Initial Study
for the proposed
Hearst Forests
Programmatic Timberland Environmental Impact Report
(PTEIR)



prepared by:

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for Hearst Forests

March 30, 2025

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INITIAL STUDY

Introduction and Regulatory Context

STAGE OF CEQA DOCUMENT DEVELOPMENT

☐ **Administrative Draft.** This California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) document is in preparation by California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CALFIRE) staff.

☒ **Public Document.** This completed CEQA document has been filed by CALFIRE at the State Clearinghouse on April 8, 2025, and is being circulated for a 30-day state agency and public review period. The review period ends on May 8, 2025.

☐ **Final CEQA Document.** This final CEQA document contains the changes made by the Department following consideration of comments received during the public and agency review period. The CEQA administrative record supporting this document is on file, and available for review, at CALFIRE's Sacramento Headquarters, Environmental Protection Program.

INTRODUCTION

This Initial Study (IS) describes the environmental impact analysis conducted for the proposed project. This document was prepared for CALFIRE staff utilizing information gathered from a number of sources including research, field review of the proposed project area, and consultation with environmental planners and experts on staff at other public agencies. Pursuant to §21082.1 of CEQA, the Lead Agency, CALFIRE, has prepared, reviewed, and analyzed the IS and declares that the statements made in this document reflect CALFIRE's independent judgment as lead Agency pursuant to CEQA. CALFIRE further finds that the proposed project may result in a significant effect on the environment and a Supplemental Programmatic Timberland Environmental Impact Report (Supplemental PTEIR) to the 1998 certified PTEIR will be prepared.

REGULATORY GUIDANCE

This IS has been prepared for CALFIRE to evaluate potential environmental effects that could result following the approval and implementation of the proposed project. This document has been prepared in accordance with current CEQA Statutes (Public Resources Code §21000 *et seq*.) and current CEQA Guidelines (California Code of Regulations [CCR] §15000 *et seq*.).

PURPOSE OF THE INITIAL STUDY

An IS is prepared by a lead agency to determine if a project may have a significant effect on the environment (14 CCR §15063(a) and thus to determine the appropriate environmental document.

CALFIRE has primary authority for oversight of the proposed project and is the Lead Agency under CEQA. The purpose of this IS is to identify those areas under CEQA that may have

significant impacts associated with the project, and which areas under CEQA will not have impacts or are addressed as baseline conditions under CEQA.

If the lead agency determines there is substantial evidence that any aspect of the project, either individually or cumulatively, may cause a significant effect on the environment, regardless of whether the overall effect of the project is adverse or beneficial, the lead agency shall do one of the following: (1) prepare an EIR, (2) use a previously prepared EIR which the lead agency determines adequately analyzes the project at hand, or (3) determine pursuant to a program EIR, tiering, or other appropriate processes which of a project's effects are adequately examined by an earlier EIR. The purpose of the IS is to provide the lead agency with information to use as the basis for deciding whether to prepare an EIR, to assist in the preparation of an EIR, and to focus the EIR on the effects determined to be significant. The IS will also identify the effects determined not to be significant and explain the reasons for the determination.

Immediately after deciding that an EIR is required for a project, the Lead Agency will send out a Notice of Preparation (NOP) (attached to this IS) stating that the EIR will be prepared and submitted to the Office of Planning and Research and each responsible agency that is identified by the agency, and will file the NOP with the county clerk of each county (Siskiyou and Shasta counties) in which the project is located. This IS/NOP provides the responsible agencies with sufficient information describing the project's potential environmental effects to enable each agency to response meaningfully. Within 30 days after receiving the IS/NOP, responsible and trustee agencies will provide the Lead Agency with specific details about the scope and content of the project information related to the responsible or trustee agency's area statutory responsibility.

AGENCY COMMENT

If submitted prior to the close of public comment, views and comments are welcomed from reviewing agencies or any member of the public on how the proposed project may affect the environment. Written comments must be postmarked or submitted on or prior to the date that the public review period will close (as indicated on the NOP) for CALFIRE's consideration. Written comments may also be submitted via email (using the email address that appears below), but comments sent via email must also be received on or prior to the close of the 30-day public comment period. Comments should be addressed to:

Jon Woessner, RPF No. 2571
CALFIRE Forester III
Cascade, Sierra, and Southern Regions Forest Practice Manager
6105 Airport Road
Redding, CA 96002
sacramentopubliccomment@fire.ca.gov

Project Description and Environmental Setting

PROJECT LOCATION

The Hearst Forests is comprised of approximately 80,989 acres located in Shasta and Siskiyou counties. The property surrounds the unincorporated community of McCloud then continues southeast towards McCloud Reservoir, Grizzly Peak, and the upper basin of Kosk Creek and east towards Bartle. The property is comprised of almost one continuous block with a few smaller isolated parcels. The property is divided into four management blocks: Wyntoon, Town, River, and Kosk Creek, respectively. The property is owned by three wholly owned subsidiaries of the Hearst Corporation: Wyntoon Estate LLC, Wyntoon Timberlands LLC, and Hearst Forests LLC. The project location is shown on Figure 1. Hearst ownership is shown on Figure 2.

BACKGROUND AND NEED FOR THE PROJECT

In 1997 Hearst Forests submitted the draft Program Timber Environmental Impact Report (PTEIR) and the final PTEIR was approved by CALFIRE in March 1998. Beyond the annual and other associated required updates as described in the PTEIR and sustained yield plan (SYP), Hearst Forests had not completed amendments or supplements to the program until 2012 when a supplement was submitted and approved to address greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions as required by Assembly Bill 97. The 1998 PTEIR needs to be updated to include the acquisition of additional property and to modify certain silvicultural practices within the ownership to address fuel loading, wildfire risk, and stand structure.

Activities resulting from the Program include timber harvesting; construction and maintenance of roads, fuel breaks, stream crossings, and skid trails; and treatment of slash/fuel loading via mastication, herbicide application, chipping, pile burning, and other treatments. The Program is designed to be consistent with the requirements of the Z'berg-Nejedly Forest Practice Act of 1973 (FPA) utilizing the PTEIR/Program Timber Harvest Plan (PTHP) process detailed in California Code of Regulations (CCR) Sections 1092.01- 1092.32 of the California Forest Practice Rules (CFPR) and the CEQA and Guidelines.

Hearst Forests utilizes primarily an uneven-aged timber management regime which requires large portions of the ownership to be under an approved timber harvest document as defined in the CFPR at any given time. The use of program EIRs is encouraged by the CEQA Guidelines Section 15168 directing lead agencies to *"Avoid duplicative reconsideration of basic policy considerations"* and *"Consider program-wide mitigation measures at an early time when the agency has greater flexibility to deal with basic problems or cumulative impacts"*.

Hearst Forests believes the preparation of a PTHP reduces long-term costs and regulatory uncertainty compared to preparing individual Timber Harvest Plans (THP). Management activities on Hearst Forests are directly integrated into multiple programmatic agreements including a Northern Spotted Owl Resource Plan, American Goshawk Adaptive Management Plan Memorandum of Understanding, Incidental Take Permits for multiple State-listed species, and the Hearst Master Timber Harvesting Lake and Streambed Alternation Agreement.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed program/project includes the following revisions to the project site and operational activities analyzed in CALFIRE's 1998 PTEIR:

1. **Expanded Project Site:** The project site is proposed to be expanded by approximately 20,010 acres to a total of 80,989 acres to encompass properties purchased by Hearst Forests in 2023 (see Figure 2). Although the expansion area is highly comparable to lands and habitats addressed in the 1998 PTEIR and will continue to employ similar uneven-aged management objectives, the following project elements will be addressed in the PTEIR:

    - Conservation Easement that includes the provision for public access and limited non-motorized recreation not previously analyzed in the 1998 PTEIR.
    - Larger project footprint in relation to the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) not previously analyzed in the 1998 PTEIR.
    - Expanded project area included within several CalWater planning watersheds not previously analyzed in the 1998 PTEIR.

2. **Fuel Hazard Reduction and Non-Commercial Vegetation Treatment:** While wildfire risk mitigation was not robustly analyzed previously, the 1998 PTEIR examined fuel management activities including lopping, chipping, or burning logging slash in all harvest units and harvesting and chipping small trees in dense stands. The Subsequent PTEIR will evaluate adding non-commercial fuel reduction activities including the creation of fuel breaks using manual treatment, mastication, herbicide treatment, and pile burning, especially in areas adjacent to critical infrastructure and the WUI.

3. **Expansion of Allowed Silvicultural Prescriptions:** Repeated entities using individual tree selection has resulted in a reduction of the number of age classes present in some stands. The problem is more pronounced in true fir stands with a brushy understory. Group selection silviculture is permitted under the 1998 PTEIR. Similar to the 1998 PTEIR, uneven-age silviculture will remain the dominant management regime.
    In addition, mortality, high fuel loads, and overstocked forest conditions in Late-Seral Management Areas and the McCloud River Preserve threaten the values for which the areas were targeted for maintenance of the late-seral conditions. The PTEIR will expressly enable timber management and fuel reduction to protect late-seral stand conditions and reduce wildfire risk in all areas of the property. Limited tree removal currently occurs within the McCloud River Preserve and Late-Seral Management Areas. The project would allow additional selection, commercial and pre-commercial thinning, sanitation salvage, and fuels reduction silviculture to occur within those areas to protect and enhance late-seral composition and structural elements.

4. **Updated Best Management Practices:** Best Management Practices (BMPs) will be updated to reflect the current requirements of the CFPR and the General Order for Timber Management Activities of the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (CVRWQCB).

5. **Integrate Adaptive Programmatic Mitigation Agreements into the PTEIR:** Integrating the adaptive programmatic mitigation agreements of other agencies into the PTEIR will maximize synergies and ensure the protection of threatened and endangered (T&E) species and other sensitive resources. These include the Spotted Owl Management Plan (SOMP)/Spotted Owl Resource Plan (SORP), Master Agreement for Timber Operations (MATO), Incidental Take Permit (ITP), Waste Discharge Requirements (WDRs), and McCloud River Redband Trout Conservation Agreement.

6. **Realign and Adjust Late-Seral Management Zone (LSMZ) Acres:** The original Late-Seral Management Zone (LSMZ) boundaries were created to facilitate the development and connectivity of late-seral stage habitats. Over the last 30 years, certain areas previously identified as LSMZ have been determined to: 1) Create unfunctional strips of habitat that are too small to have a significant beneficial ecological effect; 2) Be operationally unfeasible; and 3) Increase the risk of catastrophic wildfire due increases in fuel loading and connectivity. LSMZ area boundaries will be modified to remove the limited areas that do not possess LSMZ characteristics. These include a previously logged portion of Angelica Ridge, non-functional narrow strips adjacent to LSMZ boundaries, and a portion of the property southeast of the McCloud Dam. The latter designated area extends into an operational area and would be better protected by aligning the LSMZ with a property line of PG&E to support LSMZ objectives.

7. **Realignment and Enhancement of Preserve Boundary:** The revised PTEIR proposes to make limited changes to the McCloud Preserve boundaries to simplify operations and enhance the protection of Preserve areas. The proposed changes will result in a net increase of Preserve acres within the ownership. These include minor modifications to the Preserve boundaries consistent with functional management boundaries such as roads and powerlines. This includes areas around the estate where the preserve areas will be increased by moving the boundary closer to roads. The boundary will be extended farther up Huckleberry Creek, adding in portions of McBride and Huckleberry Meadows. Limited areas will be removed that do not exhibit the characteristics of old growth that were consistent with the Preserve designation. This includes an odd appendage extending up Fan Gulch and the reduction of a small area of Angelica Ridge to align with an operational break in slope.

PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The Hearst Forests PTEIR was developed for Hearst Forests to create a streamlined regulatory process to ensure the management objectives of:

- Forest sustainability and health primarily through selective timber harvesting to promote the development of uneven-aged stand structures.
- Maintaining soil productivity and water quality by limiting the extent of annual timber harvesting and through proper design, construction, and maintenance of roads, skid trails, landings, and stream crossings.
- Enhancing the quality and diversity of wildlife and fish habitat.

- Managing fuel loading and continuity to reduce the risk of catastrophic wildfire.
- Protecting community resources, assets, and public utilities from catastrophic wildfire.
- Maintaining other ecological services.
- The Dogwood Butte Conservation Easement Management Plan and associated Habitat Enhancement Plans.

PROJECT START DATE

February 2026

ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING OF THE PROJECT REGION

The property lies at the geographic intersection of the Klamath and Cascade Ranges and has an elevation span of 2,800 to 6,100 feet above mean sea level (msl). Soils are primarily volcanic in the northern extent of the property and transition to a combination of sedimentary and metamorphic origins in the areas surrounding the McCloud Reservoir, southern portions of the Town Block, and the Kosk Creek Block.

