



## California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

To: State Clearinghouse  
1400 Tenth Street  
Sacramento, CA 95814

From: Bill Solinsky  
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### **Subject: Notice of Preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Report Davis Family Estates Friesen Vineyard Project June 24, 2014**

The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) is the Lead Agency and Napa County is a Responsible Agency for the preparation of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the Davis Family Estates Friesen Vineyard Project (Proposed Project) in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Consistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15082, CAL FIRE, as Lead Agency, has prepared this Notice of Preparation (NOP) to inform all responsible and trustee agencies that an EIR will be prepared. The purpose of the NOP is to describe the Proposed Project and potential environmental effects in order to allow agencies and interested parties to provide input on the scope and content of the EIR. A copy of this NOP and figures referenced herein is provided on CAL FIRE's website: [http://calfire.ca.gov/resource\\_mgt/resource\\_mgt\\_EPRP\\_PublicNotice.php](http://calfire.ca.gov/resource_mgt/resource_mgt_EPRP_PublicNotice.php). Comments on this NOP are due to CAL FIRE by 5:00 PM on July 24, 2014.

#### **Project Summary**

The purpose of the Proposed Project is to convert approximately 14 acres of timberland to a commercial vineyard (Project Site). The Project Site is located within a 38.7-acre property identified as Napa County assessor's parcel numbers (APNs) 018-060-012 and 018-060-013. A Timberland Conversion Permit (TCP) is required for the Project Site, which triggers a need to prepare a CEQA document for the Proposed Project. Given the potential for environmental impacts, an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) is being prepared. A Napa County Erosion Control Plan (ECP) is also required for the Proposed Project. The environmental impacts of the TCP, the ECP, and the development of the vineyard on the Project Site will be evaluated against the CEQA baseline of the Project Site.

In addition, a Timber Harvesting Plan (THP) is being prepared concurrently for the harvest of 10.0± acres within the Project Site and will be processed separately by CAL FIRE. The balance of approximately 4.0 acres within the Project Site is comprised of grass, brush, and ruderal land. The THP will be evaluated by CAL FIRE through a CEQA-equivalent process consistent with the Forest Practice Rules. The EIR will include the THP, the TCP, and the ECP as attachments.

#### **Project Location**

The Project Site is located on a 38.7-acre property within a portion of the northwest quarter of Section 25 of the Mount Diablo Base Meridian within Township 9 North and Range 6 West. The property includes two parcels which are identified as Napa County APNs 018-060-012 and 018-060-013. The property is located at 1875 Friesen Drive, roughly two miles northwest of the town of Angwin in northern Napa County, California, as shown in **Figure 1**. Land uses in the vicinity of the property include vineyards, rural residences, and open space. The 3,030-acre Dunn-Wildlake Ranch Preserve, which is managed by the Land Trust of Napa County, is located to the west, south, and

east of the property; the preserve is adjacent to the west and east borders of the property. Property elevations range from approximately 2,050 to 2,200 feet above mean sea level. Soils on the property are forward gravelly loam for the most part, with some Henneke gravelly loam and rock outcrop-Kidd complex soils. The property is located within the Bell Canyon Reservoir watershed (Calwater 2206.500202), and an unnamed reservoir, one Class III watercourse, and one blue-line (Class II) stream are present on the property. The Project Site is set back 150 feet from the reservoir, and the Project Site would be set back from the Class III watercourse and blue-line (Class II) stream consistent with Napa County standards and/or CAL FIRE standards (whichever is most protective). The slopes on the Project Site range from 5 to 27 percent. A map of the property with the Project Site identified is included as **Figures 2 and 3**.

As part of the EIR process, a report on the biological resources within an approximate 18-acre survey area (which includes the Project Site of 14± acres and immediately surrounding area within the 38.7-acre property) has been prepared. The following habitats have been identified within the 18-acre survey area: Ghost Pine Woodland Alliance, Douglas Fir Forest Alliance, Mixed Oak Forest Alliance, Chamise Chaparral Alliance, and Provisional Shrubland Manzanita Alliance. There are ponderosa pines within the Project Site, but the pines within the survey area do not constitute a Ponderosa Pine Forest.

