



Community and Economic Development Planning Division

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NOTICE OF INTENT TO ADOPT MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION #2024-10
This notice is to inform the public and interested agencies that in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the County of Madera is circulating Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (ISMND) #2024-10 for public comment.

Project/Location: Sections 17, 20, and 21 of Township 8 South, Range 23 East Mount Diablo Base Meridian. Madera County, California.

80 Acres Tribal Trust Allotments (Assessor's Parcel Numbers [APN] 060-280-010 and 060-280-012) and 92 Acres Public Trust Allotments (portions of APNs 060-190-061 and 060-028-013)

Project Description: The Project entails the preparation of a Fuels Management Plan (FMP). An FMP is required in order to undertake forest management activities to reduce the risk of wildfire on the 80 acres of individual trust allotments in accordance with BIA trust responsibilities for resource management on qualifying tribal lands. The Proposed Project would then apply the same fuel reduction actions and associated management forest management recommendations to the adjacent 92-acre Public Allotments for which an FMP is not required.

The Project Site and surrounding area has been affected by a considerable number of fires over the past century, including the recent Mission Fire (2017) and the 379,882-acre Creek Fire (2020). The Project Site is also characterized by a large quantity of fuel at all levels—ground fuel, ladder fuels, and canopy. Considering the historic propensity of the area to burn and the abundance of existing fuel, the Project Site represents a high fire hazard risk. The purpose of the Proposed Project is to adopt an FMP to reduce fuel loading on the 80-acre FMP parcels and recommend forest health actions for the 92-acre Public Allotments. Therefore, both components of the Proposed Project would provide the Tribe with a roadmap with which to protect its land and properties while improving the ecological health of these lands.

The Proposed Project consists of the approval of funding by Yosemite/Sequoia Resource Conservation Development Council (YSR CDC) for development and implementation of the FMP for the 80-acre FMP Area and for the application of the fuel reduction actions on the 92-acre Public Allotments.

The goals and objectives of the FMP are to:

1. Restore areas that have experienced high severity wildfires,

2. Reforest areas that have experienced high severity wildfires and dramatic tree mortality to promote ecosystem biodiversity and connectivity,
3. Restore critical forest carbon stocks,
4. Implement strategic fuel treatments that address public safety hazards,
5. Prepare for future prescribed fire and reforestation efforts,
6. Utilize strategic planning, including:
 - Light Detection and Ranging mapping analysis, and
 - Technical assistance from diverse partners to facilitate climate-informed and science-based restoration in the region over the next ten years.

Document History: This ISMND was originally prepared in September 2022. Since the preparation it was determined that the YSRCDC could not be the CEQA lead agency and as such, the document was not circulated for public review. Subsequently YSRCDC reached out to Madera County to assume lead agency responsibilities. Therefore, Madera County is now circulating this ISMND.

The description and understanding of the existing conditions as they were presented at the time of document preparation have been determined to be current and therefore, impact discussions remain relevant.

Document Availability: The Initial Study/MND will be available for review at the following location beginning on October 25th, 2024:

- County of Madera Community & Economic Development Planning Division, 200 W 4th Street, Madera, CA 93637

Public Review Period: The 30-day public review period for the Initial Study/MND is from October 25th to November 27th, 2024.

Comments: Any person who wishes to comment on the County's intent to adopt the MND must submit written comments no later than 5:00 p.m. on 26, November 2024. Written comments may be sent to Samuel J. Rashe, Senior Planner, County of Madera Community & Economic Development Planning Division, 200 W 4th Street, Ste. 3100, Madera, CA 93637

