

SIERRA NEVADA  
CONSERVANCY

## SNC Governing Board Meeting

July 15, 2021

This meeting will be  
held online.

BOARD MEETING





## Board Meeting Agenda July 15, 2021

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### Board Meeting

**9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. (End time is approximate)**

Pursuant to Executive Order N-29-20 issued by Governor Gavin Newsom on March 17, 2020, certain provisions of the Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act are suspended due to a State of Emergency in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Consistent with this Executive Order, the July 2021 Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC) Governing Board Meeting will be conducted virtually through the Zoom Webinar Platform. Members of the public may join the meeting using either of the following steps:

[Join the webinar](#)

Or

Dial either of these numbers and enter the Conference Code to join the meeting by telephone:

Dial:

USA 636 651 3142 US Toll

USA 877 402 9757 US Toll-free

Conference code: 347291

Meeting Materials are available on the [SNC Board Meetings page](https://sierranevada.ca.gov/our-board/board-meetings/) (<https://sierranevada.ca.gov/our-board/board-meetings/>). Members of the public can make comments on agenda items during the meeting by using either method of joining the meeting – virtually or telephonically – and by following the moderator’s directions on how to indicate their interest in speaking. Public comment will be taken at the appropriate time during each agenda item and during the Public Comment agenda item at the end of the meeting for non-agenda items. Additional information on ways to provide public comments on agenda items is available on the SNC Board Meetings page.

For additional information, please contact Ms. Armstrong at (530) 823-4700, toll free at (877) 257-1212, or via email to [tristyn.armstrong@sierranevada.ca.gov](mailto:tristyn.armstrong@sierranevada.ca.gov).

For assistance with joining the meeting by telephone or the Zoom meeting link, please contact [SNC Technical Support](mailto:ITSupport@sierranevada.ca.gov) (ITSupport@sierranevada.ca.gov). Any person who has a disability and requires reasonable accommodation to participate in this public meeting should contact Ms. Armstrong no later than five (5) working days prior to meeting.



**1. Call to Order**

**2. Roll Call**

**3. Executive Officer's Report (INFORMATIONAL)**

**4. Immediate Action Wildfire and Forest Resilience Funding Grant Award Recommendations (ACTION)**

The Board may take action to adopt California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) findings and award grants to the following projects:

- a) [#1300](#), the West Fork Carson and Monitor Pass Project in Alpine County, in the amount of \$1,401,520 to the National Forest Foundation with a CEQA Notice of Exemption.
- b) [#1305](#), the Thompson Peak Initiative Bootsole Forest and Watershed Restoration Project in Lassen and Plumas Counties, in the amount of \$3,671,725 to the Lassen Fire Safe Council, Inc. with a CEQA Notice of Exemption.
- c) [#1312](#), the Concow Resilience Project: Implementation project in Butte County, in the amount of \$2,127,857 to the Butte County Resource Conservation District with a CEQA Notice of Exemption.
- d) [#1314](#), the Sierra Brooks - Smithneck Wildland Urban Interface Fuels Reduction Project in Sierra County, in the amount of \$1,075,059 to the Sierra Valley Resource Conservation District with a CEQA Notice of Exemption.
- e) [#1317](#), the Quincy Wildfire Protection Project in Plumas County, in the amount of \$433,280 to the Plumas County Fire Safe Council with a CEQA Notice of Exemption.
- f) [#1319](#), the Mohawk Valley Wildfire Resilience Project in Plumas County, in the amount of \$1,022,082 to the Feather River Resource Conservation District with a CEQA Notice of Exemption.
- g) [#1322](#), the Michigan Bluff Community Protection Project in Placer County, in the amount of \$3,042,670 to the National Forest Foundation with a CEQA Notice of Exemption.
- h) [#1325](#), the Twofer Pillikin Fuels Reduction Project in El Dorado County, in the amount of \$1,255,225 to the Great Basin Institute with a CEQA Notice of Exemption.
- i) [#1327](#), the Trestle Mastication project in El Dorado County, in the amount of \$370,300 to the National Wild Turkey Federation with a CEQA Notice of Exemption.
- j) [#1328](#), the Wagner Ridge Fuel Break project in Mariposa County, in the amount of \$607,782 to the Mariposa County Fire Safe Council with a CEQA Notice of Exemption.



