

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

To: Shasta County Clerk/Registrar
Office
1643 Market Street
Redding, CA 96001

Project Title: Improving Landscape and Watershed Health through Restoring Fire Regimes in Lassen Volcanic National Park: Phase Three (SNC1551)

Project Location - Specific: Two sites in the northwest section of Lassen Volcanic National Park, near the intersection of highways 44 and 89. One site on the southeast side of Manzanita Lake, the other along Hwy 89 around Lost Creek Campground. Site centers at approximately 40.52357, -121.55531 and 40.56207, -121.51769.

Project Location - City: 14 mi SW of Old Station; 8 mi E of Viola.

Project Location - County: Shasta

Description of Nature, Purpose, and Beneficiaries of Project:

The Sierra Nevada Conservancy would provide funding for the Sierra Institute for Community and Environment to partner with Lassen Volcanic National Park (LVNP) to complete approximately 600 acres of forest thinning and construct about five miles of fire line in wilderness lands to enable reintroduction of prescribed fire to approximately 1,800 acres. All work will be done by hand, with a wilderness sawyer crew equipped with traditional non-mechanized tools. The Project is in the wilderness headwaters of Battle Creek and the Pit River and is the next phase in a strategic landscape-scale fuels management strategy to restore low- to moderate-severity fire regimes throughout LVNP. Preparation of these fire management units in the Project area, and the following introduction of fire, will provide park managers with a critical buffer around Manzanita Lake and park infrastructure in one of the highest visitor use areas, and increase the resilience of California Spotted Owl habitat. The project will also reduce the risk of wildfire spreading from the wilderness to adjacent rural communities of Shasta County, including Shingletown, Old Station, and others along the Highway 44 corridor.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: Sierra Nevada Conservancy

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: Sierra Institute for Community and Environment

Exempt Status:

Statutory Exemption: Public Resources Code Section 4799.05, subd. (d)(1)

Reasons why project is exempt:

CEQA does not apply to prescribed fire, reforestation, habitat restoration, thinning, or fuel-reduction projects, or to related activities included in the project description, undertaken, in whole or in part, on federal lands to reduce the risk of high-severity wildfire that have been reviewed under the federal National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 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 federal lands in LVNP to enable the reintroduction of prescribed fire to protect infrastructure, water sources, and habitat from severe wildfire. The proposed activities were reviewed in their entirety under NEPA by LVNP. The Project is part of the May 2022 Lassen Volcanic National Park Wildland Fire Management Plan, accompanied by the Fire Management Plan – Environmental Assessment. In 2022, LVNP conducted a NEPA review and confirmed that the current NEPA was adequate for the Project’s preparation for future prescribed fire.

Lead Agency

Contact Person: Mary Akens

Area Code/Telephone/Extension: 530-450-5177

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

Signature:  Date: 3/2/2023 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.