The property is almost entirely composed of forested land with some minor components of meadows, rock outcroppings, brush fields, water bodies, and small developments. The forested portions are composed of mixed conifer, pine, true fir, montane riparian, and montane hardwood stands. Stands are generally natural with a small component of plantations split between stands that are less than 20 years old, and an older component planted in the 1970s from brush field conversions. Approximately 12,644 acres of the Town Block are encumbered by the Dogwood Conservation Easement held by Pacific Forest Trust.

CURRENT LAND USE AND PREVIOUS IMPACTS

Current Hearst Ownership

Timber

As the property has been managed for timber production for over 100 years, its forest composition and structure have changed over time as a result of management decisions. The harvest of most old-growth pine was completed in the first half of the 20th Century. Much of the residual large-diameter timber was cut by the 1970s, though scattered old-growth trees remain within an overall matrix of the property's well-managed, diverse commercial forest. During the second half of the 20th Century, some areas (particularly the McCloud Flats along the eastern extent of the Town Block) were clear-cut and reestablished as pine plantations. Other areas were selectively harvested over successive entries that favored the removal of more valuable species such as ponderosa pine, sugar pine, and Douglas-fir. Such harvests, combined with fire suppression for the past century, have created mixed conifer stands on the property.

Today, the property is managed with uneven-aged silviculture, where thinning occurs across all diameter classes, and entry to an area is on average decadal. Species diversity is largely influenced by site conditions, reliance on natural regeneration, and sometimes interplanting to achieve desired regeneration. This management approach leaves many stands with mixed species and few monocultures except where they occur naturally. The non-contiguous areas north of Highway 89 are generally flat or rolling topography typified by mixed conifer with ponderosa pine dominant in the overstory. Common associates are Douglas-fir, often occupying a co-dominant canopy position, sugar pine, incense cedar, and white fir.

Harvesting

The property is generally managed using uneven-aged silvicultural methods. Historically, the ownership has harvested less than 3 percent of the standing inventory annually, within the limits established in the 1998 PTEIR. Harvest volumes will continue to be based on estimates of non-declining even flow. The standing board foot volume has increased since the completion of the 1998 PTEIR. Revised harvest volumes are presented in the updated Maximum Sustained

Production (MSP) analysis being conducted for the site. Harvest levels are not anticipated to change significantly in the next planning period. The historical percent of inventory harvest levels of the original Hearst Forests ownership are included in Table 1.

Table 1: HISTORICAL HEARST HARVEST (PERCENT OF INVENTORY)

Period of Harvest	Percent of Inventory Harvested (5-Year Period)	Annual Percent of Inventory Harvested (1-Year Period)
2001 – 2005	10.22%	2.04%
2005 – 2010	10.51%	2.10%
2011 – 2015	13.59%	2.72%
2016 – 2020	12.61%	2.52%
2021 – 2025* (projected)	9.86%	1.97%
Average Annual % of Inventory Harvested:	**--**	**2.27%**

Logging Methods

Harvesting is completed using ground and cable methods. All logging is contracted to professional Licensed Timber Operators (LTO). Hearst Forests conducts their own road maintenance and mastication in-house using their equipment. The following equipment is used in forest operations:

- Feller-buncher
- Hand fellers
- Skidders/Cat dozer
- Processor
- Loaders
- Water trucks
- Log trucks
- Masticators
- Cable systems

Cable systems are used on less than 10 percent of the property. 85 percent of the property is suitable for ground-based logging and less than 5 percent would be suitable for helicopter systems.

Roads

The property is accessed via an existing road network maintained by Hearst Forests. Little additional road construction is planned. The road system is stable and well-maintained. Some abandonment and realignment of the road system was completed under the early years of the original PTEIR following the 1997 flood. Road maintenance prescriptions in the MATO and current PTEIR BMPs set requirements for road maintenance and management, including stream-crossing replacement and maintenance.

Archeology
The original Hearst ownership has been surveyed for archeological resources. This was completed under the 1998 PTEIR and is updated as new sites are recorded. In general, sites are avoided. Some of these sites are being added to the Preserve areas onsite. Archeological resources are reviewed and considered with each PTHP.

Dogwood Butte Conservation Easement/Unencumbered Remainder

Timber
The management of the property since its acquisition by Hancock Forest Management (HFM) initiated the restoration of a natural species distribution and forest structure more typical of historic conditions for the site. As with the current Hearst ownership, the Conservation Easement (CE) is generally managed using uneven-aged silvicultural techniques producing a variable forest structure. Approximately 70 percent of the total basal area on the property consists of ponderosa pine, white fir, and Douglas-fir species. Large trees (greater than 30 inches in diameter at breast height [DBH]) accounted for 10 percent of the total volume and represented an average of 7.0 square feet of basal area per acre. Stand typing indicates that 29 percent (3,661 acres) of the CE forest area was in multi-storied stands.

Unencumbered additional acres include a block of land due east of McCloud, a few scattered parcels north of Highway 89, and a contiguous block north of Highway 89. The properties are generally flat and appropriate for ground logging applications. The property was managed on an uneven-aged basis similar to the current Hearst ownership. The management of the property since acquisition by HFM has initiated the restoration of a natural species distribution and forest structure more typical of historic multi-staged stand conditions. As on the areas of the CE and the original Hearst ownership, the stands consist of mixed conifer species of ponderosa pine, white fir, and Douglas-fir.

Harvest
According to the terms of the CE, timber harvests may not remove more than 30 percent of the net merchantable forest inventory during each decade. Such allowable harvest is measured against inventory at the beginning of each 10-year period. Harvest levels during the first nine years of the CE (2016-2024) were below the harvest level established in the 2016 inventory. The average annual harvest was less than 3 percent of the standing volume per year. Forest management may not reduce the basal area of large trees below the level existing on the property as of the effective date of the easement. Harvest volumes on the unencumbered areas of the new ownership are not anticipated to change significantly.

Logging Methods
The acres within the CE and unencumbered areas are moderately sloped and appropriate for ground-based logging operations. The CE property has been logged similarly to the Hearst ownership and using similar systems. The estimated harvest volume and methods of harvest will not change from the current condition due to the limitations of the CE. Logging operations have historically been contracted to LTOs. Hearst Forests intends to continue contracting harvesting operations while conducting most road maintenance in-house. Equipment commonly used in forest operations was provided earlier in this document.

Roads
The CE and unencumbered acres of the property are considered fully accessible through a network of maintained seasonal roads. Little to no additional new road construction is planned. The road system is stable and well-maintained. Road maintenance prescriptions in the MATO and current PTEIR BMPs set the requirements for road maintenance and management, including stream-crossing replacement and maintenance. No changes in road construction or maintenance are planned.

Archeology
Archaeological surveys were completed at the time the CE was established. For the unencumbered portion of the property, archaeological surveys have been completed associated with historical THPs. Records are updated as additional sites are located. Archeological resources are reviewed and considered under each PTHP.

Existing Plans and Agreements

Timber operations within the project site are currently subject to the following plans and agreements.

Northern Spotted Owl Resource Plan
The northern spotted owl (NSO) was listed as threatened by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) in 1990. Although Hearst Forests is located within the range of the NSO, no active NSO nests have ever been observed on the property. Systematic NSO surveys initiated in 1990 have identified several NSO on or near the property. All NSO observed on the property, however, were concluded to be non-nesting transients. In 1993, the USFWS approved a SOMP for Hearst Forests. This management plan was intended to ensure that timber operations do not result in the take of any individual NSOs. These objectives were achieved on Hearst lands by:

- Conducting annual NSO surveys consistent with the protocols specified in the SOMP for each THP submitted;
- Protecting from disturbance related to timber operations all identified NSO and northern spotted owl nests;
- Maintaining suitable NSO habitat in at least 40 percent of the coniferous timber area of each major drainage on the property; and
- Managing a network of LSMZs to promote the development and enhancement of suitable NSO habitat.

Consistent with the SOMP, Hearst submitted annual reports to USFWS summarizing the year's survey results, noting locations and status of the year's timber operations, any observed responses by NSOs to timber operations, and recommending changes to the plans needed based on new information.

The 20,010 acres purchased from Manulife Investment Management maintained conservation efforts for the NSO via technical assistance from USFWS and a CALFIRE-approved SORP.

In 2024, USFWS informed Hearst Forests that they would no longer be providing technical assistance and would not be continuing to support the SOMP, and Hearst Forests was encouraged to transfer technical assistance to CALFIRE with a SORP. It is anticipated that in 2025 CALFIRE will approve a single SORP covering the entire ownership to ensure the "take" of NSO will not result from forest management activities.

American Goshawk Management Plan

The American goshawk is classified by the Board of Forestry and Fire Protection (BOF) as a sensitive species. In 1993, Hearst and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) signed a letter of understanding implementing a protection plan for, and an adaptive management study of, the American goshawk on Hearst Forests. Then, in 2004, it executed its protection with CDFW for goshawk. The protection plan requires Hearst to conduct goshawk surveys in all timber stands containing quality goshawk nesting habitat scheduled to be harvested the following year. To avoid goshawk disturbance during the sensitive nest-building and egg-incubation periods (March through May), surveys are conducted during the June to October period. If goshawks are identified through the surveys, or through subsequent field checks to be conducted through the initiation of timber operations, CDFW will immediately be contacted and consulted in developing appropriate silvicultural prescriptions and mitigation measures to protect the goshawks and their nests. Applicable mitigation measures include the establishment of 18-acre buffer zones surrounding nest trees with seasonal restrictions.

Incidental Take Permit with California Department of Fish and Wildlife

Hearst has an ITP from CDFW regarding procedures to avoid adverse impacts on wildlife species listed as threatened or endangered under the California Endangered Species Act (CESA) that could occur on Hearst Forests land. Species addressed by the ITP are bald eagle, willow flycatcher, great gray owl, greater sandhill crane, wolverine, and Shasta salamander. The ITP specifies that Hearst will evaluate areas planned for timber harvesting and adjacent areas to determine whether listed species are present and whether the site provides suitable habitat for listed species. It also specifies mitigation measures that Hearst will implement to avoid adverse impacts on listed species and their habitats. The ITP specifies that CDFW agrees that timber operations on Hearst Forests implemented consistent with the mitigation measures in the ITP are unlikely to adversely affect the listed species and that consultations with CDFW pursuant to Section 2090 of the California Fish and Wildlife Code are not warranted. The ITP provides for annual updates of the ITP to account for changes in the status and habitats of the listed species, including revisions to the applicable mitigation measures, as needed.

Master Timber Harvesting Lake and Streambed Alternation Agreement

In 2024 Hearst Forests executed a Master Timber Harvesting Lake and Streambed Alternation Agreement (MATO) with CDFW. The agreement replaces the use of project-based CDFW 1600 agreements and instead uses a programmatic approach that synchronizes with Hearst Forests management objectives. The MATO pertains to measures necessary to protect fish and wildlife sources with work relating to substantially divert or obstruct the natural flow or substantially change the bed, channel, or bank of any river, stream, or lake, or the use of any materials from the streambeds, or deposit or dispose of debris, waste, or other material containing crumbled, flaked, or ground pavement where it may pass into any river, stream, or lake. The agreement gives a framework for road work and timber operations relative to alterations in watercourses and requires annual and four-year reporting pertaining to that work.

California Vegetation Treatment Program (CalVTP)

The BOF has developed the California Vegetation Treatment Program (CalVTP), which is a statewide vegetation treatment program. The CalVTP defines vegetation treatment activities and associated environmental protections that would occur for projects within the State Responsibility Area (SRA) to reduce wildfire risks as one component of the range of actions being implemented by the state to respond to California's wildfire crisis. The CalVTP is an important part of the State's approach to addressing the wildfire crisis with an increase in the pace and scale of vegetation treatment to reduce wildfire risk. Currently, one site-specific project has been analyzed within the footprint of the CalVTP program. The McCloud State Route 89 VTP encompasses 440 acres along State Route 89 and the WUI interface of the town of McCloud and Hearst Forests property.

Regional Water Quality Control Board General Order for Timberland Management Activities

California Regional Water Quality Control Board Order R5-2017-0061 *Waste Discharge Requirements General Order for Discharges Related to Timberland Management Activities for Non-Federal and Federal Lands* serves as general waste discharge requirements (WDRs) for waste discharges related to timberland management activities on both non-federal and federal lands (managed by the U.S. Forest Service) that could affect waters of the state. Waste specifically regulated under this Order includes: earthen materials, including soil, silt, sand, clay, and rock; organic materials, such as slash, sawdust, or bark; and pesticides that enter or threaten to enter into waters of the state from timberland management activities. This Order implements the Basin Plans by requiring the implementation of management practices to prevent exceedances of applicable water quality objectives (both numeric and narrative) and the prevention of nuisance.

