

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: Cohasset Forest Resilience Project – SNC 1378

Project Location – Specific: Cohasset and Musty Buck Ridges in the northeastern part of Butte County within the Mud Creek, Butte Creek, and Rock Creek watersheds.

Project Location - City: 17 miles from Chico, CA. Nearby communities include Campbellville, Richardson Springs, and Forest Ranch.

Project Location - County: Butte County

Description of Nature, Purpose and Beneficiaries of Project:

The Sierra Nevada Conservancy will provide funding to implement forest resilience thinning for watershed health and community safety on approximately 741 acres of fuels within the community of Cohasset and adjacent Musty Buck Ridge. The project will implement forest resilience thinning on overstocked stands to achieve 70 percent canopy cover. Mastication, hand cutting, and chipping would be the primary vegetation treatment and biomass disposal methods that would be used to implement the project. Woody biomass that is hand cut and chipped would be returned to the forest floor to benefit carbon sequestration and soil productivity. Hand cutting and pile burning would be utilized on approximately 32 acres where mastication and chipping would not be feasible. Grazing (i.e., prescribed herbivory) and prescribed fire (i.e., broadcast burning) would be used as a maintenance tool in limited and strategic locations where initial forest thinning work has already been completed. Grazing would occur on approximately 16 acres and broadcast burning would be used on approximately 28 acres of the project area. Project implementation is anticipated to begin in January 2023 and be complete by December 2025.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: Sierra Nevada Conservancy

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: Butte County Fire Safe Council

Exempt Status:

Categorical Exemption. State CEQA Guidelines Section 15304 (Class 4)

Reasons why project is exempt:

The Cohasset Forest Resilience Project is categorically exempt from the provisions of CEQA pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15304 (Class 4). Class 4 is applicable to projects 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 alterations to vegetation proposed by the project involve forest resilience thinning through mastication, hand cutting, grazing, and prescribed broadcast burning. Although tree removal would occur, it would be for forestry purposes to reduce wildfire risk. In addition, tree removal would be limited to trees less than 10 inches diameter-at-breast height and none of the exceptions to the Class 4 categorical exemption apply to the project.

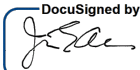
Lead Agency

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

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.