### **General Plan/Zoning Designations**

The Project Site is zoned Agricultural Watershed (AW).

### **Project Description**

The Proposed Project would convert approximately 14 acres of timberland to a commercial vineyard within a 38.7-acre property. The 14± acres constitute the Project Site and the total area to be converted to vineyard. The remaining 24.7 acres of the property will not be impacted by the project. Four vineyard blocks are proposed for development within the Project Site (**Figure 3**). The vineyard blocks will include wine grape vines as well as internal farm avenues and space for vineyard maintenance operations; therefore, the net area of the vineyard will be approximately 10.5 acres. The establishment of the vineyard as part of the Proposed Project is consistent with the current Napa County zoning designation of Agricultural Watershed (AW).

The Project Site is not located within a Timberland Protection Zone (TPZ). However, since the Proposed Project would convert “non-TPZ timberland to a non-timber growing use” through timber operations in which “future timber harvests will be prevented or infeasible because of land occupancy and activities thereon,” a TCP and approval is required from CAL FIRE consistent with the Z’berg-Nejedly Forest Practice Act (Division 4, Chapter 8, Public Resources Code) and California Forest Practice Rules (Title 14, California Code of Regulations). CAL FIRE will therefore be the CEQA Lead Agency on the EIR.

Harvested timber would be processed on-site using a portable mill. All non-merchantable trees and vegetation would be removed, chipped, and/or burned on-site, consistent with CAL FIRE, Napa County, and San Francisco Bay Air Quality Management District standards. Suitable forest products such as lumber, sawlogs, chips, etc. would be marketed as appropriate. Wood products leaving the site would be limited to transport on 3-axle trucks and would not require the use of logging trucks. No new roads, except internal farm avenues within the new vineyard, would be built. As a result of implementation of the ECP and the Forest Practice Act, post-project sediment erosion conditions and peak hydrological runoff are projected to be below pre-project conditions; these aspects are detailed in the hydrological report and sediment report that have been prepared for the Proposed Project and will be included with the EIR as attachments.

Chapter 18.108 of the Napa County Code (Conservation Regulations) requires an ECP be prepared by a Licensed Civil Engineer for the Proposed Project and approved by Napa County because slopes on the Project Site are greater than 5 percent. Consequently, Napa County will be a Responsible Agency for the EIR.

### **Environmental Factors Potentially Affected**

Anticipated impacts of the Proposed Project on the following list of resource areas will be analyzed in the EIR per CEQA Guidelines (Title 14 CCR Division 6, Chapter 3). The impacts of the Proposed Project will be determined by evaluating against the CEQA baseline, which is the Project Site as it currently exists (prior to the THP).

Aesthetics: The Project Site is located within the view shed of vehicles traveling on Friesen Drive and possibly hikers in the Dunn-Wildlake Ranch Preserve. An analysis of potential impacts to aesthetics from the Proposed Project will be provided in the EIR.

Agriculture and Forestry Resources: The impacts of the Proposed Project to these resources will be a primary subject of the EIR. An analysis of impacts to agricultural and forestry resources in the vicinity of the Project Site and local region will be included in the EIR.

Air Quality: Non-merchantable trees and vegetation would be removed, chipped, and/or burned on-site, consistent with Napa County and San Francisco Bay Air Quality Management District standards. An analysis of potential impacts to air quality from the Proposed Project will be provided in the EIR.

Biological Resources: An analysis of potential impacts to biological resources as a result of the construction and operation of the Proposed Project will be provided in the EIR.

Cultural Resources: A preliminary cultural resources survey of the Project Site identified a cultural resource in the vicinity of the Project Site. Further analysis of potential impacts to cultural resources as a result of the Proposed Project will be provided in the EIR.