The Order requires that the Discharger incorporate management practices and/or water quality protective measures resulting from Central Valley Water Board staff's participation in CALFIRE's Review Team process, the federal review process, the CDFW review process, and/or during project enrollment, that arise from changed conditions/new information into the project document(s) and/or Notice of Intent (NOI) addendum. The Discharger may propose alternative management practices if it can demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Executive Officer that the proposed alternatives will meet water quality requirements. Technical reports are necessary to evaluate Discharger compliance with the terms and conditions of this Order and to ensure that applicable water quality objectives are, in fact, being met. Consistent with Water Code section 13267, this Order requires the implementation of a monitoring and reporting program (MRP) that is designed to determine the effects of a Discharger's nonpoint source activity on water quality, to verify the effectiveness of management practices designed to comply with applicable water quality objectives, to verify the adequacy and effectiveness of the Order's conditions, and to evaluate Discharger compliance with the terms and conditions of the Order.

Conclusion of the Initial Study

ENVIRONMENTAL PERMITS

Other permits or programmatic documents required for the project include:

- Order R5-2017-0061 *Waste Discharge Requirements General Order for Discharges Related to Timberland Management Activities for Non-Federal and Federal Lands*
- Incidental Take Permit (ITP)
- Master Timber Harvesting Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreement
- Spotted Owl Management Plan/Spotted Owl Resource Plan (SOMP/SORP)
- Goshawk Management Plan
- Burn Permit

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

This Initial Study has been prepared to assess the project's potential effects on the environment and an appraisal of the significance of those effects. Based on this Initial Study, and in accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15162, it has been determined a Subsequent PTEIR is required since substantial changes are proposed in the project which would require major revisions to the previous 1998 PTEIR due to the involvement of new significant environmental effects or a substantial increase in the severity of previously identified significant effects.

Initial Study-Environmental Checklist

Project Title:
Hearst Forests Programmatic Timber Environmental Impact Report

Lead Agency Name and Address:
California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CALFIRE), 6105 Airport Road, Redding, CA 96002

Contact Person & Phone Number:
CALFIRE Project Manager: Jon Woessner, Forester III

Project Location:
The Hearst Forests is comprised of approximately 80,989 acres located in Shasta and Siskiyou counties. The property surrounds the unincorporated community of McCloud then continues southeast towards McCloud Reservoir, Grizzly Peak, and the upper basin of Kosk Creek and east towards Bartle. The property is comprised of almost one continuous block with a few smaller isolated parcels. The property is divided into four management blocks: Wyntoon, Town, River, and Kosk Creek, respectively. The property is owned by three wholly owned subsidiaries of the Hearst Corporation: Wyntoon Estate LLC, Wyntoon Timberlands LLC, and Hearst Forests LLC. The project location is shown on Figure 1. Hearst ownership is shown on Figure 2.

Project Sponsor's Name and Address:
Hearst Forests, LLC

General Plan Designation:
Public Land, Timber, TPZ, and Open Space.

Zoning:
Multiple districts including Heavy Industrial, Timber Production, Rural Residential 40, and Unclassified (see Figure 3).

Description of Project:
Revisions to Hearst Forests Programmatic Timber Environmental Impact Report.

Surrounding Land Uses and Setting:
The Hearst Forests are a generally contiguous block of timberland surrounded by other timberlands including U.S. Forest Service (see Figure 4).

Other public agencies whose approval may be required:
Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, Shasta County and Siskiyou County Air Pollution Control Districts, California Geologic Survey, and the Department of Conservation (CGS).

Docusign Envelope ID: D3C3C4DE-91FD-435F-BC0C-D2D98BE45178

Environmental Factors Potentially Affected

The environmental factors checked below would be potentially affected by this project involving at least one impact that is a potentially significant impact as indicated by the checklist on the following pages.

☐ Aesthetics	☒ Greenhouse Gas Emissions	☐ Public Services
☐ Agriculture Resources	☐ Hazards & Hazardous Materials	☐ Recreation
☒ Air Quality	☒ Hydrology and Water Quality	☐ Transportation
☒ Biological Resources	☐ Land Use and Planning	☒ Tribal Cultural Resources
☒ Cultural Resources	☐ Mineral Resources	☐ Utilities and Service Systems
☐ Energy	☐ Noise	☐ Wildfire
☒ Geology and Soils	☐ Population and Housing	☒ Mandatory Findings of Significance

Determination

On the basis of this initial evaluation:

☐ I find that the proposed project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment, and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION would be prepared.

☐ I find that although the proposed project COULD have a significant effect on the environment, there WOULD NOT be a significant effect in this case because revisions in the project have been made by or agreed to by the project proponent. A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION would be prepared.

☐ I find that the proposed project MAY have a significant effect on the environment, and an ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required.

☒ I find that the proposed project MAY have a "potentially significant impact" or "potentially significant unless mitigated" impact on the environment, but at least one effect 1) has been adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and 2) has been addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis as described on attached sheets. An ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required, but it must analyze only the effects that remain to be addressed.

☐ I find that although the proposed project COULD have a significant effect on the environment, because all potentially significant effects (a) have been analyzed adequately in an earlier ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT or NEGATIVE DECLARATION pursuant to applicable standards, and (b) have been avoided or mitigated pursuant to that earlier ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT or NEGATIVE DECLARATION, including revisions or mitigation measures that are imposed upon the proposed project, nothing further is required.

DocuSigned by:
Eric Huff
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4/8/2025

Eric K. Huff, RPF No. 2544
Assistant Deputy Director, Forest Practice
California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection
715 P Street, Sacramento, CA 95814

Date

Environmental Checklist and Discussion

AESTHETICS

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Except as provided in Public Resources Code § 21099, would the project have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?	☐	☐	☒	☐

a) The Siskiyou County General Plan states that the entire county is considered scenic lands. Portions of the project site are visible from State Highway 89, the McCloud Reservoir, and public lands, trails, and roads adjacent to the project site. The Shasta County General Plan does not identify specific scenic vistas within the County.

The 1998 PTEIR for the current PTHP included a Visual Resource Assessment which concluded that timber harvest operations would not substantially alter the visual composition of forest stands or be noticeable from State Highway 89 since timber operations would consist almost entirely of selective harvesting. The Visual Resource Assessment also concluded that the short-term visual effects of logging which includes the presence of fresh-cut stumps and slash accumulations would be less than significant since such effects are common in the context of commercial forests, including national forestlands surrounding Hearst Forests and consistent with most viewers' expectation and would only be visible from a few locations within the ownership accessible by public roads.

The project includes expansion of the program area to include the newly acquired 20,010 acres. The newly acquired acreage has similar visual characteristics as the original 60,801 acres and has been managed similarly using uneven-aged management objectives. Under the current program up to 5 percent of harvests within the program area could consist of even-aged regeneration harvests (e.g., clearcutting, shelterwood, or seed-tree harvests) which result in cleared areas up to 2.5 acres in size. The revised program also limits even-aged harvests to 5 percent of the property's decadal harvest volume and uneven-aged silviculture will remain the dominant management regime. Therefore, expansion of allowed silvicultural prescriptions and expansion of the program area would not result in significant visual changes from current timber harvest activities within the program area.

The project also includes the addition of non-commercial fuel reduction activities within the program area including pre-commercial thinning throughout the program area as well as the creation of shaded fuel breaks. Fuel reduction treatments would target the removal of understory vegetation including lower age class trees and shrubs. Fuel reduction treatments would result in lower density of vegetation within the treated areas which could be noticeable in close proximity to treated areas but would not be noticeable when viewed from a distance since overstory trees will be retained. The impacts of the proposed program revisions to a scenic vista would be less than significant and will not be evaluated further in the Subsequent PTEIR.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
b) Except as provided in Public Resources Code § 21099, would the project substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?	☐	☐	☐	☒

b) Portions of the project site are adjacent to and/or visible from State Route 89. State Route 89 is a federal Scenic Byway, but not an officially designated State scenic highway. The project would not result in damage to scenic resources within a State scenic highway and this issue will not be analyzed further in the Subsequent PTEIR.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
c) Except as provided in Public Resources Code § 21099, in non-urbanized areas, would the project substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings? (Public views are those that are experienced from publicly accessible vantage point.) If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality?	☐	☐	☒	☐

c) The project area is in a non-urbanized area. Portions of the project area are visible to State Highway 89, visitors to Lower Falls picnic site, the upper McCloud River, Forest Road 11, the McCloud River, other public roads in the Kosk Creek Tract, and conservation easement areas within the newly acquired 20,010 acres that are accessible to the public.

Short-term and long-term visual effects of logging were discussed in the Visual Resource Assessment of the 1998 PTEIR. As discussed under a) above, the 1998 PTEIR concluded that harvest operations would not substantially alter the visual composition of forest stands or be noticeable from State Highway 89 since timber operations would consist almost entirely of selective harvesting. The short-term effects of logging would include the presence of fresh-cut stumps and slash accumulations. In the context of commercial forests, including national forestlands surrounding Hearst Forests, such effects are common and consistent with most viewers' expectations and would be visible only from a few locations within the ownership accessible by public roads.

The newly acquired 20,010 acres are more accessible to the public than the original 60,801 acres evaluated in the 1998 PTEIR. However, timber harvest operations currently occur within this area and short-term visual effects of logging in this area would also be consistent with most viewer's expectations of the site. As discussed under a) above, significant long-term changes to the existing visual character of the project site would not occur since uneven-aged silviculture will remain the dominant management regime within the program area. Proposed non-commercial fuel reduction activities would result in similar visual impacts as existing logging operations within the program area. The project includes activities that are consistent with the existing visual character of the project site and would not substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site. Impacts would be less than significant and are not analyzed further in the Subsequent PTEIR.

d)	Except as provided in Public Resources Code § 21099, would the project create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?	Potentially Significant Impact ☐	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated ☐	Less Than Significant Impact ☐	No Impact ☒

d) The project does not include the installation or use of any new lighting sources or structures that would be a new source of glare. The project will not create substantial light or glare that would affect day or nighttime views in the area. Implementation of the proposed project would not result in light or glare impacts and this issue will not be analyzed further in the Subsequent PTEIR.

AGRICULTURAL AND FORESTRY RESOURCES

a)	Would the project convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?	Potentially Significant Impact ☐	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated ☐	Less Than Significant Impact ☐	No Impact ☒

a) The project site is in an area not mapped by the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP) and does not include Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (DOC 2025). The project would not convert farmland to non-agricultural use and this issue will not be analyzed further in the Subsequent PTEIR.

b)	Would the project conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use or a Williamson Act contract?	Potentially Significant Impact ☐	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated ☐	Less Than Significant Impact ☐	No Impact ☒

b) There are no Williamson Act contracts in effect within the program area. The project would not conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use or with a Williamson Act Contract and this issue will not be analyzed further in the Subsequent PTEIR.

c)	Would the project conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of forestland (as defined in Public Resources Code §12220(g)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code §4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code §51104(g))?	Potentially Significant Impact ☐	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated ☐	Less Than Significant Impact ☐	No Impact ☒

c) The project area includes forestland and timberland, including timberland zoned Timberland Production. The program does not include rezoning of any portions of the project area. Program activities including timber harvest, road construction and maintenance, and non-commercial fuel reduction would not conflict with existing zoning designations within the program area. This issue will not be analyzed further in the Subsequent PTEIR.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
d) Would the project result in the loss of forestland or conversion of forestland to non-forest use?	☐	☐	☐	☒

d) Public Resources Code §12220(g) defines forestland as land that can support 10 percent native tree cover of any species, including hardwoods, under natural conditions. The project would result in the removal of vegetation within forestland. Silvicultural prescriptions (e.g., clear cuts) could reduce tree cover to less than 10 percent in small portions of the program area but would be restocked within five years. Although the project would result in reduced tree cover within the program area, tree cover would remain greater than 10 percent throughout the program area, maintaining consistency with the definition of forestland. The project would not result in the loss of forestland or conversion of forestland to non-forest use. This issue will not be analyzed further in the Subsequent PTEIR.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
e) Would the project involve other changes in the existing environment, which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of farmland to non-agricultural use?	☐	☐	☐	☒

e) The project does not involve changes in the existing environment which could result in the conversion of farmland to non-agricultural use or conversion of forestland to non-forest use. This issue will not be analyzed further in the Subsequent PTEIR.

