



California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

To: State Clearinghouse
1400 Tenth Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

From: Bill Solinsky
CAL FIRE, Resource Management
P.O. Box 944246
Sacramento, CA 94244-2460

Subject: Notice of Preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Report Ciminelli Estate Vineyard Conversion Project November 24, 2015

The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) is the Lead Agency and Napa County is a Responsible Agency for the preparation of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the Ciminelli Estate Vineyard Conversion Project (Proposed Project) in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Consistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15082, CAL FIRE, as Lead Agency, has prepared this Notice of Preparation (NOP) to inform all responsible and trustee agencies that an EIR will be prepared. The purpose of the NOP is to describe the Proposed Project and potential environmental effects in order to allow agencies and interested parties to provide input on the scope and content of the EIR. A copy of this NOP and the figures referenced herein is provided on CAL FIRE's website: http://calfire.ca.gov/resource_mgmt/resource_mgmt_EPRP_PublicNotice.php. Comments on this NOP are due to CAL FIRE by 5:00 PM on December 24, 2015.

Project Summary

The purpose of the Proposed Project is to convert approximately 17.8 gross acres of land to 14.4 net acres of commercial vineyard (Project Site). The Project Site is located within an approximately 40-acre property identified as Napa County assessor's parcel number (APN) 018-230-002. A Timberland Conversion Permit (TCP) is required for the Project Site, which triggers preparation of a CEQA document for the Proposed Project. Given the potential for environmental impacts, an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) is being prepared. A Napa County Erosion Control Plan (ECP) is also required for the Proposed Project. The environmental impacts of the TCP, the ECP, and the development of the vineyard on the Project Site will be evaluated against the CEQA baseline of the Project Site.

In addition, a Timber Harvest Plan (THP) is being prepared concurrently for the harvest of 16.7 acres of forest as well as an additional 1.1 acres of landscaping and orchard around the existing house, within the 17.8 acre Project Site and will be processed separately by CAL FIRE. The THP will be evaluated by CAL FIRE through a CEQA equivalent process consistent with the Forest Practice Rules. The EIR will include the THP, the TCP, and the ECP as attachments.

Project Location

The Project Site is located on an approximately 40-acre property within Section 30 of Township 9N Range 5W of the Mount Diablo Base and Meridian (MDBM). The property is a single parcel which is identified as Napa County APN 018-230-002. The property is located at 1260 Summit Lake Drive, near the Town of Angwin in northern Napa County, California, as shown in **Figure 1**. Land uses in the vicinity of the property include vineyards, wineries, rural residences, and open space. Property elevations range from approximately 1,850 feet to 2,075 feet above mean sea level. Soils on the property are predominantly Aiken loam, 0 to 30 percent slopes, with some Forward gravelly loam,

30 to 75 percent slopes. The slopes on the Project Site range from 3 to 34 percent. The north-facing portion of the property drains to the Burton Creek watershed (tributary to Pope Creek thence Lake Berryessa), while the south-facing portion of the property drains to the Conn Creek watershed and Lake Hennessey (tributary to the Napa River). There are no wetlands or watercourses within the Project Site, although there is an existing permitted reservoir on the property that is fed by swales from the ridge above. A map of the property with the Project Site identified is included as **Figures 2 and 3**.

As part of the EIR process, a report on the biological resources within the Project Site and immediate surrounding area within the 40-acre property has been prepared. The following habitats have been identified to date within the property: Mixed Oak Alliance and Douglas Fir Forest. Impacts to these habitats, in particular to the oak habitat, will be addressed in the EIR. In addition, the parcel includes a residence and associated landscaping, a disked open field, orchard, and an existing water storage reservoir.

General Plan/Zoning Designations

The Project Site is zoned Agricultural Watershed (AW).

Project Description

The Proposed Project will convert approximately 17.8 acres to a commercial vineyard within a 40-acre property. The 17.8± acres constitute the Project Site and the total area to be converted to vineyard (14.4± net acres). Within the 17.8-acre project site, 16.7± acres are forested and 1.1± acres are existing yard and orchard surrounding the residence. Six vineyard blocks are proposed for development on the Project Site (**Figure 3**); vineyard blocks would be accessed via existing roadways and trails. The vineyard blocks will include wine grape vines as well as internal farm avenues and space for vineyard maintenance operations; therefore, the net area of the vineyard will be approximately 14.4 acres. The establishment of the vineyard as part of the Proposed Project is consistent with the current Napa County zoning designation of Agricultural Watershed (AW).

