

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: Sierra County Clerk
100 Courthouse Sq Rm 11
Downieville, California 95936

Project Title: Antelope Creek WUI Forest Health and Fuels Reduction Project (Tahoe National Forest) (SNC #1564)

Project Location – Specific:

The project is adjacent to the 1994 Cottonwood Fire burn scar and within the Tahoe National Forest (TNF), northeast of Sierraville and southwest of Loyalton within the Feather River Watershed. Work will focus predominantly along Antelope Valley Road.

Project Location – City: Southwest of Loyalton

Project Location - County: Sierra

Description of Nature, Purpose, and Beneficiaries of Project:

The Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC) will provide funding to the Sierra Valley Fire Safe and Watershed Council to implement fuel treatments on 45 acres of Tahoe National Forest (TNF) land to create a fuelbreak along Antelope Valley Road west of Sierra Brooks. The area is adjacent to the 1994 Cottonwood Fire footprint. SNC funding will be used to complete treatments that will restore heterogeneous lower-density forest conditions with reduced surface fuel loads that reduce the risk of mortality from drought, insects, disease and fire; result in post-treatment conditions that will allow for the safe application of prescribed fire; and provide a critical fuelbreak and connectivity of existing and planned fuelbreaks adjacent to the communities of Sierra Brooks, Loyalton, and Sierraville to allow for future fire-management opportunities. Mastication will be the primary method of treatment across the project area with smaller areas of lop and scatter and hand removal in sensitive riparian or wet areas. The project activities on these 45 acres of the TNF would be funded by the same grant that would fund implementation of related fuel-treatment activities on 130 acres on the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) Antelope Valley State Wildlife Area. The CDFW is Lead Agency under CEQA for its project, (SCH 2008082031) with an IS/ND filed in August 2008 and a NOD in November 2008.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: Sierra Nevada Conservancy

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: Sierra Valley Fire Safe and Watershed Council
Contact – Danielle Bradford, PO Box 1411, Quincy, CA

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 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 SNC would provide funding to reduce forest fuels and conduct thinning to create a fuelbreak along Antelope Valley Road on federal land within the TNF. The proposed activities were reviewed in their entirety pursuant to NEPA in the Brumby Project Environmental Assessment (2008) and as part of the Cottonwood Fire Restoration EIS (Supplemental Information Report dated April 2017).

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:  _____
 Title: Chief Deputy Executive Officer

Date: 6/1/2023

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.