

# WILDCAT CANYON – WC009

## FUELS MANAGEMENT PRESCRIPTION

### SITE DESCRIPTION AND LOCATION:

This site is 12 acres of oak/bay woodland, coastal scrub, and riparian woodland on a steep slope below homes in Wildcat Canyon Regional Park, near El Cerrito. Access is difficult and will need to be coordinated with private property owners.

### VEGETATION MANAGEMENT GOAL:

*Emerging oak woodland with ferns, oak litter, no understory shrubs, patches of north coastal scrub.* (from the Wildfire Hazard Reduction and Resource Management Plan).

### FUELS MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES:

- 1 - Reduce fuel volume and the intensity of wildland fires by reducing ladder fuels and surface fuels.
- 2 - Reduce ladder fuels through pruning and selective thinning.

### FUELS TREATMENT PRESCRIPTION:

Initial Treatment: Throughout the site, reduce fuel volume and intensity of wildland fires by reducing ladder fuels and surface fuels, with a focus on areas closest to structures and district trails. Specific fuels management includes the following:

- Prune up low hanging branches from the forest floor.
- Remove accumulated forest litter and down branches and logs, stringy bark collecting at the base of eucalyptus trees, and artificially created piles of woody debris scattered throughout the site.
- Reduce live brush where it creates a fuel ladder up into tree canopies. Treat brush by cutting, spraying herbicide, and/or pulling.
- Remove eucalyptus and non-native conifers.
- Though not necessarily posing a significant fuels management problem, hazardous trees on the site, including pines and eucalyptus, should be assessed by park staff and treated appropriately through the District's hazardous tree program.
- Dispose of cut woody material by piling/burning, chipping on site to a depth not to exceed an average of 3", or removing cut material off site.
- Use herbicide stump treatment on eucalyptus and brush, as recommended by the district's Integrated Pest Manager.
- Use goat grazing, mowing, and weed-eating to reduce flashy fuels such as grass and thistle.

Follow-up/Maintenance: (Note: if initial treatment is spread over more than one year, adjust the maintenance schedule as needed to accommodate.)

YEAR	FUELS TREATMENT
01	Initial Treatment. Reduce forest fuel loads in critical areas using a combination of tree removal, mowing, weedeating, grazing, pile burning and herbicides.
02-30	For any stumps where herbicide was applied in the previous year, follow-up with stump sprout herbicide treatment. Continue ladder and surface fuel reduction as needed. Reduce flashy fuels in critical areas using a combination of mowing, weedeating, grazing, pile burning and herbicides.

## RESOURCE OBJECTIVES AND CONSIDERATIONS:

### General

- Avoid bird nests at all times during treatment. If treatment will occur during nesting season, February 1 – August 31, Stewardship will conduct a pre-work nesting survey within 15 days of start of work and flag any identified nests. Work conducted from September 1 to January 31 does not require a prework nesting survey.
- Identify and flag dusky-footed woodrat nests during pretreatment assessments and/or surveys. Any identified nests will have a buffer zone and will be avoided during treatment, as described by the current protocol developed by Stewardship.
- Remove target tree species in a manner that retains native oak and bay trees.
- Conduct all operations to avoid unacceptable damage to boles, roots, and crowns of residual trees and vegetation.
- Throughout fuel treatment area where steep slopes exist with specific soil types and/or near water ways where there will be erosion concerns:
  - Install erosion control measures if needed in areas where duff has been removed.
  - If more than one acre of disturbance will occur during the treatment, a SWPPP is required.
- Trees will be removed from the site or chipped and left onsite. If left onsite, the wood chips generated would be left at a depth of four to six inches, with an aerial cover of no more than 20 percent of the project site, and no more than 10 percent of the site if left on roadways and landings.
- Stewardship will conduct a record review of cultural resources via the GIS Cultural Resources Atlas and/or the Cultural Services Coordinator prior to treatment. Any cultural resources will be flagged for avoidance.

