

Zephyr Point Fire Lookout Relocation Environmental Assessment

Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit

Douglas County, Nevada

Introduction

The Forest Service prepared this Environmental Assessment (EA) in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and other relevant Federal and State laws and regulations. This EA discloses the direct, indirect, and cumulative environmental impacts that would result from the proposed action and alternatives. Additional documentation, including more detailed analyses of project-area resources, may be found in the project record located at the Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit Supervisor's Office in South Lake Tahoe, California.

Purpose and Need for Action

The need arises from the change in the underlying and surrounding private property where the lookout is currently located and deterioration of the setting from that of a rural mountain to one of encroaching housing and material storage areas. The current location does not offer the public the opportunity to visit and view the Lookout.

Proposed Action

This project proposes to construct a foundation for the fire Lookout on top of White Hill in Douglas County, dismantle the fire Lookout, and reassemble it in the new location. The footprint of the fire Lookout at its current location above Zephyr Heights will be restored if an agreement can be reached with the private property owner. Less than 1/4 acre of land will be disturbed at the White Hill Location. No new roads or trails are proposed. Road upgrades, such as widening, grading, cutting back branches, tree removal, or removing rocks, may be necessary in a few locations on 14N32A to make the road passable to work vehicles. Boulder barriers will be installed to designate appropriate parking areas at the site, and signs will be installed to interpret the historical significance of the structure. The fire Lookout will continue to be an administrative facility and the LTBMU Land and Resource Management Plan would be amended to designate the top of White Hill as an administrative site.

Decision Framework

The Forest Supervisor is the Responsible Official for this project. Given the purpose and need, the Responsible Official reviews the proposed action in order to decide whether or not the fire Lookout will be relocated.

Public Involvement

The Forest Service first listed the Zephyr Point Fire Lookout Relocation project in the July 2013 through September 2013 Issue of the Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit (LTBMU) Schedule of

Proposed Actions (SOPA). The Forest distributes the SOPA to a mailing list of interested parties and it is available on the internet <http://www.fs.fed.us/sopa/forest-level.php?110519>

On July 9, 2013 the LTBMU sent a scoping package to a focused group of individuals, organizations, and agencies interested in this project. The letter requested comments on the Proposed Action before July 19, 2013. A single comment letter was received in response to the scoping. The comments in the letter provided information concerning the history of the Lookout. Other comments were outside the scope of this environmental analysis.