AIR QUALITY

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Would the project conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?	☐	☐	☒	☐

a) The program area is within the Northeast Plateau and Northern Sacramento Valley Air Basins. The Northeast Plateau Air Basin is comprised of the Siskiyou, Modoc, and Lassen counties. Siskiyou County is in attainment or unclassified for California Ambient Air Quality Standards (CAAQS) and National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for criteria pollutants and is not subject to an air quality plan. The Northern Sacramento Valley Air Basin (NSVAB) is comprised of Butte, Colusa, Glenn, Shasta, Sutter, Tehama, and Yuba counties. Under federal air quality standards, Shasta County is designated as attainment for all criteria pollutants. Under State air quality standards, Shasta County is designated as nonattainment for ozone and is designated as attainment/unclassified for all other pollutants.

The Northern Sacramento Planning Area *2024 Triennial Air Quality Attainment Plan* addresses non-attainment of California Ambient Air Quality Standards for ozone in the Northern Sacramento

Valley Planning Area. The Plan requires control measures for stationary sources and incentive programs, community education efforts, reduction from land use programs, air quality forecasting, and district rules to reduce emissions from new development. The project does not include stationary sources of air pollutants or permanent development therefore the control measures and district rules referenced in the Air Quality Attainment Plan are not applicable to the project. The project would not conflict with or obstruct the implementation of the Northern Sacramento Planning Area *2024 Triennial Air Quality Attainment Plan*, and this issue will not be analyzed further in the PTEIR.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
b) Would the project result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard?	☒	☐	☐	☐

b) Criteria air pollutants include ozone, carbon monoxide (CO), nitrogen dioxide (NO_2), sulfur dioxide (SO_2), respirable particulate matter (PM_{10}), fine particulate matter ($PM_{2.5}$) and lead. Siskiyou County is in attainment or unclassified for CAAQS and NAAQS and has not adopted mass emission thresholds for criteria air pollutants. Shasta County is designated as nonattainment for the ozone CAAQS. Shasta County Air Quality Management District's *Protocol for Review, Land Use Permitting Activities, and Procedures for Implementing the California Environmental Quality Act* includes the following thresholds of significance for emissions:

- Daily emissions of 25 pounds per day of Reactive Organic Gases (ROG) and nitrogen oxides (NO_x) and 80 pounds per day of PM_{10} (Level A)
- Daily emissions of greater than 137 pounds per day of ROG, NO_x, and PM_{10} (Level B)

Impacts to air resources were determined to be less than significant and not analyzed in detail in the 1998 PTEIR since air quality is generally very high in the project vicinity and all prescribed burning on Hearst Forests would be conducted pursuant to permits issued by the Siskiyou County Air Pollution Control District (Siskiyou County APCD) or other authorized permitting agency. Although the project includes an additional 20,010 acres, the additional acreage has been used for timber harvesting and was managed by the previous owner using similar methods and equipment used by Hearst Forests. The project does not include changes to equipment used for timber harvest or the annual volume of timber removed from the site compared to baseline conditions within the program area and emissions of criteria pollutants generated by timber harvest would remain similar to baseline conditions.

The project would result in increased emissions over baseline conditions from non-commercial fuel reduction activities within the program area. The program includes fuel reduction activities on up to 400 acres each year using manual treatment, mastication, herbicide treatment, and pile burning. Use of off-road equipment, power tools, equipment transport, contractor commute trips, and offsite transport of biomass would result in exhaust emissions containing ozone precursors ROG and NO_x.

Based on emission rates contained in the CalVTP Programmatic EIR, prescribed burning treatment activities within tree fuel types could generate an estimated 2,186.6 pounds of ROG per acre treated, 166 pounds of NO_x per acre treated, and 1,421 pounds of PM_{10} per acre treated. Mechanical treatment, manual treatments, and herbicide treatments would result in lower emissions per acre treated. Emissions from non-commercial fuel reduction could exceed Shasta County AQMD Level A and Level B emission thresholds, therefore criteria pollutant emissions of the project are potentially significant. Project impacts related to net increases in criteria pollutants will be evaluated further in the Subsequent PTEIR.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
c) Would the project expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?	☐	☐	☒	☐

c) The California Air Resources Board (CARB) defines sensitive receptors as children, the elderly, asthmatics, and others who are at a heightened risk of negative health outcomes due to exposure to air pollution. Locations where these sensitive receptors congregate are considered sensitive receptor locations. Portions of the project site are adjacent to the community of McCloud, within close vicinity to residences, and within half a mile of McCloud Elementary School and McCloud High School.

As discussed in b) above, the project would result in increased pollutant emissions from non-commercial fuel reduction activities compared to baseline conditions. Similar to timber harvest operations, fuel reduction activities would result in emissions of diesel particulate matter from equipment, smoke from pile burning, and dust from vehicle and equipment operation on unpaved roads. Fuel reduction activities would be transient and would not require equipment use in a single location for an extended period of time. Burning activities in the vicinity of sensitive receptors in the McCloud area will be subject to burn permit requirement of the Siskiyou County SCAPCD or CALFIRE as well as a Smoke Management Plan (SMP) if pile burning is required in an area greater than 10 acres or is estimated to produce more than one ton of particulate matter. SMPs regulate and coordinate regional land managers' large burn projects to prevent smoke impacts to sensitive receptors and prevent violations of state and federal ambient air quality standards. Pile burning will be conducted in accordance with the SMP, which will include wind and meteorological condition requirements for burning, identification of measures to reduce impacts to smoke-sensitive areas, contingencies to take if smoke adversely impacts smoke-sensitive areas, and public notification requirements and neighboring burn coordination. Notification of the public and known sensitive receptors in the vicinity would allow receptors to take actions to minimize their exposure to smoke if needed.

The project is not anticipated to expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations due to the short duration and transient nature of fuel reduction activities and since the implementation of an SMP for pile burning will minimize exposure to smoke generated by the project. Impacts to sensitive receptors would be less than significant and are not analyzed further in the Subsequent PTEIR.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
d) Would the project result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?	☐	☐	☒	☐

d) The project includes the continued operation of equipment that generates diesel exhaust odors as well as smoke from pile-burning activities. These activities currently occur within the program area. Diesel exhaust emissions are highly dispersive, and equipment will not be operated in any one location or for an extended period of time. Burning will be conducted in accordance with a burn permit obtained from Siskiyou County APCD or CALFIRE. Odorous emissions generated by the project would be similar to baseline conditions and the project would not result in additional odorous emissions affecting a substantial number of people. Odor impacts of the project would be less than significant and this issue will not be analyzed further in the Subsequent PTEIR.

BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Would the project have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special-status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	☒	☐	☐	☐

a) The project includes activities on additional acreage that was not evaluated in the 1998 PTEIR as well as expansion of allowed silvicultural prescriptions, and non-commercial fuel reduction activities including the use of herbicides. These revisions could result in effects to additional habitats or special-status species not previously considered in the 1998 PTEIR as well as increased effects to habitat for special-status species. Impacts to special-status species are potentially significant and will be evaluated in further detail in the Subsequent PTEIR.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
b) Would the project have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	☒	☐	☐	☐

b) The project includes expanded silvicultural prescriptions and activities on additional acreage that was not evaluated in the 1998 PTEIR. In addition, sensitive natural communities (other than riparian areas) were not addressed in the 1998 PTEIR. Impacts to riparian habitat and sensitive natural communities are potentially significant and will be evaluated in further detail in the Subsequent PTEIR.

c) Would the project have a substantial adverse effect on state or federally protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
	☒	☐	☐	☐

c) Timber harvest and fuel reduction activities would not generally occur within wetlands; however, landing and road construction within wetlands could result in adverse effects. Hearst Forests has entered into a Master Agreement for timber operations with the CDFW that addresses all activities to be undertaken within wetland areas.

As with the existing program, the project includes BMPs prohibiting road and landing construction and reconstruction in marshes, wet meadows, and other wet areas unless at the location of an existing road crossing or landing or approved as part of the Fish and Game Code process. In addition to approval by the CDFW, activities within State or federally protected wetlands would require permits from the CVRWQCB and the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE). Since project BMPs do not include complete avoidance of wetlands, impacts to State or federally protected wetlands are potentially significant and will be evaluated in further detail in the Subsequent PTEIR.

d) Would the project interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
	☒	☐	☐	☐

d) Impacts to fish migration were analyzed in the 1998 PTEIR. The 1998 PTEIR determined impacts related to fish migration barriers would be less than significant since consultation with CDFW would occur and a Lake or Streambed Alteration Agreement would be obtained prior to installing a bridge or culvert at any Class I stream. In addition, BMPs for minimizing sedimentation and avoiding landslides would reduce the potential for the formation of natural migration barriers. The 1998 PTEIR also included multiple BMPs for watercourse crossings including the requirement that crossing facilities on watercourses that support fish allow for unrestricted passage and water. The project does not include changes that would result in increased potential for fish or other aquatic species migration barriers.

In addition, Hearst Forests has entered into a MATO with the CDFW for both the additional and original acreages that includes measures to protect fish and wildlife resources for activities affecting the bed, bank, or channel of streams within the project area. Compliance with the MATO and the RWQCB General Order for Timberland Operations and implementation of BMPs will ensure impacts to migratory fish species would be less than significant.

The MATO replaces the use of project-based CDFW 1600 agreements and instead uses a programmatic approach that synchronizes with Hearst Forests management objectives. The MATO specifies measures necessary to protect fish and wildlife resources with work relating to the substantial diversion or obstruction of the natural flow; or substantial change to the bed, channel, or bank of any river, stream, or lake; or the deposition or disposal of debris, waste, or

other material containing crumbled, flaked, or ground pavement where it may pass into any river, stream, or lake. The MATO gives a framework for road work and timber operations relative to alterations in watercourses and requires annual and four-year reporting pertaining to that work.

Hearst Forests has also entered into a McCloud River Redband Trout Conservation Agreement for the property. The MATO and the Conservation Agreement specify the activities that will be used to protect sensitive terrestrial species within riparian corridors. The Programmatic document does not address all activities that may be undertaken by Hearst Forests; therefore, there may be additional potentially significant effects. These will be evaluated in the Subsequent PTEIR.

The 1998 PTEIR did not include an analysis of impacts to terrestrial migratory wildlife corridors or impacts to native wildlife nursery sites for non-special-status species. In addition, the project includes the expansion of silvicultural activities throughout the program area that could affect migration corridors used by terrestrial wildlife. Project effects to terrestrial migratory wildlife corridors and native wildlife nursery sites are potentially significant and will be evaluated in the Subsequent PTEIR.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
e) Would the project conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?	☐	☐	☐	☒

e) Siskiyou and Shasta Counties do not have a tree preservation policy or ordinance. The proposed project would not conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance. This issue will not be analyzed further in the Subsequent PTEIR.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
f) Would the project conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?	☐	☐	☐	☒

f) A CE is in effect on 12,644 acres of the newly acquired acreage within the project area (Dogwood Butte Conservation Easement held by Pacific Forest Trust). The project does not include any revisions to the CE which will continue to remain in effect. The project would not conflict with an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP), Natural Community Conservation Plan (NCCP), or other local, regional, or State habitat conservation plan and this issue will not be analyzed further in the Subsequent PTEIR.

CULTURAL RESOURCES

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to § 15064.5?	☒	☐	☐	☐

a) Impacts to cultural resources of the existing programmatic timber harvest plan were evaluated in the 1998 PTEIR and determined to be potentially significant since timber operations could disturb and damage known cultural resources or buried, unidentified archaeological or historic sites. Impacts could result from ground disturbance associated road construction, movement of heavy equipment, timber falling and yarding, or with debris piling and movement. Mitigation measures were included in the 1998 PTEIR including protection measures for known archaeological or historical sites within the program area or determination of significance for known sites that could not be avoided as well as stopping timber operations if archaeological or historical sites are discovered during timber operations. Impacts to cultural resources were determined to be less than significant with mitigation incorporated.

