

Hawaiian Hoary Bat

Thermal IR and Acoustic Monitoring Project, McCarthy Flats Mohiaka Gulch, for powerline maintenance tree clearing 24 August 2017

Survey Goals

Establish whether or not Hawaiian Hoary bats (*Lasiurus cinereus semotus*) are roosting with pups in Ironwood and Eucalyptus scheduled for removal along a powerline corridor in lower Mohiaka Gulch near McCarthy Flats. If bats present, discuss with regulatory agency possible mitigation measures to continue project or postpone removal of trees until pupping season is completed.

Survey

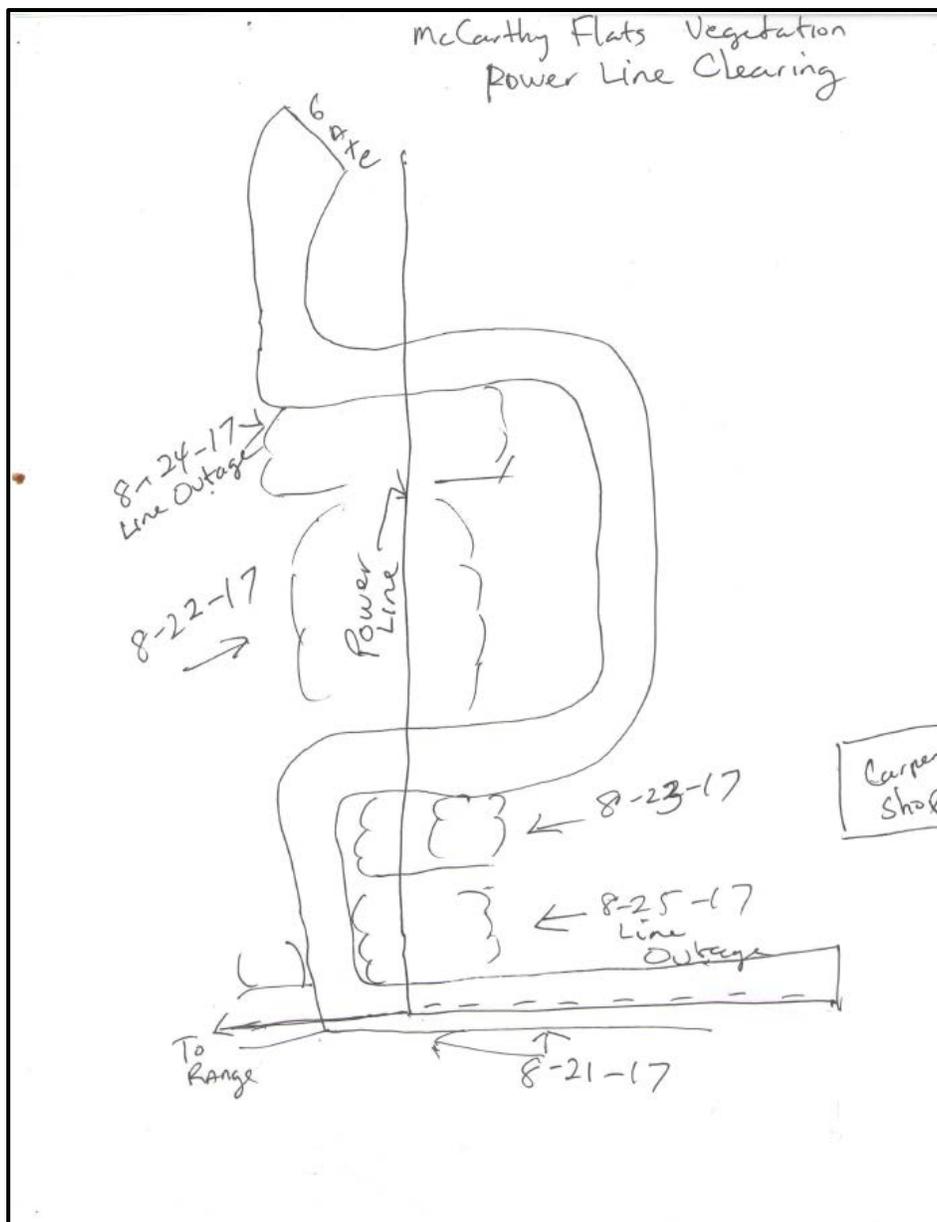


Figure 1. Sketch map provided by tree trimming company. The section slated for 8.24.17 contains trees > 15 feet tall.

Methods

Visual and acoustic surveys for bats were conducted on 24 August 2017, the day of the scheduled tree trimming. A Fluke Ti400 thermal imager was employed to scan the trees for any roosting bats to confirm no presence. OANRP also employed the hand held Wildlife Acoustics Echo Meter Touch attached to an iPad as a way to scan the area for any possible bats returning to a roost within close proximity. This tool has the ability to listen to bats in real time, GPS tracks and tags all recordings with location information and has full color spectrograms. Scanning commenced from 05:15-06:30 from the ground from different angles and locations.

Results and Discussion

Unfortunately, the section scheduled for clearing on August 24th was largely cut prior to the date communicated by the contractor lead. There were ~5 trees touching the powerlines that were not yet cut which were surveyed. Clear communication with contractors is essential in complying with the Garrison Policy. Visual thermal IR and acoustic surveys detected no bats in the trees remaining. Multiple species of birds were observed with the thermal IR, with visual confirmation, in and around the area. It was determined that there would be No Effect to bats if the trees were removed and the corridor cleared.



Figure 2. Section scheduled for clearing on 8.24.17 that was largely completed before the survey.

Recommendations

Work with DPW and contractors to ensure follow through on plans for clearing. It is wasted effort on the part of the government when plans are not followed or communication fails.