

Notice of Exemption

Appendix E

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

Project Title: Social and Ecological Resilience Across the Landscape Phase 1 – SNC 1374

Project Location – Specific: 38°10'46.14"N 120° 3'37.62"W

Project Location - City: Cold Springs, CA; Pinecrest, CA

Project Location - County: Tuolumne

Description of Nature, Purpose, and Beneficiaries of Project:

The Social and Ecological Resilience Across the Landscape (SERAL) project will be implemented in three phases; this project constitutes the first of those three. Under this phase, fuel management features will be constructed to provide a strategic defense tool to control fire that may ignite within the SERAL footprint. Fuel management features include strategically located fuel breaks, prepared roadsides, and defensible space to reduce the likelihood of fire moving from the ground into overhead tree canopy; provide increased access, safety zones, and efficient movement of fire management resources within the treatment area; provide improved opportunity for fire retardant to penetrate the forest canopy; and establish realistic sized management units for future phases of forest health work. The project includes mechanical fuel reduction treatments needed to construct and maintain a portion of the proposed fuelbreak network located within the highest priority potential wildland fire operational delineations (PODs). The mechanical fuel reduction treatments are limited to mastication, biomass removal, machine piling for burning, or hand thinning located in the areas of the fuelbreak network within or along the borders of priority PODs. SERAL forest health program goals include to restore forest health and disaster resilience to California's forests, protect upper watersheds where California's water supply originates, promote long-term storage of carbon in forest trees and soils and minimize the loss of forest carbon from unnaturally large high severity wildfires.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: Sierra Nevada Conservancy

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: County of Tuolumne

Exempt Status:

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

Reasons why project is exempt:

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 NEPA if the primary role of a state or local agency is providing funding or staffing for those projects. The Sierra Nevada Conservancy would provide funding to conduct fuel reduction activities on a minimum of 1,300 acres of the 6,153-acre project area on federal lands within the Stanislaus National Forest. The actions to be undertaken by this project were reviewed in their entirety pursuant to NEPA through an Environmental Impact Statement. The Record of Decision for the project was signed by the Stanislaus National Forest on March 28th, 2022.

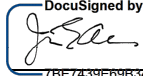
Lead Agency

Contact Person: Shannon Ciotti

Area Code/Telephone/Extension: 530-906-7345

If filed by applicant: **N/A**

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: 6/3/2022 Title: Chief Deputy Executive Officer
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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.