

STATE OF CALIFORNIA SIERRA NEVADA CONSERVANCY

Sierra Nevada Conservancy Watershed Improvement Grant Program

SNC ID Number: 1124

Applicant: Modoc Resource Conservation District

Project Title: Dry Creek Ecological Site Watershed Restoration Plan

Project Category: Two

SNC Subregion: North

County(ies): Modoc

Funding Amount Requested: \$97,400

Funding Amount Recommended: \$97,400

Total Project Cost: \$135,400

Final Score: 80

PROJECT SCOPE / DESCRIPTION

The Dry Creek Ecological Site Watershed Restoration Plan is a Category Two project located in the center of the Warner Mountains, an 85-mile long mountain range in eastern Modoc County. Situated approximately 12 miles east of Alturas, the county seat, the project spans 6,630 acres across Modoc National Forest and private lands. The Modoc Resource Conservation District (MRCD) is the grant applicant.

This planning project will develop an ecologically-based watershed restoration plan and provide recommendations to help restore the health of the conifer forest, sagebrush upland, and meadow riparian sites on Forest Service and private lands within the Dry Creek Basin analysis area. These treatment recommendations will build on the results of prior and upcoming juniper removal work funded by the National Resources Conservation Services (NRCS) to consider potential opportunities for increasing pine/fir stands and improving upland shrub habitat and riparian areas to reflect historical conditions. Assessments will be completed to support CEQA/NEPA analysis on four sites within the project area. The plan will also explore various options of using juniper as a biofuel and other wood products.

The project is part of a larger restoration effort spearheaded by the Upper Pit River Integrated Regional Water Management Plan (UPRIRWMP). NRCS has accomplished juniper removal on more than 1,000 acres within the project area and is scheduled to

accomplish an additional 1,000 acres over the next three years. This is the first project that SNC has considered for funding in the Warner Mountains.

The Modoc Resource Conservation District is considered a special district under Division 9 of the California Public Resources Code. It currently has one existing grant agreement with SNC and has successfully completed two previous SNC grants. The Modoc National Forest encompasses over half of the project area and is committed to ecological restoration.

Project partners and contributors include NRCS (\$10,000), U.S. Forest Service (\$8,000), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (\$4,000), California Deer Association (\$8,000), and private landowners (\$4,000), in addition to the MRCD's in-kind match (\$4,000) for a collective match of \$38,000. The project also leverages the work of the organizations and agencies that make up the Upper Pit IRWM Group which includes downstream beneficiaries of the project such as the City of Alturas, Pit River Tribe, and Warm Springs Irrigation District.

The Dry Creek Ecological Site project is in the headwaters of the Upper Pit River Watershed. Dry and Gleason Creeks, both located within the project area, flow into Parker Creek and then continue to Lake Shasta and the Sacramento River. The Pit River provides 30% of the yearly flow into Shasta Lake. Downstream beneficiaries include any irrigators and ranches (including the XL ranch on tribal land) who use the water primarily for native grass hay production and wild rice. Consistent with the goals of the Sierra Nevada Watershed Improvement Program and Propositions 1 and 68, the implemented projects will result in vegetative changes that will slow snow melt, prolong spring runoff, and allow more water to infiltrate into the soil benefiting ground water recharge.

PROJECT SCHEDULE

PROJECT TASKS / DELIVERABLES	TIMELINE
Initial pre-selection of assessment sites	January 2020
Complete selection of assessment sites and site characteristics	April 2020
Complete site assessments on 12 juniper cleared areas	July 2020
Complete site assessments on 13 planned juniper removal areas	October 2020
Complete NEPA/CEQA on 4 projects	December 2021
Complete recommendations for non-assessed pine/fir-juniper areas	December 2021
SNC Progress Reports	Every 6 months
SNC Final report	December 2021
Estimated Project Completion Date	January 1, 2022

PROJECT COSTS

BUDGET CATEGORIES	SNC FUNDING
Project Costs:	
Project Management	\$21,000
Specialists	\$51,000
Travel	\$5,000
Materials and Supplies	\$5,000
Reporting, Performance Measures	\$4,000
Administrative:	
Administrative Costs	\$11,400
TOTAL:	\$ 97,400

PROJECT LETTERS OF SUPPORT / OPPOSITION

SUPPORT:

- Weber Ranch/Warren Weber, Landowner
- The Swasey Family Trust/Scott Swasey, Landowner
- Patricia Neubert, Landowner
- Nancy East, Landowner
- California Deer Association
- Natural Resources Conservation Service
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program, Modoc National Wildlife Refuge
- U.S. Forest Service – Modoc National Forest
- Upper Pit River Integrated Regional Water Management Group

