

STATE OF CALIFORNIA SIERRA NEVADA CONSERVANCY

Sierra Nevada Conservancy Watershed Improvement Grant Program

SNC ID Number: 1081

Applicant: Plumas Audubon Society

Project Title: Quincy Watershed Improvement Project

Project Category: Two

SNC Subregion: North Central

County(ies): Plumas

Funding Amount Requested: \$99,997

Funding Amount Recommended: \$99,997

Total Project Cost: \$99,997

Final Score: 80.00

PROJECT SCOPE / DESCRIPTION

The Quincy Watershed Improvement Project (QWIP) is a Category 2 project in the upper Feather River watershed, Plumas County. The Plumas Audubon Society (PAS) will complete due diligence work within a 655-acre complex of heavily forested watershed drainages that empty into the American Valley just above the township of Quincy, CA. Boyles Ravine and Claremont Creek descend the slope to converge with Spanish Creek, which flows through the valley and ultimately into the north fork Feather River and the Lake Oroville Reservoir. The project area boundary abuts private and community service district lands and the Plumas National Forest.

The Quincy Watershed Improvement Project will complete necessary surveys required for CEQA and NEPA analysis and documentation. Draft environmental documents will be prepared for Plumas National Forest and Feather River Resource Conservation District to be adopted as final NEPA and CEQA documents respectively. Completion of this planning project is required to initiate a fuels reduction project in an overgrown forested wildland urban interface (WUI) that directly affects the town of Quincy.

Landowners within the Project area include the Plumas National Forest and American Valley Community Services District. The Plumas County Communities Wildfire Protection Plan (PCCWPP) identifies Quincy and East Quincy as "Communities at Risk". The QWIP Project Area is adjacent to lands treated under the Plumas National Forest's American Valley Hazardous Fuels Reduction Project in East Quincy. In 2017,

Quincy experienced a catastrophic wildfire that traveled down to just above the QWIP project area and Quincy, the most populated area in Plumas County.

For 28 years, the Plumas Audubon Society has been promoting understanding, appreciation, and protection of the biodiversity of the Feather River watershed through education, research, and the restoration and conservation of natural ecosystems. PAS has a successful track record of managing projects within the Upper Feather River Watershed.

Landowners and other Project partners wholeheartedly support the QWIP. Included are the Plumas County Fire Safe Council, Plumas County, and private landowners. The project location includes an area utilized by the Plumas Unified School District as a “learning landscape” for students. The QWIP is currently a candidate for inclusion in the Feather River Integrated Regional Water Management Plan (FRIRWMP) and meets multiple focus area goals of the Plumas County Communities Wildfire Protection Plan (PCCWPP).

By completing the necessary environmental compliance documents, this project will support future implementation for the benefit of water yield, wildlife, native plants, cultural resources, life, and property consistent with the Sierra Nevada Watershed Improvement Program. CEQA/NEPA documentation will help facilitate fuel thinning treatment projects designed to reduce catastrophic wildfire risk within the WUI, protect local watersheds and the north fork of the Feather River system watershed. Downstream beneficiaries include 27 million people who receive their drinking water from the Lake Oroville State Water Project and 750,000 acres of irrigated agriculture in the San Joaquin Valley.

PROJECT SCHEDULE

PROJECT TASKS / DELIVERABLES	TIMELINE
Planning, coordination, and contracting with resource survey contractors	April 2019
Resource Surveys	September 2019
Draft Survey Report for USFS & RCD review	November 2019
Draft Environmental Assessment (EA), CEQA checklist, and Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND)	December 2019
Second year wildlife surveys as required	August 2020
SNC Progress Reports	Every 6 months
SNC Final Report	October 2020
Estimated Project Completion Date	October 2020

PROJECT COSTS

BUDGET CATEGORIES	SNC FUNDING
Project Costs:	
Project Management	\$33,360
Project Implementation	\$54,723
Materials and Supplies	\$523
Publications, Printing, Public Relations	\$1,100
Reporting, Performance Measures	\$1,200
Administrative:	
Administrative Costs	\$9,091
TOTAL:	\$99,997

