



— BUREAU OF —
RECLAMATION

Determination of National Environmental Policy Act Adequacy

Salt Creek Floodplain Restoration Project

**Bureau of Reclamation
California-Great Basin Region**

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Mission Statements

The U.S. Department of the Interior protects and manages the Nation's natural resources and cultural heritage; provides scientific and other information about those resources; and honors its trust responsibilities or special commitments to American Indians, Alaska Natives, Native Hawaiians, and affiliated Island Communities.

The mission of the Bureau of Reclamation is to manage, develop, and protect water and related resources in an environmentally and economically sound manner in the interest of the American public.

Introduction

The Department of the Interior (DOI) Handbook of National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Implementing Procedures (516 DM 1) allows bureaus to rely on an environmental assessment (EA) or portion thereof, provided that the assessment or portion thereof meets the standards for an adequate assessment. This Determination of NEPA Adequacy (DNA) assesses whether the Trinity River Watershed Restoration EA (CGB-ED-2025-034; DOI-BLM-CA-N060-2025-0010-EA) sufficiently addresses the effects of Reclamation's proposed action.

Proposed Action

Reclamation proposes to provide funding to the Watershed Training and Research Center (WRTC) for the Salt Creek Floodplain Restoration Project (Project). The Project aims to reconnect Salt Creek to its historical floodplain and alluvial aquifer to improve approximately 2,000 linear feet of heavily degraded salmonid habitat as well as achieve multiple conservation outcomes prioritized in the Klamath Basin Integrated Fisheries Restoration and Monitoring Plan (IFRMP)(ESSA and Klamath Basin Working Groups 2023) and the NOAA and NMFS Final Recovery Plan for the Southern Oregon/Northern California Coast (SONCC) coho salmon (NMFS 2014). Primary Project elements include:

- 1) Use of grading to fill existing incised channel
- 2) Use of grading to create widened riffle areas and connect an off-channel alcove
- 3) Addition of large wood, rootwads, and large wood structures
- 4) Addition of BDAs, willow baffles and other low-tech process-based restoration techniques

These restoration elements would provide long-term benefits to adult salmonids by increasing the channel complexity and slowing flows, which increases access to cool waters during periods of high temperatures when spawning and rearing. The repositioning of the primary channel would also improve upstream channel alignment with the Tule Creek Road Bridge and reduce erosion potential to the adjacent Tule Creek Road and Water Works District Access Road.