The Project Site is not located within a Timberland Production Zone (TPZ). However, since the Proposed Project would convert “non-TPZ timberland to a non-timber growing use” through timberland operations in which “future timber harvests will be prevented or infeasible because of land occupancy and activities thereon,” a TCP and approval is required from CAL FIRE consistent with the Z’Berg-Nejedly Forest Practice Act (Division 4, Chapter 8, Public Resources Code) and California Forest Practice Rules (Title 14, California Code of Regulations). CAL FIRE will therefore be the CEQA Lead Agency on the EIR.

Harvested timber will be shipped to destinations in Northern California. All non-merchantable trees and vegetation would be removed, chipped, and/or burned on-site, consistent with CAL FIRE, Napa County, and San Francisco Bay Area Air Quality Management District standards. Suitable forest products such as sawlogs, firewood and wood chips will be marketed as is economically feasible. Material leaving the site would exit via Summit Lake Drive. No new roads, except internal farm avenues within the new vineyard, would be built. As a result of implementation of the ECP and the Forest Practice Act, post-project sediment erosion conditions and peak hydrological runoff are projected to be below pre-project conditions; these aspects are detailed in the hydrological report and sediment report that have been prepared for the Proposed Project and will be included with the EIR as attachments.

Chapter 18.108 of the Napa County Code (Conservation Regulations) requires an ECP be prepared by a Licensed Civil Engineer for the Proposed Project and approved by Napa County because slopes on the Project Site are

greater than 5 percent. Consequently, Napa County will be a Responsible Agency for the EIR.

Environmental Factors Potentially Affected

Anticipated impacts of the Proposed Project on the following list of resource areas will be analyzed in the EIR per CEQA Guidelines (Title 14 CCR Division 6, Chapter 3). The impacts of the Proposed Project will be determined by evaluating against the CEQA baseline, which is the Project Site as it currently exists (prior to the THP).

Aesthetics: The Project Site is potentially located within the viewshed of vehicles traveling on Summit Lake Drive. An analysis of potential impacts to aesthetics from the Proposed Project will be provided in the EIR.

Agriculture and Forestry Resources: The impacts of the Proposed Project to these resources will be a primary subject of the EIR. An analysis of impacts to agricultural and forestry resources in the vicinity of the Project Site and local region will be included in the EIR.

Air Quality: Non-merchantable trees and vegetation will be removed, chipped, and/or burned on-site, consistent with Napa County and San Francisco Bay Air Quality Management District standards. An analysis of potential impacts to air quality from the Proposed Project will be provided in the EIR.

Biological Resources: An analysis of potential impacts to biological resources as a result of the construction and operation of the Proposed Project will be provided in the EIR.

Cultural Resources: A preliminary cultural resources survey of the Project Site did not identify any significant historic or cultural resources on the Project Site. One isolated obsidian flake and one historic barbed wire fence were located onsite, neither of which constitutes a significant historic or cultural resource. Further analysis of potential impacts to cultural resources as a result of the Proposed Project will be provided in the EIR.

Geology/Soils: An ECP is required by Napa County to be prepared for the Proposed Project, which includes erosion control measures to be implemented during construction and operation of the vineyard. Further analysis of potential impacts to local geology/soils will be provided in the EIR.

Greenhouse Gas Emissions: An analysis of potential impacts due to the Proposed Project's greenhouse gas emissions attributed to construction, operation, and canopy removal will be provided in the EIR.

Hazards and Hazardous Materials: An analysis of hazards and hazardous materials as they pertain to construction and operation of the Proposed Project will be provided in the EIR.

Hydrology/Water Quality: A portion of the property is located in the Conn Creek watershed, a County-designated Sensitive Domestic Water Supply Drainage. An analysis of impacts from the Proposed Project to local hydrology, water quality, and the water supply to Lake Hennessey and the City of Napa will be provided in the EIR. Particular attention will be paid to the Napa River Section 303(d) standards. Groundwater from two existing wells will be the water source for the vineyard and will be discussed further in the EIR.

Land Use/Planning: No significant impacts are anticipated. As stated above, the Proposed Project would result in the development of a vineyard within the 17.8-acre Project Site, which is consistent with the current Napa County zoning designation, Agricultural Watershed. An analysis of impacts to land use/planning due to the Proposed Project

will be provided in the EIR.

Mineral Resources: No known mineral resources that are of State, regional, or local value are identified on or within the vicinity of the Proposed Project site, and therefore no significant impacts are anticipated. No further analysis will be provided in the EIR.

Noise: No significant impacts are anticipated. However, an analysis of noise impacts to the Project Site and vicinity as a result of construction and operation of the Proposed Project will be provided in the EIR.

Population/Housing: The Proposed Project would not induce substantial population growth and would displace neither existing housing nor people; therefore, no significant impacts are anticipated. No further analysis will be provided in the EIR.

