

# STATE OF CALIFORNIA SIERRA NEVADA CONSERVANCY

*Sierra Nevada Conservancy Watershed Improvement Grant Program*

**SNC ID Number:** 1075

**Applicant:** Truckee Donner Land Trust

**Project Title:** Serene Lakes Royal Gorge Headwaters Forest Health Improvements

**Project Category:** One

**SNC Subregion:** Central

**County(ies):** Placer

**Funding Amount Requested:** \$364,510

**Funding Amount Recommended:** \$364,510

**Total Project Cost:** \$364,510

**Final Score:** 84.25

## **PROJECT SCOPE / DESCRIPTION**

The Serene Lakes Royal Gorge Headwaters Forest Health Improvements project will treat 160 acres of over-dense forest in the Bogus Basin that drains directly into Serene Lakes. This water body is surrounded by the Serene Lakes neighborhood, consisting of about 600 homes. Serene Lakes is at high elevation just west of Donner Summit and Sugar Bowl ski resort, and just south of Highway 80 in Placer County. The project is on land owned by Truckee Donner Land Trust (TDLT) and is a small part of their 2012 Royal Gorge acquisition that nearly surrounds Serene Lakes. Management of the Royal Gorge property is critical to protect the Serene Lakes community from potential impacts of wildfire. The project site is also within the 3,000-acre Royal Gorge cross country ski park.

Within a 176-acre treatment area, TDLT's forester has identified about 160 acres of net thinning with mastication and harvesting of trees in the 12" – 24" size range. Current conditions consist of over-dense forest comprised mostly of Red Fir and Lodgepole Pine at an average density of over 700 trees per acre. Trees will be harvested for biomass and wood products, and revenue will be used to offset treatments costs. Species and size of harvested trees will provide relatively low revenue and will not be nearly enough to cover treatment costs. Post-treatment conditions will result in 80 – 120 square feet of basal area per acre, with well-spaced trees ranging mostly from 16" – 32" diameter.

TDLT has previously treated about 200 acres of Royal Gorge property, focusing on land closest to the Serene Lakes neighborhood. This project extends the treatments into surrounding watershed to create healthier overall forest condition. Serene Lakes and

this project site are in the North Fork American River upper watershed. There is a mix of private, land trust, and Forest Service ownership in this upper watershed, and there are multiple efforts to protect this top end of the American River.

Truckee Donner Land Trust is a non-profit organization that protects and manages over 37,000 acres of conservation lands. TDLT works closely with the Serene Lakes County Water District and the Serene Lakes Property Owners Association which support this project. TDLT also partners with Royal Gorge Cross Country Ski (owned by Sugar Bowl Ski Corp) to maintain ski trails on the property.

Serena Creek is fed by the outflow of Serene Lakes and is a tributary to the North Fork American River. This project, and the 33,450-acre headwater basin of the North Fork American River, connects with the 10,000-acre American Headwaters Restoration Project and the 29,000 French Meadows Project. Together, these restoration efforts will help protect the entire headwaters of the North and Middle Forks of the American River. This huge area is part of the Tahoe-Central Sierra Initiative and represents a primary goal of the Sierra Nevada Watershed Improvement Program.

### PROJECT SCHEDULE

PROJECT TASKS / DELIVERABLES	TIMELINE
Project Management	June 2019 – December 2021
Timber Harvesting and Mastication	June 2019 – December 2021
SNC Progress Reports	Every 6 months
SNC Final Report	December 2021
<b>Estimated Project Completion Date</b>	<b>January 1, 2022</b>

### PROJECT COSTS

BUDGET CATEGORIES	SNC FUNDING
<b>Project Costs:</b>	
Project Management	\$1,890
Registered Professional Forester	\$11,000
Mechanical Thinning (minus timber revenue retained by contractor)	\$320,000
<b>Administrative:</b>	
Administrative Costs	\$31,620
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>\$364,510</b>

## **PROJECT LETTERS OF SUPPORT / OPPOSITION**

### **SUPPORT:**

- Sugar Bowl / Royal Gorge
- Serene Lakes Property Owners Association
- Sierra Lakes County Water District
- South Yuba River Citizens League
- North Fork Association

