



Notice Of Availability for Public Review and Notice of Intent to Adopt a Mitigated Negative Declaration for the Lower Deer Creek Hazardous Fuels Reduction Project

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the County of Nevada, as a lead agency, is circulating for public review a Draft Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) for the proposed Lower Deer Creek Penn Valley Hazardous Fuels Reduction Project.

PROJECT LOCATION: The project is located within 1,011 acres of public and private lands within very high-hazard Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) areas in unincorporated western Nevada County. The project includes five roadway segments within the Lower Deer Creek - Penn Valley area, approx. 0.2 driving miles from Penn Valley along Highway 20, through North and South Lake Wildwood, to the South Yuba River State Park and Yuba County line. **(Multiple APNs).**

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: The proposed project is to perform targeted fuel reduction treatments in select locations around Lake Wildwood, Penn Valley and Rough and Ready. These areas were selected for treatment to prioritize evacuation route improvements and manage roadside vegetation based on operational needs, communities most at risk, fire history and ignition vulnerability. The objective of this project is to reduce hazardous fuels along critical transportation routes for residential evacuation and safe ingress and egress for emergency personnel, protection of critical community lifelines, and the reduction of threats to community health and natural resources within WUI areas of western Nevada County. The proposed action consists of removal of ground and ladder fuels at variable distances from each side of the roadway centerlines, thinning of trees and brush to reduce crown closure, removal of dead and dying trees less than 14 inches diameter breast height (DBH) along serviceable roadways or within landscape areas, and application of herbicide to control the future regrowth of unwanted vegetation for maintenance of an understory canopy without fire-prone fuels. Work will focus on improving forest health, vegetation management, forest undergrowth maintenance, and biomass utilization. Treatment will reduce vertical and horizontal continuity of fuels, removing competition from small, closely spaced, fire-vulnerable species, and promoting a smaller number of resilient, larger trees. Generally, living trees 14 inches DBH and under will be spaced to a distance of greater than 30 feet. These fuel reduction treatments will allow roadways to serve as areas where fire intensity decreases and act as strategic locations to deploy firefighting resources in the event of fire, hampering fire's ability to jump roadways. Both mechanized and manual techniques will be deployed for the removal of fuels. Fuel reduction, biomass use, herbicide treatment, and erosion control activities will be conducted. Commercial-sized trees will not be included in the operations.

PUBLIC REVIEW: As a lead agency, in accordance with CEQA, Nevada County is distributing the Draft Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration IS/MND to interested public and regulatory authorities for review and comment for a period of 30 days. Nevada County is inviting comments and concerns regarding the IS/MND during the public review period spanning **April 28, 2026, to May 27, 2026, at 5:00 p.m.** Final action on the proposed MND will be taken by Nevada County after the completion of the public review period at a duly noticed public hearing.

DOCUMENT AVAILABILITY: The Draft Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration is available for review on Nevada County's website.

Written comments should be sent to the following address: Brittany Beech, Nevada County Office of Emergency Services, 950 Maidu Avenue Suite 130, Nevada City, CA 95959 or via email Email: brittany.beech@nevadacountyca.gov; on or before **May 27, 2026, at 5:00 p.m.**

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