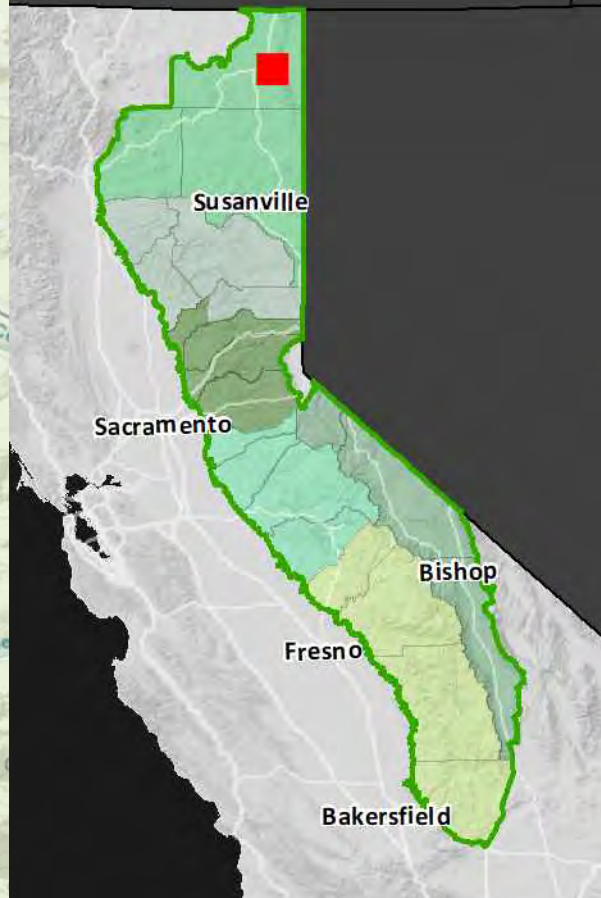
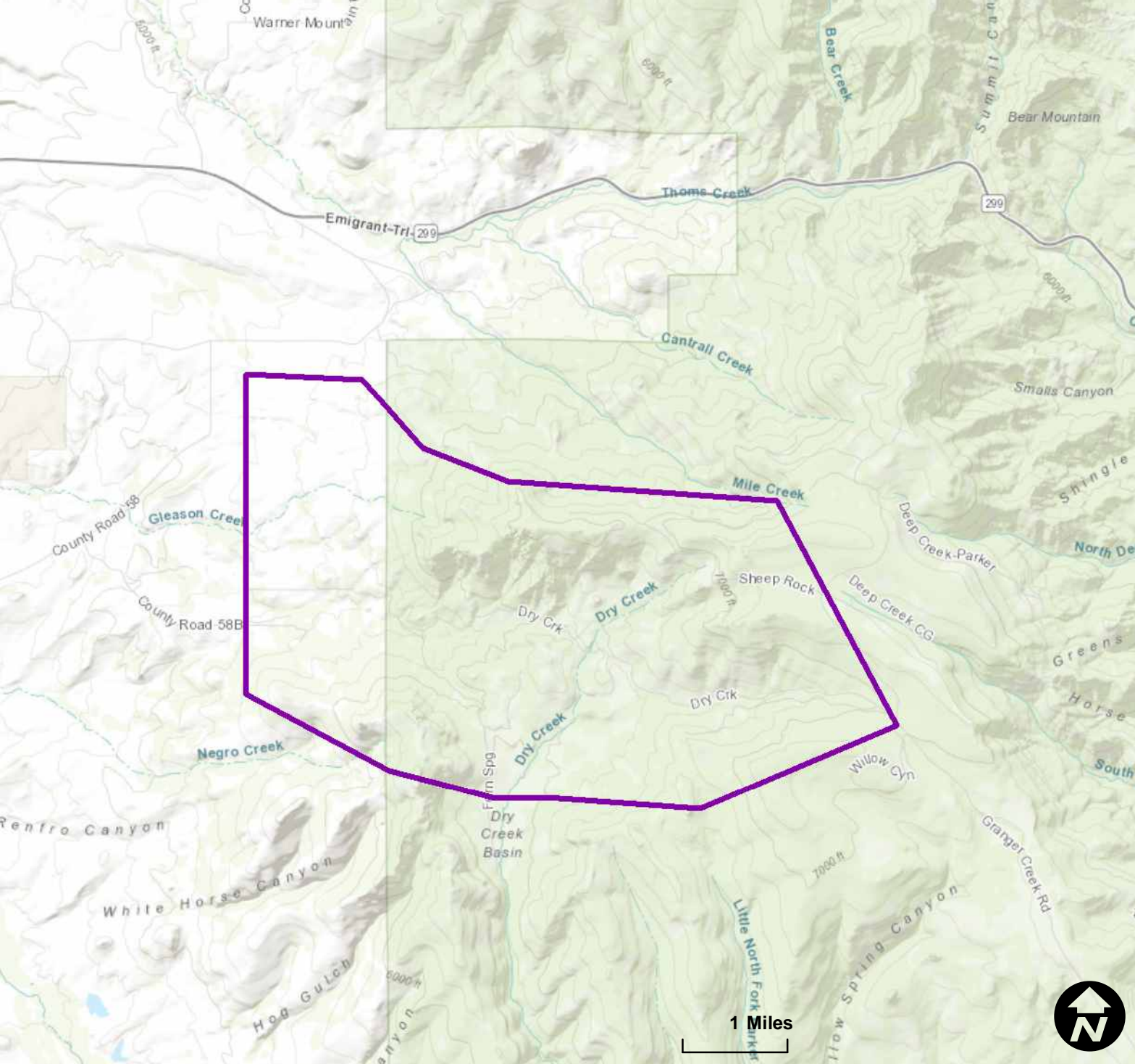
OPPOSITION:









