

**UMRWA, Eldorado NF & Stanislaus NF**

# **MAC Project Update**

**ACCG General Meeting  
June 18<sup>th</sup>, 2025**



Upper Mokelumne River  
Watershed Authority

# Overview

- Objective of today's presentation
- Estimated timeline
- Emergency Action Determination
- Project recap
- Proposed Action Highlights
- Modeling, analysis Update
- Monitoring Strategy Update
- Next steps: Draft EIS public comment period



# MAC *Estimated* Timeline: Key Next Steps

<b>Modeling: ForSys, FVS</b>	June - July 2025
<b>Complete DEIS analysis and all supporting documentation</b>	June - mid Aug 2025
<b>DEIS publication</b>	Mid Aug 2025
<b>45-day comment period</b>	Mid Aug - Sept 2025
<b>Publish FEIS</b>	Late Oct. 2025
<b>Finalize and sign decision</b>	Late Nov – Dec 2025



# Emergency Authority Determination

- USDA Secretary's Memorandum (April 2025).
- Proposed action and no action alternative only. No additional alternatives in MAC EIS.
- No objection period. Opportunity to comment on DEIS during 45-day public comment period.



# Previous Alternatives Framing

	Conceptual Alternative 1	Proposed action (Conceptual Alternative 2)	Conceptual Alternative 3	Conceptual Alternative 4
<b>Overall Objective</b>	Minimize actions with potential impact concerns.	Balance between safety goals and minimizing impacts.	Maximize improved safety, community protection, and forest resilience.	No Action
<b>Treatment in CSO PACs/territories</b>	Minimize potential temporary impacts to CSO, their habitat, and other special status species. Minimum change in canopy and most restrictive DBH and mechanical limits.	Seeks a balance that optimizes on both management for landscape resiliency and avoidance of impacts to CSO.	Prioritizes management for landscape resiliency and would include some near-term impacts to CSO habitat.	
<b>Fuel Break Maintenance</b>	No herbicide for fuel break maintenance	Restrictive use of herbicide for fuel break maintenance.	Increased herbicide flexibility for fuel break maintenance.	



