

Request for a Recommendation of Consensus Support for the *Amador Aspen Restoration Project*

ACCG Planning Work Group Meeting

October 22, 2025

**Richard Sykes, Executive Officer
Regine Miller, Project Manager**



Presentation Outline

1. Overview of scope of work
2. Recap collaboration
3. Recap proposed activities
4. Review key draft decision elements
5. Review key planning and implementation next steps
6. Review draft letter of support
7. Seek recommendation for consensus support for Aspen Project decision and future implementation



Scope of Work

- Aspen inventory, mapping and assessment
 - Desktop assessment of known and predicted stands
 - Rapid assessment and field-map stands encountered
 - Coordinate with USFS, ACCG and SYRCL
- Baseline monitoring on subset of stands for aspen vegetation condition and for birds and bumble bees pre-restoration abundance
- Restoration prioritization and design for min. 300 acres of aspen
- NEPA/CEQA for min. 300 acres



Summary of UMRWA - ACCG Project Collaboration

- October 12, 2022 – MWG Discussion
- November 9, 2022 – MWG Discussion
- March 8, 2023 – MWG Presentation and Discussion
- May 10, 2023 – MWG Presentation and Discussion
- June 23, 2023 – General Meeting Presentation
- April 24, 2024 – PWG Presentation and Discussion
- May 22, 2024 – PWG Discussion
- August 28, 2024 – PWG Presentation and Discussion



Proposed Activities

Where stands are ≥ 2 acres and isolated $>300'$ from nearby mapped stands:

- Buffer the southern side a minimum of 30' and up to 100'
- Buffer north, east and west sides with 30-50'

Where stands are <2 acres and isolated ($>300'$) from nearby mapped stands:

- Buffer the southern side a minimum of 30' and up to 50'
- Buffer north, east and west sides 30 – 50'

Where stands are <2 acres but are in close proximity ($< 300'$ or close enough that the buffers identified below may connect them) to other small (<2 acre) or larger (≥ 2 acre) mapped stands:

- Buffer the stand where possible by up to 150' in the direction of nearest stands, to connect isolated stands and link together multiple small patches that are believed to have once been a single larger stand.
- Buffer remaining sides 30 – 50'



Proposed Activities

Conifer Cutting and Removal

- Hand or machine cut conifers < 30" diameter, ground-based logging equipment, chipping, and/or lopping and scattering on slopes $\leq 40\%$.
- Hand cut on slopes > 40%.
 - Where possible, mechanically remove. Where not possible, remove and pile material < 8" diameter outside of stand or piled linearly within the stand for later burning, or lop and scatter.

Girdling

- Girdle and leave standing select trees < 30" diameter that cannot be hand cut or in areas where it is not practical or feasible to remove cut conifers and leaving them on the ground would create an unacceptable fuel load or inhibit aspen suckering.

Fencing

- Erect temporary deer and cattle exclusion fencing where heavy browsing indicated
- Targeted locations within treatment area (i.e., individual trees or clumps of trees)
- 5 years, or until > 50% of suckers are min. 6' in height.

Prescribed Fire:

- Apply in suitable stands where prescribed fire is occurring in adjacent conifer stands.
- Only after mechanical or hand cutting and USFS has assessed restoration response.



Proposed Activities and Acreages

Treatment Type	Treatment Description	Treatment Location	Project Area Acreage (Stand Count)					Fencing -only Acreage (Stand Count)	Total Acreage by Treatment Type (Stand Count)
			1	2	3	4	5		
All Treatments	Conifer cutting and removal, girdling, fencing and/or prescribed fire	Aspen stands and their buffers.	3.5 (2)	449.5 (26)	35.3 (8)	8.6 (7)	106.8 (4)	--	604 acres (47 stands)
Fencing-only Treatment	Fencing	Aspen stands only (no buffers).	--					124 (93)	124 acres (93 stands)
TOTAL ACREAGE (STAND COUNT)								728 acres (140 stands)	

