

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: Graham Landscape Planning Project Amendment (SNC 1289.1)

Project Location – Specific: Sierra National Forest, Bass Lake Ranger District, northeast of Bass Lake. Along the east and west sides of Central Camp Road. Project center at approximately 37.358093, -119.488695.

Project Location - City: No communities within the planning area; nearby communities include The Pines, which is west of the project area, and Whisky Falls to the South.

Project Location - County: Madera

Description of Nature, Purpose, and Beneficiaries of Project: The Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC) will amend its grant agreement for funding to American Forests to partner with the United States Forest Service (USFS), Sierra National Forest, to complete archeological surveys across 2,800 non-contiguous acres within a larger 18,100-acre project area. These analyses will enable the USFS to complete a National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) analysis for a potential future 2,800-acre thinning and fuel-reduction project. The potential future treatments on these 2,800 acres are needed to reduce stand densities before potentially reintroducing beneficial fire to the larger 18,100-acre area. The SNC-funded project only consists of archeological surveys; there will be no ground or resource disturbance as part of this project.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: Sierra Nevada Conservancy

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

American Forests
Leana Weissberg, Director, California
1220 L Street, NW, Suite 750, Washington, DC 20005
(202) 599-2172

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 archaeological surveys towards the development of a potential future NEPA analysis considering a potential future fuel-reduction project. The potential future projects 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 SNC 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: Angela Avery

Title: Executive Officer

Date: 6/10/2024

Signed by Lead Agency: Yes

Signed by Applicant: No

Date received for filing at OPR:

Authority cited: Sections 21083 and 21110, Public Resources Code.

Reference: Sections 21108, 21152, and 21152.1, Public Resources Code.