



River Road Bike Path Fuels Reduction Project and Alpine Meadows Fire Adapted Communities 2025 Funding Proposal

The North Tahoe Fire Protection District seeks additional funding for fuels reduction along the River Road corridor, and assistance funding to support Fire Adapted Communities in Alpine Meadows. This funding would support projects and programs already in place.

River Road Bike Path Fuels Reduction Project

Acres: 10 acres

Treatment Type: Thinning, chipping, and removal

Start Date: TBD

End Date: TBD

Project Location

Approximate project center: 120.1782° W 39.1651°N

Closest address: 1615 River Road, Tahoe City, Ca

Public lands survey system: Section 2, 11, & 12, Township 15N, Range 16E

Introduction

In 2024 the Truckee Tahoe Airport District agreed to provide funding for the River Road Fuels Reduction Project 1. The project is located on the south side of the Highway 89 corridor where it parallels the Truckee River between Tahoe City and Alpine Meadows, CA. This portion of Highway 89 is a primary evacuation route for Lake Tahoe residents and visitors and is within the Defense Zone of the Wildland Urban Interface. It is also a primary ingress route for emergency vehicles and personnel to access Lake Tahoe communities in the event of a wildfire. This area holds the biggest risk to safety and assets across the North Tahoe Fire Protection District based on Vibrant Planet's wildfire risk analysis modeling. It's adjacency to other fuels

reduction projects being planned and implemented along the river and corridor make it a very beneficial use of local tax revenue provided by the Truckee Tahoe Airport District.

The project addresses dead and dying trees, ladder fuels, and excessive ground fuels on 50 to 94.2 acres. It is planned to be part of a series of projects to reduce hazardous fuels and improve forest health, primarily on the south and west sides of the river allowing for the highway corridor to better serve for evacuation among multiple project benefits. On the north/northeast sides of the river the Liberty Power line Resilience Corridor Project "Liberty Rampart" is being planned for treatment implementation in 2025 or 2026. The power line corridor and the associated 175' wide treatment area beneath are shown on the map below.

A paved bike and pedestrian path parallels the highway, just to the south/southwest, between the highway and the river. These two projects leave small strips of land around the path with dead and dying trees, ladder fuels and excessive ground fuels as well. This proposed River Road Bike Path Fuels Reduction Project would bring the larger projects together, further complimenting them both in improving the safety and evacuation capacity of the highway. While some of the intention of the River Road Project 1 was to manage hazard trees along the bike path, this additional funding would provide for a more thorough treatment along the bike path and allow the River Road Project 1 funding to go further in treating more of it's 50-92.4-acre project goal.

Several planning elements have taken place with the River Road Project 1 and contractors have been selected to carry out archeological and sensitive species surveys in areas that would be affected by the project. Once this information is known and specific avoidance or mitigation measures are put in place, on the ground implementation will take place unfortunately not until late 2025, and 2026. This allows for full CEQA compliance with the understanding that areas along the Truckee River are likely to contain archeological and sensitive biological resources.

[Governor Newsom's March 1st Proclamation of a State of Emergency](#) further calls out the hazardous condition of vegetation throughout the state, and that 'the rules and regulations that fall within the California Environmental Protection Agency are hereby suspended to the extent necessary for expediting critical fuels reduction projects that are initiated this calendar year and that have received the appropriate Agency approval'. With this proclamation, and a more thorough understanding of the fuels reduction needs along the bike path, funding can quickly be utilized in 2025 along the bike path while the longer term Project 1 and Liberty ramparts project continue in their planning -phases.

Methods of Removal

All operations will be conducted by qualified hand crews using chainsaws and other cutting tools to cut trees, branches, and other fuels. These materials will be dragged to the bike path or to the road for removal by hand with the use of quads and trailers to move material to driveways or easements accessible to highway vehicles. Material will be hauled off-site and may be chipped prior to transport. The general management style is to thin from below to remove ladder fuels, remove overstory subdominant trees to reduce crown continuity, and promote the health of large dominant trees. Trees 18" diameter at breast

height (DBH) and smaller will be marked for removal. All trees marked for removal will be marked by a Registered Professional Forester, or their designee. Due to the smaller scale of this unit, there will be a 100% mark of all trees slated for removal.

