

**Notice of Exemption**

**To:** Office of Planning and Research  
P.O. Box 3044, Room 212  
Sacramento, CA 95812-3044

**From:** (Public Agency) Sierra Nevada Conservancy  
11521 Blocker Drive, Suite 205  
Auburn, CA 95603

(Address)

County Clerk / County of Sierra100 Courthouse Square, Room 11Downieville, CA 95936**Project Title:** Independence Fuels Thinning and Forest Health Restoration (SNC 1234)**Project****Applicant:** Truckee River Watershed Council**Project Location – Specific:**

Project sites located in the Tahoe National Forest, Sierraville Ranger District, east of SR 89. T20 R15 Sections 20, 21, 27, 28, 29, 34, and 35; T19 R15 Section 11; and T20, R16 Sections 23, 24, 25, 26, 34, and 35.

**Project Location - City:** 12 miles South of Sierraville**Project Location - County:** Sierra**Description of Nature, Purpose and Beneficiaries of Project:**

The Sierra Nevada Conservancy would provide \$619,482.00 in funding for forest thinning and fuel reduction treatments (mechanical and hand thinning) on 400 acres of federal land within the Tahoe National Forest, Sierraville Ranger District. The treatments would create a heterogeneous landscape that improves forest ecosystem resiliency, removes hazardous and concentrated fuels, and reduces the risk of catastrophic wildfire. This project would be a part of the broader effort to enhance forest/watershed health within the headwaters of the Truckee River Watershed.

**Name of Public Agency Approving Project:**Sierra Nevada Conservancy**Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project:**Truckee River Watershed Council**Exempt Status: (check one)**☐ 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: \_\_\_\_\_☒ Statutory Exemptions. State code number: Public Resources Code Section 4799.05(d)(1)**Reasons why project is exempt:**

The California Environmental Quality Act does not apply to prescribed fire, thinning, or fuel reduction projects undertaken on federal lands to reduce the risk of high-severity wildfire that have been reviewed under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) if the primary role of a state or local agency is providing funding or staffing for those projects. The Sierra Nevada Conservancy would provide funding for fuel reduction on 400 acres of federal land within the Tahoe National Forest. The proposed activities were reviewed in their entirety under NEPA in the Middlin Project Environmental Assessment (EA) and Finding of No Significant Impacts (FONSI) and the Transition Project EA/FONSI. The final Decision Notice for the EA/FONSI documents were approved in 2012. In 2020, the US Forest Service reviewed the prior NEPA documents and certified that the NEPA analysis adequately addressed current site conditions and the environmental impacts of the project as currently proposed.

Lead Agency Contact Person: Jamie SammutArea Code/Telephone/Extension: (530) 823-4688**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 ☐ NoSignature: [Signature]Date: 3/6/2020Title: Deputy Executive Officer

Governor's Office of Planning &amp; Research

☐ Signed by Applicant ☒ Signed by Lead Agency:

Date received for filing at OPR: \_\_\_\_\_

**MAR 10 2020****STATE CLEARINGHOUSE**

Notice of Exemption