WCB Upper Mokelumne Aspen Restoration Project

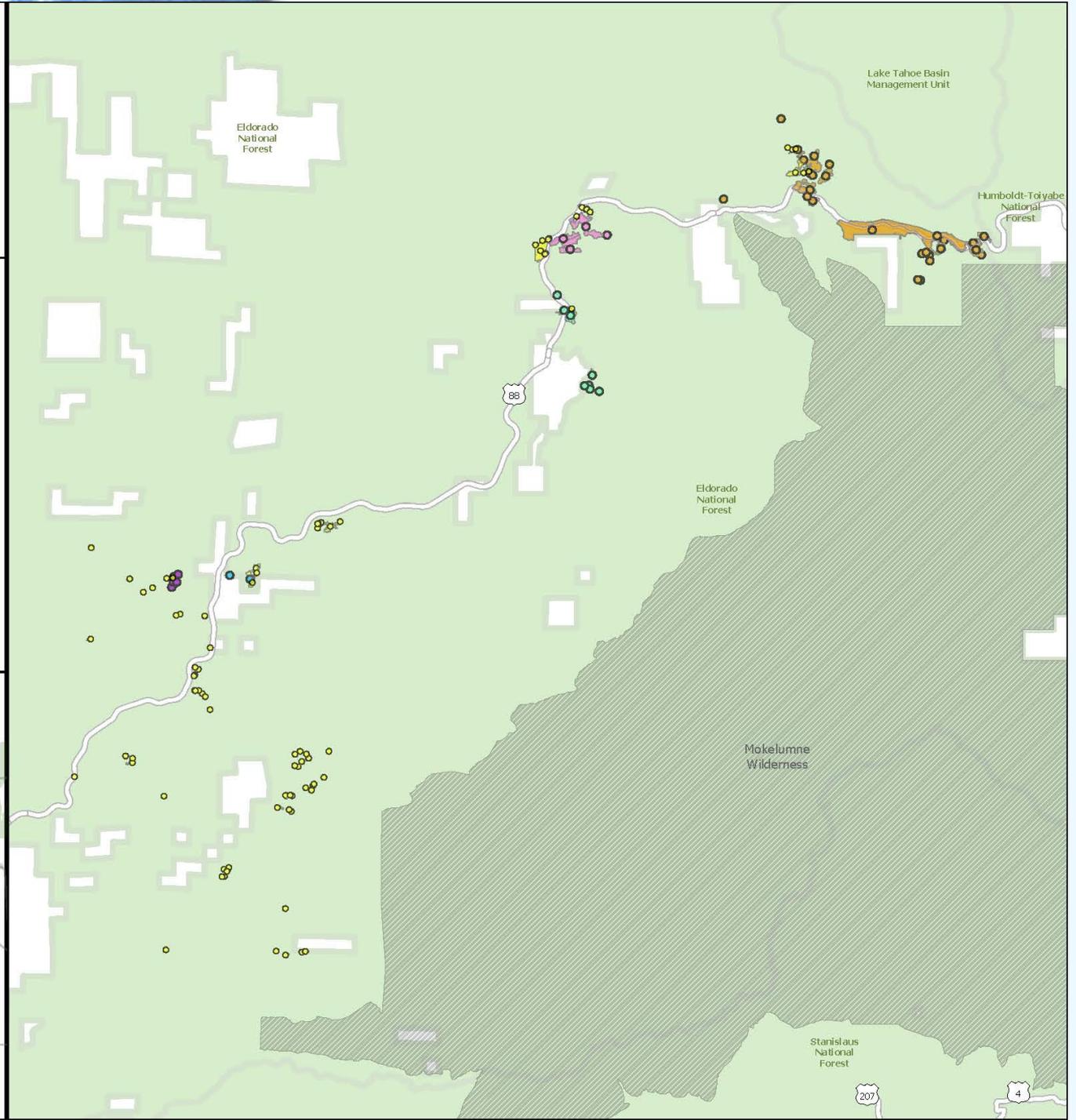
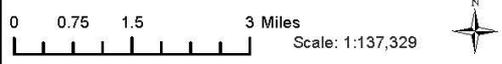
Map: Project Vicinity

v. 11/11/2024

Eldorado National Forest, Amador Ranger District



- Legend**
- aspen_nepa_fenceonly_11112024
 - aspen_nepa_alltrt_11112024
 - Project_Ar
 - Project Area 1
 - Project Area 2
 - Project Area 3
 - Project Area 4
 - Project Area 5
 - National Designated Wilderness
 - FS Lands



