:

- Construct approximately 1.2 miles of a wildlife-friendly² fence near Duckwall Ridge to extend the existing fence line (Figure 1).

DECISION

My decision is to implement the Proposed Action as described above. This action falls within a category of actions that are excluded from documentation in an Environmental Assessment (EA) or an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and no extraordinary circumstances³ would preclude use of the category: Management practices to improve allotment condition or animal distribution. [36 CFR 220.6(e)(9)]. Appendix A contains a "Review of Extraordinary Circumstances" supporting my determination that no extraordinary circumstances exist.

Resource specialists input covering aquatics, botany, heritage, hydrology, range, recreation, soils, and wildlife are included in the project file located at the Stanislaus National Forest Headquarters in Sonora, CA. I considered their recommendations in making this decision. Based on recommendations from Forest Service specialists and stakeholders, my decision will construct a wildlife-friendly fence per Stanislaus National Forest standards for new fence construction. This will include the use of smooth wire for the bottom strand and placement of the top wire at a maximum height of 42 inches to allow for wildlife passage.

Reasons for the Decision

I made this decision selecting the Proposed Action because it would improve livestock management on both the Duckwall and Hunter Creek grazing allotments while allowing continued wildlife passage. The proposed action also meets Forest Plan Direction to manage livestock to utilize available forage while avoiding adverse impacts on soil, vegetation, water quality, wildlife, fisheries and riparian zones.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

The Forest Service first listed the Duckwall Ridge Fence Extension project in the Stanislaus National Forest Schedule of Proposed Actions (SOPA) on July 17, 2017. The SOPA is available on the internet at <http://data.ecosystem-management.org/nepaweb/current-sopa.php?forest=110516>. On July 31, 2017 the Forest Service sent a scoping letter with proposed action information and maps to 4 individuals, permittees, organizations, and Tribes interested in this project. The scoping information was also posted on the project website: [<https://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=52218>]. One phone call offered support for the project during scoping. One comment letter offered support but recommended construction of a wildlife-friendly fence.

² A Wildlife-friendly fence is designed to avoid restriction of wildlife and allow wildlife to climb under the fence uninjured and constructed at a height low enough to allow wildlife to leap over the fence.

³ The mere presence of one or more of these resource conditions does not preclude use of a categorical exclusion (CE). It is the existence of a cause-effect relationship between a proposed action and the potential effect on these resource conditions and if such a relationship exists, the degree of the potential effect of a proposed action on these resource conditions that determine whether extraordinary circumstances exist. (36 CFR 220.6(b))

FINDINGS REQUIRED BY OTHER LAWS

This action is consistent with the Forest Plan; the National Historic Preservation Act; and, all other applicable laws and regulations (see Appendix A).

IMPLEMENTATION DATE

The procedures for legal notice and opportunity to comment do not apply to this project; therefore, implementation of the decision may begin immediately.

ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW OR APPEAL OPPORTUNITIES

This decision is not subject to administrative review⁴.

CONTACT PERSON

For additional information regarding this project, contact Dawn Coultrap at the Stanislaus National Forest; 19777 Greenley Road; Sonora, CA 95370; or, call (209) 288-6315.

SIGNATURE AND DATE

Todd Ellsworth

TODD ELLSWORTH
Acting District Ranger
Mi-Wok Ranger District

August 18, 2017

Date

⁴ The Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2014 (P.L. 113-76; January 17, 2014) directs that the 1992 and 2012 legislation establishing the 36 CFR 215 (post-decisional appeals) and 36 CFR 218 (pre-decisional objections) processes shall not apply to any project or activity implementing a land and resource management plan that is categorically excluded under NEPA. The Agricultural Act of 2014 (P.L. 113-79; February 7, 2014) repealed the Appeals Reform Act (P.L. 102-381) and directs that the pre-decisional objection process established in the Consolidated Appropriation Act of 2012 shall not apply to categorically excluded projects or activities.