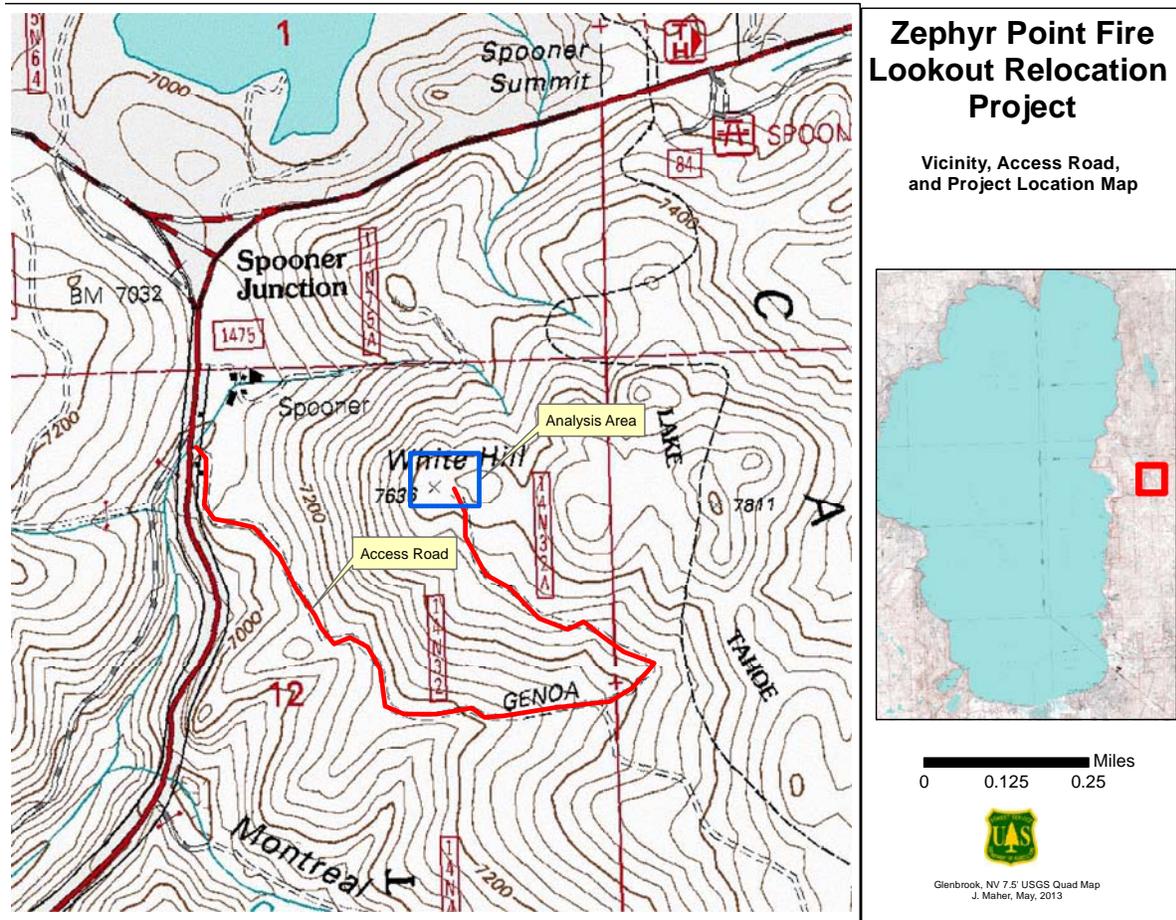


Figure 1 Zephyr Point Fire Lookout Relocation Vicinity Map

Alternatives

This section describes one alternative considered for the Zephyr Point Fire Lookout Relocation Project: Proposed Action. NEPA regulations (36 CFR 1502(c)) do not require consideration of a no action alternative in an EA (FSH 1909.15_14.2). The EA may document consideration of a no action alternative through the effects analysis by contrasting the impacts of the proposed action and any alternative(s) with the current condition and expected future condition if the proposed action were not implemented (36 CFR 220.7(b)(2)(ii)).

Proposed Action

Proposed Action includes the following activities:

1. Construct a foundation not to exceed 25 ft.X 25 ft.on the top of White Hill above Spooner Summit.
2. Relocate the Zephyr Point Fire Lookout from above Zephyr Heights to White Hill. The Lookout will be disassembled, transported by truck and reassembled on the new foundation.
3. Restore the area of the old foundation above Zephyr Heights if the private landowner is agreeable.

Ground disturbing activities would occur over the course of several days while the foundation was being excavated.

Project Design Elements

The following project design elements apply to this alternative.

Cultural

1. The Zephyr Point Fire Lookout will be dismantled and reassembled in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Restoration (36CFR68.3(c)).

Invasive Plants

1. Invasive plant infestations located within 75 feet of project activities at the new Lookout location on White Hill will be treated prior to project implementation in accordance with the design features of the LTBMU's 2010 Terrestrial Invasive Plant Species Treatment Project Environmental Assessment (TIPS EA). If treatment is not feasible, infestations will be "flagged and avoided" according to the species present, project constraints, and feasibility. For species-specific treatment requirements, see the project Invasive Plant Risk Assessment in the project record, hereby incorporated by reference. Any additional invasive plant infestations discovered prior to or during project implementation will also be treated. The Project Leader will notify the Forest Botanist prior to project initiation to coordinate the treatment of invasive plant infestations. GIS layers and maps of invasive plant infestations will be provided to the Project Leader.
2. All vehicles and equipment must be cleaned before moving into the project area, in order to ensure that they are free of invasive plants. Equipment will be considered clean when visual inspection does not reveal soil, seeds, plant material, or other debris that could contain or hold seeds of invasive plants.
3. Staging areas for equipment, materials, or crews will not be situated in areas infested by invasive plants. Areas containing invasive plants should be avoided during project activities. When working in areas known to harbor invasive plants, equipment shall then be cleaned at a washing station before moving to other non-infested lands. If this mitigation isn't possible, then coordination with the Forest Botanist will take place.
4. All gravel, fill, or other materials are required to be "weed-free". Use on-site sand, gravel, rock, or organic matter when possible. Otherwise, obtain "weed-free" materials from gravel pits and fill sources that have been surveyed and approved by the Nevada Department of Agriculture or by the Forest Botanist. A list of suitable material sources, based on annual inspections, will be provided to the project leader.