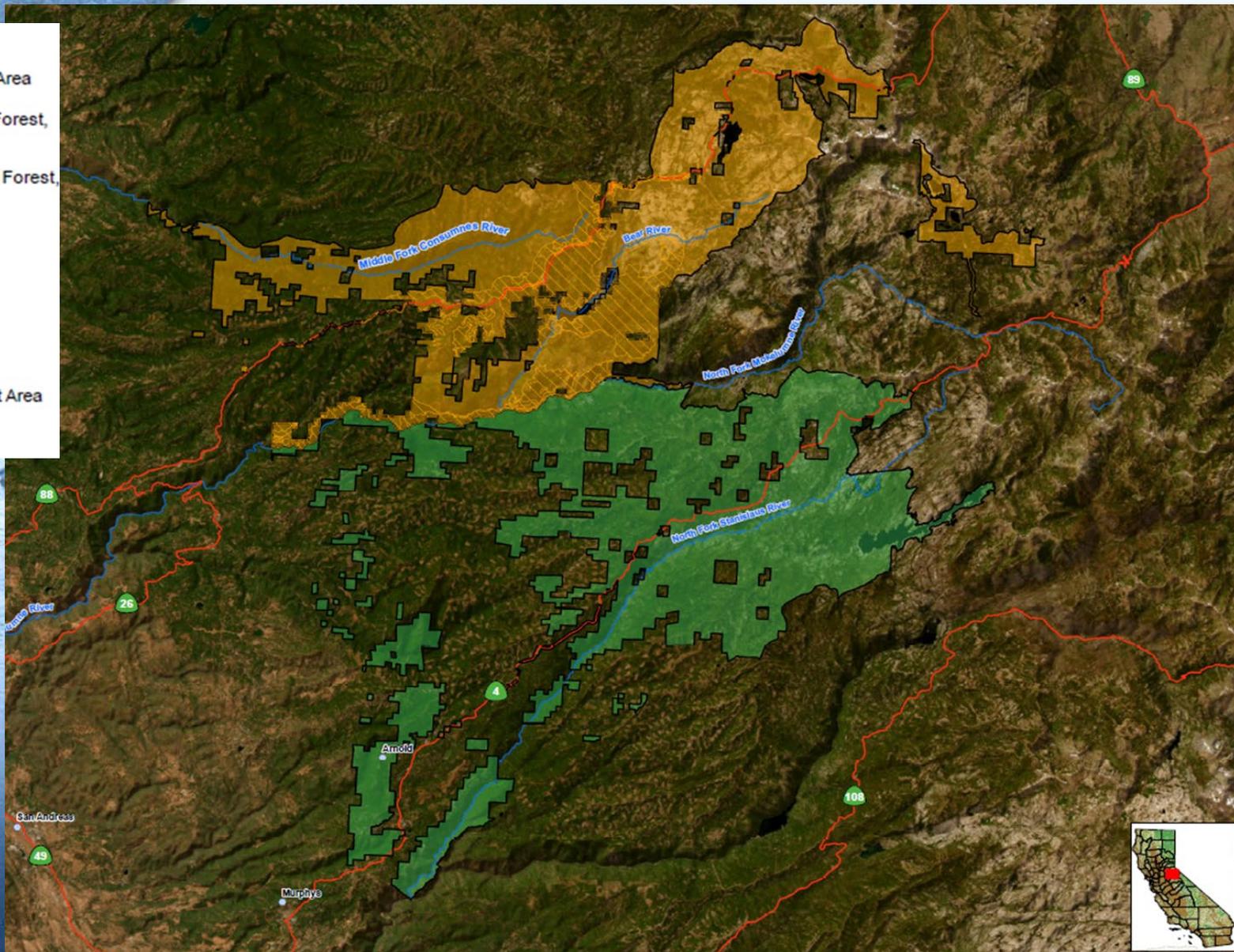
# MAC Project Location

## Project Features

-  MAC Forest Project Area
-  Eldorado National Forest, Amador District
-  Stanislaus National Forest, Calaveras District

## Other Map Features

-  Major Cities/Towns
-  Major Rivers
-  Major Highways
-  FPP Phase 1 Project Area



Upper Mokelumne River  
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# MAC Purpose & Need

<b>Restore ecosystem health and resilience.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Increase forest resilience to natural disturbances and stressors, including largescale wildfires, insect and disease, drought, and climate change.</li><li>• Improve and protect plant and wildlife habitat and biodiversity, including but not limited to conserving special-status species.</li><li>• Improve and protect watershed integrity, water yield, and water resources, including water supply and water quality.</li><li>• Reduce the spread of non-native, invasive species.</li></ul>
<b>Reduce safety hazards across public lands.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Reduce the risks of wildfire to communities and their assets within and adjacent to USFS-managed lands.</li><li>• Increase firefighter and public safety by improving and maintaining safe ingress/egress routes for fire personnel, equipment, and the public.</li></ul>
<b>Promote a fire-resilient landscape.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Reestablish fire processes and support the safe and effective use of fire management strategies.</li></ul>
<b>Maintain and support local economies.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Provide jobs and forest products from restoration and management activities.</li><li>• Protect or enhance ecosystem services, such as water yield, carbon sequestration, wildlife habitat, and recreation.</li></ul>



