

Notice of Exemption

To: Office of Planning and Research
P.O. Box 3044, Room 212
Sacramento, CA 95812-3044

From: Sierra Nevada Conservancy
11521 Blocker Drive, Suite 205
Auburn, CA 95603

County Clerk
County of: Sierra
100 Courthouse Square
Downieville, CA 95936

Project Title: Sierra Brooks - Smithneck WUI Fuels Reduction Project - SNC 1314

Project Location – Specific: T21N, R15,16E S 2-36

Project Location - City: Loyalton, CA

Project Location - County: Sierra

Description of Nature, Purpose and Beneficiaries of Project:

The Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC) would provide funding to the Sierra Valley Resource Conservation District for forest health restoration and fuel reduction activities on lands within California Department of Fish and Wildlife's (CDFW) Smithneck Creek Wildlife Area and Tahoe National Forest. This project would complete fuel reduction and thinning treatments on at least 723 acres of heavily overstocked forests and dense brush with degraded forest health conditions. These activities would also provide for future opportunities for applications of prescribed understory burning. The purpose of the project is to reduce hazardous fuels in the wildland-urban interface (WUI), reduce the risk of wildfire, and improve forest health and fire resiliency.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: Sierra Nevada Conservancy

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: Sierra Valley Resource Conservation District

Exempt Status:

Categorical Exemption. CEQA Guidelines Section 15304

Statutory Exemptions. State code number: Public Resources Code Section 4799.05(d)(1)

Reasons why project is exempt:

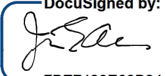
The portion of the Project on CDFW's Wildlife Area is categorically exempt from the provisions of CEQA pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15304, Class 4, which consists of minor public or private alterations in the condition of land, water, and/or vegetation which do not involve removal of mature, scenic trees except for forestry and agricultural purposes. The minor land alterations proposed by the project consist of forestry treatments to reduce hazardous fuels and improve forest health. The project has been reviewed and would not result in significant adverse effects. Additionally, CEQA does not apply to prescribed fire, thinning, or fuel reduction projects undertaken on federal lands to reduce the risk of high-severity wildfire that have been reviewed under the NEPA if the primary role of a state or local agency is providing funding or staffing for those projects. SNC would provide funding for fuel reduction treatments on federal lands within the Tahoe National Forest. The proposed activities on federal lands were reviewed in their entirety pursuant to NEPA in the Record of Decision for the Cottonwood Fire Vegetation Management Project Environmental Impact Statement, signed in 2005 with an SIR completed in 2017 by the U.S. Forest Service.

Lead Agency

Contact Person: Shannon Ciotti Area Code/Telephone/Extension: (530) 906-7345

If filed by applicant:

1. Attach certified document of exemption finding.
2. Has a Notice of Exemption been filed by the public agency approving the project: Yes No

DocuSigned by:

 Signature: _____ Date: 7/15/2021 Title: Deputy Executive Officer

Signed by Lead Agency: Yes

Signed by Applicant: No

Authority cited: Sections 21083 and 21110, Public Resources Code. Date received for filing at OPR: _____
Reference: Sections 21108, 21152, and 21152.1, Public Resources Code.