- 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.

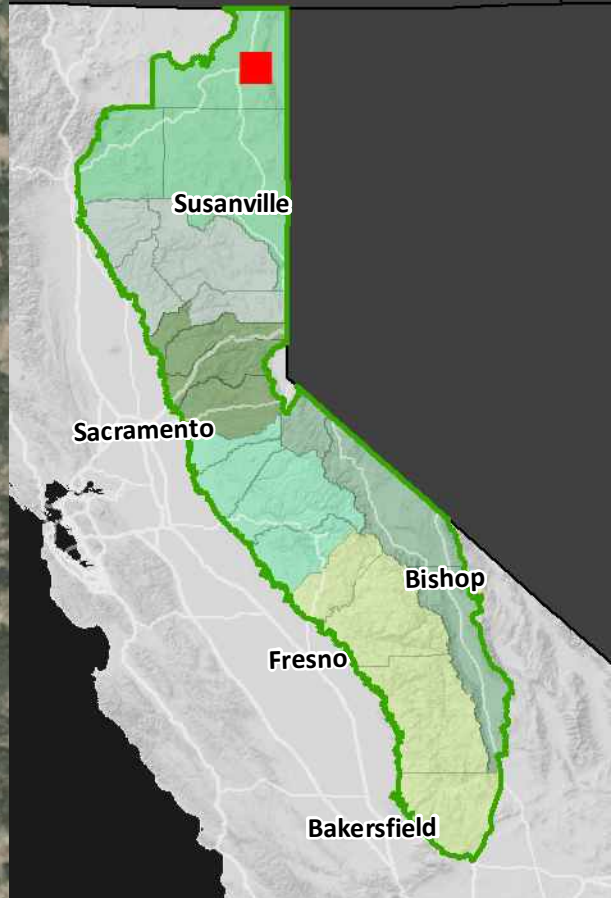
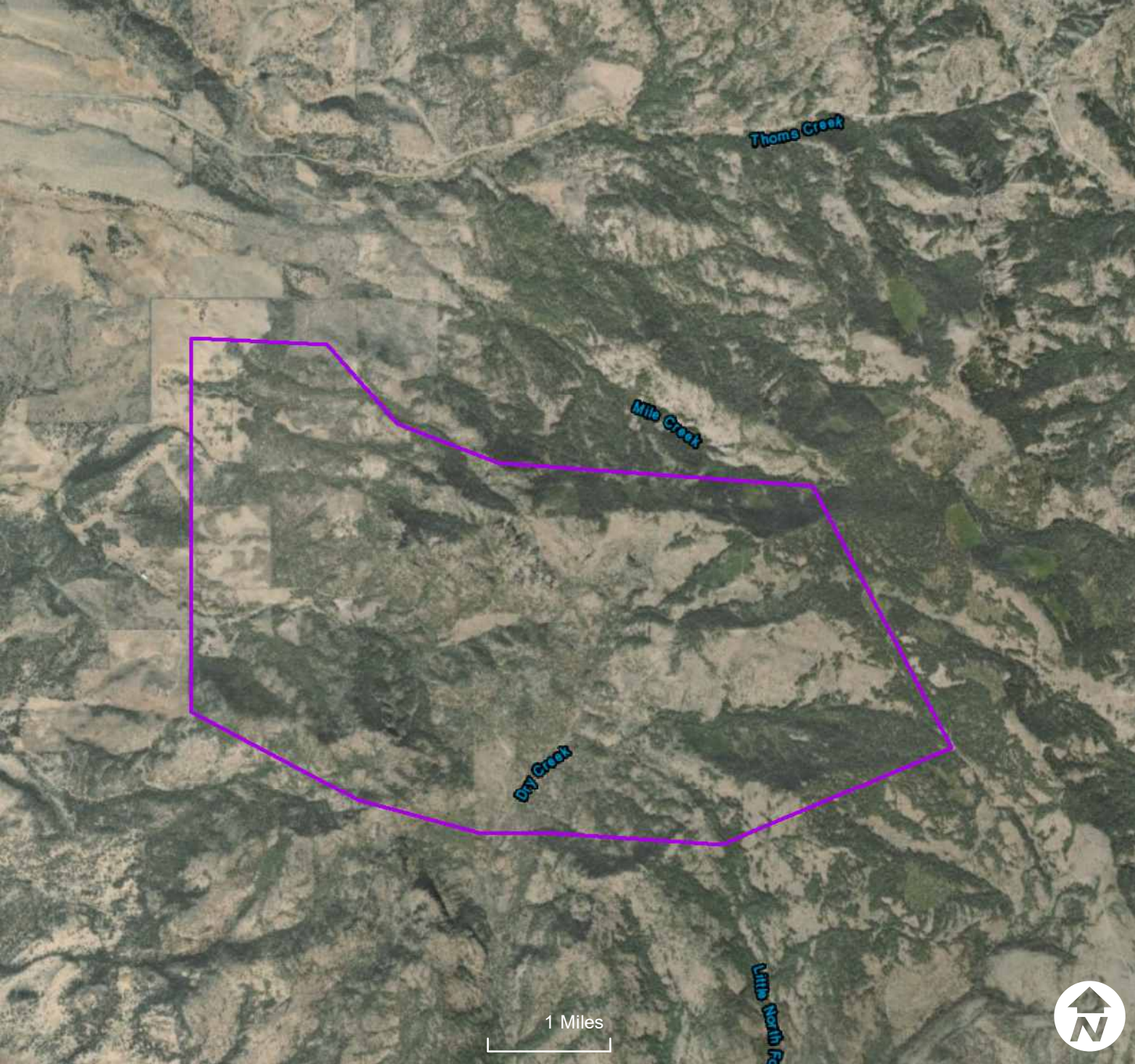
- Number of Collaboratively Developed Plans and Assessments











