

Notice of Exemption

To: Office of Planning and Research
PO Box 3044, 1400 Tenth Street, Rm 113
Sacramento, CA 95812-3044

Nevada County Clerk-Recorder
950 Maidu Avenue
Nevada City, CA 95959

From: California Department of Fish and Wildlife
North Central Region
1701 Nimbus Road, Suite A
Rancho Cordova, CA 95670

Project Title: Five Lakes Basin non-native fish removal and Sierra Nevada yellow-legged frog (*Rana sierrae*) population recovery.

Project Applicant: California Department of Fish & Wildlife (CDFW)

Project Location - Specific: Five Lakes Basin, Grouse Ridge Non-motorized Area, Tahoe National Forest.

Project Location - County: Nevada

Project Description: Non-native Brook Trout and Rainbow Trout will be removed from Five Lakes Basin, Glacier Lake, and other small, connected fish-containing ponds and perennial tributaries using monofilament gill nets and backpack electrofishing units. Sierra Nevada yellow-legged frogs (frogs) will be translocated from the Mossy Pond area (south of Fordyce Lake, Nevada County) into Five Lakes Basin following fish removal. Frogs will be transported by vehicle and on foot using backpacks and small containers. If fish numbers decline rapidly, frog translocations will occur in conjunction with fish removal activities. Work will be implemented by CDFW and occasional assistance may be provided by Tahoe National Forest biologists. Most field work, including fish removal and translocations, is scheduled to occur from 2020–2022, after which there will be long-term frog population monitoring by CDFW.

Public Agency Approving Project: CDFW

Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: CDFW

Exempt Status:

- Categorical Exemption. Type and section number: 15307
 Statutory Exemptions. State code number:

Reasons why project is exempt:

This project is subject to the "Class 7" categorical exemption in section 15307 of Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations. The Class 7 categorical exemption is defined as "actions by regulatory agencies for protection of natural resources" under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (Pub. Resources Code, § 21000 et seq.). In general, Class 7 consists of actions taken by regulatory agencies as authorized by state law to assure the maintenance, restoration, or enhancement of a natural resource.

The proposed project falls within the Class 7 categorical exemption because the purpose of the project is to restore and enhance populations of native frogs, listed as 'threatened' under the California Endangered Species Act and 'endangered' under the Federal Endangered Species Act. The proposed activities are limited in scope and no serious or major disturbances to environmental resources are expected. In Five Lakes Basin, CDFW proposes to remove non-native trout to benefit the reestablishment of an extirpated frog population. CDFW also proposes translocations from the Mossy Pond area to Five Lakes Basin to create a new population of frogs. All of the proposed activities are within the historic range and critical habitat of the Sierra Nevada yellow-legged frog. These actions also meet conservation goals outlined in the multi-agency Mountain Yellow-legged Frog Conservation Strategy.

Lead Agency: CDFW

Contact Person: Isaac Chellman

Area Code/Telephone/ Extension: 916-767-4673

Signature: _____

Kevin Thomas, Regional Manager

Date: _____

3/3/2020

Governor's Office of Planning & Research

Date Received for filing at OPR: _____

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STATE CLEARINGHOUSE