WCB Upper Mokelumne Aspen Restoration Project

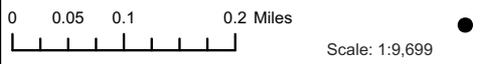
Map: Project Area 1

Eldorado National Forest, Amador Ranger District

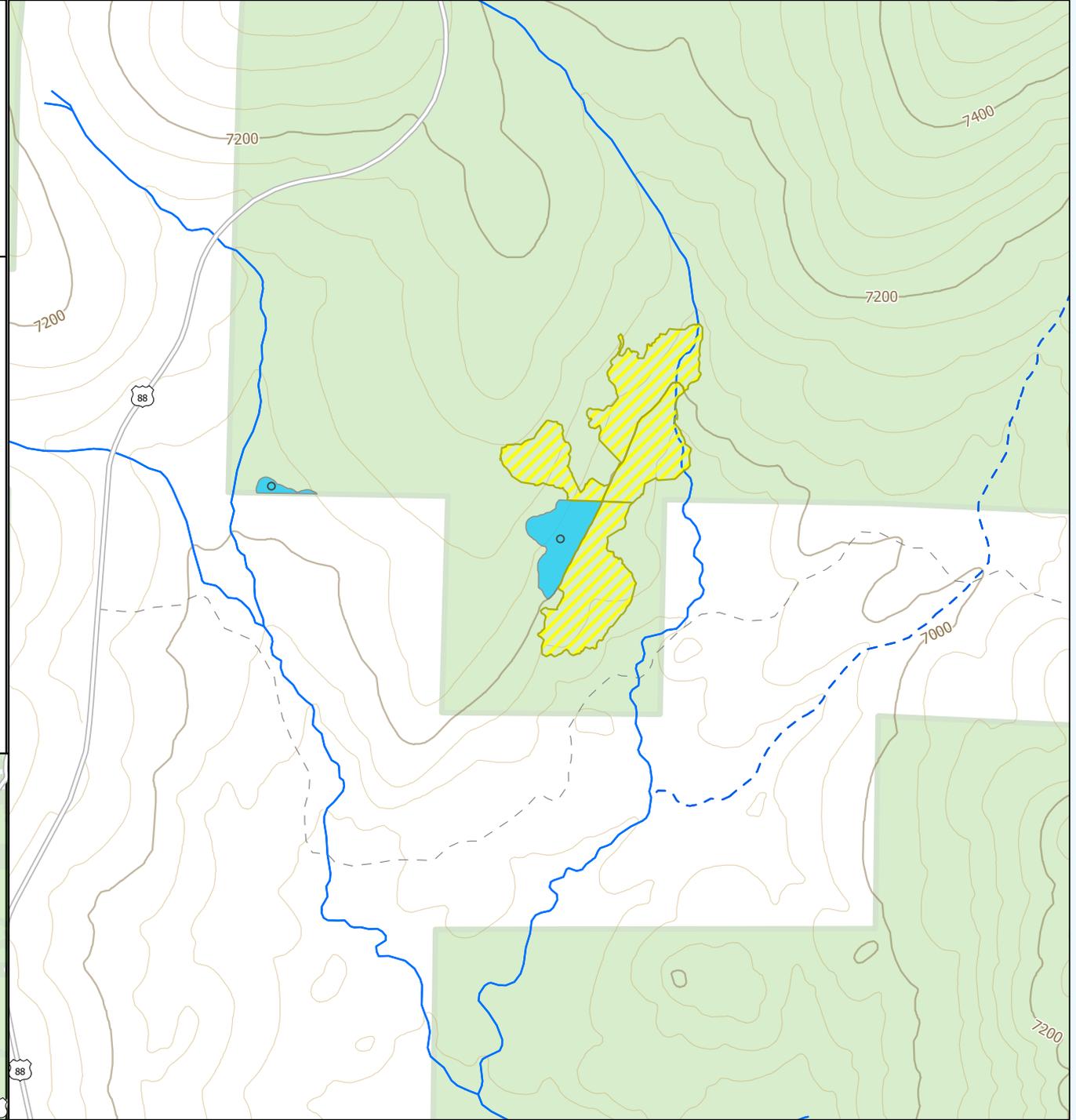
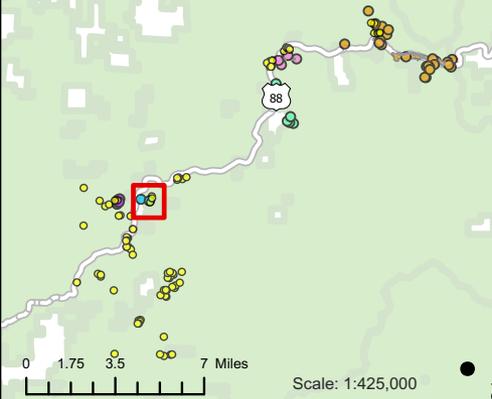


Legend

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- aspen_nepa_alltr_11112024
- Project_Ar**
- Project Area 1
- Project Area 2
- Project Area 3
- Project Area 4
- Project Area 5
- Waterbody (Data source: USGS)
- Streams, rivers (Data source: USGS)**
- Stream/River: Hydrographic Category = Perennial
- Stream/River: Hydrographic Category = Intermittent
- Local road
- FS Lands



