

## **PROJECT INITIATION NOTICE (PIN) –**

(For projects that initially appear to be Categorically Excluded (CE) from documentation in an EIS or EA)

**Project Name:** Mt Hough OHV and Watershed Restoration

**Proponent:** Mt. Hough Ranger District and Plumas County

**Project Leader:** Kurt Sable

**Job Code:** NFXNH119 and as planned. There is some time for several of you under the grant. When it is in PWP we can charge to it and I will need the pay sheets.

Personal	Days
Kurt Sable	5
Jim Belsher-Howe	5
Cristina Weinberg	3
Miguel Jeffrey (gs7 arch tech)	7
Colin Dillingham	5
Wildlife tech, GS 6	5

**Please Return By: July 19<sup>th</sup>.**

**Project Location:** This project is located near Quincy CA, on Mt Hough proper, Grizzly Peak, South Park, and Snake Lake areas. The legal land description is as follows, Township 24 North, Range 8 East; Section 8, Township 24 North, Range 9 East, Sections 6 and 36; Township 24 North, Range 10 East, Section's 4, 5, 6; Township 25 North, Range 9, Section 21, Township 25 North, Range 10, Section 8; Township 25 North, Range 11 East, Section 19. (MDBM), Plumas County, California). See Figures 1 – 4.

### **Electronic project documents should be filed under:**

<https://usfs.box.com/s/m5puj5h7fthd0k14y1r3rf5n4wkdecjf>

Project folder is on Pinyon in MHRD CE's

### **Spatial data for this project is saved at:**

T:\FS\NFS\Plumas\Project\MHRD\CategoricalExclusions\GIS\Mt Hough OHV and Watershed Restoration

### **Background:**

In 2018, the Mt Hough Ranger District applied for and has been awarded an Off Highway Vehicle (OHV) Restoration Grant from California State Parks. The objective is to close and rehabilitate unauthorized non-system OHV trails and roads on NFS lands. These roads and trails, here to for referred to as routes, negatively impact water and soil resources by detrimentally compacting soils and causing erosion and risks to water quality on the forest (Figure 5.) Some of the routes also pose a risk to botanical and historical resources. One of the routes is located in a land designation (Semi-Primitive Non-Motorized) where OHV traffic is prohibited. Many of them existed during the Travel Route Management Decision (2010), but were not added to the NFS system.

The grant's life is 3 years and consists of a planning phase and an implementation phase; this PIN is part of the planning phase.

The main focus area is Mt. Hough proper. This area has received a tremendous increase in use due to the development of new authorized multi-use trails. Non-system routes can be a temptation for users. Also included is routes at Snake Lake, South Park, and Grizzly Peak. Total trail obliteration is 7.9 miles. New foot trail construction if up to 0.5 miles. New motorized trail is 0.1 miles.

### **Description of the Proposed Action:**

Mt Hough OHV and Watershed Restoration includes obliteration of non-system routes, construction of short route realignments, and construction of a foot trail to Crystal Lake. Two routes are proposed here to Crystal Lake, but only one of these will likely be built.

- Route obliteration activities include sub-soiling, water bar construction, out-sloping and placement of slash, root balls, and boulders. Areas near riparian areas would also be seeded with native grass seed.
- Route realignment and trail building would include benching and out sloping trails with hand or small trail building tractors. All new routes will be single track trails 36" or narrower. Proper drainage would be installed as per Forest Service Handbook 2309.18 Section 23.12. "Trail tread will exhibit proper width, drainage, stabilization, and slope."

### **ROLES and RESPONSIBILITIES**

The following resource specialists have been assigned to this project:

Project Leader / Hydrology and Soils: Kurt Sable  
Wildlife: Colin Dillingham  
Botany: Jim Belsher-Howe  
Heritage: Cristina Weinberg  
Engineering: Chris Frappier  
Recreation: Leslie Edlund

It is the responsibility of these specialists to ensure that the proposed action is consistent with the Forest Plan, as amended, properly fits the proposed categories, and does not impact resource conditions at FSH 1909.15 30.2 such that extraordinary circumstances are implicated.

The realignment and construction of new trail meets the requirements of Forest Service Interim Directive, FSH 1909.15, Chapter 30, Categorical Exclusion from Documentation, 32.2, Category 1, "Constructing and Reconstructing of trails" (36 CFR 220.6(e)(1)).