Geology/Soils: An ECP is required to be prepared for the Proposed Project, which includes erosion control measures to be implemented during construction and operation of the vineyard. Further analysis of potential impacts to local geology/soils will be provided in the EIR.

Greenhouse Gas Emissions: An analysis of potential impacts due to the Proposed Project's greenhouse gas emissions attributed to construction, operation, and canopy removal will be provided in the EIR.

Hazards and Hazardous Materials: An analysis of hazards and hazardous materials as they pertain to construction and operation of the Proposed Project will be provided in the EIR.

Hydrology/Water Quality: The Proposed Project site would be set back from the watercourses, consistent with Napa County standards and/or CAL FIRE standards (whichever one is most protective), and no conversion activities would take place within these setbacks. An analysis of impacts from the Proposed Project to local hydrology, including groundwater, and water quality will be provided in the EIR.

Land Use/Planning: No significant impacts are anticipated. As stated above, the Proposed Project would result in the development of vineyards within the 14± acre Project Site, which is consistent with the current Napa County zoning designation, Agricultural Watershed. Any potential impacts to neighboring properties within 300 feet will be

evaluated, consistent with CAL FIRE programs. An analysis of impacts to land use/planning due to the Proposed Project will be provided in the EIR.

Mineral Resources: No known mineral resources that are of state, regional, or local value are identified on or within the vicinity of the Proposed Project site, and therefore no significant impacts are anticipated. No further analysis will be provided in the EIR.

Noise: No significant impacts are anticipated. However, an analysis of noise impacts to the Project Site and vicinity as a result of construction and operation of the Proposed Project will be provided in the EIR.

Population/Housing: The Proposed Project would not induce substantial population growth and would displace neither existing housing nor people; therefore, no significant impacts are anticipated. No further analysis will be provided in the EIR.

Public Services: The Proposed Project would not result in a substantial increase of demand on public services, and therefore no significant impacts are anticipated. No further analysis will be provided in the EIR.

Recreation: The Proposed Project would not include construction of any recreational activities and would not increase the use of existing recreational facilities, including recreational facilities within 300 feet of the project boundary. Therefore, no significant impacts are anticipated, and no further analysis will be provided in the EIR.

Transportation/Traffic: No new roads, except internal farm avenues within the new vineyard and 14± acres of disturbance, would be built. An analysis of transportation/traffic issues as they pertain to construction and operation of the Proposed Project will be provided in the EIR.

Utilities/Service Systems: The Proposed Project would not result in any additional demands on utilities and service systems. An active electricity connection exists near the reservoir along Friesen Road. Groundwater would be pumped from an existing operation well and serve as the irrigation water source, and no additional wastewater would be generated. Therefore, no significant impacts are anticipated, and no further analysis will be provided in the EIR.

Mandatory Findings of Significance: A complete analysis of mandatory findings of significance, including cumulative impacts of the Proposed Project, will be provided in the EIR.

In order for your comments to be considered, please submit your written comments no later than **5:00 PM on July 24, 2014** to:

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P.O. Box 944246  
Sacramento, CA 94244-2460

Email: [sacramentopubliccomment@fire.ca.gov](mailto:sacramentopubliccomment@fire.ca.gov) (Please include "Davis Friesen Vineyard" in email subject line).