Project Vicinity



WCB Upper Mokelumne Aspen Restoration Project

Map: Project Area 2

Eldorado National Forest, Amador Ranger District



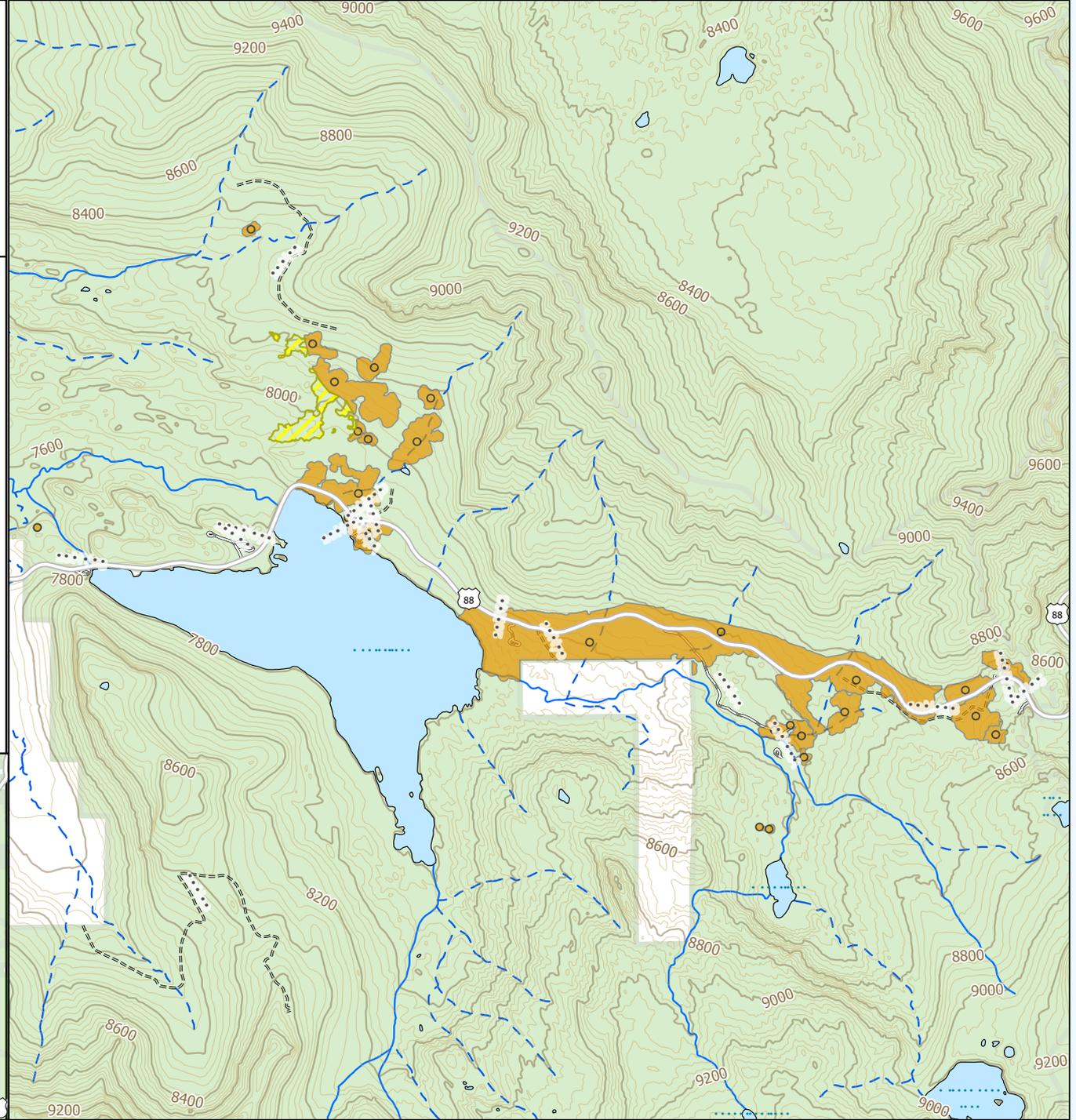
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- aspen_nepa_allrt_11112024
- Project_Ar**
- Project Area 1
- Project Area 2
- Project Area 3
- Project Area 4
- Project Area 5
- Waterbody (Data source: USGS)
- Streams, rivers (Data source: USGS)**
- Stream/River: Hydrographic Category = Perennial
- Stream/River: Hydrographic Category = Intermittent
- RoadCore_FS (Data source: USFS)**
- OPER_MAINT_LEVEL**
- 1 - BASIC CUSTODIAL CARE (CLOSED)
- 2 - HIGH CLEARANCE VEHICLES
- 3 - SUITABLE FOR PASSENGER CARS
- Local road
- FS Lands

0 0.25 0.5 1 Miles
Scale: 1:37,000

Project Vicinity

0 1.75 3.5 7 Miles
Scale: 1:425,000



WCB Upper Mokelumne Aspen Restoration Project

Map: Project Area 3

Eldorado National Forest, Amador Ranger District



Legend

aspen_nepa_fenceonly_11112024

aspen_nepa_alltrt_11112024

Project_Ar

Project Area 1

Project Area 2

Project Area 3

Project Area 4

Project Area 5

Waterbody (Data source: USGS)

Streams, rivers (Data source: USGS)

Stream/River: Hydrographic Category = Perennial

Stream/River: Hydrographic Category = Intermittent

RoadCore_FS (Data source: USFS)