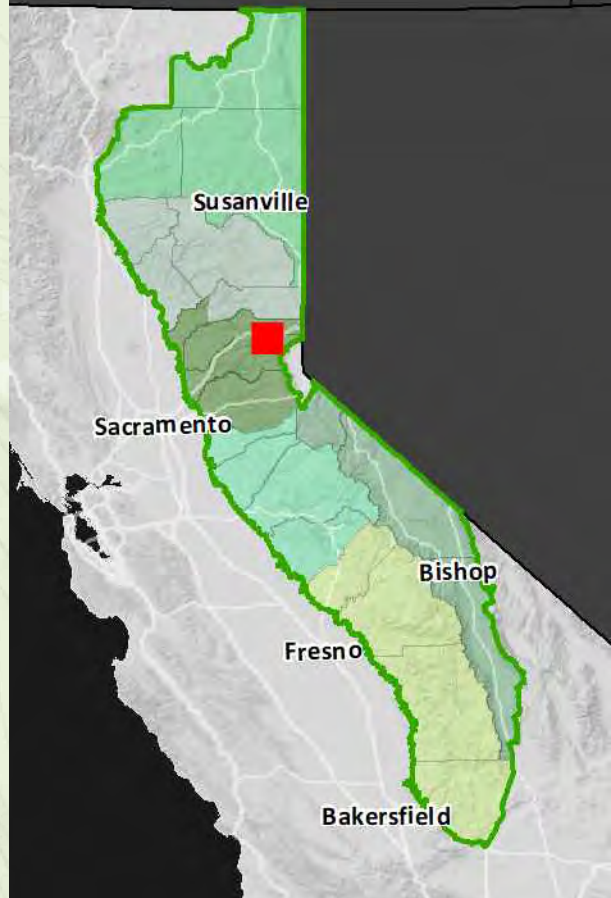
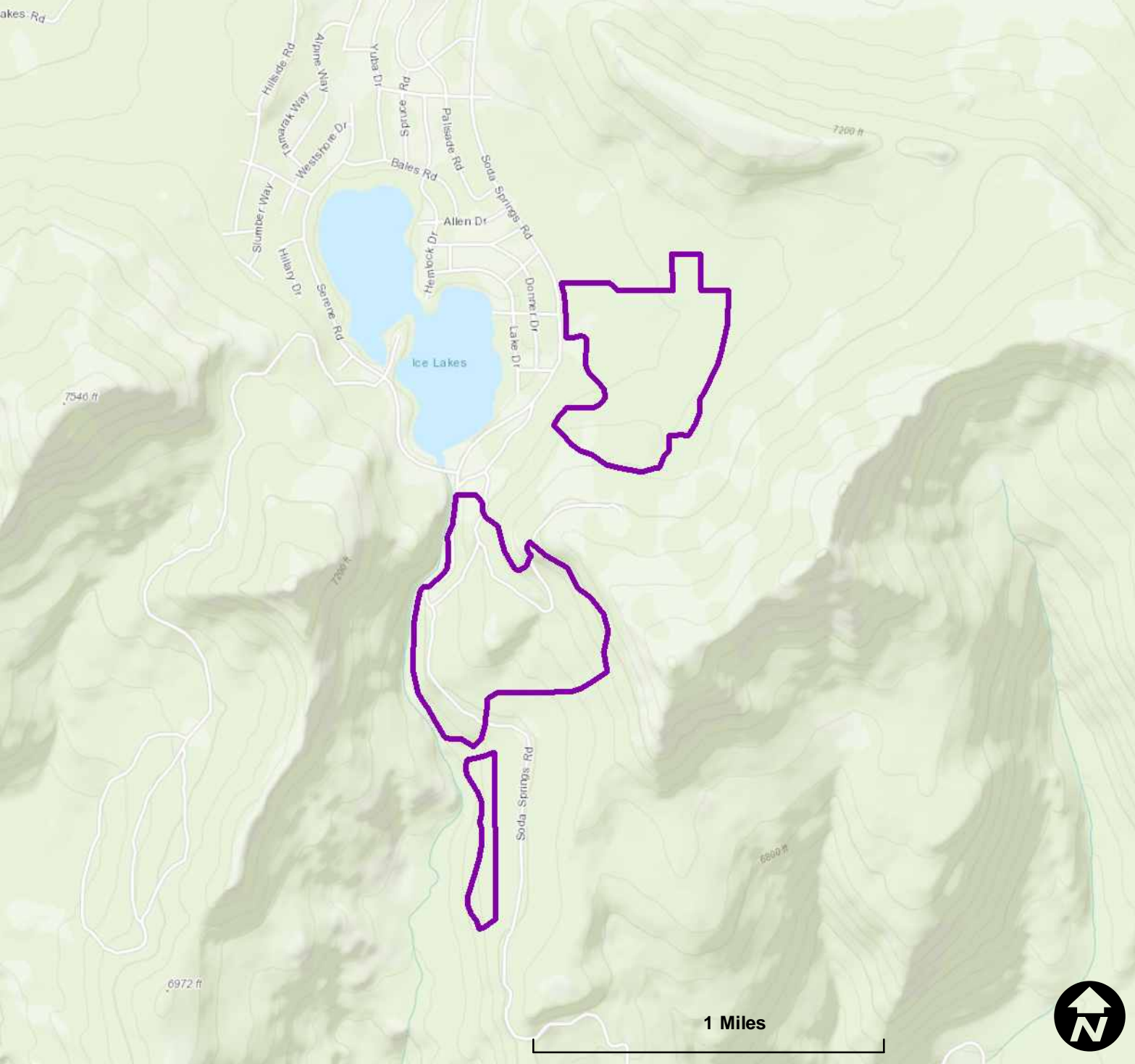
### **OPPOSITION:**









- None

## **PROJECT PERFORMANCE MEASURES**

*There are four Performance Measures common to all grants. In addition, grantees are required to identify one to three project specific Performance Measures in their application. Please note, Performance Measures listed here represent those proposed by applicants and may be modified before the grant agreement is executed.*