PROJECT LETTERS OF SUPPORT / OPPOSITION

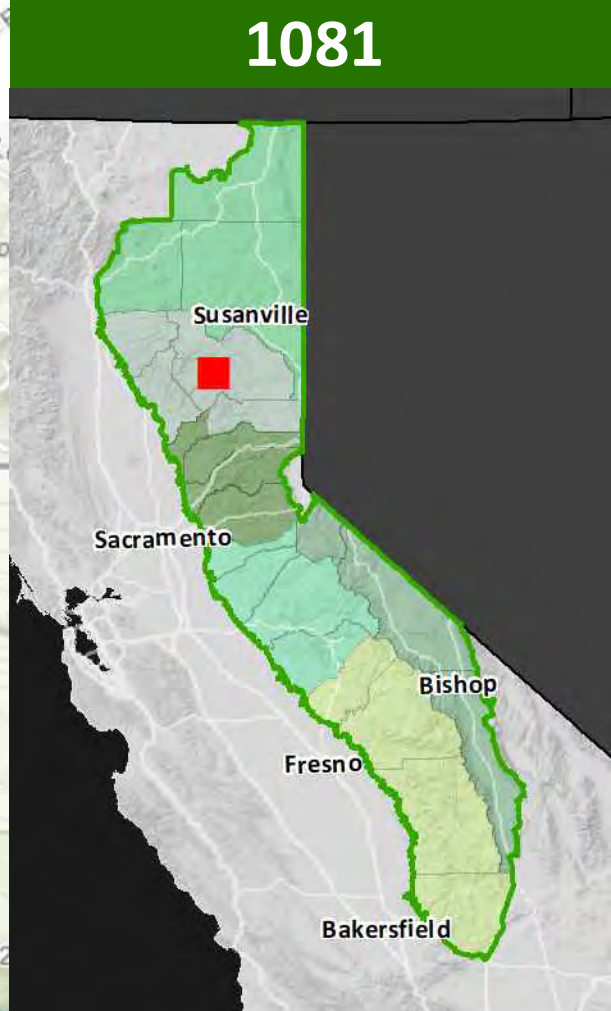
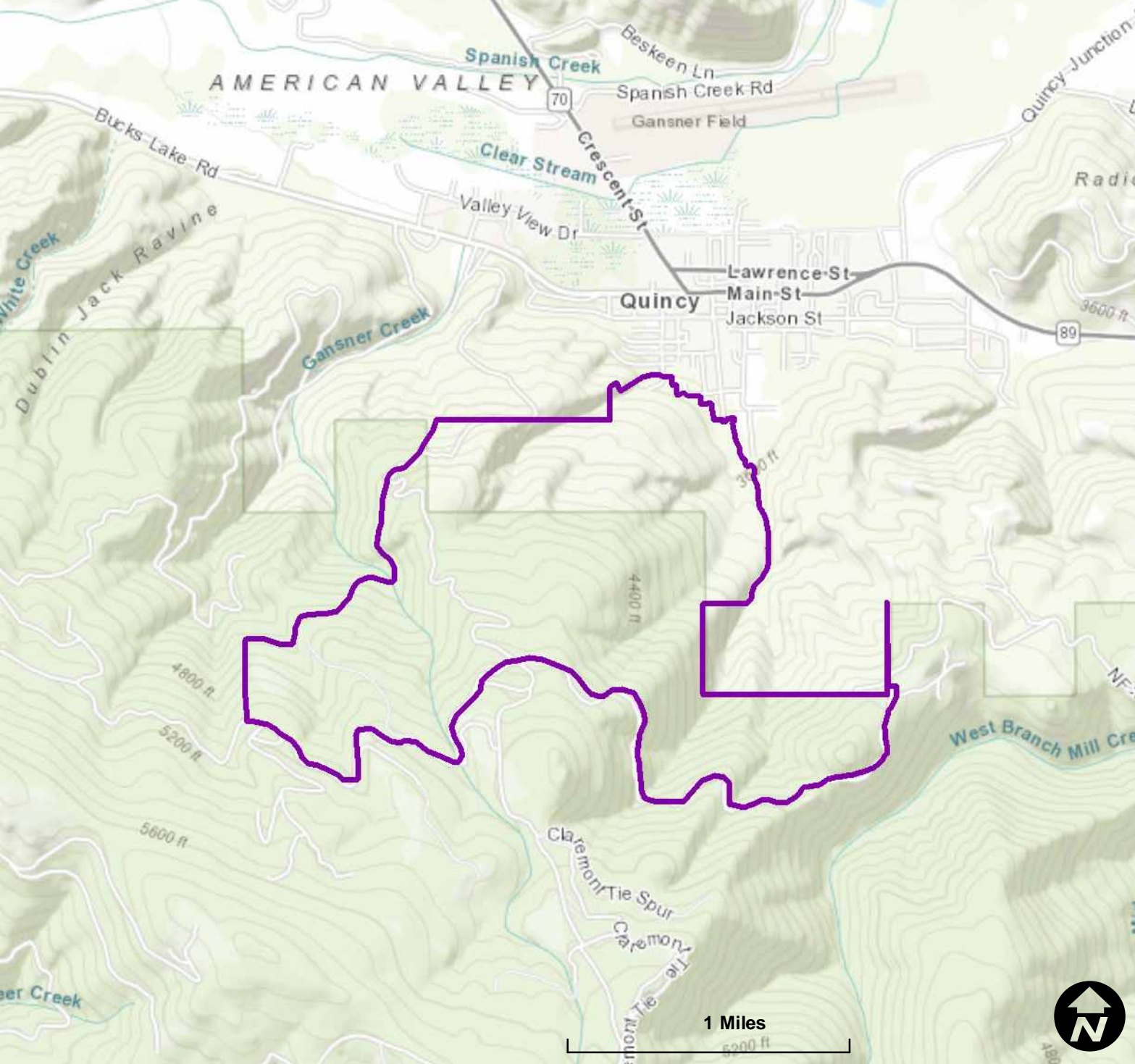
SUPPORT:

- American Valley Community Services District
- Feather River Stewardship Coalition
- Plumas National Forest, Mt Hough Ranger District
- Feather River Resource Conservation District

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.

- Number of Collaboratively Developed Plans and Assessments



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



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CEQA Documentation

SNC #: 1081

Project Title: Quincy Watershed Improvement Project

Applicant: Plumas Audubon Society

CEQA:

The project is Statutorily Exempt under Section 15262. Feasibility and Planning Studies and Categorically Exempt under Class 6 Section 15306. Information Collection.

- **Notice of Exemption:** See Below

Notice of Exemption

Form D

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 Plumas
520 Main Street Room 102
Quincy, CA 95971

Project Title: Quincy Watershed Improvement Project (SNC #1081)

Project Location - Specific:

The approximately 665-acre project area is located within the upper Feather River watershed in Plumas County. The project area is bound by the town of Quincy to the north and the 2017 Minerva Fire footprint to the south-southwest. The eastern border of the project area abuts Soper-Wheeler logging company lands. Landowners within the project site include the Plumas National Forest and American Valley Community Service District.

Project Location – City: south of Quincy Project Location – County: Plumas

Description of Nature, Purpose and Beneficiaries of Project:

The Sierra Nevada Conservancy would provide funding in the amount of \$99,997 to the Plumas Audubon Society to complete a CEQA and NEPA study for fuels reduction via hand thinning, piling, and underburning. Initial planning will require wildlife, archaeology, soils, botany, and forestry surveys in addition to preparation of NEPA and CEQA documents. This planning phase is the first step towards initiating a fuels reduction project within the Wildland Urban Interface near the town of Quincy.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: Sierra Nevada Conservancy

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: Plumas Audubon Society

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: Section 15306, "Information Collection"
- Statutory Exemptions. State code number: Section 15262, "Feasibility and Planning Studies"

Reasons why project is exempt:

This is a planning project involving the preparation of environmental compliance documents; it does not involve physical alterations to the environment. Specific actions include completing resource surveys and preparation NEPA and CEQA documents that evaluate future possible actions. Future fuel reduction activities have not been approved, and the completion of these environmental documents will not have a legally binding effect on future activities.

Lead Agency Contact Person: Shannon Ciotti Area Code/Telephone/Extension: (530) 823-4689

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: _____ Date: _____ Title: _____

- Signed by Lead Agency Date received for filing at OPR: _____
- Signed by Applicant

Revised 2005