OPER_MAINT_LEVEL

2 - HIGH CLEARANCE VEHICLES

3 - SUITABLE FOR PASSENGER CARS

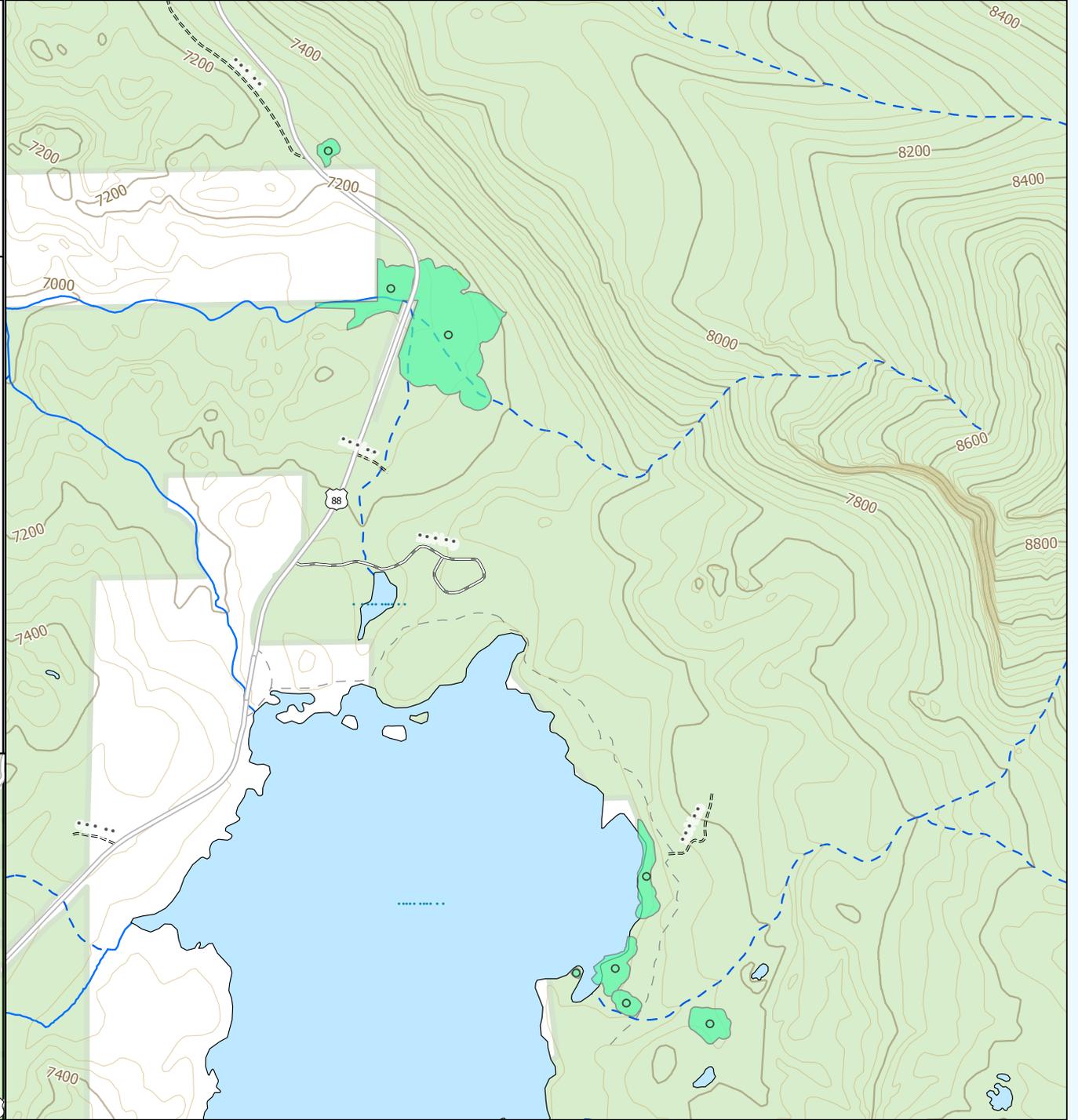
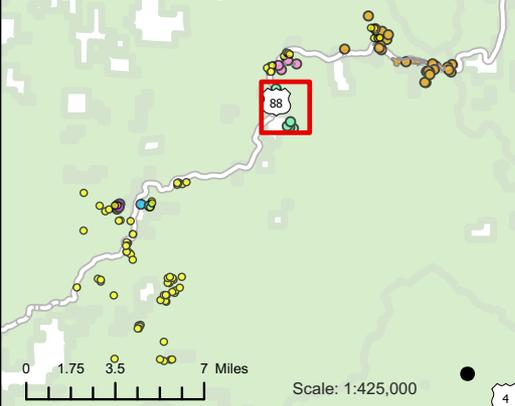
Local road