Public Services: The Proposed Project would not result in a substantial increase of demand on public services, and therefore no significant impacts are anticipated. No further analysis will be provided in the EIR.

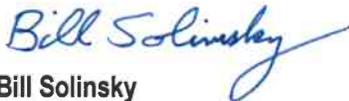
Recreation: The Proposed Project would not include construction of any recreational facilities and would not increase the use of existing recreational facilities, and therefore no significant impacts are anticipated. No further analysis will be provided in the EIR.

Transportation/Traffic: No new roads, except internal farm avenues within the 17.8-acre Project Site are proposed. An analysis of transportation/traffic issues as they pertain to construction and operation of the Proposed Project, including the off-site hauling of logs due to the THP, will be provided in the EIR.

Utilities/Service Systems: The Proposed Project would not result in any additional demands on utilities and service systems. Groundwater will be pumped from an existing and/or proposed on-site well and serve as the irrigation water source, and no wastewater will be generated. Therefore, no significant impacts are anticipated, and no further analysis will be provided in the EIR.

Mandatory Findings of Significance: A complete analysis of mandatory findings of significance, including cumulative impacts of the Proposed Project, will be provided in the EIR.

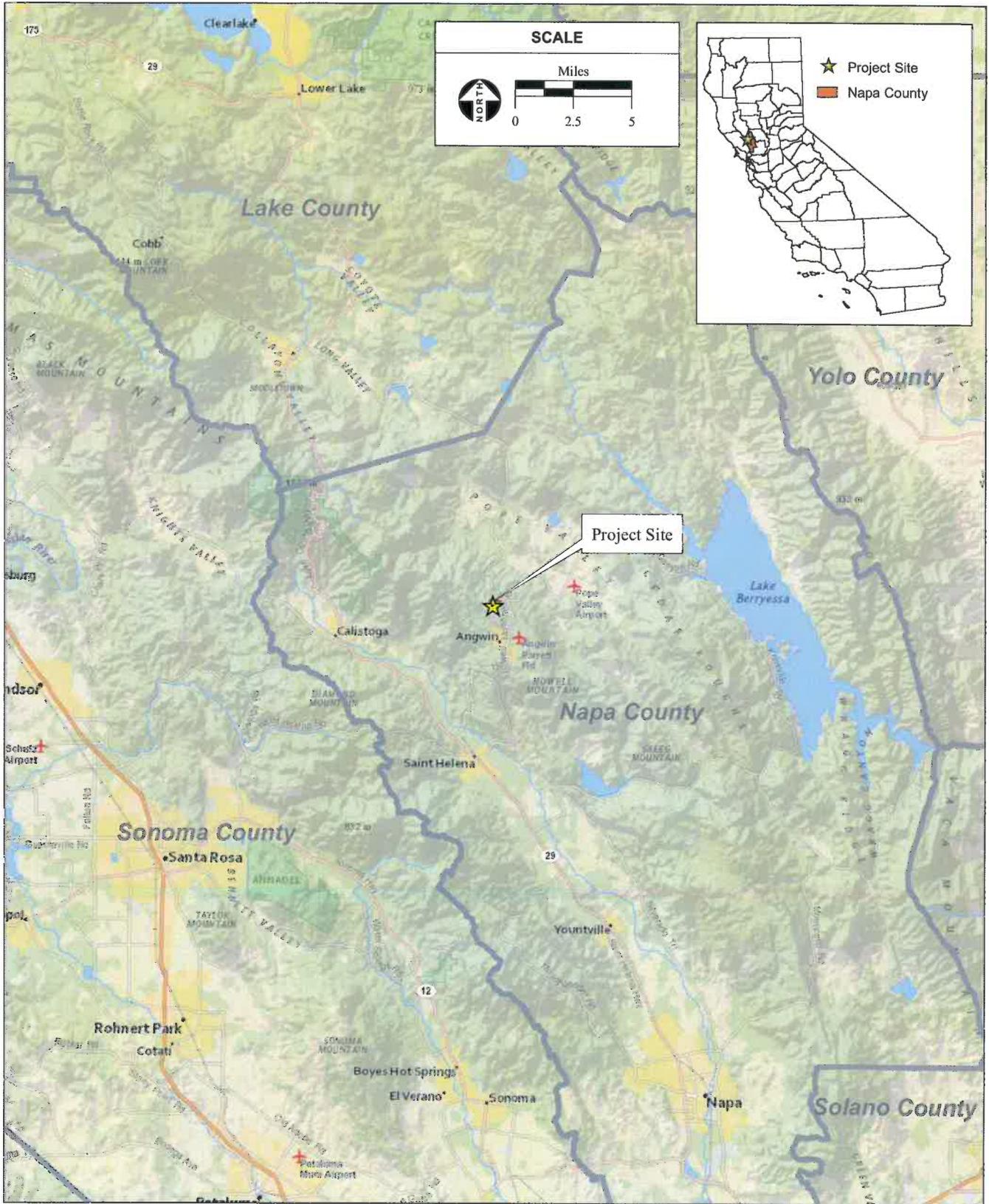
In order for your comments to be considered, please submit your written comments no later than **5:00 PM on December 24, 2015** to:



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P.O. Box 944246
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Email: SacramentoPublicComment@fire.ca.gov (Please include "Ciminelli Vineyard" in email subject line).

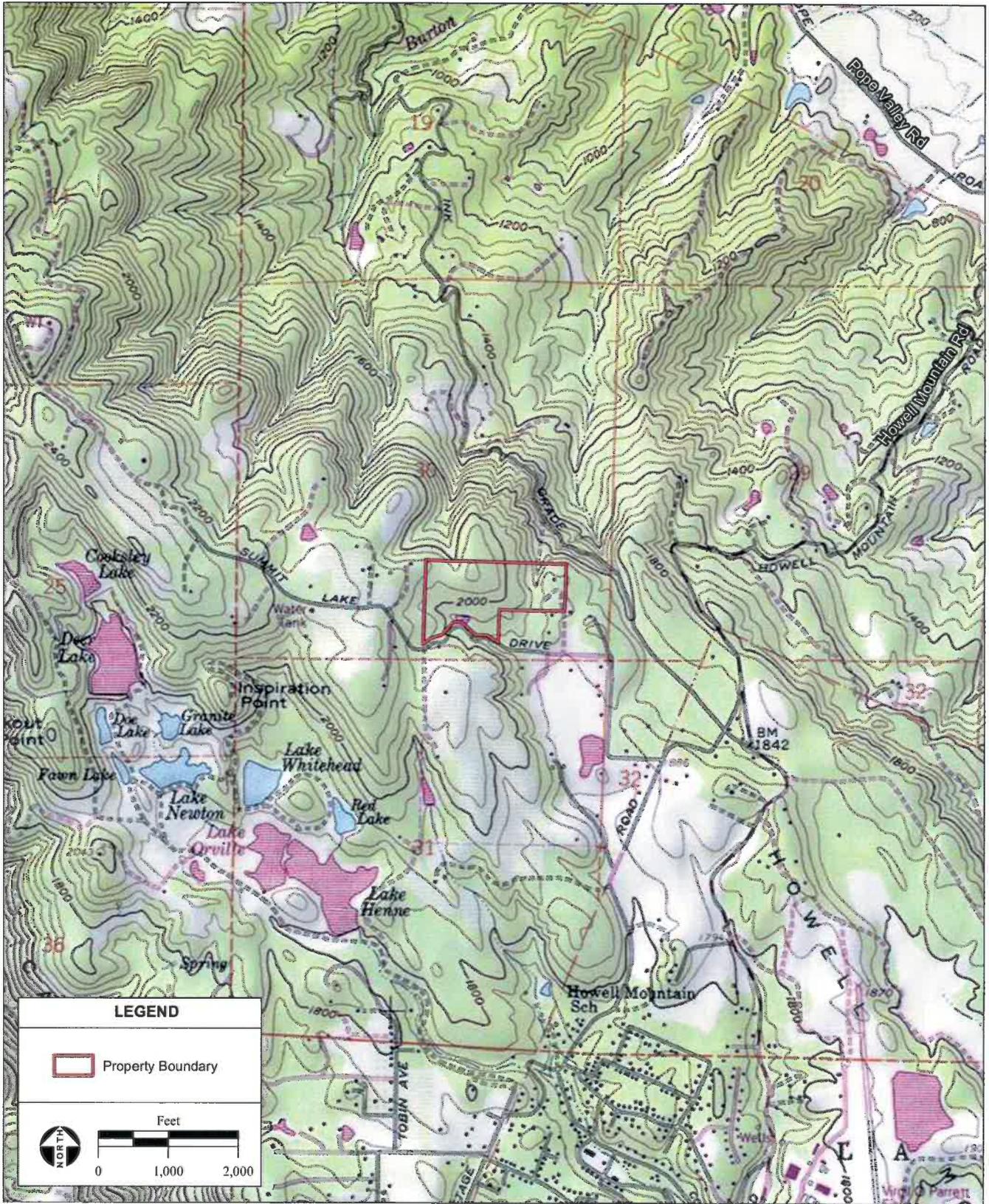
Comments by Fax will not be accepted.