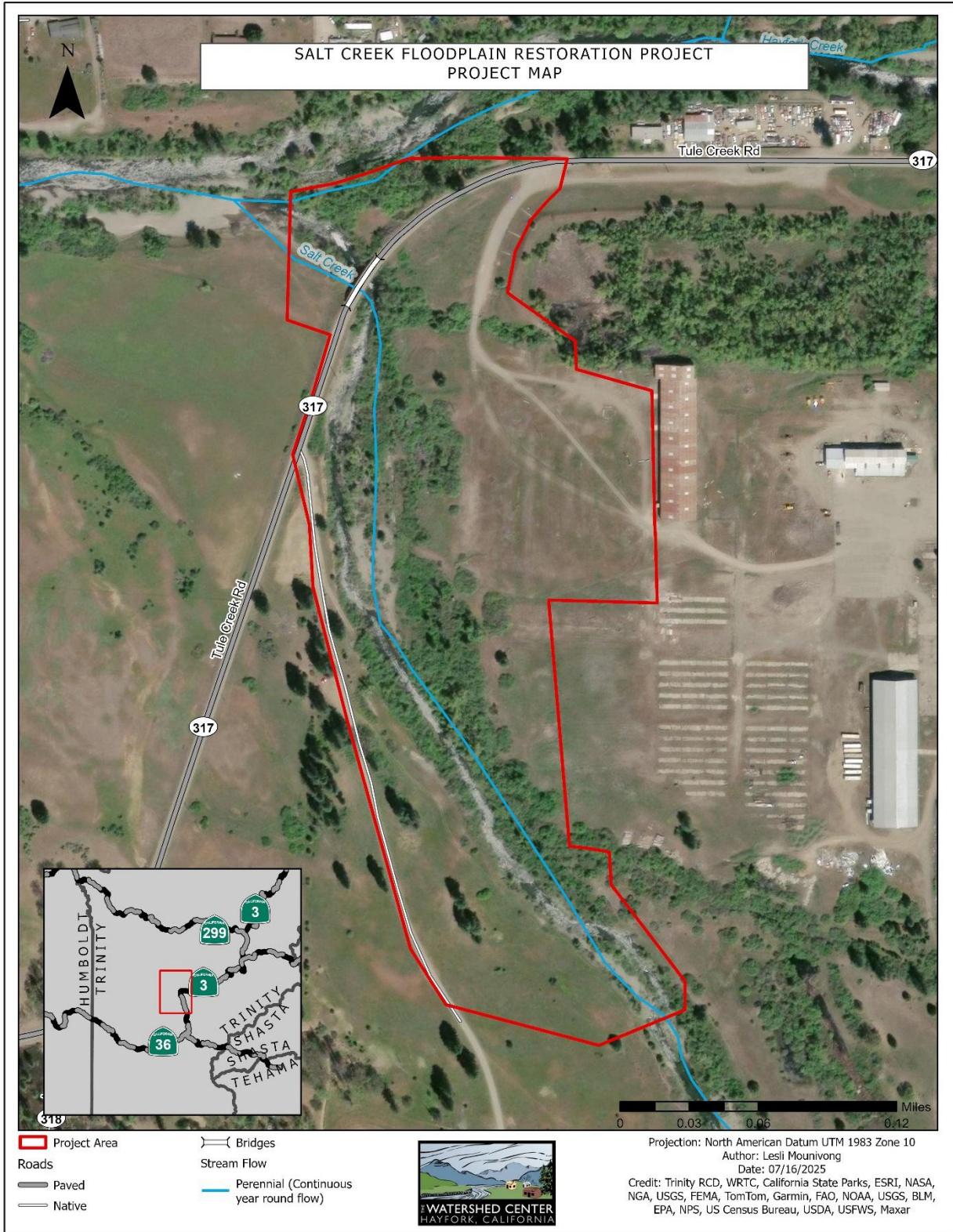


Figure 1. Project Location and Details.