FS Lands

0 0.1 0.2 0.4 Miles

Scale: 1:15,155

Project Vicinity



WCB Upper Mokelumne Aspen Restoration Project

Map: Project Area 4

Eldorado National Forest, Amador Ranger District



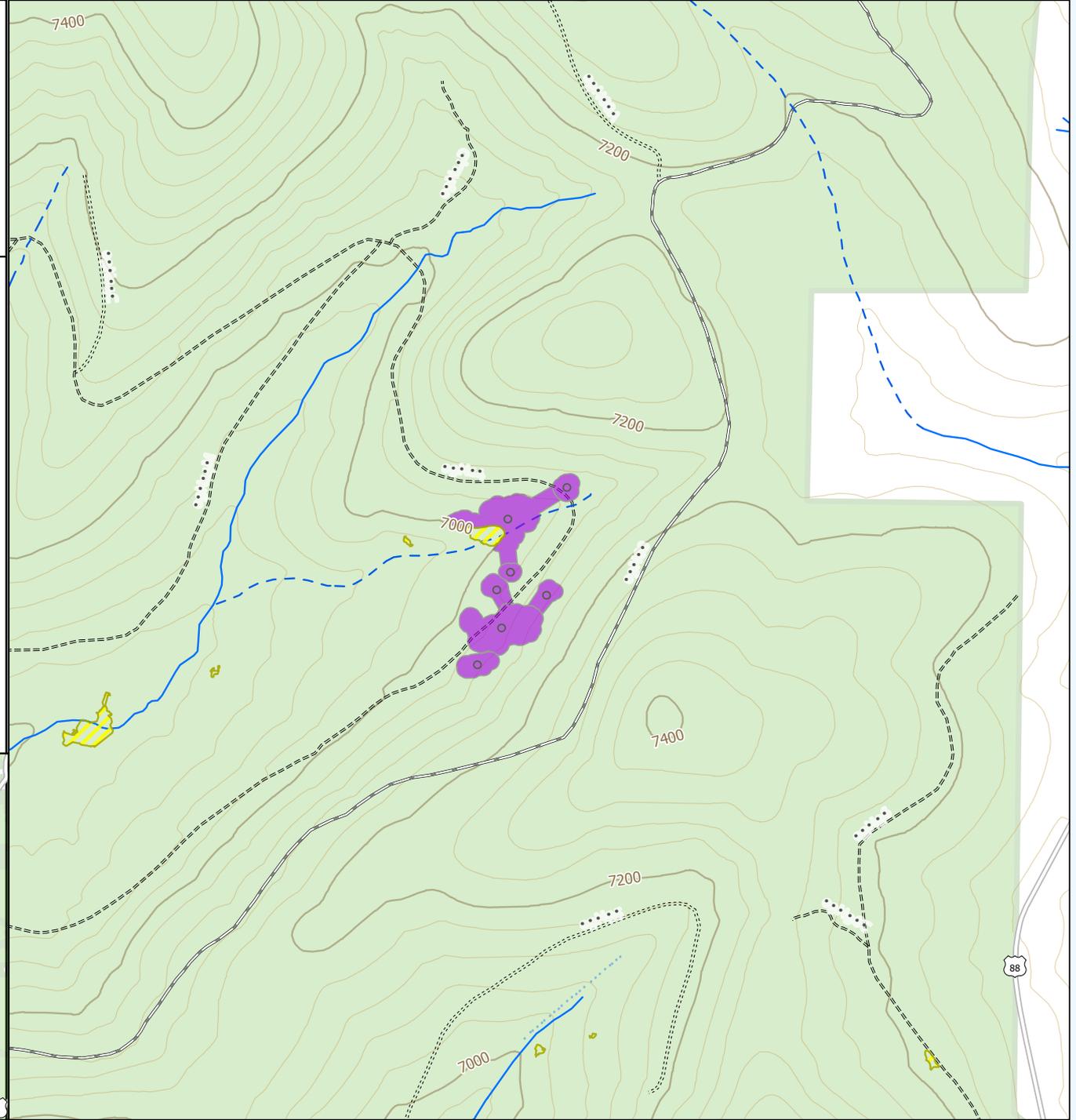
Legend

- aspen_nepa_fenceonly_11112024
- aspen_nepa_allrt_11112024
- Project_Ar**
- Project Area 1
- Project Area 2
- Project Area 3
- Project Area 4
- Project Area 5
- Waterbody (Data source: USGS)
- Streams, rivers (Data source: USGS)**
- Stream/River: Hydrographic Category = Perennial
- Stream/River: Hydrographic Category = Intermittent
- RoadCore_FS (Data source: USFS)**
- OPER_MAINT_LEVEL**
- 1 - BASIC CUSTODIAL CARE (CLOSED)
- 2 - HIGH CLEARANCE VEHICLES
- 3 - SUITABLE FOR PASSENGER CARS
- Local road
- FS Lands