5. Use “weed-free” mulches, hay, and seed sources. Salvage topsoil from project area for use in onsite revegetation, unless contaminated with invasive plants. Do not use soil or materials from areas contaminated by cheatgrass.
6. Minimize the amount of ground and vegetation disturbance in construction areas. Reestablish vegetation where feasible on disturbed bare ground to minimize non-native invasive species establishment and infestation. Revegetation is especially important in staging areas.
7. Seed mixes must be approved by the Forest Botanist or their appointed representative. Utilize locally collected native seed sources when possible. Plant and seed material should be collected from or near the project area, from within the same watershed and at a similar elevation when possible. Persistent non-natives such as *Phleum pratense* (cultivated timothy), *Dactylis glomerata* (orchard grass), or *Lolium* spp. (ryegrass) will not be used.
8. The Forest Botanist should be notified after project completion so that the project area can be monitored for three years (as funding allows) to ensure additional invasive plants do not spread or become established in the areas affected by the project.

Sensitive Plants

1. If any sensitive plants are detected prior to or during implementation, the Forest Botanist will be contacted promptly so that potential impacts to sensitive plant species can be minimized or avoided.

Wildlife

1. Limited operating periods (LOPs) restrict the type, spatial extent, and timing of project activities to minimize disturbance to breeding pairs. If special status wildlife species are detected in the project vicinity, LOPs would be implemented as determined by the project biologist. LOPs are based on habitat suitability or the most current wildlife data from pre-project field surveys. LOPs are provided in Appendix A of the Forest Plan. (LTBMU LRMP S&G page IV-26, IV-27, Forest Order 19-86-99; SNFPA 2004 S&G 57, 62, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 83, 85, 88; TRPA Code chapter 78).
2. Any sightings of threatened, endangered, proposed, candidate, sensitive, management indicator, or special interest species would be reported to the project biologist. Nests and dens would be protected with flagging, fencing, or LOPs in accordance with management direction. Species identification, known locations, and protection procedures would be addressed with implementation crews during a pre-construction tailgate meeting.
3. Bear proof garbage dumpsters would be temporarily installed during implementation, or food related trash would be removed daily to avoid attracting wildlife to the project area.

Scenic Resources

1. Exposed concrete utilized for the building foundation will include a compatible hue to reduce visual contrast with the surrounding soils of White Hill.
2. When re-painted, the color of the Lookout should have a matte finish and include grey/green hues to reduce visual contrast with the surrounding landscape while preserving historic values.
3. Excavated soils will not be permanently piled at the project site.

Recreation

1. Maintain a distance between boulder barriers of at least 30 inches in at least one location to prevent barriers to access by persons with disabilities.
2. Provide interpretation of the historic Lookout from the parking area west of US Highway 50 near the intersection with NV Highway 28, or near the Spooner Fire Station.
3. Provide physical deterrence to public access to the Lookout structure itself, including the viewing deck.
4. Provide advanced public notification of the timing and duration of anticipated access restrictions related to project implementation activities.
5. Place snow stakes or other indicators near features that have the potential to be damaged by snow mobile access during winter conditions.

Environmental Consequences

This section summarizes the physical, biological, social and economic environments of the affected project area and the potential changes to those environments due to implementation of the alternatives. It also presents the scientific and analytical basis for comparison of alternatives.