SOURCE: NatGeo, 2015; AES, 2015

Ciminelli Estate Vineyard Conversion Project NOP / 214558 ■

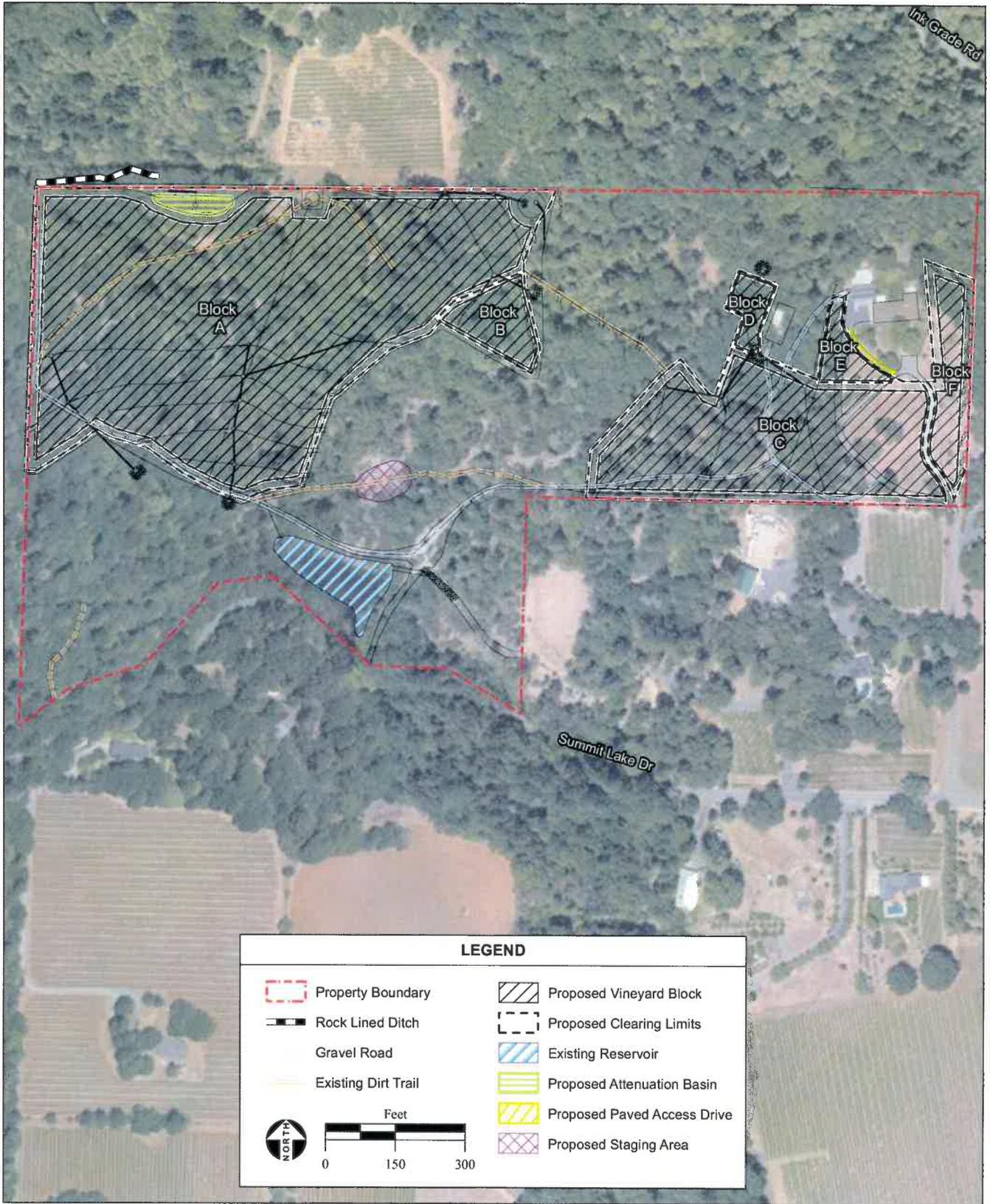
Figure 1
Regional Location



SOURCE: "Saint Helena, CA" USGS 7.5 Minute Topographic Quadrangle, T9N R5W, Section 30, Mt. Diablo Baseline & Meridian AES, 6/19/2015

Ciminelli Estate Vineyard Conversion Project NOP / 214558 ■

Figure 2
Site and Vicinity



SOURCE: Napa County Orthophoto, 6/2014; AES, 2015

Ciminelli Estate Vineyard Conversion Project NOP / 214558 ■

Figure 3
Project Site Boundary