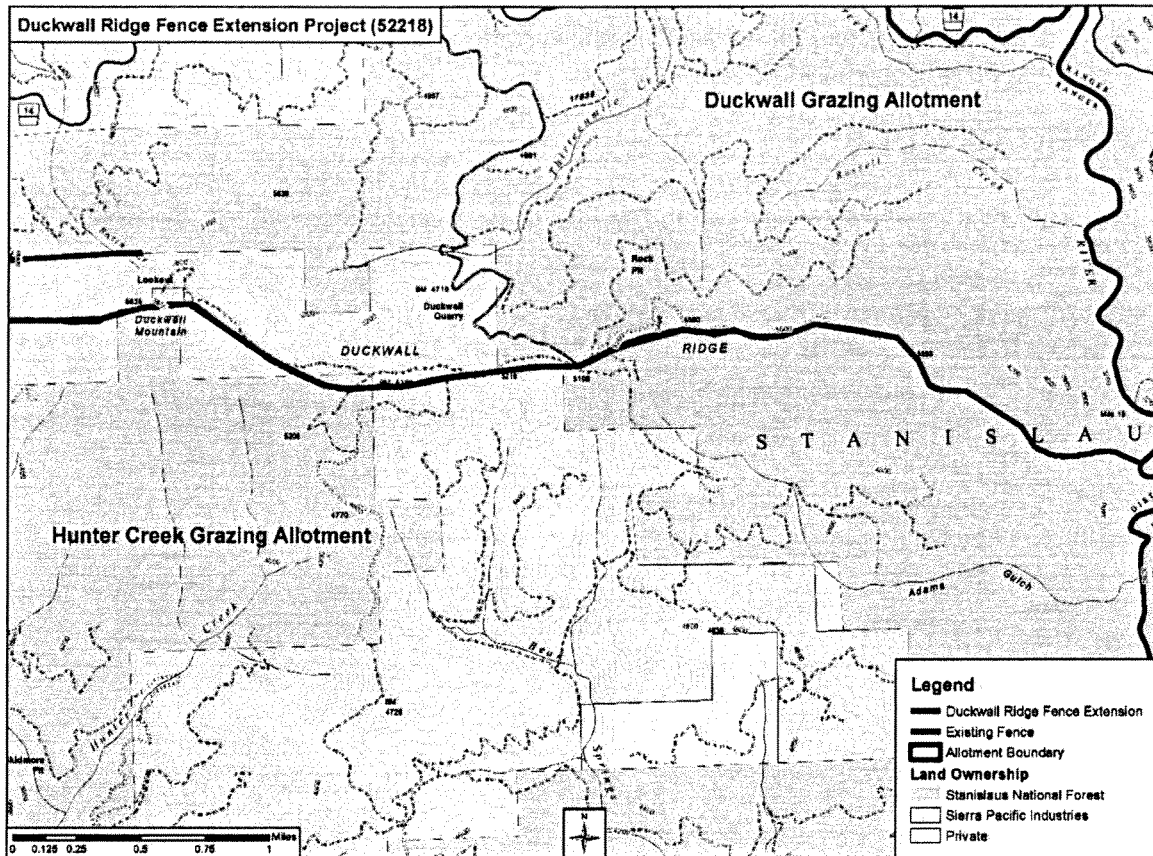


Figure 1 Duckwall Ridge Fence Extension Project Location Map

APPENDIX A: REVIEW OF EXTRAORDINARY CIRCUMSTANCES

In accordance with FSH 1909.15 Section 30.3(2), the Responsible Official considered the following resource conditions in determining whether extraordinary circumstances related to the proposed action would warrant further analysis and documentation in an Environmental Assessment (EA) or an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).

1. Federally listed threatened or endangered species or designated critical habitat, species proposed for Federal listing or proposed critical habitat, or Forest Service sensitive species.

The response to Project Input Form (Marcie Baumbach, Wildlife Biologist, Stanislaus National Forest; 4/13/2017), determined that there were no concerns that the Duckwall Ridge Fence Extension project would affect wildlife, including Federally listed threatened or endangered species or designated critical habitat, species proposed for Federal listing or proposed critical habitat, or Forest Service sensitive species.

The response to Project Input Form (Steve Holdeman, Forest Aquatic Biologist, Stanislaus National Forest; 6/14/2017), determined that there is no habitat or designated critical habitat for Federally listed or proposed threatened or endangered species. There are no known occurrences of Forest Service sensitive species in the project area.

A site specific review of the proposed Duckwall fence extension area (Margaret Willits, Botanist Mi-Wok Ranger District and Dawn Coultrap, Forest Rangeland Management Specialist, Supervisor's Office; 7/16/2017), determined that the Duckwall Fence Ridge Fence Extension project:

May affect individual *Clarkia australis*, but would not likely lead to a trend toward federal listing or loss of species viability.

2. Floodplains, wetlands or municipal watersheds.

Floodplains: Executive Order 11988 defines floodplains as, “. . . the lowland and relatively flat areas adjoining inland and coastal waters including flood prone areas of offshore islands, including at a minimum, that area subject to a one percent [100-year recurrence] or greater chance of flooding in any one year.” A review of aerial photos and Google Earth show that this project does not occur in floodplains or wetlands.

Wetlands: Executive Order 11990 defines wetlands as, “. . . areas inundated by surface or ground water with a frequency sufficient to support and under normal circumstances does or would support a prevalence of vegetative or aquatic life that requires saturated or seasonally saturated soil conditions for growth and reproduction. Wetlands generally include swamps, marshes, bogs, and similar areas such as sloughs, potholes, wet meadows, river overflows, mud flats, and natural ponds.” The proposed action would not occur within wetlands.

Municipal Watersheds: FSM 2542.05 defines municipal watersheds as: “A watershed that serves a public water system as defined in the Safe Drinking Water Act of 1974, as amended (42 U.S.C. §§ 300f, et seq.); or as defined in state safe drinking water statutes or regulations.”

- The Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board lists the Tuolumne River from its source to New Don Pedro Reservoir as a municipal and domestic supply. This project is not expected to negatively affect beneficial uses of water. Project activities are small in scale and are not anticipated to impact water quality (Fernando Perez, Hydrologist, Stanislaus National Forest; response to Project Input Form; 3/28/2017).