The project includes additional areas not previously evaluated in the 1998 PTEIR. Similar to the existing PTEIR, activities could result in adverse changes to historical and archaeological resources within the project site and impacts to these resources are potentially significant. Potential impacts to historical and archaeological resources will be evaluated in the Subsequent PTEIR.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
b) Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to § 15064.5?	☒	☐	☐	☐

b) See discussion under item a) above. Project impacts to archaeological resources are potentially significant and will be evaluated in the Subsequent PTEIR.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
c) Would the project disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?	☐	☐	☒	☐

c) Record searches and surveys completed previously have indicated that burial sites not previously known or recorded are unlikely within the program area. In the unlikely event that project activities result in the discovery of previously undiscovered human remains, compliance with the California Health and Safety Code is required. No further disturbance of the site or any nearby area will occur until the county coroner (Siskiyou or Shasta) has determined that no investigation of the cause of death is required. If the coroner determines that the remains are not subject to his or her authority and if the coroner recognizes the human remains to be those of a

Native American or has reason to believe that they are those of a Native American, he or she shall contact, by telephone within 24 hours, the Native American Heritage Commission. Compliance with laws regarding the discovery of human remains would ensure potential impacts to human remains are less than significant and this issue will not be analyzed further in the Subsequent PTEIR.

ENERGY

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Would the project result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation?	☐	☐	☒	☐

a) Revised silviculture practices would not result in significant changes to the volume of timber harvested on an annual basis or associated energy use compared to baseline conditions within the project area. Program revisions include non-commercial fuel reduction activities that would result in increased consumption of energy resources (diesel fuel and gasoline) for equipment, transportation of workers and equipment, and offsite transport of biomass. The project is required to comply with State, federal, and local regulations (limiting idling times, etc.) which will minimize energy demand during fuel reduction activities to the extent feasible. The project would result in less than significant impacts related to the use of energy resources and this issue is not analyzed further in the Subsequent PTEIR.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
b) Would the project conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?	☐	☐	☐	☒

b) The Energy Element of the Siskiyou County General Plan contains goals, policies, and implementation measures pertaining to energy needs, efficient land use and transportation, efficient buildings, efficient commerce and agriculture, efficient community services, renewable resource use, and energy facilities; however, the implementation measures included in the Energy Element are not directly applicable to the project. The Energy Element of the Shasta County General Plan includes a policy related to encouraging thinning and harvest of biomass fuels for purposes of improving wildland fire protection and forest productivity in developed areas that are capable of forest production (Policy E-i). A portion of the biomass generated by current timber harvest activities is transported to biomass energy facilities and will provide a source of renewable energy (biomass). The project includes the addition of non-commercial fuel reduction activities that will improve wildland fire protection and a portion of the biomass generated by these activities will also be used as fuel for biomass energy facilities. The project would not conflict with or obstruct a local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency and this issue is not analyzed further in the Subsequent PTEIR.

GEOLOGY AND SOILS

a)	Would the project directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including risk of loss, injury, or death involving rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? (Refer to California Geological Survey Special Publication 42.)	Potentially Significant Impact ☐	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated ☐	Less Than Significant Impact ☐	No Impact ☒

a) The project site does not contain Alquist Priolo-Falt Zones (CGS 2019). The closest mapped Alquist Priolo Fault Zones are east of the project site and include the Cedar Mountain Fault System near Tennant, the Mayfield Fault Zone adjacent to the Whitehorse Mountains, and the Rocky Ledge Fault Zone northeast of Burney. The project would not directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects involving the rupture of a known earthquake fault. This issue will not be evaluated further in the Subsequent PTEIR.

b)	Would the project directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving strong seismic ground shaking?	Potentially Significant Impact ☐	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated ☐	Less Than Significant Impact ☐	No Impact ☒

b) Frequent, strong seismic ground shaking is unlikely within the project site. The project site is in a region distant from known, active earthquake faults and will experience lower levels of shaking less frequently than other regions in California near major, active faults (CGS 2016). The project does not include the construction of additional occupied structures within the program area. The project would not cause potential adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving strong seismic ground shaking. This issue will not be evaluated further in the Subsequent PTEIR.

c)	Would the project directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?	Potentially Significant Impact ☐	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated ☐	Less Than Significant Impact ☒	No Impact ☐

c) Since frequent strong seismic ground shaking is not anticipated at the project site, seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction and earthquake-induced landslides, is not anticipated. The project site does not contain liquefaction zones or earthquake-induced landslide zones mapped by the California Department of Conservation California Geological Survey (CGS 2024). Landslides unrelated to seismic activity are addressed under d) below. Impacts related to seismic-related ground failure would be less than significant and will not be evaluated further in the Subsequent PTEIR.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
d) Would the project directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving landslides?	☒	☐	☐	☐

d) An overview of unstable areas was included in the 1998 PTEIR. Under the existing PTHP, a certified engineering geologist (CEG) or a trained Registered Professional Forester (RPF) visits each landslide shown on the Hearst Forests "Known Unstable and Eroded Areas" map in areas where tractor-based timber operations are planned and landslides are classified. Landslide areas are managed consistent with the guidelines in "Geology, Landslides, and Geologic Guidelines for Managing Hearst Forests" included in the 1998 PTEIR.

The review of unstable areas in the 1998 PTEIR did not include the 20,010 acres recently acquired by Hearst. In addition, initial scoping comments received from the CGS requested an update of the existing Hearst Forests Landslide Map, including landslides documented in the field by Hearst Forests staff and review team agencies as well as an assessment of the implementation of existing Hearst Forests BMPs effectiveness and monitoring. These items will be addressed, and impacts related to landslides from the proposed program revisions will be evaluated in further detail in the Subsequent PTEIR.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
e) Would the project result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?	☒	☐	☐	☐

e) Surface erosion was evaluated in the 1998 PTEIR for primary planning watersheds within the existing program area. As discussed in the 1998 PTEIR, timber operations can increase surface erosion directly through soil disturbance associated with tree falling and log yarding and indirectly through changes in runoff rates and patterns related to reduced transpiration, soil compaction, and runoff diversion. Any disturbance that increases runoff rates can increase erosion, particularly in highly detachable soils. The 1998 PTEIR included an Erosion Hazard Rating (EHR) map intended to depict soil erodibility for planning purposes. Detailed analysis and mapping of EHR are conducted during PTHP preparation to identify localized variations in soil type and cover characteristics. The 1998 PTEIR concluded that with the implementation of CFPRs as well as special BMPs being implemented by Hearst to minimize erosion in areas with high or extreme EHR, and monitoring the effectiveness of BMPs, erosion attributable to timber operations would be less than significant.

In addition, Hearst Forests has entered into a MATO with the CDFW for both the additional and original acreages that includes measures to protect fish and wildlife resources for activities affecting the bed, bank, or channel of streams within the project area. Compliance with the MATO and the RWQCB General Order for Timberland Operations and implementation of BMPs will ensure impacts to migratory fish species would be less than significant.

The project includes expansion of the program area into watershed areas not analyzed in the 1998 PTEIR and expansion of allowed silvicultural prescriptions that could affect soil erosion rates within the program area. Impacts related to soil erosion are generally associated with roads and stream crossings covered under programmatic agreements; however, CGS required these be evaluated as part of the Subsequent PTEIR.

		Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
f)	Would the project be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse?	☒	☐	☐	☐

f) See d) above. Project impacts related to unstable areas are potentially significant and will be evaluated in further detail in a Subsequent PTEIR.

		Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
g)	Would the project be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994, as updated), creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property?	☐	☐	☐	☒

g) The project would not include the construction of buildings or structures. The project would not create substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property from expansive soils and this issue is will not be analyzed further in the Subsequent PTEIR.

		Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
h)	Would the project have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater?	☐	☐	☐	☒

h) The project would not require the installation of new septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems. This issue will not be analyzed further in the Subsequent PTEIR.

		Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
i)	Would the project directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?	☐	☐	☐	☒

i) The project does not include deep ground disturbance and is not anticipated to affect unique paleontological resources or unique geologic resources. This issue will not be analyzed further in the Subsequent PTEIR.

GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

		Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a)	Would the project generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?	☒	☐	☐	☐

a) A supplement to the 1998 PTEIR to address greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions was prepared in March 2013. The supplement evaluated the direct, indirect, and post-consumer emissions generated by the current PTHP as well as cumulative carbon sequestration of standing inventory within the program area. The GHG supplement concluded that the existing PTHP would not result in GHG emissions that would have a significant impact on the environment.

Although the project is not anticipated to result in significant changes to GHG emissions resulting from timber operations within the project area, emissions from non-commercial fuel reduction activities would result in increased emissions from increased equipment operation and pile-burning activities. In addition, estimated carbon sequestration rates within the project area would be significantly different than estimated in the 2013 GHG supplement due to expanded silvicultural practices and an expanded project area. Greenhouse gas impacts from the project are potentially significant and will be evaluated further in the Subsequent PTEIR.

		Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
b)	Would the project conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?	☒	☐	☐	☐

b) As discussed under a) above, a supplement to the 1998 PTEIR was prepared in 2013 to address GHG emissions. GHG plans policies, and regulations applicable to the project have been developed since 2013. Impacts related to conflict with an applicable plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing emissions of greenhouse gases are potentially significant and will be evaluated in further detail in the Subsequent PTEIR.

HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

		Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a)	Would the project create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?	☐	☐	☒	☐

a) Timber operations requiring transportation, use, and storage of gasoline, diesel, oil, and lubricants required for vehicle and equipment operations already occur in the program area under existing conditions and would not change under the proposed project. In addition to materials currently handled under baseline conditions, the project includes the use of herbicides for non-commercial fuel reduction treatments.

Herbicide application would comply with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) label directions, as well as California Environmental Protection Agency and Department of Pesticide Regulation (DPR) label standards. Use will be limited to ground-level application. The application method chosen would depend on the written recommendations of an independent Pest Control Advisor (PCA) licensed by DPR for the targeted weed species and characteristics of the site to which the treatment is proposed. Hearst Forests staff will obtain a permit from the applicable County Agricultural Commissioner (CAC) prior to applying herbicides.

Herbicides that will be used for the project have been subject to extensive testing and research under a certified regulatory program administered by the California Department of Pesticide Regulations (CDPR). Through this process, CDPR has determined that an herbicide, if used as prescribed on the label, will not have a significant impact on the environment. Impacts from routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials used for the project will be less than significant and will not be further evaluated in the Subsequent PTEIR. Herbicide use will be considered in the biological resources and water quality analyses in the Subsequent PTEIR.

b) Would the project create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and/or accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
	☐	☐	☒	☐

b) See discussion under item a) above. Hazardous materials used for project operations will not change from baseline conditions with the exception of herbicide use for non-commercial fuel reduction activities. Herbicide use will comply with all federal and state laws regarding the transport, storage, and disposal of herbicides and recommendations provided on the herbicide label and by the licensed PCA. Hearst BMPs related to herbicide use included setbacks from Watercourse and Lake Protection Zones (WLPZ) and other wetlands, mixing area requirements, and the use of personal protective equipment. Impacts from upset and/or accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment would be less than significant and will not be evaluated further in the Subsequent PTEIR.

c) Would the project emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
	☐	☐	☐	☒

c) The project site is not within a quarter mile of a school and will not emit hazardous emissions or handle acutely hazardous materials within a quarter mile of a school. This issue will not be evaluated further in the Subsequent PTEIR.

d) Would the project be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code § 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact

	☐	☐	☒	☐

d) Cortese List Data Resources were reviewed to determine if the project site is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code §65962.5. The project site includes two Leaking Underground Storage Tank (LUST) Sites included in the State Water Board's GeoTracker Database. The status for both sites is listed as completed – case closed. The project does not include excavation activities that could expose the public, environment, or contractors to hazards from these closed LUST sites. This issue will not be evaluated further in the Subsequent PTEIR.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area?	☐	☐	☐	☒

e) The project site is not located within an airport land use plan or within two miles of an airport. The project would not result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people working in the project area and this issue will not be evaluated further in the Subsequent PTEIR.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
f) Would the project impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	☐	☐	☐	☒

f) Program activities would occur on private land and would not generate significant traffic volumes on public roadways. The project would not impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan and this issue will not be evaluated further in the Subsequent PTEIR.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
g) Would the project expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires?	☐	☐	☒	☐

g) The 1998 PTEIR prepared for the existing PTHP included a fuels and wildlife safety assessment. The 1998 PTEIR concluded, that because of the highly restricted access of the public to Hearst Forests, implementation of the fuel management practices required by CFPRs as well as additional BMPs implemented by Hearst Forests, and ongoing implementation of comprehensive preattack fire plan, proposed timber operations would not increase wildfire hazards relative to conditions existing prior to implementation of the PTHP and would reduce such hazards relative to the no-project alternative.

Project activities will not increase the risk of wildland fires compared to existing operations within the program area. Hearst Forests requires their staff as well as contractors to comply with a Fire Plan prepared annually for all timber and road management operations within the program area. The Fire Plan outlines which activities are allowed or prohibited during the CALFIRE-declared Fire Season, requires fire inspections, outlines activities allowed or prohibited during red flag conditions, requires fire pumpers with a minimum capacity of 250 gallons of water, and contains provisions for the use of hotsaws and masticators. In addition, the Fire Plan includes actions to take to respond to lightning events as well as outlines fire suppression actions and reporting in case of a fire and fire-training requirements.