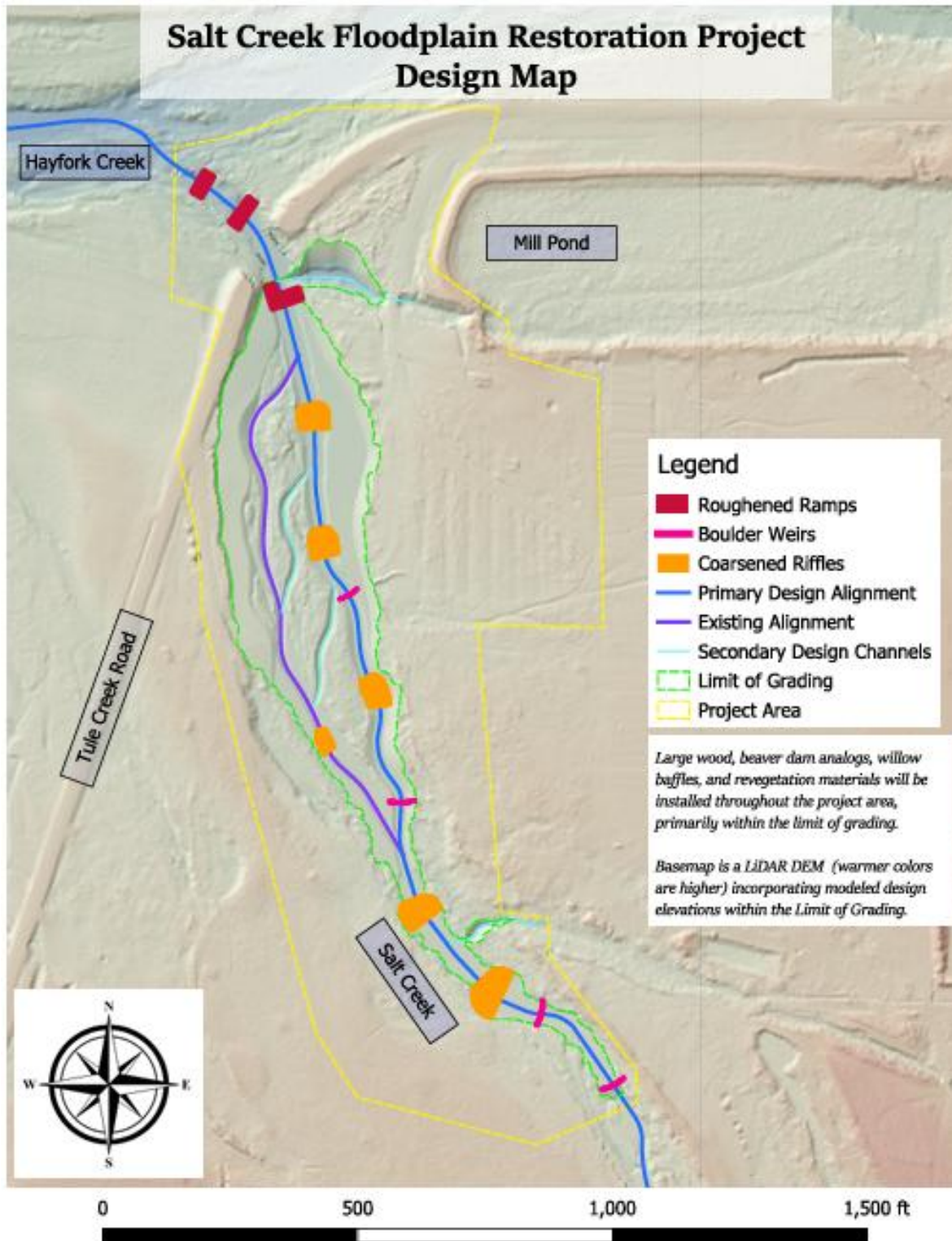


Figure 2. Salt Creek Floodplain Restoration Project Design Map.

Project Components

Instream Habitat Restoration

Restoration and Enhancement of In-Channel Habitat

All work falls into descriptions set in the Watershed EA section *4.2.1.1 Restoration and Enhancement of In-Channel Habitat* and would follow design guidelines set in Appendix B: Trinity River Watershed Restoration Project EA Environmental Commitments (Appendix B).

Large Wood Structures

All work falls into descriptions set in the Watershed EA section *4.2.1.1.1 Large Wood* and would follow design guidelines set in Appendix B.

The Project would incorporate large wood structures into Salt Creek to steer the channel flow and protect the banks, as well as create bank complexity and in-channel habitat. The structures would consist of rootwad deflectors and single rootwads. Rootwad deflectors would consist of two rootwads pinned to the ground surface, exposing more of the rootwad to flows and resulting in greater flow deflection. Rootwads would consist of single logs, approximately 30 feet long, buried into the streambank to maintain their stability. The rootwads are intended to facilitate scour holes, provide cover for fish, help with sediment storage, and add woody material back into the stream channel.

Small wood

All work falls into description set in the Watershed EA section *4.2.1.1.2 Small Wood* and would follow design guidelines set in Appendix B.

Numerous BDA structures would be added to cross channels and the secondary channel on the floodplain. BDAs typically consist of smaller trees or posts pinning brush in place. The intent would be to create structures that would encourage beaver activity within the Project area, provide foundations for beaver dams to remain stable under higher flows, and further raise the groundwater elevations within the Project area.

Floodplain Restoration

All work falls into descriptions set in the Watershed EA section *4.2.1.2 Floodplain Restoration and* would follow design guidelines set in Appendix B: Trinity River Watershed Restoration Project EA Environmental Commitments (Appendix B). Additionally, the Project work would follow a site-specific stormwater pollution prevention plan (SWPPP).

