

# **Lands/Special Uses**

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## **Affected Environment**

There are numerous land-type special uses authorized under permit within the project area including: water systems (spring developments, water lines and storage tanks) that provide potable water to Sugar Pine Camp/Yosemite Mountain Railroad, and for an individual residence; buried fiber optic and telephone lines; a telephone carrier site along the Sugar Pine Road 630; overhead and buried electrical lines; the Madera Irrigation District's gauging station; private and County roads; signs, and apiary sites.

Recreation special uses authorized under permit in the project area include the Yosemite Mountain Sugar Pine Railroad (YMSRR) and Yosemite Trails Pack Station (YTPS). The YMSRR operates the railroad 6 months a year between March and October; however, their peak visitor season is between June and mid-August.

The Yosemite Trails Pack Station offers horseback rides three seasons of the year from their pack station headquarters. In addition, YTPS offers horse driven sleigh rides during winter months when snow conditions are favorable from a secondary location south of Tenaya Lodge. The YTPS is authorized to use and maintain some of the horseback riding trails they take their clients on.

The Lewis Creek Recreation Trail crosses through the southern portion of the project area.

Map 5, found in the Map Package in Appendix A, identifies the permitted special uses found within the project area and how they relate to the proposed treatment areas.

## **Alternative 1 – No Action**

### **Direct, Indirect and Cumulative Effects**

Under the No Action alternative, current management plans would continue to guide activities in the project area. This includes all ongoing activities with existing decisions or permits that would not be changed if this alternative were selected. This would include all current uses as permitted.

While special use permittees would continue to perform hazardous fuels reduction around the facilities they operate, they would be limited to the standard 100 feet required by the State of California. Like the community of Sugar Pine, there would be no added protection from moderate to high intensity fires.

The continuation of natural fuels build-up could pose a wild fire threat to permit holder improvements, and for commercial permit holders, a loss of revenue. Overstocked stands have the potential to be effected by epidemic infestations of bark beetles and, in combination with disease, and/or drought-induced mortality, the forested areas the commercial permit holders depend on for their livelihood are at risk. Commercial permit holders would likely experience loss of revenue because forest visitors they depend on may be hesitant to visit parts of the forest that have high tree mortality. As public safety concerns (mainly from snag densities and high fire danger) began to increase there would be the potential need for areas to be closed to public access.

## Alternative 2 – Proposed Action

### **Direct, Indirect and Cumulative Effects**

Alternative 2, like the No Action alternative, would not change the management and currently permitted activities within the project area. The activities associated with the proposed action would include commercial, pre-commercial and biomass thinning of conifer stands and prescribed burning (understory and pile) with associated post-activity treatments. These are the actions that have the largest possibility of effecting special use permitted operations. Design criteria were developed to minimize the impacts that could occur from the implementation of this alternative and are listed on pages 12-13.

## Alternative 3

### **Direct, Indirect and Cumulative Effects**

The effects of this alternative would be similar to that of Alternative 2.

## Alternative 4

### **Direct, Indirect and Cumulative Effects**

The effects of this alternative would be similar to that of Alternative 2.