

Notice of Exemption

Appendix E

To: Office of Planning and Research
P.O. Box 3044, Room 212
Sacramento, CA 95812-3044

From: Lead Agency
Sierra Nevada Conservancy
11521 Blocker Drive, Suite 205
Auburn, CA 95603

Project Title: (RFFCP2022) WIP Capacity Subgrant - Tulare County (1717-RFFCP).

Project Location – Specific: General communication, outreach, and planning activities across parts Tulare County.

Project Location - City: None – feasibility planning. The community of Visalia is within the project area.

Project Location - County: Tulare.

Description of Nature, Purpose, and Beneficiaries of Project:

The Sierra Nevada Conservancy would provide funding to Tulare County to collaborate with local communities, local tribes, regional partners, and stakeholders to develop a priority plan to improve forest health and fire resiliency within the Tulare County area. The proposed activities will increase capacity to prioritize, plan, and develop potential future projects focused within, but not exclusively within, the area of the Upper Grouse Valley, potentially covering approximately 980 acres. Tasks conducted under these activities would include participating in training sessions, attending regional conferences, engaging with local tribes, preparing and implementing a Regional Engagement Strategy, creating maps and Geographic Information System (GIS) shapefiles, working to develop monitoring and evaluation plans, communicating and engaging with stakeholders, facilitating meetings, and the gathering of pertinent data and information for plan development. The purpose is to engage with their community and stakeholders to generate a list of potential future forest health projects and create a plan for evaluating and monitoring projects as well as completing a Capacity Building Sustainability Report. These activities could potentially lead to improved forest health and fire resiliency, facilitate greenhouse gas emissions reductions, and increase carbon sequestration.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: Sierra Nevada Conservancy

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

County of Tulare
Larry Micari
2800 W Burrel Ave. Visalia, CA 93291
(559) 636-5005.

Exempt Status:

Statutory Exemption: Common Sense Exemption – CEQA Guidelines, Section 15061, subd. (b)(3) and Feasibility and Planning Studies under Pub. Resources Code, Section 21102 and CEQA Guidelines, Section 15262.

Reasons why project is exempt:

These activities are exempt under the commonsense exemption under Section 15061, subd. (b)(3) of the CEQA Guidelines which states that CEQA applies only to projects which have the potential for causing a significant effect on the environment. Where it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the activity in question may have a significant effect on the environment, the activity is not subject to CEQA. This grant funding will support capacity building activities and project pipeline development tasks such as preparing and implementing a Regional Engagement Strategy, creating maps and GIS shapefiles, engaging with local tribes, coordination of meetings, participating in training sessions, and community engagement as well as the gathering and sharing of data for early-stage planning and prioritization of currently unidentified, potential future projects related to forest health and fire resiliency. They are early-stage planning activities; no specific projects have yet been identified, nor have they been approved, adopted, or funded. There will be no ground or resource disturbance. Therefore, it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the activity in question may have a significant effect on the environment. Additionally, the project would be statutorily exempt under CEQA Guidelines, section 15262 exempting feasibility and planning studies as the activity involves planning studies for possible future actions which the Sierra Nevada Conservancy Board has not approved, adopted, or funded. Further, there is no legally binding effect on later activities.

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

Executive Officer

Title: _____

Date: 8/1/2024

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.