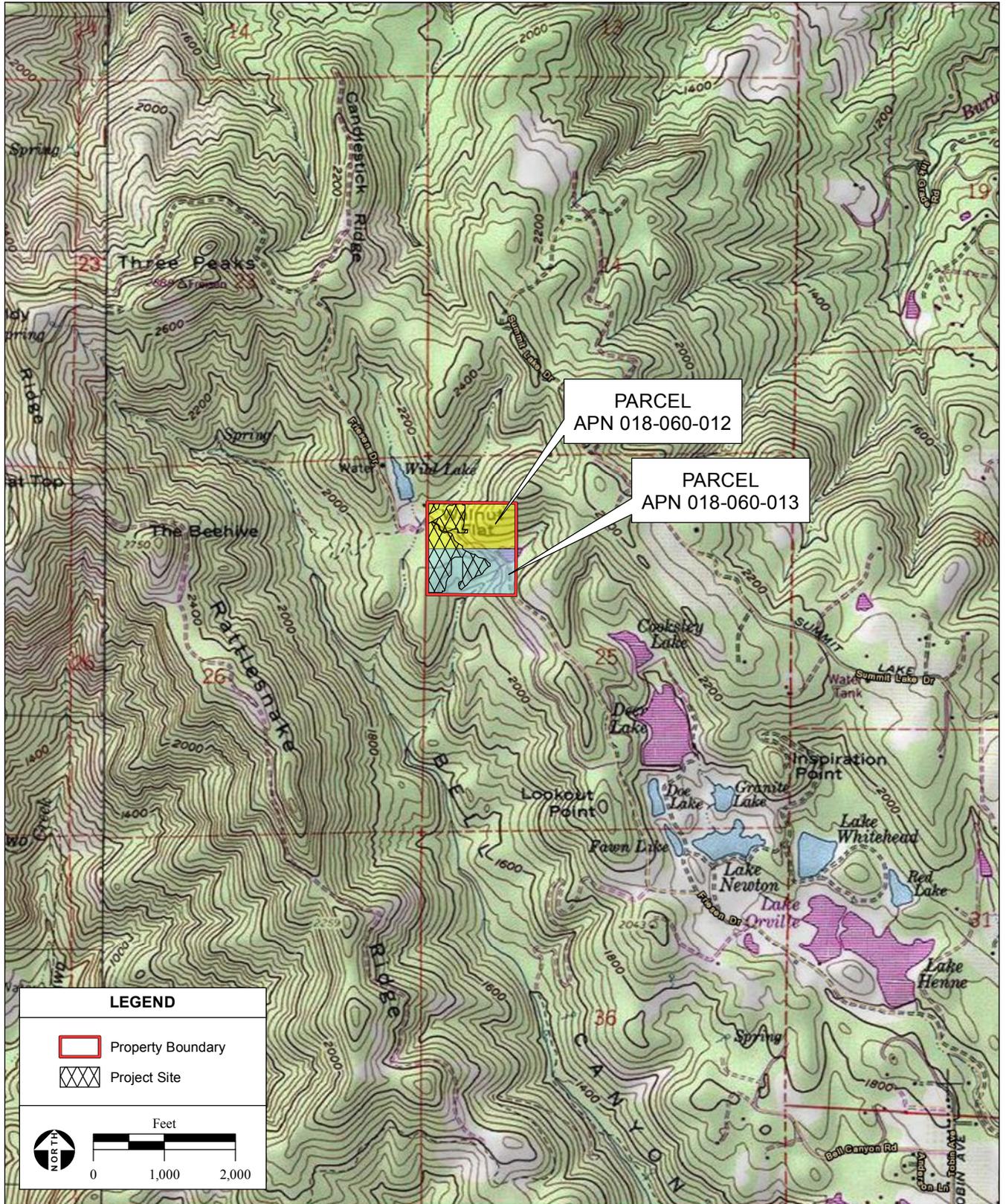
Comments by Fax will not be accepted.