The non-system route obliteration meets the requirements of requirements of Forest Service Interim Directive, FSH, 1909.15, Ch. 32.2 (20) Activities that restore, rehabilitate, or stabilize lands occupied by roads and trails, excluding National Forest System roads and National Forest System trails to a more natural condition that may include removing, replacing, or modifying drainage structures and ditches, reestablishing vegetation, reshaping natural contours and slopes, reestablishing drainage-ways, or other activities that would restore site productivity and reduce environmental impacts [(36 CFR 220.6(e)(20)].

This project is **not** subject to notice, comment, and appeal; **is** categorically excluded from documentation; and **does** require a Decision Memo and project file.

**Project Timeline:**

March 13th, 2019: PIN sent out to specialists for scoping

July 19th, 2019: Specialist input due back to Kurt

August 23, 2019: Review specialist, and public input and write decision memo - project approved and any mitigations finalized/finalize Decision Memo, and then submit to OHV Division at State.

Oct.7<sup>th</sup>: 2019: Begin implementation

**Scoping:**

The level of scoping that will be completed:

☐ Internal scoping only, include an explanation why no external scoping is needed.

The project is not adjacent to private land, mining claims, or areas under special use permits, which may potentially be affected by the project.

☒ External scoping with the following people or groups to be included:

Sierra Access Coalition, Friends of Plumas Wilderness, Jim Battidgin, Sierra Buttes Trail Stewardship.

This PIN has been reviewed and approved by:

\_\_\_\_\_  
District Ranger

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Resource Comments:**

( ) Using known information, I have analyzed the proposed action and have determined that, for those resources within my area of expertise, there will be no negative environmental effects. Factors leading to this determination (why)

( ) Based on known information, the following mitigation measures will need to be incorporated into the project (what): (A statement is needed to explain the reasons for the measures and why the measures result in no negative effects.)

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### Functional Area

CC: Botany: Jim Belsher-Howe, Wildlife: Colin Dillingham, Hydrology: Kurt Sable, Archaeology: Cristina Weinberg, Engineering: Chris Frappier

### References:

USDA 2010. Record of Decision Plumas National Forest Public Motorized Travel Management. USDA Forest Service, Quincy, CA.

