

STUDY DESCRIPTION TR-3
Special-Status Terrestrial Wildlife Study
April 1, 2026

This Study Description is developed to inform information gaps identified by Calaveras County Water District (CCWD) for the relicensing of its North Fork Stanislaus River Hydroelectric Project (Project).¹

STUDY AREA

The Study Area includes the FERC Project Boundary plus a 0.25-mile buffer around the boundary with the following exception: 1) boundaries for underground Project facilities (i.e., tunnels) are not included in the Study Area. The Study Area conforms to the Assessment Area described in Section 3.5 *Terrestrial Resources* of the Pre-application Document (PAD). Figure 1 shows the Study Area.

¹ In addition to the details provided in this study description, study implementation will also follow the "*Concepts and Practices Applicable to All Relicensing Studies*" developed by CCWD.

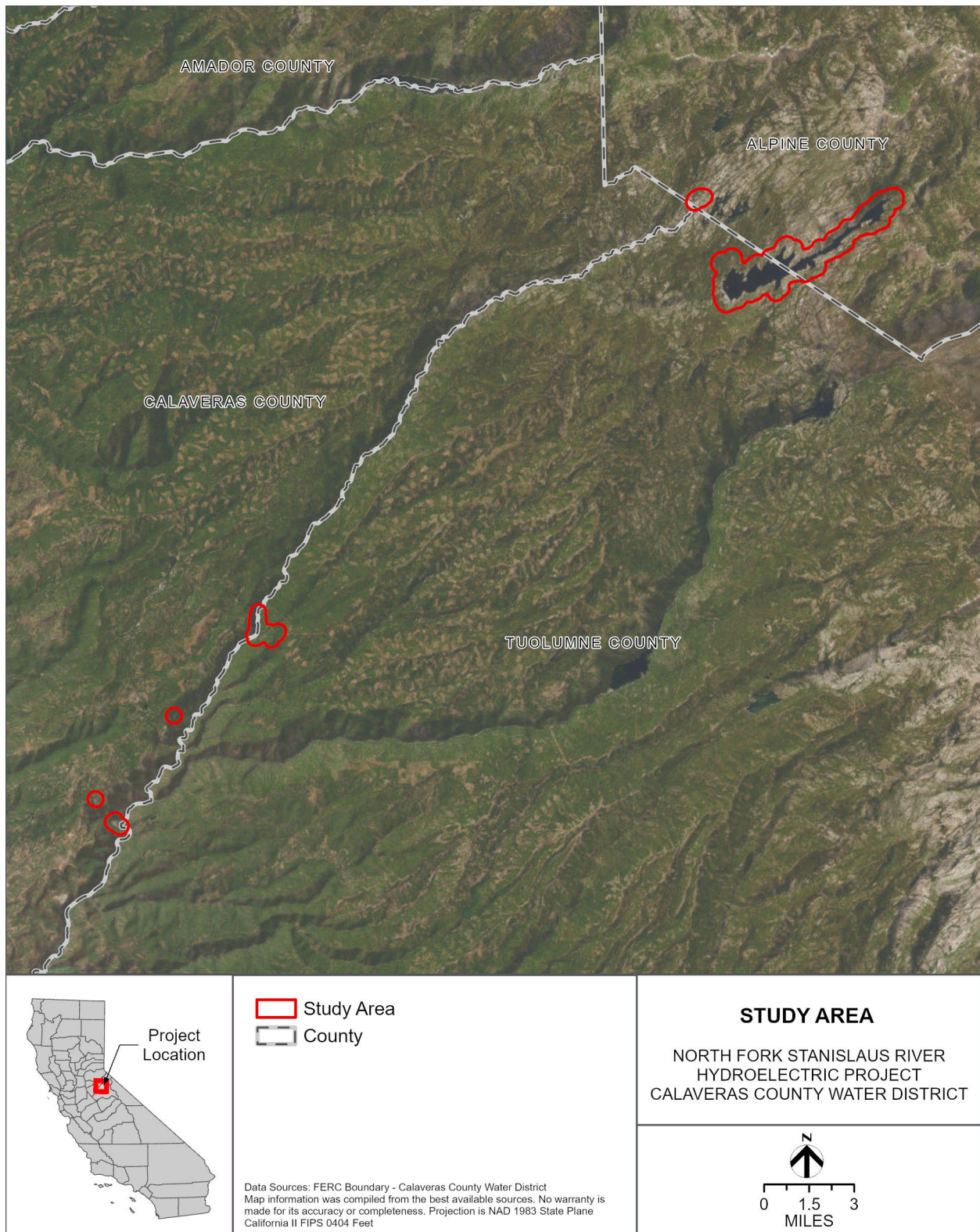


Figure 1. Study Area.

