

# Wildfire Fuel Reduction & Forest Health Improvement Project

You are standing...

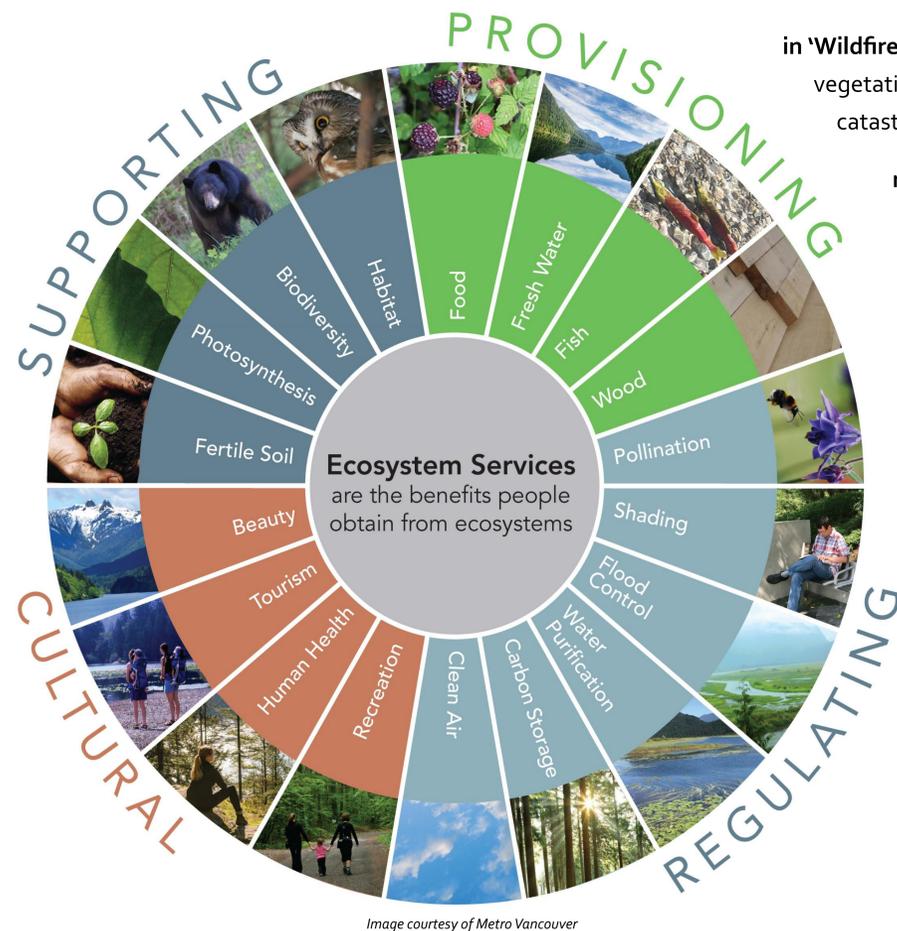
at the base of the Onion Ridge, the site of the Onion Ridge Fuel Reduction and Forest Health Improvement Project. The Project increases forest and watershed health, climate resiliency, and ecosystem services on private land for the benefit of the public.

in 'Wildfire Country.' This area has a history of large, destructive fires. The large amount and type of forest vegetation (wildfire fuel) and the rapid change in climate have made forests more vulnerable to catastrophic wildfire events

near the headwaters of two watersheds, Mill and Deer Creeks, that provide surface water to downstream communities and wildlife habitat. Both watersheds are unique in hosting undammed anadromous\* fish habitat as well as habitat for various threatened and special status species including spring-run Chinook salmon, Pacific fisher, and other plant and wildlife species.

in a historically rich place. A segment of the California (Lassen) Trail passes through Onion Ridge. It served as an emigrant route at its peak during the mid-19th Century.

near the Ishi Wilderness, a culturally significant place for the Yahi, a First Nations tribe of California and is named after the last known member of the tribe, Ishi.



**Ecosystem Services 'Wheel of Fortune':** We are lucky to have forests that provide ecosystem services, the benefits we receive from nature without a fee. These services come from natural processes that we cannot create ourselves such as air, soil, water, minerals and wood as featured in the figure above. Which Ecosystem Services do you think occur in this area? How many did you identify?