The following resource specialist reports prepared for this project are incorporated by reference in this EA: Wildlife Internal Scoping Specialist Review, Sensitive Plant Biological Evaluation (BE), Invasive Plant Risk Assessment, . These reports are available for review as part of the project record.

Effects Relative to Significance Factors

This section describes the context and intensity factors which provide a basis for determining if an action would have significant effects to the human environment (40 CFR 1508.27). It provides brief, yet sufficient evidence and analysis for the responsible official to determine whether to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement or a Finding of No Significant Impact.

Context

This is a site-specific project that by itself does not have international, national, regional, or statewide importance. Project activities will occur on less than 0.25 acres of National Forest near White Hill above Spooner Summit. The project area is used occasionally by sight seers during the summer and as a snowmobiling overlook spot by an outfitter and guide in the winter. Use of the project area for recreation is expected to continue and may increase slightly as visitors are attracted to the Lookout.

Intensity

The following 10 elements of impact intensity address the potential significance of project effects.

1. Impacts that may be both beneficial and adverse.

The direct and indirect effects of the alternatives are addressed here. Cumulative effects are addressed below under intensity factor 7.

Aquatic Wildlife

There are no aquatic resources near the project area.

Cultural

Affected Environment

The Zephyr Point Fire Lookout was constructed by the US Forest Service in 1932 on private property under an easement to construct, maintain, access and use as a fire Lookout. The Lookout was last seasonally staffed through the mid 1980's when remote fire detection became less necessary in the Lake Tahoe Basin. Since then, the Lookout has been used on an ad hoc basis when specific fire detection requirements make it necessary.

The Lookout was determined eligible to the National Register of Historic Places in 1997. At that time the properties integrity factors were considered good with only the setting having been degraded. Recently, the property owner has turned the surrounding lot into a storage area for trailers and construction materials, has performed extensive landscaping around the structures, (rock terraces and vegetation planting). The remote setting and feel of the property have been degraded by these activities. A large water storage tank has also been constructed next to the Lookout, obscuring the view and further impacting the setting of the property. The public also no longer has access to the property for interpretive purposes.

Cultural Resource Metrics

The measure of effects to Historic Cultural Resources will be the degree to which the National Register of Historic Places integrity factors are adversely effected or restored.

Environmental Consequences

Moving the Lookout to the White Hill location will have an adverse effect to the property's integrity of location. However, the integrity of the setting and feel will be restored, more than offsetting the adverse effect. Informal discussions with the Nevada State Historic Preservation Office (NSHPO) representatives and site visits with their staff have indicated that the NSHPO would be sympathetic to a determination of "no adverse effect" from this project.

A review of the Forest's heritage resource files revealed that all of the Area of Potential Effect (APE) has been previously inventoried. A single resource is located at the White Hill location, the old White Hill Ski lift alignment and some foundation footings. The White Hill Ski area has been previously evaluated and determined to be not eligible to be listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

Scenic Resources

Affected Environment

The project area is located in the Carson Range of the Sierra Nevada. The scenic character of the area is dominated by Jeffery pine trees with understory vegetation, and views of Lake Tahoe and its surrounding topography. Background views reach to the crest of the Sierra Nevada to the west. The Lookout's current location includes residential development and its associated roads and overhead utilities. The proposed relocation site at White Hill overlooks US Highway 50 and its intersection with NV Highway 28 near Spooner Lake.

Valued scenic attributes in this area are the forested views, and distant views of Spooner Lake, Lake Tahoe, and the distant Sierra Nevada crest.

Scenic Resource Metrics

Scenic resources are managed under the Forest Plan in accordance with adopted Visual Quality Objectives (VQOs). A VQO of Retention has been assigned to the White Hill location. Under this VQO management activities should remain visually subordinate to the characteristic landscape of the area and should utilize line, form, color, massing, and texture that exist in the natural landscape. VQOs are assigned at the landscape scale and include consideration of views from various distances including foreground, middleground, and background views. The Forest Service also utilizes its Built Environment Image Guide (BEIG) when considering the visual effect of constructed features on National Forest System Lands. The project area's desired built environment character is described in the BEIG's Pacific Northwest design province. The intent of the BEIG is to ensure that constructed features are informed by and compliment the landscape in which they are located – the constructed features should not detract from their natural and cultural settings and should help to strengthen the visual identity of the area.