0 0.05 0.1 0.2 Miles
Scale: 1:10,000

Project Vicinity

0 1.75 3.5 7 Miles
Scale: 1:425,000



WCB Upper Mokelumne Aspen Restoration Project

Map: Fencing only stands

Eldorado National Forest, Amador Ranger District

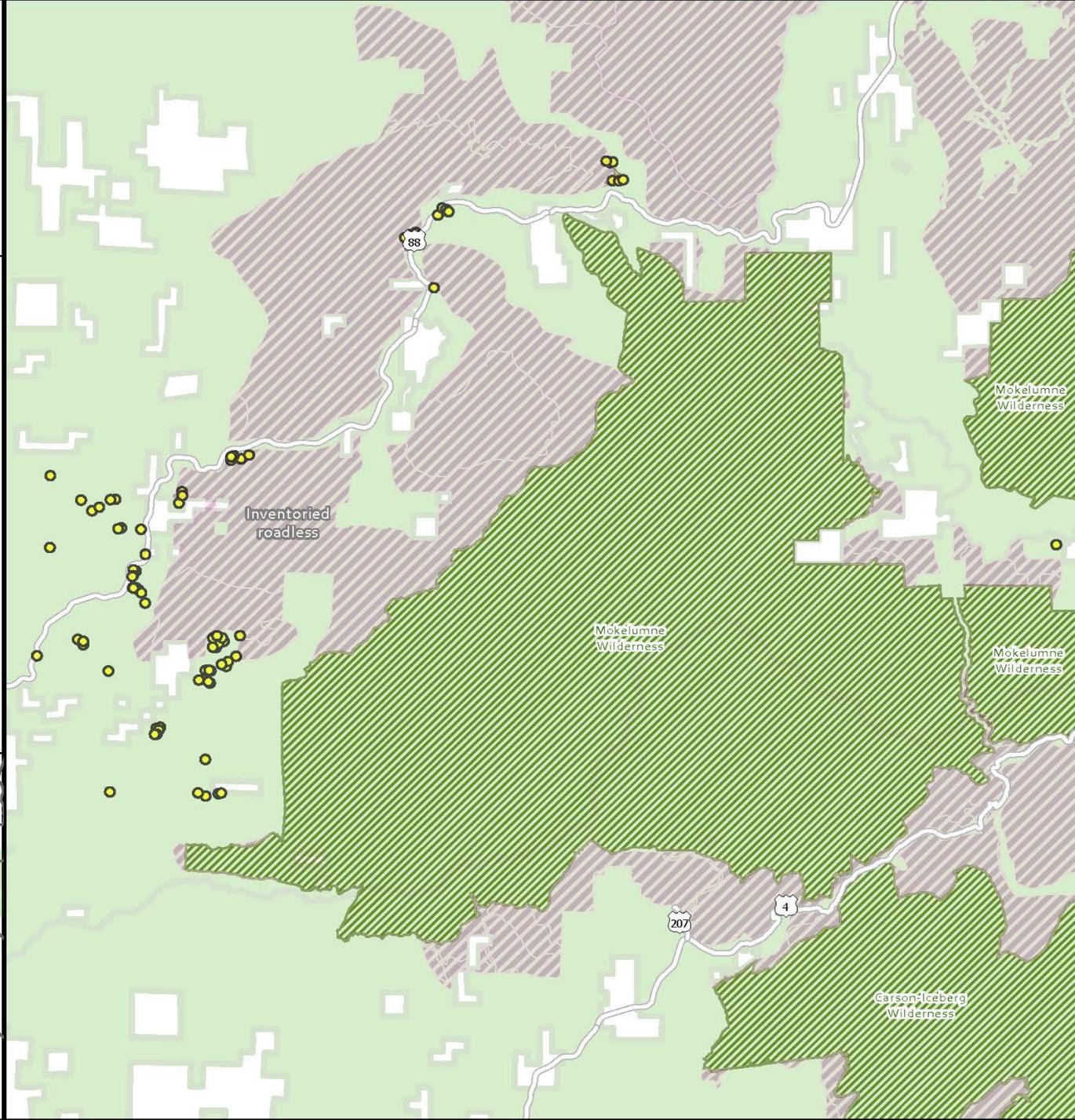
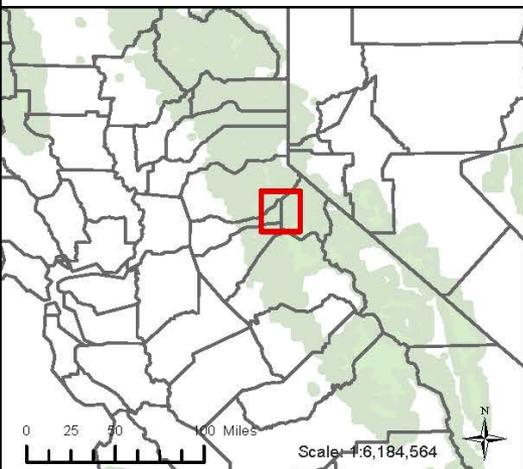


Legend

- aspen_nepa_fenceonly_11112024
- Inventoried roadless areas
- National Designated Wilderness
- FS Lands

0 1 2 4 Miles

Scale: 1:175,000



Status of USFWS Consultation

1. Consultation with the USFWS was initiated on August 26, 2025.
2. Seek to append the project to the Programmatic BO for four Sierra Nevada Amphibian species.
3. UMRWA anticipates consultation will be complete by <xx>, 2025 and USFWS will compile Conservation Measures for the protection of federally listed species.



