

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: El Dorado County Recorder Clerk
360 Fair Lane
Placerville, CA 95667

Project Title: Crystal Basin – Healthy Eldorado Landscape Partnership Pilot Project – Recreation Activities (SNC937.1A-LGPP) [SCH 2024040622]

Project Location – Specific: Wrights Lake Recreation Area, Pacific Ranger District, Eldorado National Forest, El Dorado County. Approximately 6.25 miles northeast of Kyburz, 6.4 miles northwest of Twin Bridges, 11 miles west of Meyers, and 42 miles east of Pilot Hill. T12N, R16E, Sec. 28,32,33. 38*51’N 120*14’W.

Project Location - City: None; Eldorado National Forest

Project Location - County: El Dorado

Description of Nature, Purpose, and Beneficiaries of Project: The purpose of the Crystal Basin – Healthy Eldorado Landscape Partnership Pilot Project – Recreation Activities is to amend the Grant Agreement between SNC and Great Basin Institute allowing grant funds to be used towards implementation of recreation activities in the Wrights Lake Recreation Area. The project is to plan for and implement repairs, modernization, and enhancement of the existing recreation infrastructure with improvements to parking safety, information kiosks, fee stations, trail access, restrooms, water spigots, campsites, and accessibility features commensurate with present-day usage. The project would also regrade damaged areas of the main roadway and implement critical traffic control features to increase visitor safety and access. Another purpose of the project is for understory vegetation thinning treatments to occur around trailheads, if needed, and hazard tree removal. All project work would be within and upon the existing recreation infrastructure and amenities around Wrights Lake.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: Sierra Nevada Conservancy

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

Great Basin Institute
Jerry Keir, GBI Stewardship Consultant
16750 Mt Rose Hwy
Reno, NV 89511
775-674-5475

Exempt Status:

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

Categorical Exemption: CEQA Guidelines Section 15301, Existing Facilities

Reasons why project is exempt:

The project is categorically exempt from the provisions of CEQA pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15301 Existing Facilities, which consists of the operation, repair, maintenance, permitting, leasing, licensing, or minor alteration of existing public or private structures, facilities, mechanical equipment, or topographical features, involving negligible or no expansion of existing or former use. The key consideration is whether the project involves negligible or no expansion of use. This project is to repair and upgrade existing recreation infrastructure on Eldorado National Forest lands around Wrights Lake, which has degraded over time with extensive public use. All of the proposed work would be done on existing public campgrounds, trails, and access roads, including such activities as updated information kiosks, new bear bins, improving accessibility features, parking access and control measures, new water spigots, replacing picnic tables, repairing bathroom roofs, and new signage. This project consists of the repair, maintenance, and minor alterations to existing public recreational facilities and structures, with no expansion of use. The project has been independently reviewed and the SNC has determined that none of the exceptions in CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2 would apply. Additionally, under Pub. Resources Code, Section 4799.05, subd. (d)(1), CEQA does not apply to prescribed fire, thinning, or fuel-reduction projects undertaken on federal lands to reduce the risk of high-severity wildfire that have been reviewed under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) if the primary role of a state or local agency is providing funding or staffing for those projects. Some SNC funds may be used toward understory vegetation thinning treatments around select trailheads on Eldorado National Forest lands around Wrights Lake. The proposed hazard tree removal is part of a broader Eldorado National Forest project, the Wrights Lake Forest Health and Hazardous Fuels Reduction Project, which was reviewed in its entirety pursuant to NEPA, as documented in the *Wright's Lake Forest Health and Hazardous Fuels Reduction Project Decision Memo*, which was signed on October 3, 2024.

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:

Angela M. Amey

Title:

Executive Officer

Date:

3/6/2025

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.