Environmental Consequences

Proposed Action

Under the Proposed Action, the Lookout would be removed from its current location and would be reconstructed at the White Hill location. A new concrete building foundation would be constructed at the White Hill site and the Lookout would be approximately thirty feet above the ground surface. Road improvements may be required to facilitate the building relocation, however these road improvements would be visually insignificant.

The relocated Lookout would be visible in distant middleground and background views from northern shores of Spooner Lake and the parking area west of US Highway 50 at Spooner Summit, as well as in transitory views from vehicles travelling south on NV Highway 28 and US Highway 50 near their intersection. The Lookout structure would represent a visual contrast with the surrounding landscape due to its light-colored paint, which is one of the Lookout's historic features. The Lookout structure would be visible from its position on top of White Hill but the impact of this location is reduced by the presence of topography behind the structure which forms a forested backdrop that reduces the potential for silhouetted views of the Lookout against the sky.

The project will result in direct effects that alter the scenic resource, however these effects are less than significant. The structure is consistent with the BEIG. Its historic qualities, including its light-colored paint, provide a cultural relevancy and make the structure visually appropriate within the landscape. A project design feature has been included to reduce the visual contrast of the paint while maintaining its historic qualities. The project is consistent with the VQO because it will not result in a fundamental change to the visual character of the surrounding landscape; the project will not result in a loss of valued scenic attributes.

The direct effects of implementing the proposed action when combined with the effects of past, present, and foreseeable future projects do not result in cumulative impacts. Projects considered for cumulative effects include forest health/fuels reduction activities, the construction of the Spooner Summit Fire Station, and on-going operation of telecommunication towers in the nearby area.

Lookout Use

In the recent past (2001-2012) Zephyr Point Fire Lookout was utilized by fire crews as a Lookout during and after thunder storms to detect wildland fires produced from the thunder storms. The ability of crews to utilize the Lookout has deteriorated in the last few years due to the encroachment of infrastructure and the accumulation of the private property owner's personal property. The personal property inhibited easy access to the Lookout. The personal property surrounding the Lookout make it more difficult to access the Lookout. In addition, the new homes degrade the site lines from the Lookout.

The new location will provide fire crews the ability to observe more of the Lake Tahoe Basin. The new location will provide better site lines to cover the north and west portions of the Lake Tahoe Basin. The other portions are covered by the Angora and Martis Peak Lookouts. These Lookouts are located in the South and North portions of the Basin respectively. Additionally the recommended Lookout site will not be affected by infrastructure or other man-made structures. The Lookout will require periodic maintenance which may include: painting, repairing/replacing decks, railing, windows, and doors. Painting will usually need to occur every 5 years and restoration of decks/siding/windows/doors will need to occur every 20-30 years. The maintenance may be completed by fire crews, volunteers or other Forest Service staff.

Costs for regular maintenance may range from \$500 to \$5,000 per year depending on degree of restoration needed and the group completing the work. These funds may originate from the Forest Fire Lookout Association or other partners.

Management Indicator Species

There would be no change to habitat for aquatic macroinvertebrates, black-backed woodpeckers (*Picoides arcticus*), yellow warblers (*Dendroica petechial*), Pacific tree frogs (*Pseudacris regilla*), mountain quail (*Oreortyx pictus*), sooty grouse (*Dendragapus fuliginosus*), mule deer (*Odocoileus hemionus*), fox sparrows (*Passerella iliaca*), California spotted owls (*Strix occidentalis occidentalis*), American martens (*Martes americana*), northern flying squirrels (*Glaucomys sabrinus*) or hairy woodpeckers (*Picoides villosus*) from project implementation; therefore, no further documentation is required.