3. Congressionally designated areas such as wilderness, wild and scenic rivers, or national

recreation areas.

No congressionally designated Wilderness, Wild and Scenic Rivers or National Recreation Areas exist within the project area.

4. Inventoried Roadless Areas.

No existing or proposed Inventoried Roadless Areas exist within or adjacent to the project area.

5. Research Natural Areas.

No existing or proposed Research Natural Areas (RNAs) exist within or adjacent to the project area.

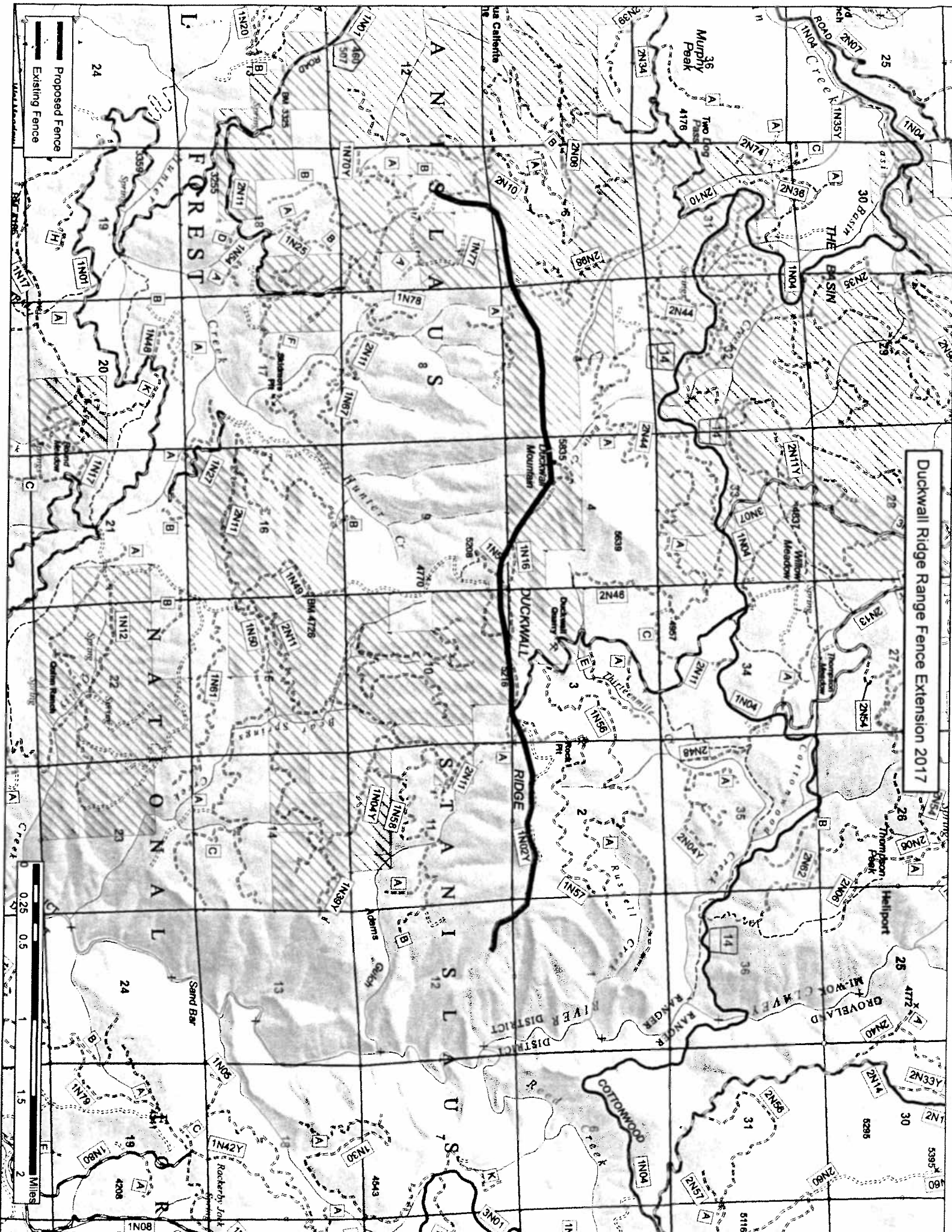
6. American Indians and Alaska Native religious or cultural sites.

Cultural Resource Management Report (CRMR) 05-16-1383 was completed for the Duckwall Fence Extension project. A NO ADVERSE EFFECT RECOMMENDATION was made for project activities in accordance with the provisions set forth in Programmatic Agreement Among United States Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, Stanislaus National Forest, the California State Historic Preservation Officer, and The Advisory Council on Historic Preservation Regarding the Program of Rim Fire Emergency Recovery Undertakings, Tuolumne County, California (Rim Fire PA), signed August, 2014." No heritage resources of interest are located within the project area. (Peter Wisniewski, District Archaeologist, CRMR 05-16-1383; 7/13/2017).

7. Archaeological sites, or historic properties or areas.

Refer to item 6 (American Indians and Alaska Native religious or cultural sites) above.

Duckwall Ridge Range Fence Extension 2017



Proposed Fence
Existing Fence

