

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION



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

PROJECT TITLE	The Great Basin Institute, "Crystal Basin Ecological Restoration Project"		
PROJECT LOCATION	Crystal Basin - USDA Forest Service Eldorado National Forest	COUNTY	El Dorado
LEAD AGENCY	California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE)		
CONTACT	Shannon Johnson		
ADDRESS	PO Box 944246 Sacramento, CA 94244-2460	PHONE	530-338-8197

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

CAL FIRE would provide funding to the Great Basin Institute to increase capacity with the Health Eldorado Landscape Partnership and implement treatments on the Crystal Basin Ecological Restoration Project. Treatments would occur along the U.S. Highway 50 corridor near popular recreation and tourism adjacent to the Union Valley Reservoir, Icehouse Reservoir, Wrights Lake, Alder Ridge, and the Desolation Wilderness in the central Sierra Nevada. Treatment activities include mechanical and manual thinning and piling, including commercial thinning, herbicide application, and reforestation efforts. This landscape-scale project will reduce wildfire risks to local resources, increase forest health, promote native plant and wildlife species, and improve forest resiliency.

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 Eldorado National Forest NEPA documents:

- Reservoir Forest Health Project Environmental Assessment and Decision Notice and Finding of No Significant Impact, signed May 17, 2021
- John Don't Fuels Reduction and Forest Health Project Environmental Assessment and Decision Notice and Finding of No Significant Impact, signed April 9, 2018
- O'Leary's Cow Fuel Reduction Project Environmental Assessment and Decision Notice and Finding of No Significant Impact, signed October 25, 2010, and Supplemental Information Report, signed January 5, 2018
- Sacramento Municipal Utility District Upper American River Project – Transmission Line Fuel Break Decision Memo, signed November 21, 2022

The NEPA records of project approval is available to the General Public at:
<https://www.fs.usda.gov/projects/eldorado/landmanagement/projects>

DATE RECEIVED FOR FILING

DocuSigned by: Matthew Reischman, Deputy Director Resource Management California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection	4/9/2025 Date
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