For the purpose of this Study the following definitions apply:

Special-Status Terrestrial Wildlife Species²

- Is a wildlife species that, at the time the Study is conducted, is;
 - Listed as Threatened or Endangered, or is a candidate or proposed for listing under the federal Endangered Species Act (USFWS 2026) and/or;
 - Protected under the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act and/or;
 - Listed as Threatened, Endangered, or Rare or is a candidate for listing under the California Endangered Species Act (CDFW 2026a) and/or;
 - Listed as Fully Protected under California law pursuant to Fish and Game Code Sections 3511, 4700, 5050 and 5515 and/or;
 - Designated by California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) as a Species of Special Concern and/or;
 - Listed as a United States Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Sensitive species and occurs on lands administered by BLM (BLM 2026) and/or;
 - Listed by the United States Department of Agriculture, Forest Service (Forest Service) as a Forest Service Sensitive Species and occurs on National Forest System (NFS) lands.

STUDY METHODS

Excluding Data Summary Development (i.e., Reporting), the Study consists of the following two steps: 1) Identify and Quantify Suitable Foraging and/or Breeding Habitat for Special-status Terrestrial Wildlife Species based on California Wildlife Habitat Relationships (CWHR) habitat types; and 2) Refine the List of Special-status Terrestrial Wildlife Species. Study TR-3 does not include any fieldwork, but utilizes information developed by Study TR-1, Botanical Resources Study, including Vegetation Mapping. Incidental observations of special-status wildlife documented during relicensing studies will also be incorporated into the results.

Step 1 - Identify and Quantify Suitable Foraging and/or Breeding Habitat for Special-status Wildlife Species

CCWD will crosswalk the Manual of California Vegetation (MCV) alliances developed during Study TR-1 into CWHR habitat types within the Study Area. CCWD will then run the CWHR habitat types through CDFW's CWHR Version 10 (or as updated) Online Application (CDFW 2021) to generate a list of potential Special-status Terrestrial Wildlife Species that have potential to use the area.

² Aquatic amphibians, reptiles, mollusks, and snails are not considered in this Study, but any species that spends part of their life cycle on land is considered terrestrial for the purpose of this Study.

Step 2 – Refine the List of Special-Status Terrestrial Wildlife Species.

In Step 2, the list of Special-status Terrestrial Wildlife Species developed in Step 1 will be supplemented by information from:

- CDFW’s Special Animals List (CDFW 2026a);
- CDFW’s California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB) (CDFW 2026b);
- USFWS’s Information for Planning and Consultation (IPaC) portal (USFWS 2026a); and
- USFWS’s Critical Habitat Mapper (USFWS 2026b).

These data will be utilized to update Table 3.5-3, *Special Status Wildlife Species with the Potential to Occur in the Assessment Area*, from the PAD. The refinements will include addition and subtraction of special-status wildlife species, listing suitable habitat in and around the Project facilities for each species, acreage of suitable habitat in the FERC Project boundary, and acreage of suitable habitat within the 0.25-mile buffer. A map of the CWHR habitat types will be developed for the Project.

REPORTING

The study will generate an updated table of special-status terrestrial wildlife with suitable habitat on and near the Project, as well as maps of the suitable habitat.³

SCHEDULE

CCWD anticipates the schedule for Study completion as follows:

Crosswalk MCV into CWHR	July 2027
Develop Terrestrial Wildlife Table	August – September 2027
Data Summary Development	September – November 2027

³ In addition to the details provided in this section, reporting will also follow the "*Concepts and Practices Applicable to All Relicensing Studies*" developed by CCWD.

REFERENCES

- California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW). 2026. California *Natural Diversity Database (CNDDDB)*. Available online at: <https://wildlife.ca.gov/Data/CNDDDB>.
- _____. 2021. California Wildlife Habitat Relationship System, Version 10.1.29. Sacramento, CA. Available online at: <https://apps.wildlife.ca.gov/cwhr/index.shtml>.
- California Native Plant Society (CNPS). 2026. Manual of California Vegetation Online. Available online at: <https://vegetation.cnps.org/>.
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. 2026a. Information for Planning and Consultation. Environmental Conservation Online System. Available online at: <https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/>. United States Fish and Wildlife Service. Washington D.C.
- _____. 2026b. Critical Habitat Mapper. Available online at: <https://fws.maps.arcgis.com/apps/mapviewer/index.html?layers=794de45b9d774d21aed3bf9b5313ee24>.

Page Left Blank