### Alameda Striped Racer (whipsnake) considerations

The following restrictions apply when working in Alameda whipsnake habitat, defined as core scrub (PCE1), adjacent woodland or annual grassland (PCE2), and rock outcrops and small mammal burrows within or adjacent to PCE1 or PCE2 (PCE3). *Treatments in unsuitable habitat (e.g. eucalyptus forest) are exempt from these conditions.*

- **Work Windows.** Treatment activities involving heavy equipment and/or significant ground disturbance within any areas determined to be suitable AWS habitat would not occur between November 1 and March 31. Between April 1 – October 31, heavy equipment may be used with proper BMPs in place. Treatments involving hand crews, light mechanical equipment, or prescribed burning can be implemented throughout the year with proper BMPs in place. Work with chain saws is permitted without conditions at all times.
- **Biomonitoring.** A Designated Biologist would be onsite during implementation of activities that may result in take of State- and federally listed species, including mowing, weed eating, and heavy equipment use. Biomonitoring is required for all work *EXCEPT for light work with hand crews between November 1 – March 31*. If at any time a Covered Species is found within the Project Area, the Designated Biologist has the authority to stop work in the immediate vicinity until the Covered Species leaves the Project Area on its own, or be relocated by the Designated Biologist to a suitable location outside of the Project Area.
- **Heavy Equipment.** Where heavy equipment is used in a manner that will impact core scrub whipsnake habitat (PCE1), a Designated Biologist must be present. See Directional Workplan bullet.
- **Directional Workplan.** In lieu of exclusion fencing, a directional workplan may be submitted for agency review and approval. In the case of an approved Directional Workplan, a Designated

Biologist shall be present for all work involving heavy equipment. When earthmoving equipment is used, the Designated Biologist shall walk in front of equipment, where feasible and if it can be done in a safe manner. If a directional work plan is not approved, exclusion fencing will be required to protect core scrub habitat. Where fencing is feasible to install and within areas already proposed for temporary impacts, fencing would be installed around areas within or adjacent to AWS core scrub habitat where heavy equipment is operated, including landing areas, access roads, and staging areas.

- *Coverboards.* For all work overseen by a Designated Biologist, coverboards shall be installed in key areas, determined by the Designated Biologist or Permittee prior to initialing vegetation clearing activities for each area. The coverboards shall be placed to provide refuge for the Covered Species fleeing the area, including areas where a directional treatment methodology is used. Coverboards shall be inspected at the end of each work day and use by wildlife shall be recorded.
- *Rock Outcroppings.* Rock outcroppings and native shrubs surrounding outcroppings will be separated from the treatment area by orange construction fencing or other appropriate means.
- *Skid Trails.* Skid trails would be sited a minimum of 10 feet away from Alameda whipsnake core scrub habitat (PCE1) and rock outcrops (PCE3).
- *Wood Chips and Landings.* Wood chips and landings would not be placed within 50 feet of rock outcrops.
- *Ground Burrows.* Where possible during any treatment, ground burrows, holes, and tunnels shall be avoided. Spoils and burn piles shall be placed away from such features.
- *Shrublands.* When working in shrublands retain roughly 30% to 50% of shrub cover in islands through mosaic thinning or patch retention thinning. Islands are to be approximately 50' diameter, spaced 50 feet apart and should be natural in appearance and include specimens of variable age classes.

When conducting pile burning in Alameda whipsnake habitat the following restrictions apply:

- Pile burning would not occur within suitable Alameda whipsnake habitat during the hibernation season (November 1- March 31). Pile burning in unsuitable habitat is permitted year round.
- Check for burrows before building piles. Avoid placing piles on large rodent burrows.
- Light the pile from one end (generally the uphill side on slopes) to allow Alameda whipsnakes to escape, rather than lighting the whole pile at once.
- Limit material in the pile to 4-inch diameter or less to limit heat penetration into the ground and provide short escape distance.

**MONITORING:**

Resource monitoring results will be documented by Stewardship staff in the post-work survey data sheet.

**PRESCRIPTION PREPARED BY:**

Brad Gallup  
Fire Representative, EBRPD

[Signature]  
Signature

7/19/18  
Date

**REVIEW AND APPROVAL:**

This prescription meets the District's standards for fuels management, natural resource protection and achievement of Best Management Practices according to the Wildfire Hazard Reduction and Resource Management Plan and is consistent with the mitigation measures contained in the EIR:

Alice Thiele  
Fire Chief, EBRPD

[Signature]  
Signature

7/23/2018  
Date

MATTHEW GRAUL  
Chief of Stewardship, EBRPD

[Signature]  
Signature

8/8/18  
Date

N  
1 inch = 158 feet

EAST BAY REGIONAL PARK DISTRICT  
WHA-WC009

RTA  
EBRPD

Creek Trail

WHA-WC009



Driveway

Driveway

Driveway

Vista Heights Rd

Driveway

Driveway

Driveway

Driveway

Vista Rd

Club View Dr

Wildcat Dr

Rife Range Rd

Bel View Ct