

## NOTICE OF EXEMPTION



State of California  
 The Natural Resources Agency  
 California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

<b>PROJECT TITLE</b>	United States Forest Service (USFS), "Lower Bass Lake District Restoration Project"		
<b>PROJECT LOCATION</b>	Sierra National Forest; Bass Lake and High Sierra Ranger Districts	<b>COUNTY</b>	Madera and Fresno
<b>LEAD AGENCY</b>	California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE)		
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**PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

CAL FIRE would provide funding to the USFS to conduct post-fire restoration treatments on Sierra National Forest lands in the Bass Lake and High Sierra Ranger Districts burned by large catastrophic wildfires. These treatments (site preparation, fuels reduction, including hazardous tree removal, and reforestation) will aid in increasing forest resiliency and carbon sequestration and will also reduce future wildfire risks to local resources and community members and promote native plant and wildlife species.

**EXEMPTION STATUS**

- Categorical Exemption Type and Section: Class
- Statutory Exemption (state code section): Public Resources Code Section 4799.05(d)(1)
- Ministerial (§21080(b)(1); 15268)
- Declared Emergency (§21080(b)(3); 15269(a))
- Emergency Project (§21080(b)(4); 15269(b)(c))

**REASONS PROJECT IS EXEMPT**

CEQA does not apply to fuel reduction, reforestation, & habitat restoration projects undertaken, in whole or in part, on federal lands to reduce the risk of high severity wildfire that have been reviewed under the NEPA, if the primary role of a state or local agency is providing funding or staffing for those projects. The proposed project was reviewed in its entirety under the following Sierra National Forest NEPA documents: 1) Whisky Ridge Ecological Restoration Project Record of Decision, signed May 22, 2013; 2) Greys Mountain Ecological Restoration Project Final Environmental Impact Statement and Record of Decision, signed March 16, 2012; 3) Bass Lake Ranger District Hazard Tree Removal Supplemental Information Report filed June 8, 2017, on the McLeod Hazard Abatement Project Environmental Assessment and Decision Notice, signed on July 17, 2006; 4) French Fire Environmental Assessment and Decision Notice, signed August 8, 2015; 5) Creek Fire Ecological Restoration Project Environmental Assessment and Decision Notice, signed June 23, 2023; and 6) Sierra Scenic Byway Roadside Hazard Project Environmental Assessment and Granite Creek Subproject Decision Notice, signed October 19, 2023.

Sierra National Forest NEPA record of project approvals are available to the General Public at:

<https://www.fs.usda.gov/projects/sierra/landmanagement/projects>

**DATE RECEIVED FOR FILING**

DocuSigned by:  John Melvin, Assistant Deputy Director Resource Management California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection	8/2/2024 _____ Date
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