Migratory Birds

No effects to migratory birds are expected because the Proposed Action is limited in scope and duration. There would be no alteration of habitat for migratory species, only minor noise disturbance to individuals in the project area; therefore, impacts to migratory avian species are expected to be temporary and negligible.

Invasive Plants

Affected Environment

Cheatgrass occurs in small scattered patches around the top of White Hill and in a few small patches along Forest Roads 14N32 and 14N32A, which access the project area. In addition, there are five known active infestations along Forest Road 14N32.

Species	Infestation ID	Infestation size (# Plants)	Last survey date	Notes
Bull thistle	196	0	9/10/2012	Along access road 14N322.
Bull thistle	197	225	9/11/2012	Along access road 14N322.
Bull thistle	285	72	9/11/2012	Along access road 14N322.
Bull thistle	286A	0	7/23/2012	Along access road 14N322.
Canada thistle	286B	0	7/8/2013	Along access road 14N322.

The habitat of the project area is chaparral and dry coniferous forest. Understory cover consists of primarily native shrub and forb species, with a moderate litter layer of coniferous duff. The cover of native vegetation and woody debris offers some protection from invasion. The project area includes dirt roads open to motorized vehicle use. Current visitation to the site is minimal and likely primarily consists of brief visits by recreationists on motorized recreation vehicles (4WD vehicles, motorcycles, etc.). Vehicles traveling on these roads could serve as seed sources and vectors for invasive plant spread. The site is at a moderate risk of invasion due to disturbance from the dirt road that loops through the site.

Environmental Consequences

The project will involve construction of a new foundation for the fire Lookout at the top of White Hill, approximately 25 feet by 25 feet in size. This will necessitate some ground disturbance to prepare a foundation, but will not substantially alter habitat as approximately half of the top of White Hill is already covered by roads, and the footprint of the Lookout is < 0.25 acre.

There will be vehicles and equipment staged at the top of White Hill during project implementation, but in existing disturbed areas (road, pullout, parking area). Materials and equipment will be transported to White Hill by vehicles on Forest Roads 14N32 and 14N32A. Road upgrades, such as widening, grading, cutting back branches, tree removal, or removing rocks, may be necessary in a few locations on 14N32A to make the road passable to work vehicles. Road upgrades are expected to be minor, as they would only slightly increase the width of the road in a couple locations and would not change the overall condition of the road. However, when ground disturbance occurs or vehicles and mechanical equipment are used, there is an increased risk of weed establishment and spread.

One of the purposes of the project is to provide the public the opportunity to visit and view the Lookout. No extensive interpretation or promotion of the site is planned as part of this project, and there will not be any signage of the site posted aside from a basic informational sign at the historical structure. At its new location on White Hill, the Lookout will be visible from US Highway 50 near Spooner Summit, which could encourage more public visitation to the site. Therefore, public visitation to the site is likely to increase slightly in the long-term, which will slightly increase the risk of noxious weed spread, as visitors or their vehicles can serve as vectors to spread invasive plants.

Project Design Elements (Invasive Plants 1-8) will be implemented to reduce the risk of invasive plant establishment and spread associated with proposed activities.

Determination

The anticipated invasive plant response to the Zephyr Fire Lookout Relocation Project is **LOW-MODERATE**, based on: a) the project will require some ground disturbance, involves the use of vehicles or mechanized equipment, and will result in a small but long-term increase in use of the site; and b) cheatgrass is present at the site, and two active bull thistle infestations occur along the route used to access the site; these infestations represent a spread risk.

For a complete list of invasive plant species considered, please see the project Invasive Plant Risk Assessment in the project record, hereby incorporated by reference.

Sensitive Plants

Affected Environment

There are no known occurrences of sensitive plants within the project area. There is suitable habitat for goldencarpet buckwheat (*Eriogonum luteolum* var. *saltuarium*)- sandy granite slopes in montane conifer woodlands- throughout the 0.25 acre project area. No suitable habitat was found for any other sensitive plant species.