One of the primary intents of the Project is to raise the incised Salt Creek and to restore it to a multi-threaded channel with greater potential for expanding flow onto the floodplain. To achieve this goal, Salt Creek's main channel in the Project area would be moved approximately 200 ft east, away from the roadway, raising the channel profile by 2.5 ft. The existing primary channel would be filled using existing onsite materials and flow control structures (boulder weirs, roughened ramps, and coarsened riffles) would be installed in the new main channel (Figure 2).

Existing high-flow channels would be excavated up to 4 ft, and the excavated material would be used as fill for the current primary channel. Vegetated islands between the channels would be retained when possible so the vegetation can stabilize the banks and create shade over the channels. Existing berms and

spoil piles within and adjacent to the floodplain would be excavated and graded to increase the floodplain area and partially compensate for the 100-year flood increase associated with filling the existing channel.

By excavating existing high-flow channels, and creating new secondary channels, a network of channels would be established across the floodplain. The current primary channel would become a secondary channel, and two smaller cross channels would be constructed, following existing high-flow channels (Figure 2). The cross channels would distribute flow across the floodplain, allowing connection to other smaller channels.

Boulder Weirs

Boulder weirs would be installed along the primary channel within the Project area (Figure 2). The weirs would consist of 3- to 4-foot-diameter boulders placed in bands across the channel and founded by a double layer of rocks. At minimum, the Project would install four boulder weirs. However, site conditions assessed during construction may inform the use of additional weirs. Each weir would be embedded a minimum of 10 feet into the adjacent streambank to minimize potential flow flanking around the structures. A 20-foot-long scour pool would be constructed downstream of each weir to dissipate flow energy and provide initial deep water fish habitat. Similar to the roughened ramps described above, the voids between the boulders and the trench in which they would be installed would be “sealed” by washing and jetting smaller material into the voids between the large rocks. Due to their size, the boulders for the weirs would need to be imported.

Roughened Ramps

Roughened ramps would be created in the primary channel at the downstream end of the Project area to provide grade control (Figure 2). At minimum three ramps would be constructed, however, site conditions assessed during construction may inform the use of additional ramps. Two upstream roughened ramps would be constructed so that their crests match the elevations of the existing high-flow channels on the inset floodplain. Downstream roughened ramps would be constructed at and below existing grade. The existing channel between the ramps would not be filled due to its location under the Tule Creek Road Bridge.

Each of the roughened ramps would be approximately 25 feet long, dropping two feet at an 8% slope, and would be constructed of 4 bands of 40 to 48-inch boulders sized to remain stable during a 100-year flow event. Engineered streambed material (ESM), consisting of a range of small to larger material, would be placed between the rock bands. The rock bank portions would extend a minimum of 10 feet into the adjacent stream bank to minimize potential for flow bypassing around the structures. The stream banks would be lined with rocks to protect them from erosion.

The roughened ramps would be “sealed” by washing and jetting salvaged smaller materials into the voids between the large rocks to maintain flows on the ramp surface. The sealing process is also intended to reduce upstream subsurface flows and raise groundwater elevation.

Coarsened Riffles

At minimum, the Project would install six coarsened riffles, five (5) in the primary channel and one (1) in the secondary channel (Figure 2). However, site conditions assessed during construction may inform the use of additional riffles. The intent of the coarsened riffles would be to provide a naturally appearing stable grade control in the channel without importing rock. The riffles would be approximately 50-foot-long sections of channel that would be widened and sloped to transition from the channel bottom to the floodplain elevation.

Coarsened riffles would be created with a “coarsened riffle mix” placed to a thickness of 4 feet that would span the full width of the channel and extend 5 feet beyond the top of the bank. This thickness would allow the riffle to adjust vertically while remaining stable. Similar to the other profile-control structures, the coarsened riffle material would be “sealed” with a mix of smaller material.

Floodplain reconnection

The existing outlet channel to the log pond would be excavated and converted to an alcove to provide refugia from winter high velocity flow and to provide a cool water rearing area that takes advantage of groundwater seeps. Little to no flow comes from the log pond, so an alcove within the log pond outlet channel would need to rely on a backwater from Salt Creek and/or groundwater seeps that emerge into the channel in this area. Wood cover structures such as root wads and brush would be installed within the pool portion of the alcove to create bank edge diversity and cover.