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

Dry Creek Ecological Site-Watershed Restoration Plan

Modoc RCD



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

Dry Creek Ecological Site-Watershed Restoration Plan

Modoc RCD

CEQA Documentation

SNC #: 1124

Project Title: Dry Creek Ecological Site-Watershed Restoration Plan

Applicant: Modoc Resource Conservation District

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

County Clerk
County of Modoc
108 E. Modoc Street
Alturas, CA 96101

(Address)

Project Title: Dry Creek Ecological Site-Watershed Restoration Plan (SNC #1124)

Project Location - Specific:

The 6,630-acre project area is located in eastern Modoc County, northeast of Alturas within the Modoc National Forest. The project area also includes private lands. The project site is located within the headwaters of the Upper Pit River Watershed.

Project Location - City: East of Alturas Project Location - County: Modoc

Description of Nature, Purpose and Beneficiaries of Project:

The Sierra Nevada Conservancy would provide funding in the amount of \$97,400 to the Modoc Resource Conservation District to complete site assessments and surveys, restoration design, archaeology and biological surveys, CEQA/NEPA documentation, and permit applications. The planning efforts will develop a watershed restoration plan that focuses on achieving a healthy, diverse vegetative complex by encouraging plant species that are part of the ecological site description to occupy areas previously dominated by juniper. The plan will identify landscape restoration recommendations and develop four initial projects that could be implemented in the near term.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: Sierra Nevada Conservancy

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: Modoc Resource Conservation District

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 project site surveys, restoration design, preparation of NEPA and CEQA compliance documents, and acquisition of permits for future restoration projects. The future restoration projects 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