## Funders



**SIERRA NEVADA CONSERVANCY**

Funding for this project has been provided by the Sierra Nevada Conservancy, an agency of the State of California under the Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Act of 2014 (Proposition 1) grant cycle and in support of the Sierra Nevada Watershed Improvement Program.

## Partners



**Photos:** To reduce wildfire fuel, roadside vegetation is removed with a masticator (top left) as well as hand thinning with a chainsaw (top right) or loppers along the Onion Ridge. The masticator quickly shreds trees as well as large brush. Hand thinning involves cutting and lopping small trees on steeper terrain. The treatment area maintains a 25 – 27 foot spacing for the remaining roadside trees. Remnants from mastication and hand thinning are scattered as mulch onsite to support a healthy ecosystem. The before photo (bottom left) - dense growth from the forest floor to its crown create a ladder fuel has been removed as shown in the after photo (bottom right).

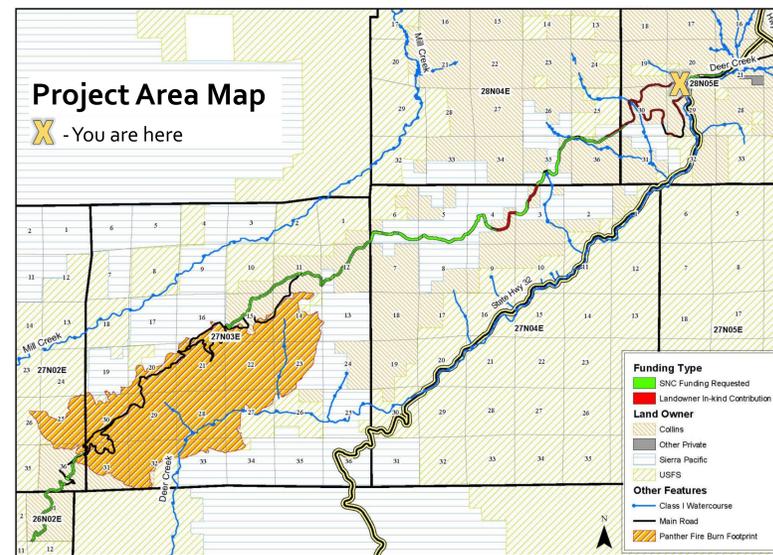
## Quick Facts

- **Completion Date:** August 2019 with ongoing maintenance
- **Purpose:** Develop a strategic fuel treatment zone to alter wildfire behavior and reduce its spread
- **Treatment Area:** continuous ~706 acres or ~25 miles along Road 28N05E
- **Equipment Used:** Masticator, chainsaws, and loppers
- **Project Contact:** Resource Conservation District of Tehama County (530) 727-1280 or [tcrcd@tehamacountyrcd.org](mailto:tcrcd@tehamacountyrcd.org) [www.tehamacountyrcd.org](http://www.tehamacountyrcd.org)

## You Benefit from this Project too!

Managing roadside vegetation that fuels wildfire is a public benefit. The Onion Ridge Fuel Reduction and Forest Health Improvement Project provides valuable services to all:

- **Clean air and water, health, habitat and more:** The forest, timberlands, (forested areas that grow commercial wood for lumber, pulp, and wood-based composites) and upper watersheds of Mill and Deer Creek offer provisioning, regulating, supporting, and cultural services as ecosystem services, see Ecosystem Services 'Wheel of Fortune' image at left.
- **Recreation:** safeguarding recreational activities that occur on adjacent public lands
- **Flood Reduction:** valley floods are often caused by sediment choking upstream stream channels
- **Emergency Access:** improving emergency access to manage wildfires safely and effectively



**Map -** The Onion Ridge treatment zone reduces fuel loads to help diminish wildfire on over 700 acres or roughly 20 miles of continuous roadside work. In the event of a wildfire, this treatment zone reduces the spread of wildfire and provides a critical access point for fire fighters. The 2013 Panther Fire consumed nearly 7,000 acres and was one of four recent wildfires in the watershed since 1994. What comes to mind when you see the proximity of Onion Ridge, the Panther Fire Burn Footprint, Mill Creek, and Deer Creek on the map?

\* Anadromous fish are born in freshwater, then migrate to the ocean as juveniles where they grow into adults before migrating back to birth water to spawn. Both Mill and Deer Creek host anadromous fish species including spring-run and fall-run Chinook salmon as well as steelhead trout.