Summary Conclusions of NEPA Project Record Reports

Name of Report	Conclusions
<p style="text-align: center;">Programmatic Consultation for Sierra Nevada Yellow-legged Frog</p> <p>This report analyzed the probability for adverse effects to federally listed species</p>	<p>Federally listed species in project area: Sierra Nevada yellow-legged frog (SNYLF)</p> <p>Due to the ecology of Aspen, some work will necessarily occur close to water features and within Sierra Nevada yellow-legged frog suitable habitat. For this reason, the analysis produced a May Affect, Likely to Adversely Affect determination for the SNYLF and Designated Critical Habitat. However, the likelihood of occurrence of adverse effects is low based on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A lack of SNYLF observations in most of the Project Area. While not all sites have been surveyed to the extent where we can declare the suitable habitat Unutilized Potential, the highest quality habitat has been surveyed. • Design criteria that require pre-implementation surveys immediately prior to work within occupied habitat or instream restoration work. • Implementation of appropriate actions to avoid adverse effects to SNYLF if found during pre-implementation surveys. Appropriate actions are not detailed in the Design Criteria but will be at the discretion of the Forest Aquatic Biologist. • The potential for adverse effects to suitable SNYLF habitat will be minimized by Project features, and implementation of best management practices and Design Criteria.

Summary Conclusions of NEPA Project Record Reports

Name of Report	Conclusions
<p align="center">Biological Evaluation/Assessment for Terrestrial and Aquatic Wildlife</p>	<p>This document analyzes the potential effects of the Project on other Federally listed, proposed, and Forest Service Sensitive species. The report concluded the project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will have no effect on the Federally listed gray wolf, North American wolverine, Sierra Nevada red fox, northwestern pond turtle, foothill yellow-legged frog, Yosemite toad, Lahontan cutthroat trout, and Monarch butterfly. • Will have no effect, will not affect species viability, and will not lead to trend toward federal listing, for FSS: Pacific lamprey, hardhead, northwestern pond turtle, willow flycatcher, and fisher. • May affect, but not threaten viability or cause a trend toward federal listing, for: western bumble bee, California spotted owl, American goshawk, bald eagle, Pacific marten, great gray owl, pallid bat, fringed myotis, and Townsend's big-eared bat.
<p align="center">Biological Evaluation/Assessment for Botanical Species</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The report concluded that the project will not affect any federally listed plant species. • No occurrences of Forest Service Sensitive plant species have been documented however it is possible the project may affect undiscovered individuals but is not likely to result in a trend toward Federal listing or loss of viability for any of the species. • The risk of spreading and/or introducing noxious weeds will be low within forested habitats with implementation of Design Criteria.

Summary Conclusions of NEPA Project Record Reports

Name of Report	Conclusions
<p>Management Indicator Species (MIS) Report</p>	<p>The report concludes that the effects of the project on the habitat of MIS is minimal and will not alter the existing trend in the habitat, nor will it lead to a change in the distribution of MIS.</p>
<p>Migratory Bird Report/Bald Eagle</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Migratory Bird Report concludes that the project actions result in minimal adverse effects to migratory birds and will provide long-term net benefits to migratory birds by protecting aspen stands that increase habitat diversity and ameliorate the effects of future wildfires. • The Project is not expected to alter habitat quantity or quality for golden eagle or bald eagle.
<p>Cultural Resources Management Report</p>	<p>Cultural resources will be protected by flagging and avoiding sites during project implementation. The project will not result in adverse effects to historic properties.</p>



Key Remaining Steps

1. ACCG Letter of Consensus Support - November 19, 2025
2. Execute Decision Memo – First week of December
3. Complete CEQA Compliance - January 23, 2026 UMRWA Board Meeting

Note: The timing to complete USFWS consultation is uncertain. USFWS consultation must complete before the Decision Memo can be signed.



Anticipated Implementation Next Steps

Restoration Implementation Plan:
October – December 2025

Pre-implementation flagging and
surveys: June – October 2026

Apply for WCB funding: March -
September 2026

Bidding/Procurement: September
2026 – April 2027

Award Contract: April 2027
• Implement: 2027 - 2032



**Thank you, ACCG, for your valuable
input, support and ongoing
partnership!**