# MAC Proposed Activities

Proposed Activity	Details
<b>Forest Thinning</b>	Timber harvest, Biomass removal.
<b>Fuels Reduction</b>	Mastication, Machine Pile, Hand thinning.
<b>Fuelbreak Construction</b>	Combination of Forest thinning and Fuels Reduction activities to achieve FB desired condition.
<b>Maintenance of abovementioned activities</b>	Includes Prescribed Fire, Targeted Grazing, Herbicides (fuelbreak maintenance only).
<b>Prescribed Fire</b>	Broadcast burning, Pile burning. As primary and follow-up (maintenance) treatment.
<b>Non-Native Invasive Weed Control and Eradication</b>	Integrated Management Approach using a suite of methods, with herbicide use as a last option when non-chemical methods are deemed not feasible.
<b>Ecological restoration</b>	Conifer removal in and around aspen stands, and around meadows within treatment areas.
<b>Hazard tree removal</b>	To facilitate safe project implementation.
<b>Treatment Access activities</b>	Road Maintenance & Repairs; Road/Skid Trail Reconstruction; Temporary Access Route Construction; Landing Construction.
<b>Project-specific Forest Plan Amendments</b>	Land Allocations, Goals, Desired Conditions, Standards, Guidelines, and Potential Management Approach.



# MAC Draft Proposed Action: Highlights

Forest Thinning	
Proposed Action Component	Draft Desired Conditions, Prescription Elements
<b>Tree retention: DBH limits</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ≤20-in CSO PACs</li> <li>• ≤30-inch outside PACs, up to 35-inch dbh for equipment operability</li> <li>• Hardwoods (e.g., oaks, aspen, maples, dogwoods) will be retained unless removal is necessary to facilitate treatment efficacy and/or safety.</li> </ul>
<b>Stand Density Index (SDI) Targets</b>	<p>Outside of CSO PACs, territories. Vary based on topographic position and forest type. SDI Range by Forest Type:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Pine: 50-150 SDI</li> <li>○ Dry Mixed Conifer 100-200 SDI</li> <li>○ Moist Mixed Conifer 150-250 SDI</li> </ul>
<b>CSO habitat (PACs, territories)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Retain high quality nesting/roosting habitat within PACs.</li> <li>• At a minimum, if at least 40% of the territory contains suitable habitat (i.e., nesting/ roosting/ foraging) pre-treatment, retain at least 40% of the territory as habitat. Habitat may be maintained/ improved.</li> </ul>
<b>Maintenance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• follow-up thinning</li> <li>• fuels reduction</li> <li>• prescribed fire</li> <li>• targeted grazing</li> </ul>



# MAC Draft Proposed Action: Highlights

Fuels Reduction	
Proposed Action Component	Draft Desired Conditions, Prescription Elements
<b>Tree retention: DBH limits</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>≤10-in live conifer trees</b>, exceptions permitted to support equipment maneuverability, safety hazards, or in support of fuels objectives.</li> <li>• <b>≤11-in oak, hardwoods</b>, unless tree poses a threat to human life or property, or if removal is needed to maintain and enhance a hardwood stand. Retain all blue and valley oak.</li> </ul>
<b>Standing dead trees (i.e., snags)</b>	In mixed conifer, pine, and hardwoods forest types retain 4 of the largest trees per acre; In red fir forest type, retain 6 of the largest per acre.
<b>Shrub removal and retention</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Post treatment shrub cover will be generally reduced to 30% across unit. Shrub removal and retention includes the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Large continuous blocks of shrub species (i.e. manzanita, deerbrush, whitethorn) will be broken up. This generally includes shrubs taller than 1.5 feet and in patches greater than 1/4 acre in size.</li> <li>○ Bear clover and huckleberry oak and other similar low growing shrub species (&lt;1.5-feet) height will generally not be targeted for removal, except in strategic areas where fuel continuity is of concern.</li> <li>○ Low-growing shrub communities will be treated to create small gaps (6-8-foot in width) between shrub patches, where required.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Openings created or enlarged will be strategically located where the vegetation, including shrubs, can develop without further manipulation.</li> </ul>
<b>Dead and Downed Logs Removal</b>	Retain 4 of the largest downed logs per acre (average 20-inch diameter and ft long).
<b>Maintenance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• fuels reduction</li> <li>• prescribed fire</li> <li>• targeted grazing</li> </ul>