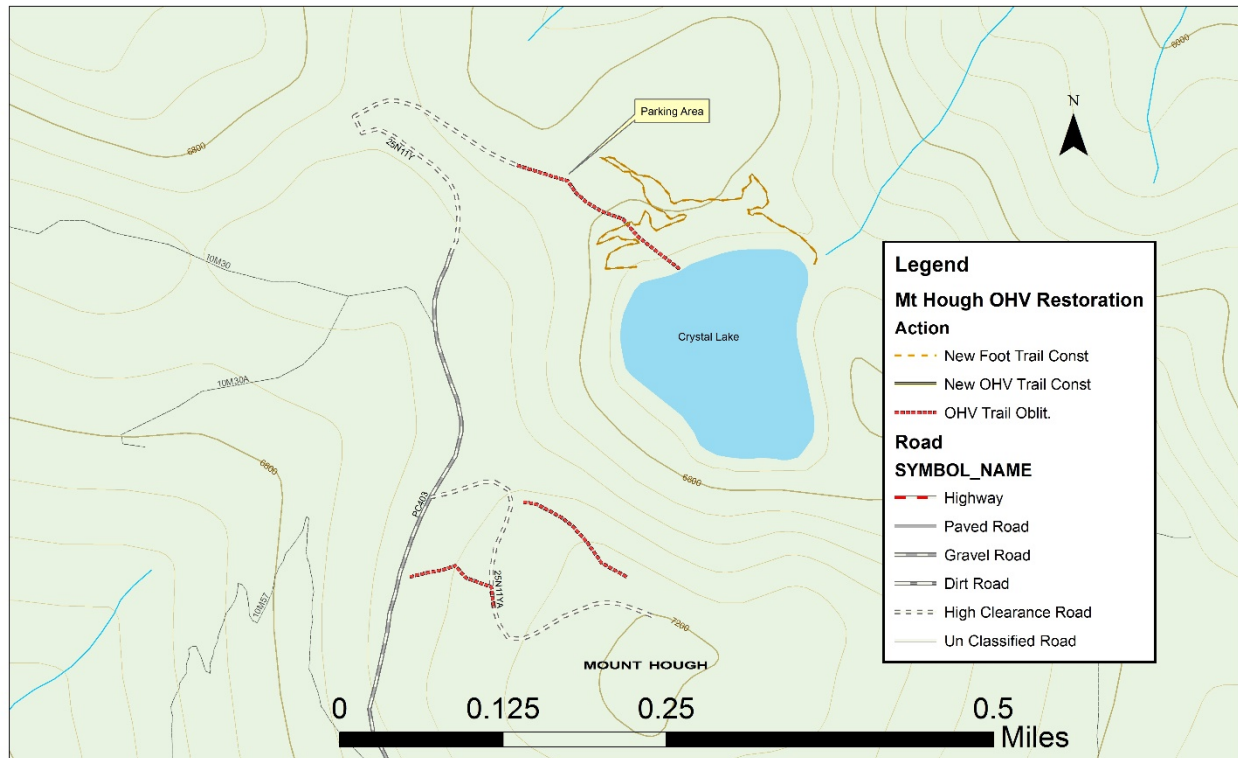
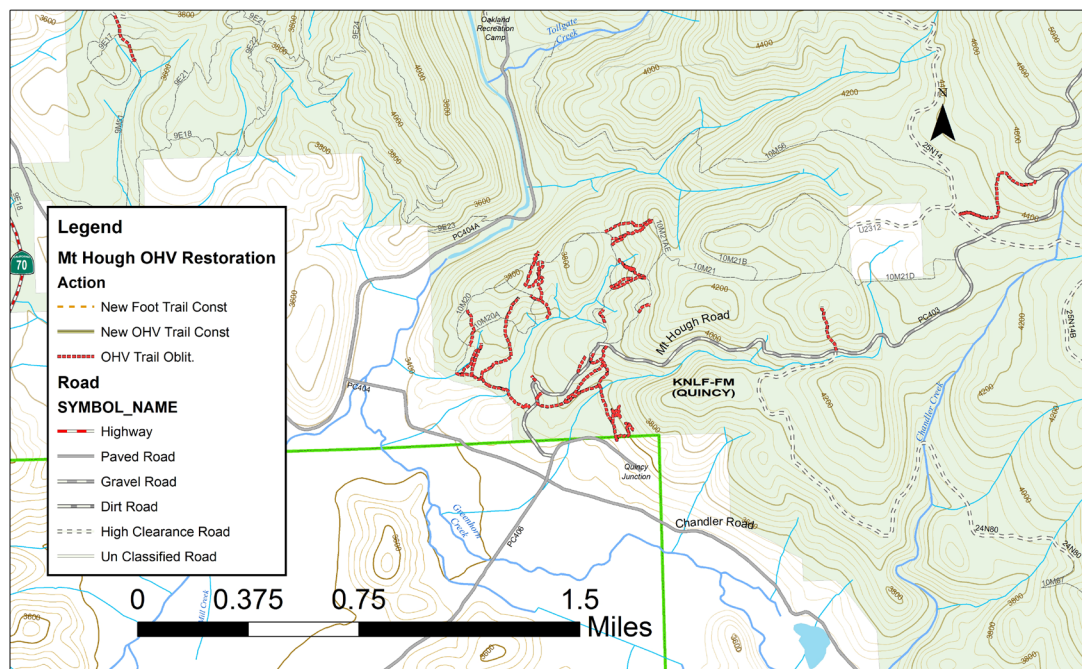
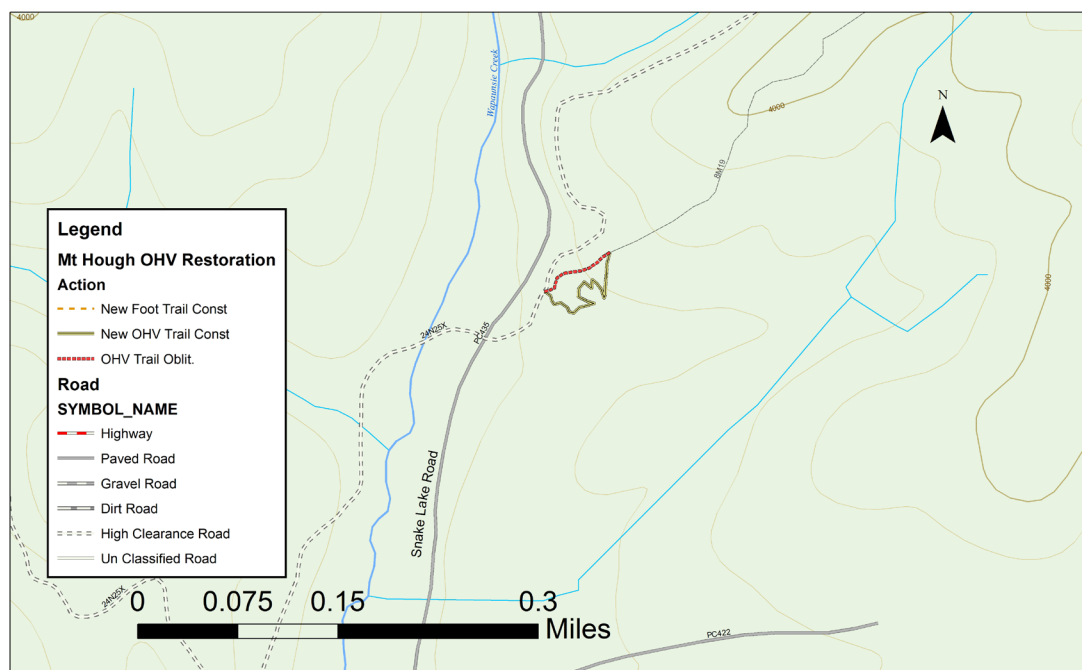