Expansion of the program area would result in a larger program footprint within the WUI of McCloud; however, these areas are currently used for timber harvesting. In addition, the project also includes the creation and maintenance of shaded fuel breaks and other fuel reduction activities, including fuel breaks surrounding the community of McCloud, that would reduce the risk of spread of wildfire and the risk to people or structures compared to baseline conditions. Project impacts related to risks from wildfire would be less than significant and will not be analyzed in the Subsequent PTEIR.

HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Would the project violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality?	☒	☐	☐	☐

a) The 1998 PTEIR for existing PTHP activities included a watershed assessment to determine whether timber operations conducted under the existing program would, in conjunction with past, present, or foreseeable future activities result in cumulative watershed effects (CWEs) that would impair the beneficial uses of the study area's surface waters. The project includes new physical areas, expansion of allowed silvicultural prescriptions as well as non-commercial fuel reduction activities (including herbicide use) that could result in increased quality impacts compared to the existing program. In addition, the project includes expansion of the program area into watersheds not analyzed in the 1998 PTEIR. Impacts to water quality are potentially significant and will be analyzed in the Subsequent PTEIR.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
b) Would the project substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?	☐	☐	☒	☐

b) Project activities would require small quantities of water for dust suppression as well as water storage onsite for fire suppression during operations occurring during the fire season and during pile-burning activities. Water is generally sourced from surface water locations based on riparian

rights. Hearst Forests maintains 40 permitted water rights for surface water sources on the property.

Water use associated with forestry operations on the historic Hearst Forests property varies annually and averages approximately 2 million gallons/year (6 acre-feet annually) since reporting annual usage to the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) began in 2012. Annual use per acre on the acquired Manulife property would be comparable to historic Hearst operations. Projected water use on the entire Hearst Forest property is anticipated to be less than 10 acre-feet per year.

The project would not require significant quantities of groundwater or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge. Groundwater supply and recharge impacts of the project are considered less than significant and will not be further analyzed in the Subsequent PTEIR.

c) Would the project substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would result in substantial on- or off-site erosion or siltation?	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
	☒	☐	☐	☐

c) The project includes activities in watersheds not previously analyzed in the 1998 PTEIR for the existing PTHP. In addition, expansion of allowed silvicultural prescriptions could alter the drainage pattern of the program area through changes in vegetation which could result in on- or offsite erosion or siltation. This impact is potentially significant and will be further analyzed in the Subsequent PTEIR.

d) Would the project substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in on- or off-site flooding?	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
	☒	☐	☐	☐

d) The 1998 PTEIR included an analysis of peak flows and flooding impacts from the existing PTHP based on a Natural Sensitivity Index and Equivalent Roaded Area Calculations (ERA Analysis). Based on the ERA Analysis, proposed timber operations could result in minor increases in flooding potential in all planning watersheds analyzed; however, increases in peak flows resulting from management activities were expected to be nearly offset by the gradual natural recovery of areas subject to past disturbance.

The project includes activities in watersheds not previously analyzed in the 1998 PTEIR. In addition, the expansion of allowed silvicultural prescriptions could alter the drainage pattern of the program area through changes in vegetation that could result in an increased rate or amount of surface runoff. This impact is potentially significant and will be further analyzed in the Subsequent PTEIR.

e) Would the project substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff?	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
	☒	☐	☐	☐

e) The project does not include revisions to the existing PTHP that could result in significant changes to the rate and amount of surface runoff within the program area; however, the project includes expansion to watersheds not evaluated in the 1998 PTEIR. Impacts related to surface water runoff in newly added areas may be potentially significant and will be evaluated in the Subsequent PTEIR.

f) Would the project substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would impede or redirect flows?	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
	☒	☐	☐	☐

f) The project does not include revisions to the existing PTHP that could result in significant changes to the rate and amount of surface runoff within the program area; however, the project includes expansion to watersheds not evaluated in the 1998 PTEIR. Impacts related to surface water runoff in newly added areas may be potentially significant and will be evaluated in the Subsequent PTEIR.

g) In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, would the project risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
	☐	☐	☒	☐

g) The project area does not contain tsunami or seiche zones. The project area contains flood hazard areas adjacent to streams; however, continued implementation of WLPZs limits timber harvest activities occurring within flood hazard areas. Compliance with forest practice rules and BMPs would minimize pollutants associated with timber operations, road construction and maintenance, and stream crossings within flood zones. The risk of release of pollutants due to project inundation would be less than significant. This issue will not be evaluated further in the Subsequent PTEIR.

h) Would the project conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
	☒	☐	☐	☐

h) The project area does not include high- or medium-priority groundwater basins subject to the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SWRCB 2024). The project would not conflict with or obstruct the implementation of a sustainable groundwater management plan. The project includes revisions to the existing PTHP that have the potential to result in increased surface water quality impacts. These impacts would be mitigated through the Hearst Forests BMPs, compliance with MATO, and enrollment in coverage under the RWQCB General Order for Timber Operations; however, compliance with the Water Quality Control Plan for the Sacramento and San Joaquin River Basins will be evaluated further in the Subsequent PTEIR.

LAND USE AND PLANNING

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Would the project physically divide an established community?	☐	☐	☐	☒

a) The project will not divide an established community. This issue will not be evaluated further in the Subsequent PTEIR.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
b) Would the project cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?	☐	☐	☐	☒

b) Project activities are allowed in the land use and zoning districts within the project area. Project activities will continue to be conducted in accordance with Forest Practice Rules and BMPs developed by Hearst and will not conflict with a land use policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect. This issue will not be analyzed further in the Subsequent PTEIR.

MINERAL RESOURCES

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Would the project result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?	☐	☐	☐	☒

a) Siskiyou County does not contain California Geological Survey (CGS) study areas where mineral resources have been studied or mapped. Shasta County has been included in a mineral land classification study (*Land Classification of Alluvial Sand and Gravel, Crushed Stone, Volcanic Cinders, Limestone and Diatomite within Shasta County, California*). Portions of the project site in Shasta county contain areas classified MRZ-3 (areas of undetermined mineral

resource significance) for limestone. No portions of the project site are classified MRZ-2 (areas of identified mineral resource significance). The project includes continued use of borrow pits within the program area from which road surfacing material are excavated when needed. Continued use of this material would not result in loss of availability of mineral resources in the future and no other project activities would result in loss of availability of mineral resources. This issue will not be evaluated further in the Subsequent PTEIR.

		Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
b)	Would the project result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan or other land use plan?	☐	☐	☐	☒

b) Project activities will not result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site. This issue will not be evaluated further in the Subsequent PTEIR.

NOISE

		Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a)	Would the project result in generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or in other applicable local, state, or federal standards?	☐	☐	☒	☐

a) Timber harvest operations and road construction and maintenance occur within the project area and are part of the baseline noise conditions within the project site. As with existing operations, the project will generate short-term increases in ambient noise levels in the immediate vicinity of each activity from the operation of mechanical equipment and minor increased vehicle traffic. Noise impacts in any one location within the project site would be short-term. Equipment used for non-commercial fuel reduction activities would be similar to that currently used for timber harvest activities. The project does not include a change to existing equipment or processes within the program area that would generate higher noise levels when compared to existing operations. The project would not result in substantial temporary or permanent increases in ambient noise levels and this issue will not be analyzed further in the Subsequent PTEIR.

		Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
b)	Would the project result in generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?	☐	☐	☒	☐

b) The project does not include equipment or processes that would result in significant levels of vibration or groundborne noise, such as pile driving or blasting. Mechanical equipment such as grinders and masticators will result in low levels of ground vibration perceptible in the immediate vicinity of the equipment. Equipment will not operate in a single location for an extended period of time or in close vicinity to any residences or other structures. The project would not generate excessive levels of vibration that could result in structural damage or annoyance levels at the

closest structure or noise receptor. The project would result in less than significant impacts related to groundborne vibration and noise levels and this issue will not be analyzed further in the Subsequent PTEIR.

c)	For a project located within the vicinity of a private airstrip or an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?	Potentially Significant Impact ☐	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated ☐	Less Than Significant Impact ☐	No Impact ☒

c) The project site is not within the vicinity of a private airstrip or within an airport land use plan. The project site is not within two miles of a public airport or public use airport. The project would not expose people working or residing within the project area to excessive noise levels from aircraft. This issue will not be analyzed further in the Subsequent PTEIR.

POPULATION AND HOUSING

a)	Would the project induce substantial unplanned population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?	Potentially Significant Impact ☐	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated ☐	Less Than Significant Impact ☐	No Impact ☒

a) The project does not include new homes or businesses or expansion of public roads or other infrastructure. The project would not result in direct or indirect unplanned population growth and no further analysis is required in the Subsequent PTEIR.

b)	Would the project displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?	Potentially Significant Impact ☐	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated ☐	Less Than Significant Impact ☐	No Impact ☒

b) The project would not affect housing or land designated for residential use. The project would not displace people or housing or require the construction of replacement housing elsewhere. This issue will not be evaluated further in the Subsequent PTEIR.

PUBLIC SERVICES

a)	Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, or the need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives for fire protection?	Potentially Significant Impact ☐	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated ☐	Less Than Significant Impact ☐	No Impact ☒

a) The project does not include changes to existing conditions that would require increased fire protection needs. The project does not include the construction of new structures or involve activities that would adversely affect fire protection service ratios, response times, or other objectives. The project will not include or require new or physically altered governmental facilities for fire protection and no further analysis is required in the Subsequent PTEIR.

b) Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, or the need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives for police protection?	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
	☐	☐	☐	☒

b) The project does not include changes to existing conditions that would require increased police protection. The project will not require the construction of new or altered facilities to maintain acceptable police service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives for police response and no further analysis is required in the Subsequent PTEIR.

c) Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, or the need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives for schools?	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
	☐	☐	☐	☒

c) The project will not result in the need for new or physically altered schools. No impacts to schools would occur and no further analysis is required in the Subsequent PTEIR.

d) Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, or the need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives for parks?	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
	☐	☐	☐	☒

d) The project will not increase the use of local parks or require construction of new or altered parks to maintain acceptable service ratios or other performance objectives. No impacts to parks would occur and no further analysis is required in the Subsequent PTEIR.

e) Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, or the need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times,	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
	☐	☐	☐	☒

	or other performance objectives for other public facilities?

e) The project will not result in the need for new or physically altered other public facilities No impact to public facilities would occur and no further analysis is required in the Subsequent PTEIR.

RECREATION

		Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a)	Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?	☐	☐	☐	☒

a) Dogwood Butte Conservation Easement (CE) is in effect on approximately 12,644 acres within the expanded program area. Within the CE, the public is allowed limited, controlled, non-motorized, and non-consumptive daytime recreational access to the property. Recreational access for hunting, camping, campfires, fishing, and gathering may be allowed with an access permit or lease. Access may be restricted when timber harvesting or other forest management operations are being planned or underway, during periods of high fire danger or weather events, during the hunting season, when access is inconsistent with another requirement or condition of a government-issued permit, or for any reason access poses an increased risk of personal injury or property damage.

The project does not include changes to the previously approved public access plan of the CE that would result in increased recreational use of the site. The project would not result in population increases that would increase the use of other existing neighborhood and regional parks or recreational facilities in the project area The project would not result in impacts to recreational facilities and no further analysis is required in the Subsequent PTEIR.

		Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
b)	Would the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities that might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?	☐	☐	☐	☒

b) The project does not include construction or expansion of recreational facilities or changes to existing recreational uses within the project area. The project would not result in adverse physical effects to the environment from construction or expansion of recreational facilities and no further analysis is required in the Subsequent PTEIR.

TRANSPORTATION

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Would the project conflict with a program, plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities?	☐	☐	☒	☐

a) The 1998 PTEIR included a Traffic Assessment for traffic generated by the existing PTHP. The assessment concluded traffic increases on State Highway 89 could easily be accommodated by existing highway facilities and no substantial changes in traffic volumes would occur on any other highways. As with existing timber operations within the project area, traffic would primarily utilize private roads accessed from State Highway 89. Trucks transporting lumber or biomass could also use Interstate 5 and Highway 299. The proposed project would not result in substantial traffic increases for timber harvest operations compared to baseline traffic volumes generated by existing timber operations within the project area since annual harvest volumes will be similar to baseline harvest volumes within the project area.