# MAC Draft Proposed Action: Highlights

Fuelbreaks	
Proposed Action Component	Draft Desired Conditions, Prescription Elements
<b>Fuelbreak width</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1,000-ft wide along Hwy 88 and 4</li> <li>• 500-ft wide or less everywhere else</li> </ul>
<b>Tree retention: DBH limits</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Live conifer DBH limits: Same as Forest Thinning.</li> <li>• Hardwood DBH limits: same as Fuels Reduction. Retain all blue and valley oak.</li> </ul>
<b>Standing dead trees (i.e., snags), Dead/ Downed Logs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Remove snags that compromise utility of fuelbreak.</li> <li>• Retain downed logs where they don't meaningfully weaken the effectiveness of the fuelbreak.</li> </ul>
<b>Understory retention</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Retain some dominant and codominant size class trees creating an average crown spacing of ½ to 1 ½ crown widths.</li> <li>• In larger (&lt;0.25 acres) openings healthy smaller trees spaced on 20-30 foot spacing.</li> </ul>
<b>Canopy cover</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain a minimum 30% on average across treatment stands.</li> <li>• Maintain average 50% within PACs.</li> </ul>
<b>Maintenance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Forest Thinning</li> <li>• Fuels Reduction</li> <li>• Prescribed fire</li> <li>• Targeted grazing</li> <li>• Herbicides:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Up to 300 acres/year per district.</li> <li>○ Herbicide types: Glyphosate and Triclopyr.</li> <li>○ Targeted application using a backpack sprayer. Targeted foliar application herbicides will be sprayed directly onto resprouting shrubs.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>



# MAC Draft Proposed Action: CSO habitat treatment analysis

## Next steps

1. Run ForSys to identify proposed treatment overlap with CSO habitat.
2. Assess individual CSO territory/PAC existing conditions.
3. Determine prescriptions based on individual CSO territory/PAC existing conditions.