Figure 1. Project area, Crystal Lake

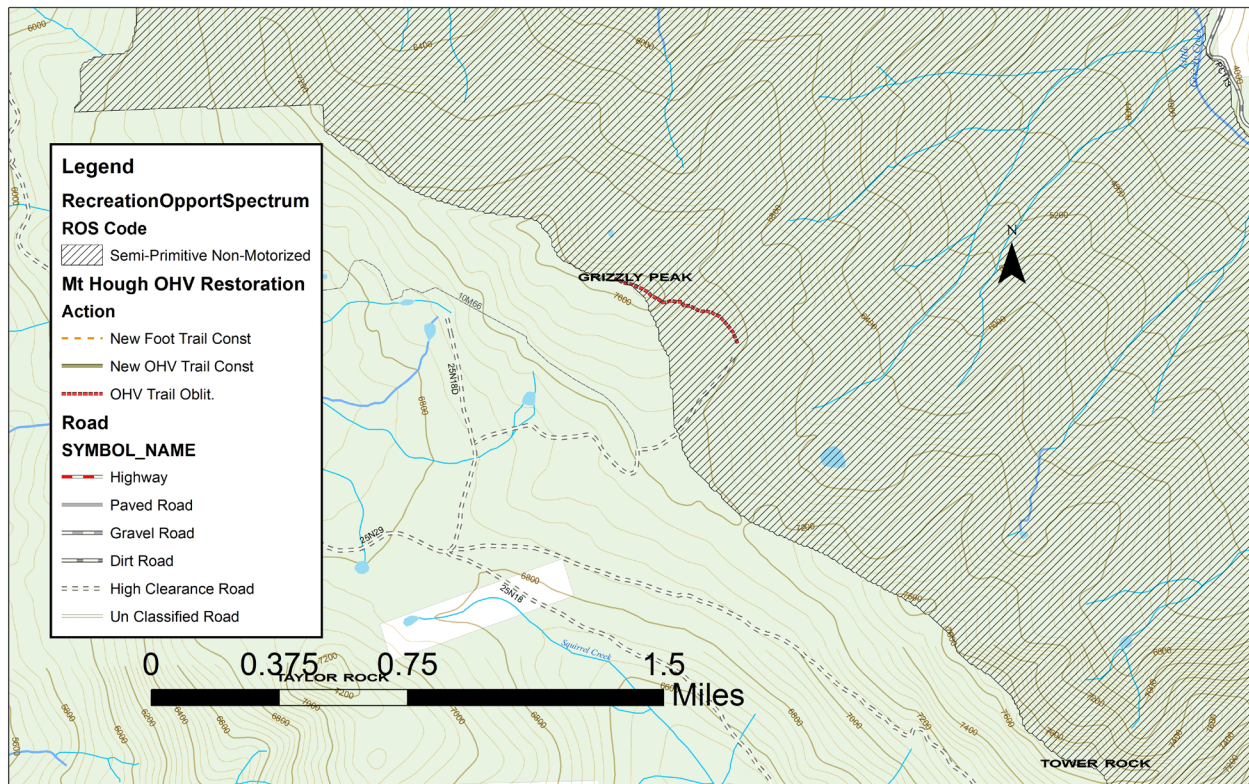


**Figure 2. Project area, Bottom of Hough Road and South Park.**



**Figure 3. Project area, Snake Lake.**





**Figure 4. Project area, Grizzly Peak, note trail in Semi Primitive Non-Motorized land designation.**



**Figure 5. Eroding, over steep, non-system OHV trail above Crystal Lake.**