According to Caltrans 2022 traffic count data, the annual average daily traffic on Highway 89 at the intersection with Broadway Avenue in McCloud was 2,750 to 2,800. Traffic from non-commercial fuel reduction activities would be limited to mobilization and demobilization of equipment to the site, worker commute trips, and transport of biomass from the project site which would not generate substantial traffic volumes and would not exceed 50 trips per day. Traffic increases from non-commercial fuel reduction activities would result in only minor traffic increases on Highway 89 and other highways. The project would not result in substantial traffic increases or other changes that would conflict with a program, plan, ordinance, or policy addressing the circulation system. Project impacts would be less than significant and this issue will not be evaluated further in the Subsequent PTEIR.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
b) Would the project conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines § 15064.3(b)?	☐	☐	☒	☐

b) Section 15064.3 states that "vehicle miles traveled" (VMT) is the preferred method for evaluating transportation impacts. According to the Office of Planning and Research (OPR) Technical Advisory on Evaluating Transportation Impacts in CEQA, absent substantial evidence indicating that a project would generate a potentially significant level of VMT, or inconsistency with a Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) or general plan, projects that generate or attract fewer than 110 trips per day generally may be assumed to cause a less than significant impact. As discussed in a) above, the project would not increase baseline traffic volumes by more than 50 trips per day. Additional VMT generated by the project would be less than significant and this issue will not be evaluated further in the Subsequent PTEIR.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
c) Would the project substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?	☐	☐	☒	☐

c) The project includes construction and reconstruction of private roads within the program area as needed but will not result in changes to the design or use of public roads used by project-generated traffic. Traffic generated by the project (trucks hauling logs, biomass, or equipment) would be consistent with existing road use and is expected along the roadways used for project activities. As discussed in a) and b) above, the project would not result in substantial increases in traffic. The project would not increase hazards due to a geometric design feature or incompatible uses. This impact is less than significant and will not be evaluated further in the Subsequent PTEIR.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
d) Would the project result in inadequate emergency access?	☐	☐	☐	☒

d) The project does not include changes to access to the program area. In accordance with 14 CCR §1270.03(d) emergency road access standards to not apply to roads used solely for timberland or harvesting of timber products. The project would not result in inadequate emergency access and this issue will not be evaluated further in the Subsequent PTEIR

TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code § 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code § 5020.1(k)?	☒	☐	☐	☐

a) Consultation and correspondence with various culturally affiliated Tribal groups and agencies were conducted in accordance with Public Resources Code (PRC) Section 21080.3.1 (AB 52). On February 25, 2025, CALFIRE initiated environmental review under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) for the proposed project. CALFIRE sent a certified project notification letter to all CALFIRE tribal contacts for Shasta and Siskiyou counties as per Cultural Resource Management (CALFIRE, 2020) notifying that the project was under review and to provide the Tribes 30 days from the receipt of the letter to request consultation on the project in writing. No responses were received requesting initiation of consultation under the provisions of AB 52.

No TCRs were identified within or immediately adjacent to the project area and, therefore, the proposed project would not result in a significant impact to known TCRs. Impacts to unknown TCRs that may be discovered will be evaluated further in the Subsequent PTEIR.

b)	Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code § 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is: A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code § 5024.1? In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resource Code § 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.	Potentially Significant Impact ☒	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated ☐	Less Than Significant Impact ☐	No Impact ☐

b) As described above, no known TCRs have been identified (as defined in PRC Section 21074) within the project area. Therefore, the project would not cause a significant adverse change in the significance of a TCR that is either listed in, or eligible for listing in, the CRHR, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in PRC Section 5020.1(k). The proposed project would not cause a substantial adverse effect to a known TCR. Mitigation measures to address the inadvertent discovery of cultural resources and human remains during construction will be evaluated further in the Subsequent PTEIR.

UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

a)	Would the project require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects?	Potentially Significant Impact ☐	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated ☐	Less Than Significant Impact ☐	No Impact ☒

a) The project does not include construction of water, wastewater treatment, stormwater drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities and would not require relocation of facilities. This issue will not be analyzed further in the Subsequent PTEIR.

b)	Would the project have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years?	Potentially Significant Impact ☐	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated ☐	Less Than Significant Impact ☒	No Impact ☐

b) The project does not include permanent development within the project site. Occasional use of water for dust suppression may be required during timber harvest or fuel reduction activities. Water will be sourced from a permitted well, municipal supply, or stream diversion. Impacts related to

water supply would be less than significant and will not be evaluated further in the Subsequent PTEIR.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
c) Would the project result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider that serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand, in addition to the provider's existing commitments?	☐	☐	☐	☒

c) The project would not generate wastewater or require wastewater treatment. The project will not affect a wastewater treatment provider. This issue will not be analyzed further in the Subsequent PTEIR.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
d) Would the project generate solid waste in excess of State or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals?	☐	☐	☐	☒

d) The project will continue to generate biomass from logging slash and will also generate additional biomass from non-commercial fuel reduction activities. Biomass will be disposed of through pile burning, dispersed onsite (masticated vegetation), or chipped and transported to a biomass energy facility. Biomass will not be disposed at landfills. The project would not generate solid waste in excess of state or local standards exceed capacity of local infrastructure or impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals. This issue will not be analyzed further in the Subsequent PTEIR.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
e) Would the project comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?	☐	☐	☐	☒

e) Solid waste generated by the project would be limited to biomass. As discussed under d) above, biomass will be disposed of through pile burning, dispersed onsite, or chipped and transported to a biomass energy facility. The project would not conflict with federal, State or local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste and this issue will not be analyzed further in the Subsequent PTEIR.

WILDFIRE

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	☐	☐	☐	☒

a) No roadway closures are anticipated during harvesting activities. As a result, the proposed project would not impair the implementation of any emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan as it would not alter existing roadways or physically interfere with existing roadway patterns. The project includes activities on private land accessed by a private roadway network. Project activities would not substantially impair emergency response or evacuation activities and this issue will not be analyzed further in the Subsequent PTEIR.

The program area includes state responsibility areas classified as very high fire hazard severity zones.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
b) Due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, exacerbate wildfire risks, and thereby expose projects occupants to, pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of wildfire?	☐	☐	☒	☐

b) As discussed under item g) of the Hazard and Hazardous Materials section of this document, the 1998 PTEIR determined the existing PTHP would not increase wildfire hazards relative to existing conditions and would reduce such hazards relative to conditions without timber operations. The project would not result in increased wildfire risks compared to existing timber harvesting that currently occurs within the program area. In addition, the project includes non-commercial fuel reduction activities including the creation of shaded fuel breaks that would reduce wildfire risks within the program area and reduce uncontrolled spread of wildfire into or out of the program area. Therefore, the likelihood of exposing adjacent areas to pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire is considered minimal. Furthermore, the project would not result in additional occupants on the project site with the exception of workers during timber harvest activities. This impact would be less than significant and is not analyzed further in the Subsequent PTEIR.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
c) Require installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel sources, power lines or other utilities) that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment?	☐	☐	☒	☐

c) Project activities will be conducted in accordance with applicable standards and Forest Practice Rules to reduce the potential for the activities to result in wildfire events. Additionally, harvesting activities would not require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure (such as roads, emergency water sources, power lines, or other utilities) that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment. As mentioned above under item b), the project includes non-commercial fuel reduction activities including the creation of shaded fuel breaks that would reduce wildfire risks within the program area and reduce uncontrolled spread of wildfire into or out of the program area. This impact would be less than significant and is not analyzed further in the Subsequent PTEIR.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
d) Expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes?	☐	☐	☒	☐

d) Project activities would not expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes. The majority of the site is located outside of the mapped 100-year floodplain. Potential future post-fire conditions are not expected to increase risks associated with runoff and erosion. Considering the implementation of erosion control BMPs, including applicable forest practice rules, potential impacts associated with runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes are considered to be less than significant and will not be analyzed further in the Subsequent PTEIR.

MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Would the project have the potential to substantially degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of an endangered, rare, or threatened species, or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?	☒	☐	☐	☐

a) Project impacts to biological and cultural resources are potentially significant and will be analyzed further in the Subsequent PTEIR.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
b) Would the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects.)	☐	☐	☒	☐

b)The project could result in significant impacts on several environmental resources and has the potential to result in cumulatively considerable impacts to air quality, biological resources, cultural resources, geology and soil, greenhouse gas emissions, hydrology and water quality, and tribal cultural resources, Cumulative project impacts to these resources areas will be evaluated in the Subsequent PTEIR.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
c) Would the project have environmental effects that would cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?	☒	☐	☐	☒

c) Project impacts related to air quality and greenhouse gas emissions could affect human beings and are potentially significant. Potential air quality and greenhouse gas impacts of the project will be analyzed further in the Subsequent PTEIR.

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This document was prepared by VESTRA Resources, Inc., for CALFIRE with input and support from CALFIRE.

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Attachment A

Figures

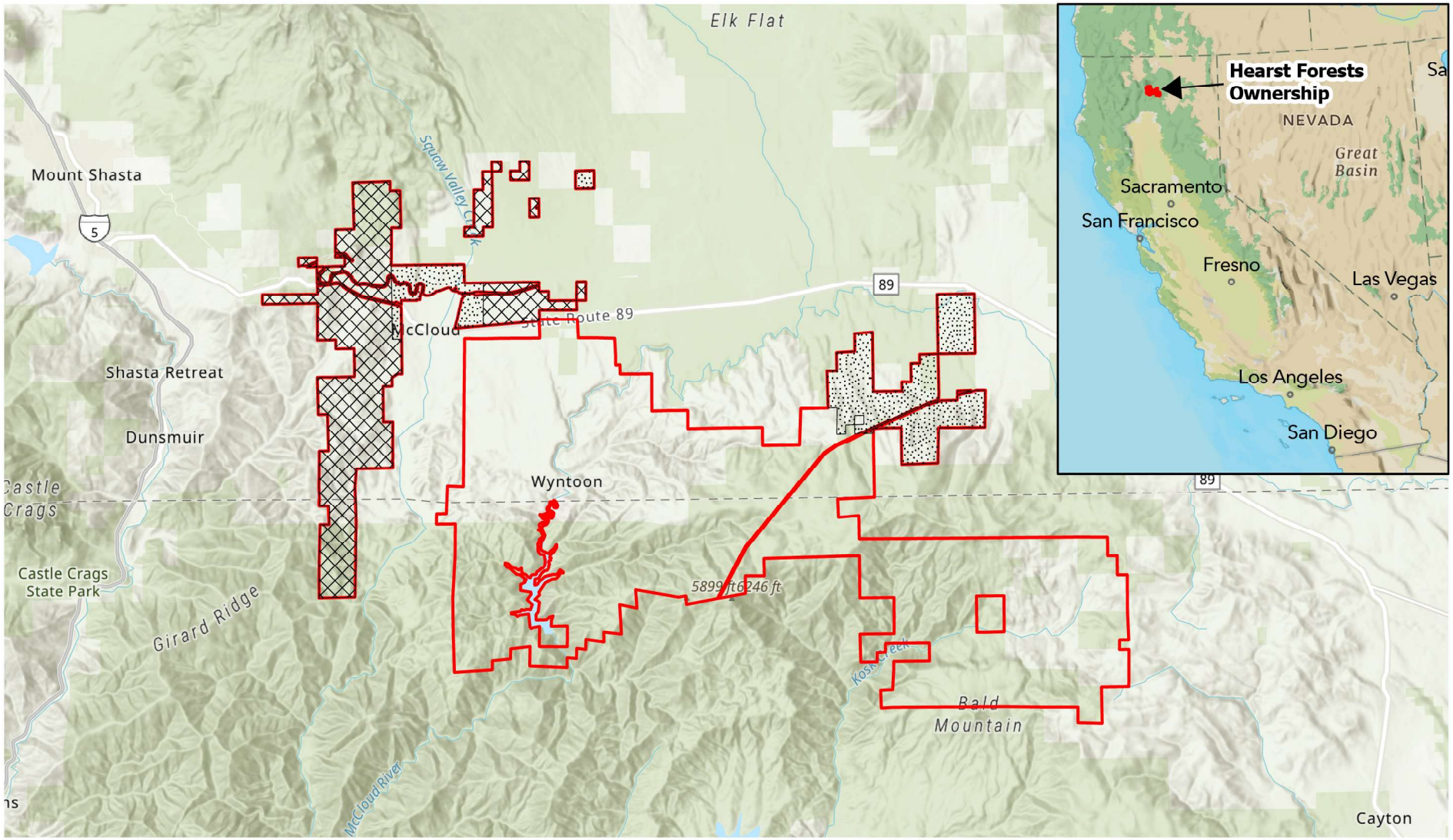

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FIGURE 1
GENERAL SITE LOCATION
HEARST FORESTS
SHASTA AND SISKIYOU COUNTIES, CALIFORNIA