Treatment Prescription

- Remove trees 18" dbh or less where marked.
- Remove brush beneath the driplines of leave trees.
- Remove brush within 3 feet of leave snags and leave logs.
- Cut coarse woody debris less than 14 inches in diameter only if marked
- Prune limbs of all trees as necessary to improve stand health and reduce fire ladder potential.
- Cut all dead trees less than 18 inches DBH, unless marked for retention.
- Avoid incidental or operational damage to sugar pine, incense cedar and Sierra junipers on site.

Project Delineation

Exterior Boundaries: Pink

Boundary Corners / Bends: Double Pink

Required Leave Tree: pink **"DO NOT CUT"** flagging

Exclusion Zones: Orange and Black stripped flagging

Permitting

Work in conjunction with David Murray, Registered Professional Forester (#3226) from the Tahoe Resource Conservation District to file a Fuel Hazard Reduction exemption from the Forest Practice Rules, and a Class 4 Categorical Exemption, Section 15304 (i), Minor Alterations to Land, CEQA Exemption and notify the agency of the activity.

Exercise with caution, the March 1st, 2025 Proclamation of a State of Emergency to reduce fuels based on eligibility of this critical fuels reduction project.

A Cal Trans encroachment permit will be obtained if no memorandum of understanding (MOU) is in place at the time of project implementation.

Initial Environmental Checklist filed with Tahoe Resource Planning Agency for adjoining River Road Project 1.

Landowner engagement is in place with the LTBMU Forest Service, the Tahoe City Public Utilities district that manages the bike trail, and the neighboring private landowners that may be affected. Access to driveways and private easements has been granted in conjunction with River Road Project 1.

Implementation

Develop a Request for Proposals for hand thinning, chipping and vegetation removal based on this funding proposal.

Ensure safety, and begin work once a contractor can be secured, and an encroachment permit can be put in place. As this is a high-risk and critical fuels reduction project, work can begin once minimal planning elements and site prep activities take place.

Ensure adequate resources during project implementation.

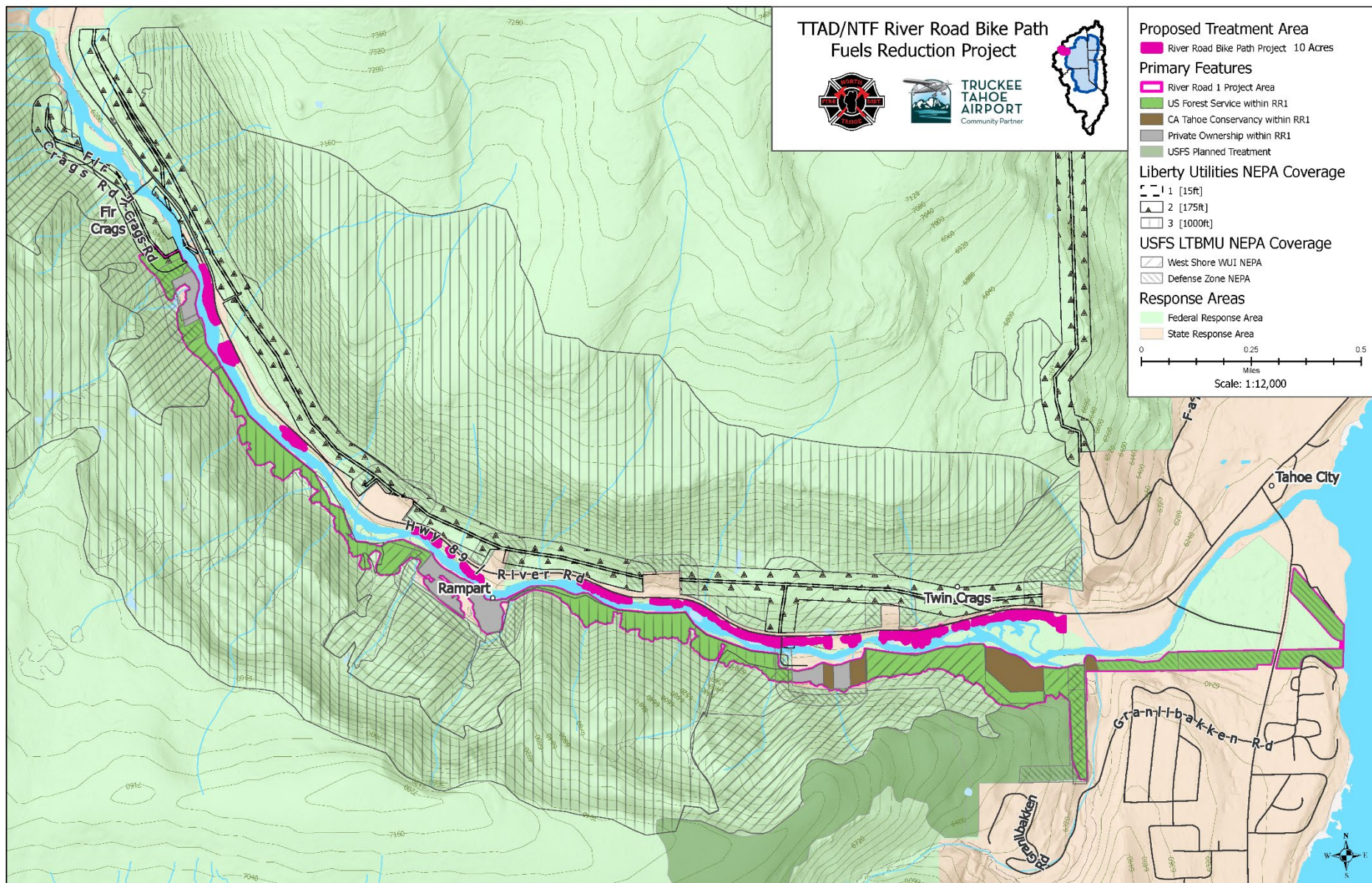
Ensure safety measures are implemented.