Cool-water seeps also emerge from the east channel bank near the upstream end of the Project where the existing cross channel enters the Project area. An alcove and channel connecting to the existing drainage channel would be constructed in this area to provide off-channel velocity refugia and a cool-water salmonid rearing area. The proposed spring channel and alcove would also reconnect the existing east-west drainage channel to the main channel, allowing its backwaters to extend into the drainage channel, providing additional off-channel habitat.

Upslope Habitat Restoration

Bioengineering and Riparian Area

All work falls into descriptions set in the Watershed EA section 4.2.2.1 *Bioengineered Bank Stabilization and* would follow design guidelines set in Appendix B: Trinity River Watershed Restoration Project EA Environmental Commitments (Appendix B).

Bioengineering involves using natural and live materials for bank stabilization or flow deflection. The project would employ three types of bioengineering techniques: brush baffles, willow clumps, and live stakes.

Brush baffles would create a “wall” to divert stream flows and slow flow velocities. The baffles would consist of both live stakes (dormant tree or brush cuttings) of willows and cottonwoods and dead brush material. Willow clumps would consist of willows with large root balls harvested from the Project area. Placement of the willow clumps would help to stabilize the point at which the channels diverge as well as creating shade. To supplement riparian re-establishment, additional live stakes may be installed within the Project area.

Road Decommissioning, Maintenance, and Rehabilitation Activities

Road rehabilitation

All work falls into descriptions set in the Watershed EA section 4.2.3.2 *Road Rehabilitation and* would follow design guidelines set in Appendix B: Trinity River Watershed Restoration Project EA Environmental Commitments (Appendix B).

Culvert Replacement

The Project would also upgrade an existing culvert upstream of the proposed off-channel alcove pond and located under the existing access road. The existing culvert is currently crushed, buried, and would be replaced with a new 36-inch corrugated metal pipe culvert. A rock ramp with a 15% slope would also be

installed to transition from the new culvert to the drainage channel alcove. The culvert replacement would follow design guidelines set in the Watershed EA Appendix B for road decommissioning, maintenance, and rehabilitation activities.

Equipment and Materials

Heavy equipment use would follow guidelines set in the Watershed EA section *4.2.5.2 Heavy Equipment Use*.

The primary construction materials would consist of boulders (40 inches to 4 feet in diameter) and smaller-sized rocks. Due to their size, the boulders and larger rocks for ESM would need to be imported. Smaller rocks can be salvaged from the Project area and excavated material. Rootwads and logs would likewise need to be imported. Other materials include small trees/posts, branches for BDAs and live stakes (willow and cottonwood), and brush for baffles, most of which can be harvested on-site. Weed-free straw bales would be used to cover disturbed areas post-project for stabilization and erosion control.

Heavy earth-moving equipment would be required for excavation and grading, including two to three (2–3) excavators, three (3) haul trucks, a bulldozer, and a front-end loader. Additional equipment may include a 5,000-gallon water truck or 500-gallon water trailer and a sump pump. Smaller tools and equipment would include a chainsaw, a gas-powered post driver, and hand tools for construction and revegetation.

Access Routes, Staging, and Soils Disposal

Access routes, staging, and soils disposal area would follow the general protection measures as established in Sections 4.2.5.4, 4.2.5.6, and 4.2.5.10 of the Watershed EA.

A road to the northeast of the Project area, located between Salt Creek and the log pond, would serve as primary Project site access. However, the existing road over the log pond outlet would still be necessary for secondary emergency access. Staging would take place east of Salt Creek on a flat, disturbed area of about 6 acres. Excavated soils would remain on-site and would be used for grading or to fill in the primary channel.

Project Timing

The Project would occur during the spring and summer of 2026. Once commenced, Project work would follow the Construction Timing guidelines outlined in the Watershed EA Section *4.2.5.1 Construction Timing*.