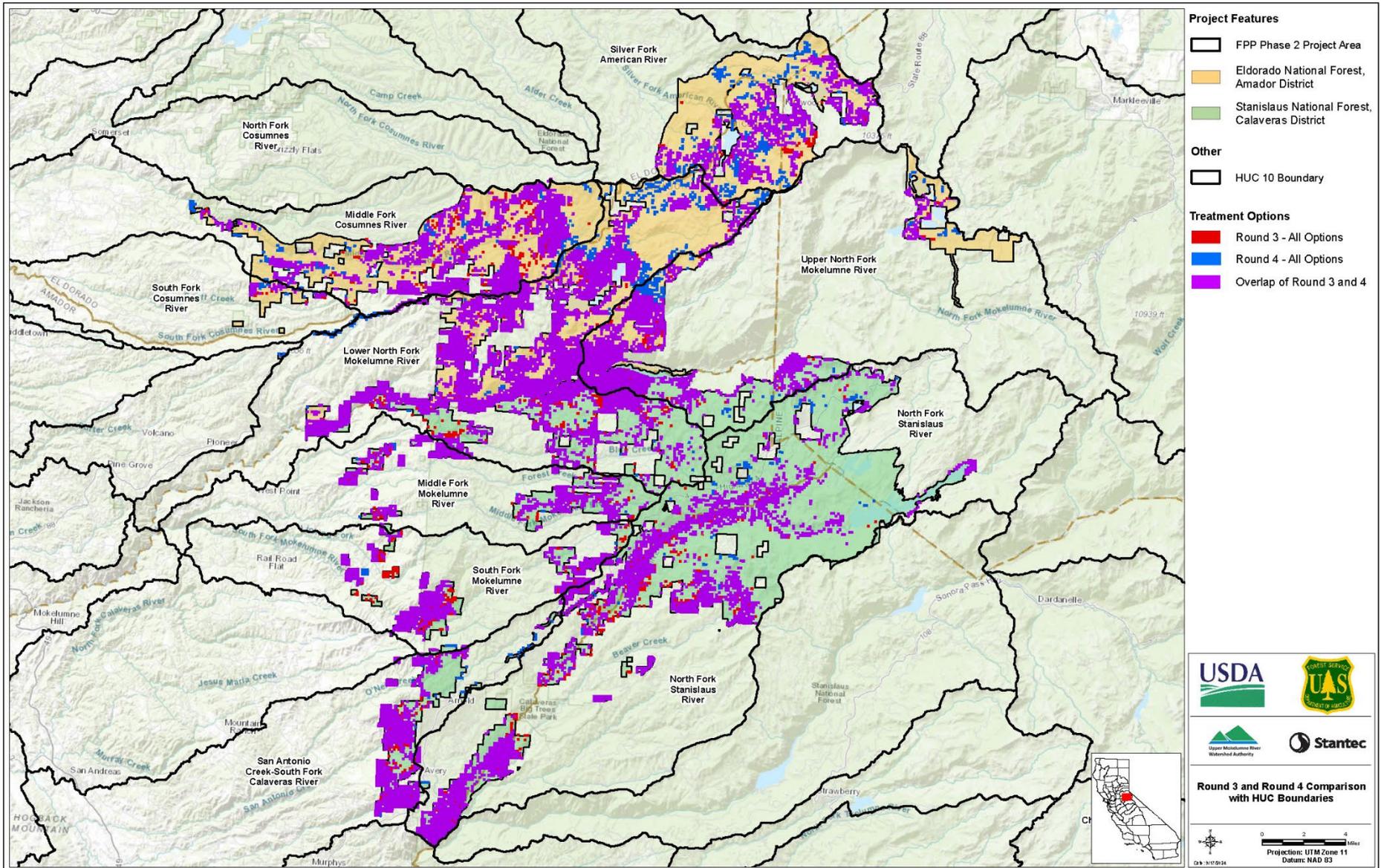


# Modeling Update

- Collaboration with the **Planscape team**.
- **ForSys**: decision support tool built to maximize wildfire resilience and ecological benefits. Rerunning ForSys w/updated vegetation data (June 2025).
- **Fire/Veg Modeling**: forest vegetation change in response to natural succession, disturbances, and management. Post-ForSys (June-July 2025).



# ForSys Treatment Areas (Illustrative)



**Project Features**

- FPP Phase 2 Project Area
- Eldorado National Forest, Amador District
- Stanislaus National Forest, Calaveras District

**Other**

- HUC 10 Boundary

**Treatment Options**

- Round 3 - All Options
- Round 4 - All Options
- Overlap of Round 3 and 4

USDA

US Forest Service

Upper Mokelumne River Watershed Authority

Stantec

Round 3 and Round 4 Comparison with HUC Boundaries

Scale: 0 2 4 Miles

Projection: UTM Zone 11

Datum: NAD 83

Date: 10/2/2014

# MAC Monitoring Strategy

- MAC Monitoring Coordinator (Ty McCarthy) working closely with ACCG Monitoring Work Group to develop monitoring questions.
- Anticipated timeframe:

<b>Development of monitoring questions</b>	<b>March – July 2025</b>
<b>Development of monitoring metrics and indicators</b>	<b>June-August 2025</b>
<b>Present draft questions to ACCG</b>	<b>TBD (August 2025)</b>
<b>Draft monitoring strategy</b>	<b>Oct – Dec 2025</b>
<b>Present draft strategy to ACCG.</b>	<b>Jan 2026</b>



# MAC Estimated Timeline: Key Upcoming Steps

**\*Check-in with ACCG during DEIS comment period.**

<b>Modeling</b>	<b>June - July 2025</b>
<b>Complete DEIS analysis and all supporting documentation</b>	<b>June - mid Aug 2025</b>
<b>DEIS published in Federal Register</b>	<b>Mid Aug 2025</b>
<b>45-day comment period</b>	<b>Mid Aug - Sept 2025</b>
<b>Publish FEIS</b>	<b>Late Oct. 2025</b>
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