

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: Upper Middle Yuba Watershed Forest Restoration: NEPA Planning (SNC 1688)

Project Location – Specific: Approximately 2,000-acre planning project located adjacent to Jackson Meadows and Milton reservoirs on the Sierraville Ranger District, Tahoe National Forest, in Nevada and Sierra counties

Project Location - City: Approximately four miles southeast of Sierra City

Project Location - County: Nevada and Sierra

Description of Nature, Purpose, and Beneficiaries of Project: The Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC) would provide funding to the Nevada Irrigation District (NID), in partnership with the Tahoe National Forest (TNF), for project #1688 Upper Middle Yuba Watershed Forest Restoration: NEPA Planning. It is a planning effort to develop forest restoration and fuels reduction treatment plans and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) analysis on at least 2,000 acres of TNF lands within the headwaters of the Middle Yuba River watershed. The project is adjacent to Jackson Meadows and Milton reservoirs on the Sierraville Ranger District, TNF, in Nevada and Sierra counties. The project will complete the necessary environmental compliance and forestry/fuels planning to define and prepare at least 2,000 acres for potential future treatment to return the Middle Yuba River headwaters region to a healthier state. The project will conduct surveys, reporting, and consultation associated with biological, hydrological, and archaeological resources; finalize forest restoration and fuels reduction treatment plans; and prepare draft NEPA documents. Project activities include only the planning, resource surveys, environmental analysis, and coordination to develop NEPA environmental documents for potential future forest-treatment projects. There will be no ground or resource disturbance as part of this planning project. None of the planning or analysis activities to be conducted under this proposed project will have a legally binding effect on future activities, or for a possible future project, which an agency has already approved, adopted, or funded.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: Sierra Nevada Conservancy

Project Applicant / Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project:

Nevada Irrigation District
Neysa King, Environmental Resources Administrator
1036 W Main Street, Grass Valley, CA 95945
(530) 271-6733

Exempt Status:

Statutory Exemption: Pub. Resources Code, Section 21150; CEQA Guidelines, Section 15262, Feasibility and Planning Studies

Categorical Exemption: CEQA Guidelines, Section 15306, Information Collection

Reasons why project is exempt:

The planning activities under this project are resource surveys, data analysis, and coordination and outreach towards the development of a forest-treatment plan and environmental compliance documents considering potential future forest-management projects, which have not yet been approved, adopted, or funded. The planning and due-diligence activities to be carried out as part of the project involve no ground or resource disturbance. The project is Statutorily Exempt under CEQA Guidelines, Section 15262 Feasibility and Planning Studies as the project only involves planning studies for possible future actions, which the Sierra Nevada Conservancy Governing Board has not approved, adopted, or funded; there is no legally binding effect on later activities. The project is also Categorical Exempt under CEQA Guidelines, Section 15306 Information Collection because it consists of basic data collection and resource evaluation activities, which do not result in a disturbance to environmental resources. The proposed activities are for information gathering purposes and are part of a study leading to an action, which a public agency has not yet approved, adopted, or funded.

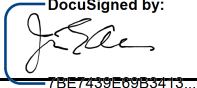
Lead Agency

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: 3/7/2024 _____

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.