Construction work would follow the work windows set in the Watershed EA Appendix B: GPM-2; work in wetted or flowing channels would be restricted to the low-flow season June 15 to October 15 for Trinity River tributaries. Work in intermittent streams may continue beyond November 1, as long as weather conditions permit, the stream remains dry, and with North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife approval. The Project may additionally restrict work windows if nesting bird/bat activity is discovered.

Project Specific Conservation Measures

Below is an abbreviated list of Project specific conservation measures. All conservation measures are detailed in the Watershed EA, *Appendix B Trinity River Watershed Restoration Project EA Environmental Commitments*.

- **General Protection Measures (GPM)**
 - 1 - 27
- **Geology, Water Quality, and Hydrology (GWH) Conservation Measures**

- 1-7, 9, 12-16
- **Vegetation Resources Conservation Measures**
 - 2, 4, 11, 12, 13, 15, 18
- **Non-Native Invasive Species (NNIS) Conservation Measures**
- **Fishery Resources (FR) Conservation Measures**
 - 1-8, 10-13
- **Wildlife Conservation Measures**
 - **General Wildlife (WL)** 1-17
 - **Northwestern Pond Turtle (WPT)** 1-3, 5-7
 - **Monarch Butterfly (INV)** 1-3
- **Cultural, Land Use, Visual, Recreation, and Noise Conservation Measures**
 - 1-4, 7-8
- **Noise**
 - 1-3

Existing NEPA Documentation Review

[Trinity River Watershed Restoration Project EA](#) (ref unique ID: CGB-ED-2025-034; DOI-BLM-CA-N060-2025-0010-EA) evaluates the environmental effects of proposed restoration activities in the Trinity River watershed and is incorporated by reference.

The following answers are provided to inform whether the analysis in the Trinity River Watershed Restoration Project EA adequately covers the proposed action currently under consideration.

1. Is the new proposed action a feature of, or essentially like an alternative analyzed in the existing environmental document?

The new proposed action is a feature of the existing environmental document. All elements of the Project are analyzed within the existing environmental document.

2. Is the proposed action within the same analysis area, or if the location of the proposed action is different, are the geographic and resource conditions sufficiently like those analyzed in the existing environmental document? If there are differences, can the bureau explain why they are not substantial?

The Proposed Action would occur within Lower Hayfork Creek watershed in Trinity County, which is within the coverage area of the Trinity River Watershed Restoration EA. The Watershed EA covers the geographical area along the mainstem and tributaries of the Trinity River, located both below and above the Lewiston and Trinity dams.

3. Is the range of alternatives analyzed in the existing environmental document appropriate with respect to the new proposed action, given current environmental concerns and resource values?

The alternatives analyzed in the Trinity River Watershed Restoration EA are appropriate as there has been no significant change in circumstances or significant information germane to the proposed action or the alternatives analyzed in the existing environmental document.

4. Is the existing analysis valid considering any new information or circumstances relevant to the proposed action? Can the bureau reasonably conclude that new information and new circumstances do not warrant substantial change to the analysis of the new proposed action?

The existing analysis in the Trinity River Watershed Restoration EA is valid and relevant to the Proposed Action.

5. Are the environmental effects that would result from implementation of the new proposed action similar (both quantitatively and qualitatively) to those analyzed in the existing environmental document?

The environmental effects from the Proposed Action would be quantitatively and qualitatively similar to those effects analyzed in the Trinity River Watershed Restoration EA.

6. Is the public involvement and interagency review associated with the existing EAs/EIS adequate for the new proposed action?

Public involvement occurred with the Trinity River Watershed Restoration EA and is summarized in Appendix G and is adequate for the proposed action..

Based on the evaluation and documentation in this DNA, Reclamation has determined that the Trinity River Watershed Restoration EA is adequate to cover the proposed action and no additional analysis under NEPA is required.