Environmental Consequences

There will be no direct effects to sensitive plants, because there are no known occurrences within the project area. Indirect effects to sensitive plant habitat are not anticipated. Suitable habitat was found for goldencarpet buckwheat as stated above. The proposed activities- a small area of ground disturbance in previously-disturbed areas at the top of White Hill and a few minor improvements to Forest Road 14N32A- will not substantially reduce or degrade the quality of the sandy granitic slope habitat for goldencarpet buckwheat. There is a risk that project-related activities will degrade sensitive plant habitat, if these activities result in the introduction or spread of invasive plants. However, if the project design elements (Invasive Plants 1-8) are implemented fully, the anticipated invasive plant response to the project will be reduced from low-moderate to low. Due to the lack of direct and indirect effects of the proposed action, the project will not contribute to cumulative effects on any sensitive plants.

Determination

The proposed action *will not affect any federally threatened, endangered, or proposed plant species*; there are no federally threatened, endangered, or proposed plant species known to occur or with known suitable habitat within LTBMU.

The proposed action *may affect individuals but is not likely to result in a trend toward federal listing or a loss of viability*, based on the lack of plant occurrences known within the project area, and the negligible impact to suitable habitat for goldencarpent buckwheat.

Project Design Elements are included in the project (Sensitive Plants 1). For a complete list of sensitive plant species considered, please see the project Biological Evaluation in the project record, hereby incorporated by reference.

Terrestrial Wildlife

Species were considered in detail in the effects analysis if suitable habitat exists within the elevation and geographic range of the project area. Occurrence records were also considered.

Although suitable habitat for the bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*), great gray owl (*Strix nebulosa*), and willow flycatcher (*Empidonax trailii*) exists within the elevation and geographic range of the project area, field visits indicate that the project area does not have known occurrences or potential habitat for these species; therefore, Alternative 1 (Proposed Action) would not affect the aforementioned species or their habitat.

Noise disturbance during project activities could affect the following Region 5 Forest Service sensitive species and their habitat: northern goshawk (*Accipiter gentilis*), California spotted owl, Pacific fisher (*Martes pennanti*), American marten, pallid bat (*Antrozous pallidus*), Townsend's big-eared bat (*Corynorhinus townsendii*), and western red bat (*Lasiurus blossevillii*). Noise disturbance would be of short duration (about 3 days) and limited scope. It could temporarily cause wildlife to avoid the project area. Project implementation is not expected to affect individual fitness of any of the aforementioned species. No forested habitat alteration would occur as a result of Alternative 1 (Proposed Action); therefore, no indirect effects are expected.

Determinations

The Proposed Action may affect individuals, but is not likely to result in a trend toward Federal listing or loss of viability for the northern goshawk, California spotted owl, American marten, pallid, Townsend's big-eared, or western red bats in the project area.

The Proposed Action may affect individuals, but is not likely to contribute to the need for Federal listing or result in loss of viability for the Pacific fisher in the planning area.

Recreation

Proposed Action

The project would be consistent with the area's Roaded Natural ROS (Recreation Opportunity Spectrum) classification. The structure itself would remain closed to public entry, however public access and viewing of the structure would be improved compared to existing conditions. Boulder barriers would keep public vehicles from parking immediately adjacent to the structure and encroaching into the surrounding undisturbed forest. Pedestrian access to the structure would be via a native surface travel route which could include loose surface material and uneven surfaces. Interpretation signs near the vehicle barriers would provide the public, including those with disabilities, an opportunity to experience views of the structure and learn about its history. Public use is anticipated to be of limited duration and restroom facilities are not planned.

During project implementation, areas immediately affected by construction activities would be closed to public access in order to ensure public safety. These closures would be limited in their duration and have very little effect.

The relocated Lookout structure provides an opportunity for snowmobile operators to offer views of the historic structure and interpretation of its historical significance to winter guests.

2. The degree to which the proposed action affects public health or safety.

The Proposed Action will improve public health and safety by providing a fire detection Lookout with appropriate access and view scape for ad hoc fire detection.