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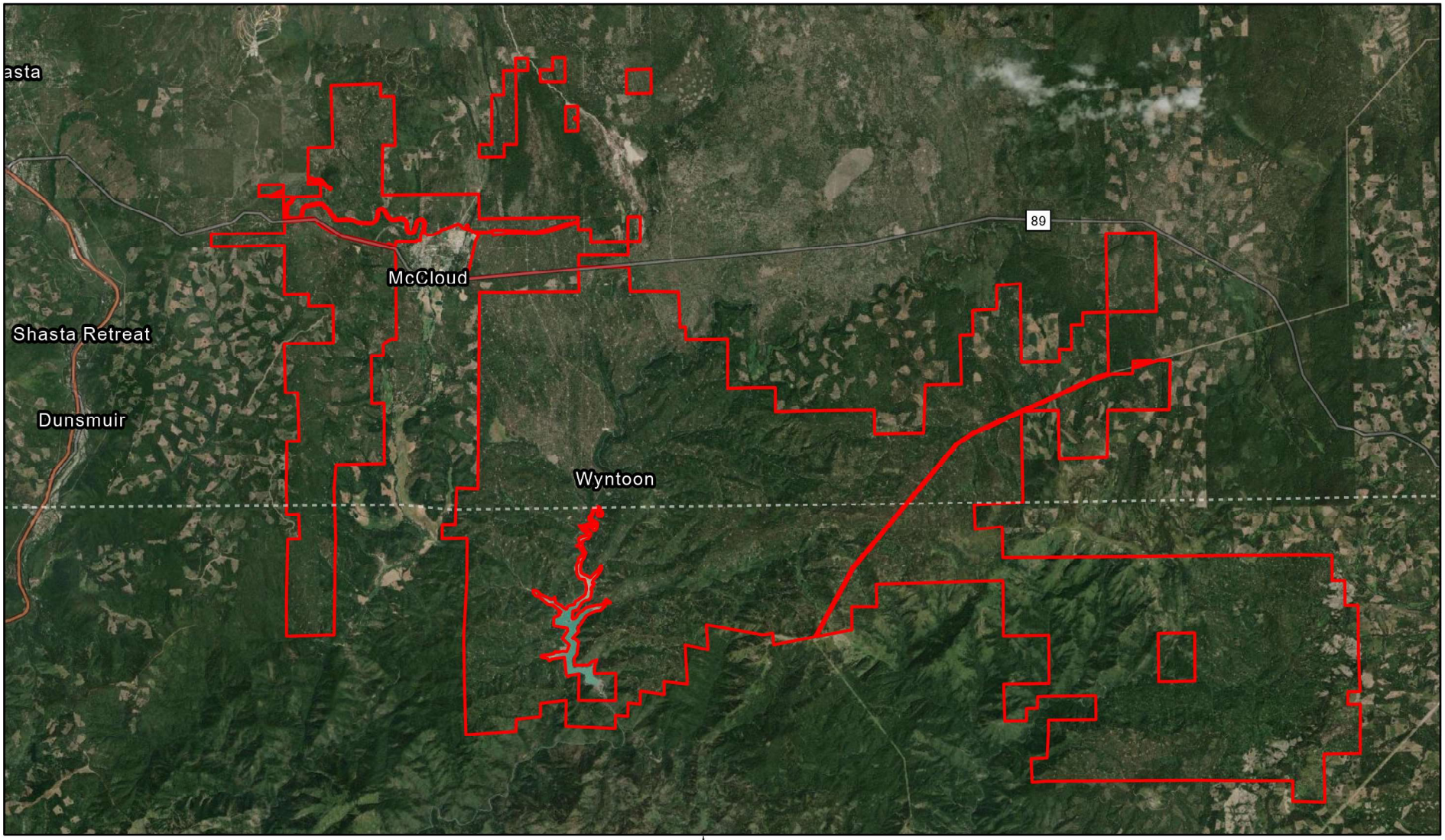

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SOURCE: MAXAR 2024 AERIAL PHOTOGRAPH

FIGURE 2
OWNERSHIP
HEARST FORESTS
SHASTA AND SISKIYOU COUNTIES, CALIFORNIA

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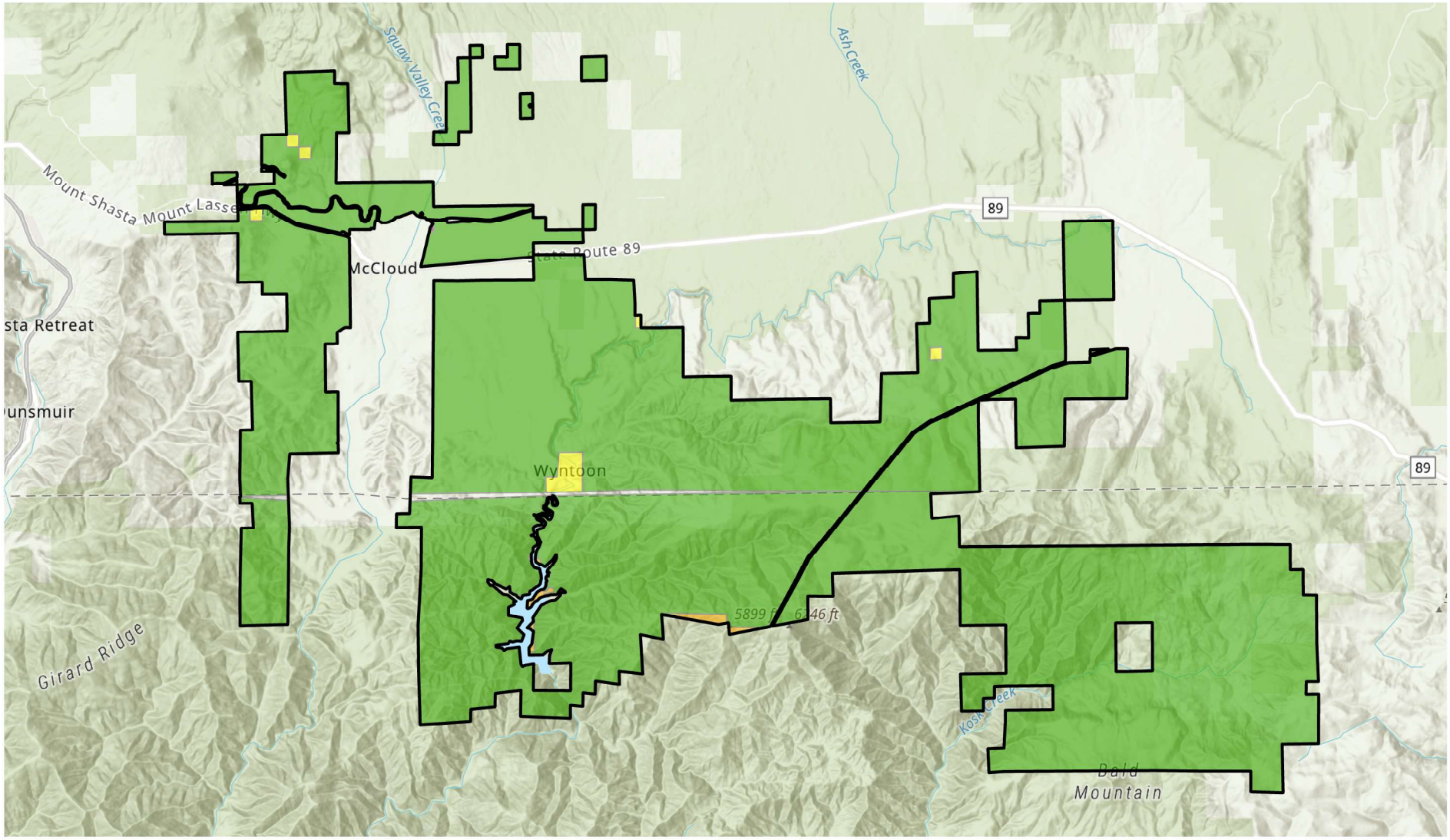
P:\GIS\72502\Figures\InitialStudy\72502_Ownership.pdf



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SOURCE: SHASTA COUNTY GIS 2024; SISKIYOU COUNTY GIS 2022

FIGURE 3
ZONING
HEARST FORESTS
SHASTA AND SISKIYOU COUNTIES, CALIFORNIA

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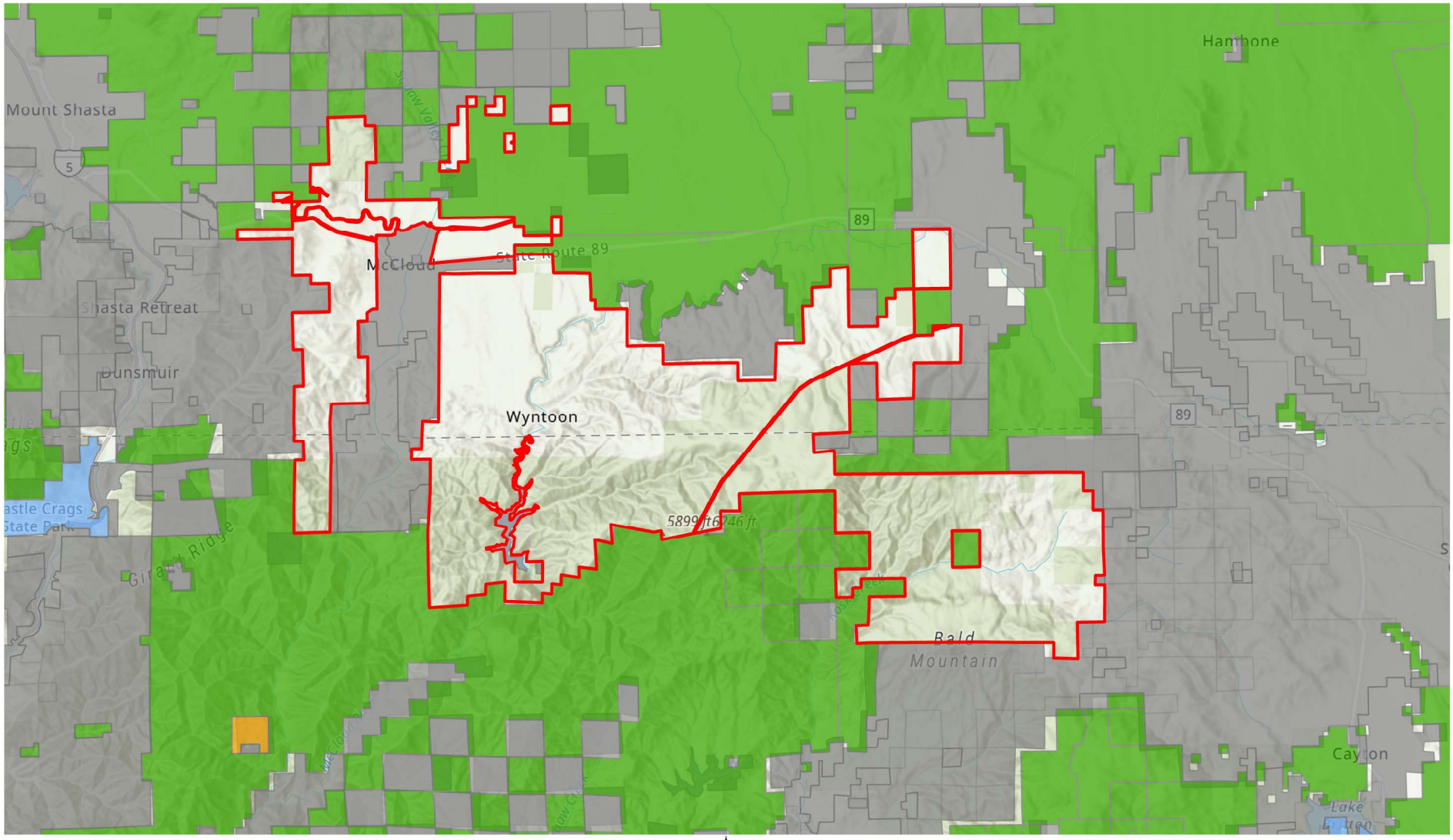
P:\GIS\72502\Figures\InitialStudy\72502_Zoning.pdf



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SOURCE: BLM 2020; CFA 2000

FIGURE 4
NEARBY LAND USE
HEARST FORESTS
SHASTA AND SISKIYOU COUNTIES, CALIFORNIA

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