Maintain adequate records and photographs of project activities, including dates, locations, and outcomes.

Prepare a final report to update stakeholders on project completion.

Project Contacts

Project Manager	Registered Professional Forester
April Shackelford North Tahoe Fire Protection District shackelford@ntfire.net 530 584 2344	David Murray Tahoe Resource Conservation District dmurray@tahoercd.org 530 543 1501 x113
Landowner/Manager	Bike Path Manager
Tod Flowers USFS Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit tod.flowers@usda.gov 916 897 0688	Kim Boyd Tahoe City Public Utility District kboyd@tcpud.org 530.580.6286



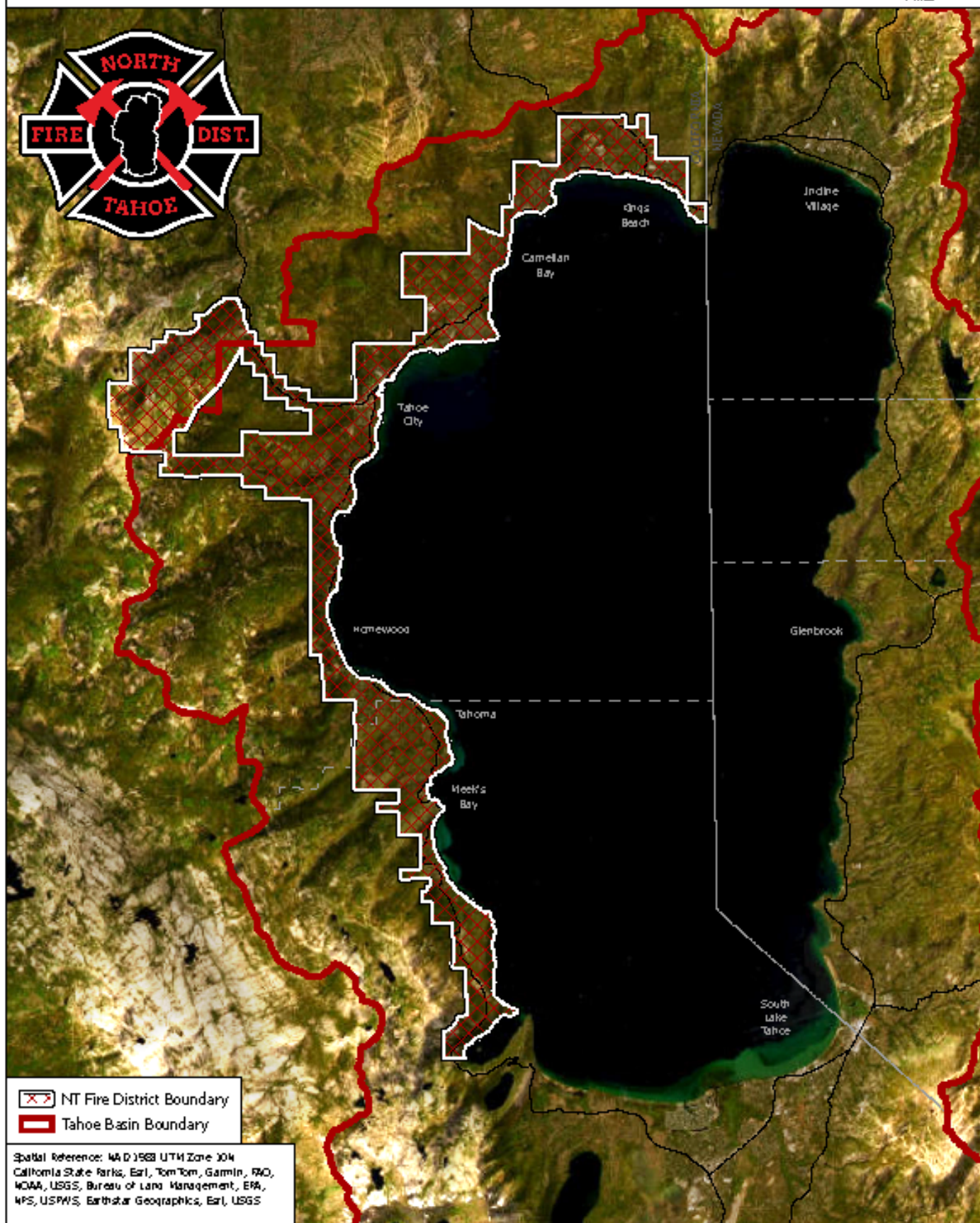
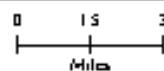
Alpine Meadows – Fire Adapted Communities

North Tahoe Fire Protection District provides a suite of services to build and maintain Fire Adapted Communities and Firewise sites. This entails free defensible space inspections and educational guidance on home hardening and evacuation preparedness, as well as a free chipping service to help residents dispose of shrubs, branches and small trees that are impeding compliance with defensible space, and lastly it provides free green waste dumpsters to organized neighborhoods. Several residents within Alpine Meadows are engaged with the Alpine Meadows Fire Safe Council and the whole valley has obtained Firewise status. The fire district's funding for these activities is limited to Lake Tahoe Basin based on boundaries established by the USFS Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit (LTBMU), and the Bureau of Land Management – Southern Nevada Public Lands Management Act (SNPLMA). The inclusion of Alpine Meadows into this boundary has been discussed and alterations and exceptions cannot be made.

Alpine Springs County Water District used to cover costs related to these programs but decided in 2023 to withhold payment for services already rendered. This was part of several challenges in providing fire district services to the residents of Alpine Meadows. In time contracts were renegotiated and the fire district will maintain coverage of the area and will provide funding in support of at least two community workdays. This provides limited opportunities for chipping and does not allow funding for green waste dumpsters, free education inspections including curbside inspections, and opportunities for free chipping every five weeks in the summer months. It ultimately leaves residents in the valley less served than those throughout the rest of the fire district where funding has been made available through an assistance agreement from SNPLMA.

Providing these services in the valley is relatively affordable, and 2025 marks an especially good year to fully fund the tenets of Fire Adapted Communities in the Alpine Meadows Valley because we are preparing to invest \$790,000 of state funding into fuels reduction projects. With this kind of investment, it is all the more imperative that residents make investments in their defensible space and home hardening in particular.

North Tahoe Fire Protection District Boundary Map



Budget

Proposed Activity	Cost
River Road Bike Path Fuels Reduction Project	\$105,000
Alpine Meadows Fire Adapted Communities	\$20,000
Total	\$125,000

*Management and oversight costs are built into the figures above