

4 Priority Project Areas

Community Wildfire Protection Plans (CWPPs) are required to identify and prioritize areas for wildfire risk reduction. The main goal of the Wildfire Risk Assessment (WRA) was to use hazard and risk analysis to determine priority areas for wildfire risk reduction projects based on what the community determined to be valuable. The Priority Project Areas are areas within Nevada County where wildfire risk reduction activities should be a priority to both mitigate the wildfire risk and protect the values of the Nevada County community. By identifying Priority Project Areas, Nevada County will be able to design more holistic wildfire projects and establish a landscape-level perspective of wildfire resiliency. This approach will also allow for greater diversity in the type of wildfire mitigation project that could be identified and for greater participation in wildfire risk reduction across the County.

Priority Project Areas were determined by the results of the Quantitative Wildfire Risk Assessment (QWRA), which helps to identify and prioritize areas based on potential impacts to identified High Value Resources and Assets and results from the CWPP community outreach. To identify Project Priority Areas, additional processing of the QWRA results was required. The QWRA data was imported into ArcGIS Pro to detect overlaps in with high wildfire risk and high-priority values. The QWRA High and Very High Priority Risk categories were combined for analysis, with no significant differences found between fuel-driven and wind-driven scenarios due to the consideration of High and Very High Priority Risk together as described in Section 3.3.1. High and Very High Priority Benefits were also combined as risk reduction activities can also mimic the benefits associated with fire.

High and Very High Priority Risks and Benefits were extracted for each Primary-HVRA across Forecast Zones (FZ) and fire scenarios. The results were then consolidated by High Value Resources and Assets (HVRA) and FZ. Areas with High or Very High Priority Risk, or Benefit within a FZ, were included in the analysis.

Economic Resources were excluded from the analysis due to their close ties to the natural environment, and the focus shifted to (1) Community Lifelines, (2) Community Health, and (3) Natural Resources as described above in Section 3.3.1. The public survey, which received over 2,200 responses, highlighted these three Primary-HVRAs as the most critical HVRAs.

Intersecting the results for each Primary-HVRA within each FZ identified areas with overlap among all three HVRAs as the highest priority for multi-benefit wildfire risk reduction. Areas with overlap between Community Lifelines and Community Health were categorized as High Priority. Areas with overlap between Community Lifelines, Community Health, and Natural Resources were categorized as Highest Priority since risk reduction activities in these zones could potentially benefit all three critical HVRAs. Thus, Project Priority Areas were designated based on high wildfire risk from multiple HVRAs and prioritized for multi-benefit risk reduction activities. The Priority Project Areas therefore represent the focus areas for wildfire risk reduction efforts identified in this CWPP.

In Nevada County, 407,678 acres are identified as Project Priority Areas, representing 65% of the County's total area. These 407,678 acres are classified as High Priority. Of these, 265,297 acres are also classified

as Highest Priority. Project Priority Areas at the County scale are provided below in Table 17 and Figure 13.

Table 17. Project Priority Areas in Nevada County

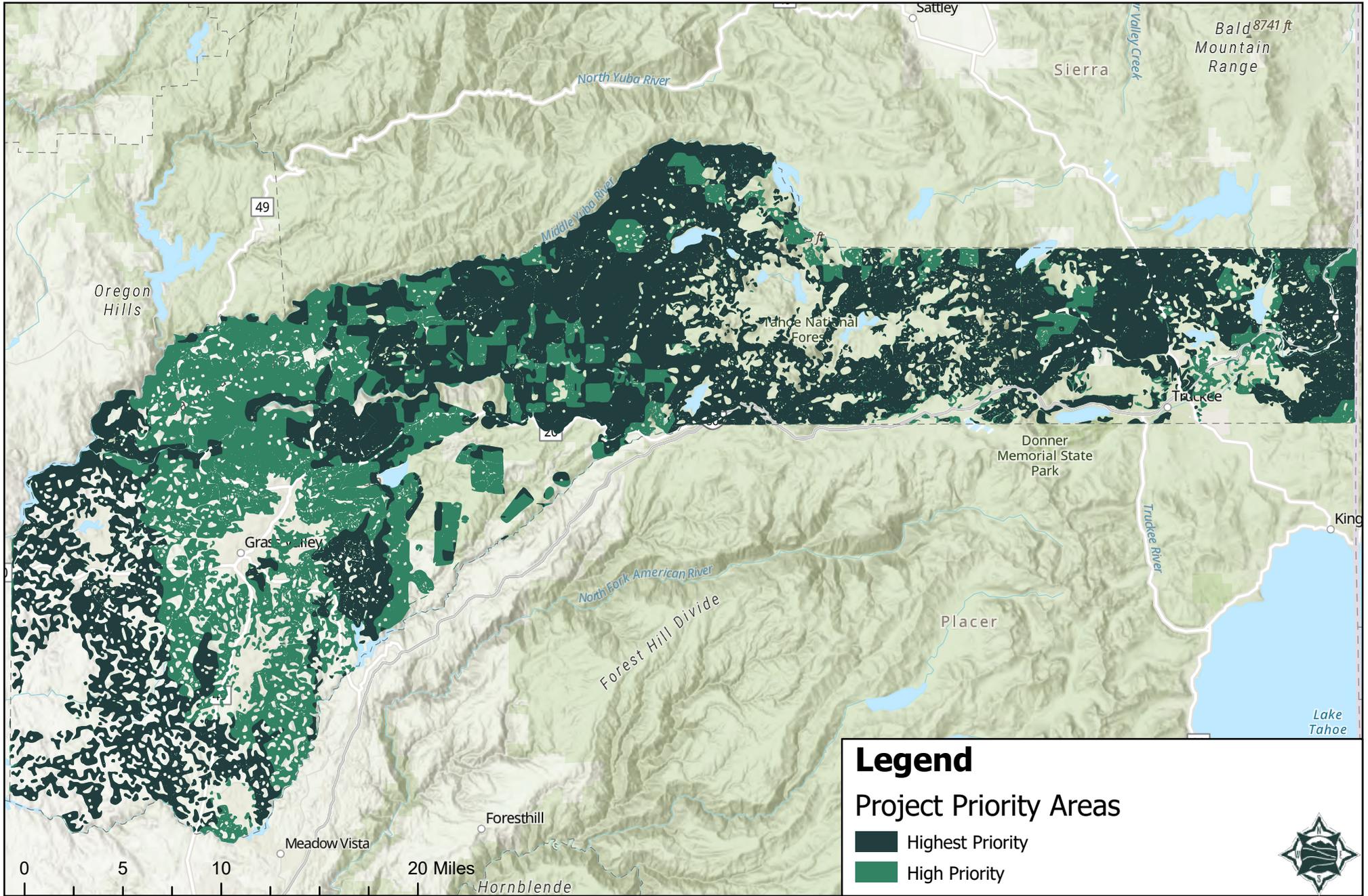
Project Priority Areas	Acres
Highest Priority (Community Lifelines, Community Health, and Natural Resources)	265,297*
High Priority (Community Lifelines and Community Health)	407,678

Note:

* Areas designated as highest priority are also considered high priority areas.

As a result, the Highest Priority category offers the most opportunity for multi-beneficial wildfire risk reduction projects. The division between Highest and High Priority allows for different Project Priority Areas that can fulfill multiple benefits but also do not limit the results. Therefore, much of the majority of the Project Priority Areas have the potential for wildfire risk reduction activities that can protect Community Lifelines, Community Health, and Natural Resources.

Figure 13 - Nevada County Project Priority Areas



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