



NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

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FEB 24 2020

MC 20-002

OFFICE OF THE CLERK

TO: ☒ Office of Planning and Research
PO Box 3044
Sacramento, CA 95812-3044

☒ County Clerk / County of Mono
PO Box 237
Bridgeport, CA 93517

FROM: Mono County Community Development
PO Box 8
Bridgeport, CA 93517

Project Title: Buckeye Hot Springs Recreation Enhancement

Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest in conjunction with Mono County and Mammoth Lakes Recreation 501(c)3 propose minor recreation improvements to the Buckeye Hot Spring area. These improvements include: restoration of user created access points and trails into one new and sustainable trail to access the hot springs; new interpretive and regulatory signage for the visiting public; removal and rehabilitation of illegal parking areas; minor grading and improvements for a new parking area (~.4 acres) to reduce resource damage to vegetation and erosion, and construction of a new vault toilet facility to correct human waste contamination and provide improved visitor services for the recreation audience of Mono County.

Mono County (project partner) is acting as lead-agency on filing CEQA determinations and working collaboratively with Mammoth Lakes Recreation (grant applicant) and Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest (land manager).

Project Applicant: Mono County and Mammoth Lakes Recreation with Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest

Project Location – Specific: Buckeye Hot Spring

Project Location - City: approximately 10 miles west of the Bridgeport Community

Project Location - County: Mono

Description of Nature, Purpose, and Beneficiaries of Project:

Recreation enhancements consist of minor public alterations in the condition of land and/or vegetation for the purpose of providing sustainable recreation and limiting environmental impacts caused by existing informally created trails, paths, and parking areas. Road grading performed to the informal pullout on Buckeye Road (de facto staging area) will involve minor alterations within the existing prior-disturbed footprint and with a slope of less than 10 percent. The proposed project will not involve the removal of any trees and is intended to provide a new, sustainable recreation opportunity that benefits, and offsets impacts to local watershed and better manages current environmental impacts. The proposed project will enhance this unique geologic site for the benefit of recreation users and the environment.

The project will create a new sustainable access trail, a new educational/interpretive kiosk, a new vault toilet, and a new delimited parking area. These new improvements will mitigate existing impacts caused by redundant, unsustainable trail-braiding, rehabilitate existing resource damage, and substantially improve public health and safety.

The project includes no expansion of or beyond existing user created disturbance areas.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project:

Exempt Status: (check one)

- ☐ Not a Project & No Effects (Sec. 15378(b)(4); 15061(b)(3))
- ☐ Ministerial (Sec. 21080(b)(1); 15268);
- ☐ Declared Emergency (Sec. 21080(b)(3); 15269(a));
- ☐ Emergency Project (Sec. 21080(b)(4); 15269(b)(c));
- ☒ Categorical Exemption. State type and section number: Class 1, 15301(c)& (d) and Class 3, 15303(d) & (e) and Class 4 14304(a)
- ☐ Statutory Exemptions. State code number:
- ☐ Project Consistent with a Community Plan, General Plan, or Zoning (15183)

Posted thru March 30, 2020

Reasons why project is exempt:

Categorical Exemptions applied:

15301. EXISTING FACILITIES

Class 1 consists of the operation, repair, maintenance, permitting, leasing, licensing, or minor alteration of existing public or private structures, facilities, mechanical equipment, or topographical features, involving negligible or no expansion of existing or former use beyond that existing at the time of the lead agency's determination. The types of "existing facilities" itemized below are not intended to be all-inclusive of the types of projects which might fall within Class 1. The key consideration is whether the project involves negligible or no expansion of an existing use.

Examples include but are not limited to:

- (c) Existing highways and streets, sidewalks, gutters, bicycle and pedestrian trails, and similar facilities (this includes road grading for the purpose of public safety), and other alterations such as the addition of bicycle facilities, including but not limited to bicycle parking, bicycle-share facilities and bicycle lanes, transit improvements such as bus lanes, pedestrian crossings, street trees, and other similar alterations that do not create additional automobile lanes);

The proposed project will implement minor alteration and rehabilitation of unsustainable user created trails and informal staging area that involves no expansion of use beyond that which currently exists. The creation of a new sustainable access trail will mitigate existing impacts caused by redundant, unsustainable trail-braiding.

- (d) Restoration or rehabilitation of deteriorated or damaged structures, facilities, or mechanical equipment to meet current standards of public health and safety, unless it is determined that the damage was substantial and resulted from an environmental hazard such as earthquake, landslide, or flood;

The project will restore and rehabilitate the deterioration of site conditions caused by existing use, restoration of sagebrush steppe caused by informal parking will be completed by grading and construction of a formal parking area and will improve current erosion and vegetation damage. The project includes no expansion of existing (informal) use.

15303. NEW CONSTRUCTION OR CONVERSION OF SMALL STRUCTURES

Class 3 consists of construction and location of limited numbers of new, small facilities or structures; installation of small new equipment and facilities in small structures; and the conversion of existing small structures from one use to another where only minor modifications are made to the exterior of the structure. The numbers of structures described in this section are the maximum allowable on any legal parcel. Examples of this exemption include, but are not limited to:

- (d) Water main, sewage, electrical, gas, and other utility extensions, including street improvements, of reasonable length to serve such construction.

The proposed project will install a new vault toilet to greatly improve current fecal coliform contamination created by the absence of a bathroom facility.

- (e) Accessory (appurtenant) structures including garages, carports, patios, swimming pools, and fences.

The project will restore and rehabilitate the deterioration of site conditions caused by the informal parking area that is user created. The new parking area will be centralized on-site and will improve current erosion and vegetation damage. The project includes no expansion of existing (informal) use.

15304. MINOR ALTERATIONS TO LAND

Class 4 consists of minor public or private alterations in the condition of land, water, and/or vegetation which do not involve removal of healthy, mature, scenic trees except for forestry or agricultural purposes. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- (a) Grading on land with a slope of less than 10 percent, except that grading shall not be exempt in a waterway, in any wetland, in an officially designated (by federal, state, or local government action) scenic area, or in officially mapped areas of severe geologic hazard such as an Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone or within an official Seismic Hazard Zone, as delineated by the State Geologist.

This project will perform grading on land with a slope of less than 10 percent to reduce hillside erosion, and delineate parking on durable, permeable surfaces.

Lead Agency Contact Person: Tony Dublino

Area Code/Telephone/Extension: (760) 932-5440

If filed by applicant:

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: _____

Tony Dublino

Date: _____

2-24-2020

Title: _____

Dir. of Public Works

Governor's Office of Planning & Research

☒ Signed by Lead Agency

☐ Signed by Applicant

MAR 02 2020

STATE CLEARINGHOUSE