3. Unique characteristics of the geographic area such as proximity to historic or cultural resources, park lands, prime farmlands, wetlands, wild and scenic rivers, or ecologically critical areas.

The Proposed Action does not contain nor would it adversely affect any parklands, prime farmlands, wild and scenic rivers, ecologically critical areas, or wetlands.

4. The degree to which the effects on the quality of the human environment are likely to be highly controversial.

The Proposed Action is consistent with all laws, regulations and policy including the Forest Plan as amended. In addition, no issues were raised during scoping that indicated that the degree to which this project may affect the human environment is likely to be highly controversial.

5. The degree to which the possible effects on the human environment are highly uncertain or involve unique or unknown risks.

No unique or unknown risks are anticipated. Effects of the relocation are certain.

6. The degree to which the action may establish a precedent for future actions with significant effects or represents a decision in principle about a future consideration.

The Proposed Action would not establish a precedent for any future actions with significant effects. This decision only applies to the project area and does not represent a decision in principle about a future consideration. Any future action not analyzed in this EA would be analyzed separately and on its own merits at the time it is proposed in the future.

7. Whether the action is related to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant impacts.

No other actions that would cumulatively impact the area have been identified.

8. The degree to which the action may adversely affect districts, sites, highways, structures, or objects listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places or may cause loss or destruction of significant scientific, cultural, or historical resources.

The Nevada State Historic Preservation Office and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation will be consulted on the proposed action and consultation will likely lead to a Memorandum of Agreement. It is anticipated that consultation will lead to a determination of "no adverse effect" The Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California were informed of the proposal via scoping letter. No cultural issues, concerns or comments were brought forth.

There are no scientific research sites that may be affected by the proposed actions, nor is there any indication that this project would affect any scientific resource.

9. The degree to which the action may adversely affect an endangered or threatened species or its habitat that has been determined to be critical under the Endangered Species Act of 1973.

On December 4, 2012, the USDI Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) website (<http://sacramento.fws.gov>) was accessed to obtain a list of threatened and endangered species and species proposed for listing that may occur in or be affected by projects in the Zephyr Point Fire Lookout Relocation project area. The list is dated December 4, 2012, and can be found in the project record (Document Number 121204113117). The quad species list includes the Pacific fisher, a candidate species. This list fulfills the requirements to provide a current species list pursuant to the Endangered Species Act.

Determination

The Proposed Action may affect individuals, but is not likely to contribute to the need for Federal listing or result in loss of viability for the Pacific fisher in the planning area.

10. Whether the action threatens a violation of Federal, State, or local law or requirements imposed for the protection of the environment.

Alternative 1 (Proposed Action) was developed in accordance with and does not threaten violation of any Federal, State, or local laws or requirements imposed for the protection of the environment (i.e., National Forest Management Act, Endangered Species Act, National Historic Preservation Act, Federal Clean Water Act, Executive Order 11988 for Floodplain Management, or the Clean Air Act). The Forest Service has obtained concurrence with USFWS, and SHPO, and would obtain required permits from the appropriate county, state, and federal regulatory agencies prior to implementation.

Consultation and Coordination

The Forest Service consulted the following individuals, Federal, State, and local agencies, tribes and non-Forest Service persons during the development of this environmental assessment:

ID Team Members

John Maher	Team Leader
Mike LeFevre	NEPA Advisor
Tom Fuller	Archaeologist
Blake Engelhardt	Botanist, Noxious Weeds
Katie Kuchenbecker	Engineer
Daniel Cressey	Landscape Architect
Cheva Heck	Public Affairs
Gina Thompson	Recreation
Stan Kot	Wildlife Biologist
John Wahsington	Fire Suppression

Federal, State, and Local Agencies

United States Department of the Interior Fish and Wildlife Service, Tahoe Regional Planning Agency, Douglas County Board of Supervisors, Nevada State Historic Preservation Office, Advisory Council on Historic Preservation

Tribes

Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California

Others

Tahoe Heritage Foundation, Lake Tahoe Historical Society, Cleve Canepa