Endangered Species Act (ESA) and Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) Compliance

The following species listed by the federal ESA are documented as being present at the Project Area or in the project vicinity:

- *NMFS Species/Critical Habitat/EFH Present in the Project Area:*
 - Southern Oregon/Northern California Coastal (SONCC) coho salmon (*Oncorhynchus kisutch*), threatened and designated critical habitat
 - EFH for Chinook and coho salmon, Pacific Coast Salmon Fishery Management Plan (FMP)
- *USFWS Species/Critical Habitat Present in the Project Area:*
 - Northwestern pond turtle (*Actinemys marmorata*), proposed threatened
 - Monarch butterfly (*Danaus plexippus*), proposed threatened

NMFS ESA coverage for the Project is covered by the 2020 *Endangered Species Act Section 7(a)(2) Biological Opinion, and Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act Essential Fish Habitat Response for the Trinity River Restoration Program's Mechanical Channel Rehabilitation, Sediment Management, Watershed Restoration, and Monitoring Actions in Trinity County, California* (NMFS No: WCRO-2019-03827).

USFWS ESA coverage for the Project is covered by the 2025 *Programmatic Biological and Conference Opinion California Statewide Restoration Programmatic Consultation* (FWS Reference: 2022-0005149-S7).

Cultural Resources Compliance:

The proposed action is not expected to have significant impacts on properties listed, or eligible for listing, on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) because measures have been taken to identify, evaluate, and protect such resources within the project's Area of Potential Effects (APE) pursuant to 36 CFR § 800.5(b).

The proposed action is located on private and county land. Providing Federal funds requires compliance with Title 54 U.S.C. § 306108, commonly known as Section 106 of the NHPA, and its implementing regulations found at 36 CFR Part 800. The proposed Project constitutes an undertaking as defined in 36 CFR § 800.16(y) and is a type of activity that has the potential to cause effects to historic properties under 36 CFR § 800.3(a).

The area of potential effects (APE) for the proposed undertaking includes an approximately 27-acre area that would encompass beyond the approximately 7 acres of grading, all access, staging, and vegetation rehabilitation activities. The APE is located in Sections 10 and 15, T. 31 N., R. 11 W., Mount Diablo Base and Meridian, as depicted on the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) 7.5' Hayfork, California, topographic quadrangle map. The maximum vertical extent of the APE would be approximately 3 feet below the existing ground surface for grading and 4 feet for tree stakes.

WRTC retained William Rich Associates (WRA) to conduct cultural resources identification efforts for the Project. The investigation included a record search at the Northeastern Information Center, review of historic maps and aerial photographs, library research, and intensive pedestrian survey of the APE.

On May 20th, 2026 the State Historic Preservation Officer concurred with the findings by the Bureau of Reclamation that the proposed action would not adversely effect properties listed, or eligible for listing, on the NHRP.

Tribal Consultation:

In compliance with Section 106 of NHPA, project notification letters were sent to the following Tribes and groups : the Redding Rancheria, the Round Valley Reservation/Covelo Indian Community, the Nor-Rel-Muk Wintu Nation, the Shasta Nation, the Winnemem Wintu Tribe and the Wintu Tribe of Northern California.. The letters provided project information and invitations to consult and/or provide input about the proposed action and its potential to impact Native American Tribal and cultural values. No formal comments or issues were expressed by the responding Tribes. Any future or post-review comments, information, or requests, if received by Tribes prior to project implementation will be considered and used to inform project modifications, as appropriate.

Indian Trust Assets:

Indian Trust Assets (ITAs) are legal interests in assets that are held in trust by the United States for federally recognized Indian tribes or individuals. There are no Indian reservations, Rancherias, or allotments in the Project area. The closest ITA to the proposed Action is 50F MR435, a public land allotment (a parcel of land or real estate holding, that may or may not be affiliated with a particular tribe or is in the process of being recorded) which is 12.3 miles from the project site. On December 15, 2025, Reclamation's ITA coordinator Kevin Clancy stated "Based on the nature of the planned work, does not appear to be in an area that will impact Indian hunting or fishing resources or water rights nor is the proposed activity on actual Indian lands. It is reasonable to assume that the proposed action will not have any impacts on ITAs."

This document certifies that the Reclamation has considered all relevant information raised in the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process and that the NEPA process has concluded. The proposed action described above complies with ESA and NHPA and requires mitigation measures as described in the Environmental Commitments section. Public involvement occurred with the Trinity River Watershed Restoration EA and is not required with the DNA.