

## 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:** Mariposa County Clerk  
4982 10th Street  
Mariposa, CA 95338

**Project Title:** Sarah Priest Fuels Reduction Project (SNC #1544)

**Project Location – Specific:** Sarah Priest Tribal Allotment, No. 50H SAC118, near the intersection of Colorado Road and Hwy 140, two miles north of the community of Midpines, Mariposa County.

**Project Location - City:** Midpines

**Project Location - County:** Mariposa

### **Description of Nature, Purpose, and Beneficiaries of Project:**

The Sierra Nevada Conservancy would provide funding for the American Indian Council of Mariposa County to partner with the US Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) to treat 160 acres of forestland and chaparral to reduce fire risk and intensity across the Sarah Priest Tribal Allotment. The Allotment is owned and managed by the BIA. Treatments will consist of hand thinning, pruning, brushing, mechanical mastication, and dead/dying and hazard-tree felling. Hand thinning will occur throughout most of the project boundary and will significantly reduce ladder fuels and open the overstory canopy to approximately 50%. Most dead and dying trees will be felled, with some snags remaining for wildlife habitat. All hazard trees hanging over roadways or homes will be removed by professional arborists, where necessary to ensure public safety. Trees will be bucked and left for residents to use for firewood. All slash will be chipped and spread or piled and burned. This project will help protect the residents of the Sarah Priest Allotment from catastrophic wildfires and will improve firefighter access and resident evacuation.

**Name of Public Agency Approving Project:** Sierra Nevada Conservancy

### **Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project:**

American Indian Council of Mariposa County  
(in partnership with the US Bureau of Indian Affairs)  
Contact: Tara Fouch-Moore, Project Manager. PO Box 186, Mariposa, CA 95338

### **Exempt Status:**

**Statutory Exemption:** Public Resources Code Section 4799.05(d)

### **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,

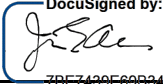
undertaken, in whole or in part, on federal lands to reduce the risk of high-severity wildfire that have been reviewed under the federal National Environmental Policy Act if the primary role of a state or local agency is providing funding or staffing for those projects. The Sierra Nevada Conservancy would provide funding to conduct fuel reduction within the Sarah Priest Tribal Allotment, which is owned and managed by the BIA. The proposed activities were reviewed in their entirety under NEPA by the BIA in the Categorical Exclusion TR-4400-P5-J51 532T SARA Priest Allotment HRC Free Use Cutting Permit, which was approved on April 18, 2023.

**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: 6/1/2023 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.