- Acres of Land Improved or Restored



-  Project Location
-  Project Boundary
-  North Subregion
-  North Central Subregion
-  Central Subregion
-  East Subregion
-  South Central Subregion
-  South Subregion

**Serene Lakes/Royal Gorge Headwaters Forest Health Improvements**  
**Truckee Donner Land Trust**



-  Project Location
-  Project Boundary
-  North Subregion
-  North Central Subregion
-  Central Subregion
-  East Subregion
-  South Central Subregion
-  South Subregion

**Serene Lakes/Royal Gorge Headwaters Forest Health Improvements**  
**Truckee Donner Land Trust**

## CEQA Documentation

**SNC #:** 1075

**Project Title:** Serene Lakes Royal Gorge Headwaters Forest Health Improvements

**Applicant:** Truckee Donner Land Trust

**CEQA:**

The Truckee Donner Land Trust holds Timber Harvest Plan 2-18-0054-PLA, approved by CAL FIRE. The SNC may file a Notice of Determination on the THP as a Responsible Agency.

- **Notice of Determination:** See Below
- **Timber Harvest Plan:** [Click Here](#)

# Notice of Determination

Appendix D

**To:**

Office of Planning and Research  
U.S. Mail: \_\_\_\_\_ Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
P.O. Box 3044 1400 Tenth St., Rm 113  
Sacramento, CA 95812-3044 Sacramento, CA 95814

County Clerk  
County of: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**From:**

Public Agency: Sierra Nevada Conservancy  
Address: 11521 Blocker Drive, Suite 205  
Auburn, CA 95603  
Contact: Shannon Ciotti  
Phone: (530) 823-4689

Lead Agency (if different from above):  
California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection  
Address: 6105 Airport Road  
Redding, CA 96002  
Contact: John Ramaley, RPF #2504  
Phone: (530) 224-2490

**SUBJECT: Filing of Notice of Determination in compliance with Section 21108 or 21152 of the Public Resources Code.**

State Clearinghouse Number (if submitted to State Clearinghouse): N/A

Project Title: Serene Lakes Royal Gorge Headwaters Forest Health Improvements (SNC #1075)

Project Applicant: Truckee Donner Land Trust

Project Location (include county): The project is located on 175 acres in eastern Placer County, approximately 1.25 miles south of Soda Springs in Section 35 T17N R14E of the Soda Springs U.S. Geological Survey 7.5' Quadrangle and in Section 3 T16N R14E of the Royal Gorge USGS 7.5' Quadrangle.

**Project Description:**

The Sierra Nevada Conservancy would provide the Truckee Donner Land Trust with funding for wildfire hazard reduction treatments on 175 acres of red fir stands with a nominal Sierran mixed conifer component. All work will be performed in compliance with the California Forest Practices Act and an adopted Timber Harvest Plan (THP) prepared for the property (THP No. 2-18-054-PLA, Royal Gorge SNC 2018), which was approved by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) on December 4, 2018.

The forest fuels reduction will help to minimize the risk of catastrophic wildfire and subsequent environmental damage caused by such conditions by reducing ladder fuels, removing diseased trees, and thinning areas of overstock. These treatments would employ cut-to-length timber harvesting methods using a rubber-tired processor and forwarder and a rubber-tired chipper in strategic areas with especially high fuel loadings. Implementation of the THP will be completed by a Licensed Timber Operator under the direction of a Registered Professional Forester. CAL FIRE will monitor compliance with the terms of the Timber Harvest Plan.

This is to advise that the Sierra Nevada Conservancy has approved the above  
( Lead Agency or  Responsible Agency)

described project on March 7, 2019 and has made the following determinations regarding the  
above (date)  
described project.

*Continued on next page*

1. The project [ will  will not] have a significant effect on the environment.
2. A Timber Harvesting Plan (Plan No. 2-18-054-PLA, Royal Gorge SNC 2018) was adopted by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection pursuant to Chapter 8, commencing with section 4511 of Part 2 of Division 4 of the Public Resources Code. The Timber Harvest Plan meets the requirements of a Substitute Document pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15252. The Sierra Nevada Conservancy is using the substitute document in its approval of the project as a Responsible Agency, consistent with CEQA Guidelines section 15253 (a) and (b).
3. Mitigation measures [ were  were not] made a condition of the approval of the project.
4. A mitigation reporting or monitoring plan [ was  was not] adopted for this project.
5. A statement of Overriding Considerations [ was  was not] adopted for this project.
6. Findings [ were  were not] made pursuant to the provisions of CEQA.

This is to certify that the final Timber Harvesting Plan with comments and responses and record of project approval, is available to the General Public at:

[ftp://thp.fire.ca.gov/THPLibrary/Cascade\\_Region/THPs/THPs2018/2-18-054PLA/](ftp://thp.fire.ca.gov/THPLibrary/Cascade_Region/THPs/THPs2018/2-18-054PLA/)

Signature (Public Agency): \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_

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