SOURCE: ESRI Data, 2013; AES, 2013

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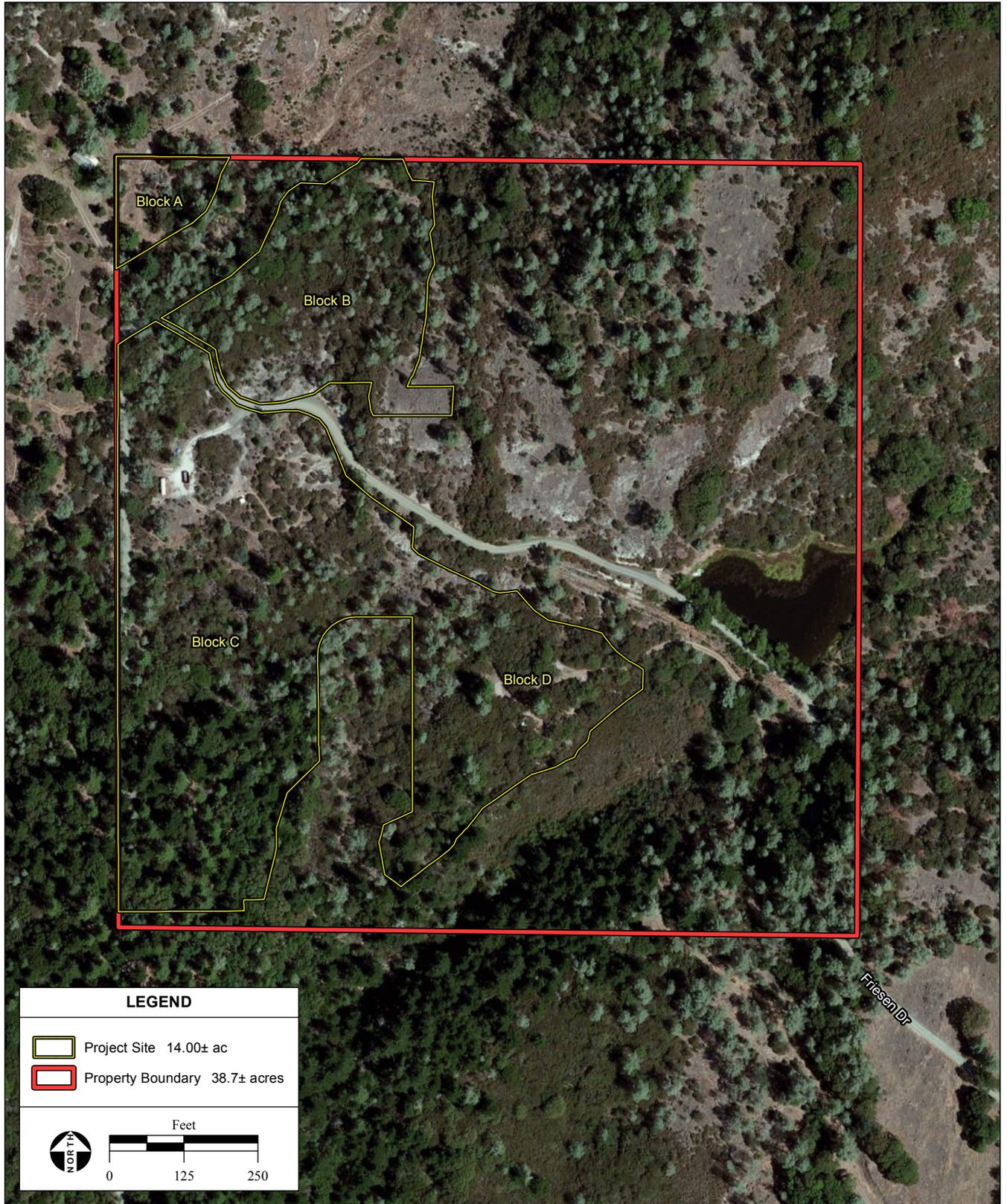
**Figure 1**  
Regional Location



SOURCE: "Saint Helena, CA" USGS 7.5 Minute Topographic Quadrangle, T9N, R6W, Section 25, Mt. Diablo Baseline & Meridian; ESRI Data, 2013; AES, 2013

Davis Family Estates Friesen Vineyard Project NOP / 213509 ■

**Figure 2**  
Site and Vicinity



SOURCE: Microsoft aerial photograph, 11/2/2010; ESRI Data, 2013; AES, 2013

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**Figure 3**  
Project Site Boundary