- k) [#1330](#), the Tiger Creek Fuel Break Enhancement project in Amador County, in the amount of \$220,200 to the Amador Fire Safe Council with a CEQA Notice of Exemption.
- l) [#1337](#), the Middle Fork American River Watershed Restoration Project in Placer County, in the amount of \$1,000,000 to the Placer County Water Agency with a CEQA Notice of Exemption.
- m) [#1338](#), the Rim Fire Plantation Thin / Biomass Treatment project in Tuolumne County, in the amount of \$1,368,000 to the Stanislaus National Forest with a CEQA Notice of Exemption.
- n) [#1341](#), the Big Chico Creek Forest Resilience Project in Butte County, in the amount of \$1,000,000 to the Butte County Fire Safe Council with a CEQA Notice of Determination as a Responsible Agency.
- o) [#1343](#), the Forbestown Forest Resilience Project in Butte County, in the amount of \$500,000 to the Butte County Fire Safe Council with a CEQA Notice of Exemption.

#### **5. Boardmembers' Comments**

Provide an opportunity for members of the Board to make comments on items not on the agenda.

#### **6. Public Comments**

Provide an opportunity for members of the public who have not previously addressed the Board to comment on non-agenda items. The Board Chair reserves the right to limit the time allocated for each person providing public comment.

#### **7. Adjournment**

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**Closed Session:** Following, or at any time during, the meeting, the Board may recess or adjourn to closed session to consider pending or potential litigation, property negotiations, or personnel-related matters. Authority: Government Code Section 11126



**Sierra Nevada Conservancy**  
**July 15, 2021**

## **Agenda Item 4: Immediate Action Wildfire and Forest Resilience Funding Grant Award Recommendations**

### **Background**

In January 2021, Governor Gavin Newsom proposed a \$1 billion funding package to address wildfire and forest resilience priorities. In April 2021, \$20 million in General Fund was appropriated from the 2020 Budget Act to the Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC) as part of an early action implementation strategy to support projects that build the state's resilience to wildfires, increase pace and scale of ecological forest management, and reduce fire risk. Additionally, the governor's Wildfire and Forest Resilience Task Force identified these priorities in its action plan, "California's Wildfire and Forest Resilience Action Plan: A Comprehensive Strategy," released January 2021.

In anticipation of the early action dollars, the SNC Board approved the 2021 Immediate Action Wildfire and Forest Resilience Directed Grant Program Guidelines (Guidelines) at the March 2021 Board meeting. The program focus is to implement forest health projects that address wildfire recovery and resilience and result in a combination of multiple watershed, ecosystem, and community benefits. Examples of such benefits include reduced likelihood of high-intensity fire and the negative consequences of such fires; protection and enhancement of natural resources, habitat, and recreation; improved air and water quality; increased carbon sequestration and reduced greenhouse gas emissions; and supporting regional economies. The program has an emphasis on shovel-ready projects, which can start implementation in 2021 and have direct benefits related to this and next year's fire seasons.

The SNC announced the program immediately upon the appropriation of funds. The program had a condensed timeline in the interest of recommending awards during the summer of 2021 to enable work starting on the ground as soon as possible. The SNC released a request for proposals on April 13 and began evaluating all proposals submitted by May 1 for consideration at a July Board meeting.

By May 1, SNC received 32 project proposals requesting over \$38 million dollars. This was double the amount of funding available, as the budget appropriation provided \$19 million for local assistance, plus funds for SNC support. Please see the table below for a summary of proposals received by Subregion.



*2021 Immediate Action Wildfire and Forest Resilience Grant Program:  
Proposals Received*

Subregion	Number of Proposals Received	Amount of Funding Requested
North	5	\$7,080,795
North Central	12	\$12,289,163
Central	7	\$10,336,095
South Central	5	\$4,145,963
South	1	\$1,171,884
East	2	\$3,271,520
Total	32	\$38,295,420

Proposals received were reviewed for environmental compliance and evaluated based on the scoring criteria published in the Guidelines. Notifications of projects under consideration were sent to the appropriate tribal representatives, as well as water agencies, county planning departments, and SNC Board Subregional representatives.

**Current Status**

The SNC staff is currently recommending 15 projects totaling \$19,095,700 for treatment on 11,669 acres across the Sierra Nevada. While this is slightly over the \$19 million originally dedicated to local assistance, a small transfer of funds intended for SNC support to local assistance will allow for fully funding these 15 projects. All due diligence is complete and environmental compliance is in place.

Please see the table below for a summary of grant awards recommended in the 2021 Immediate Action Wildfire and Forest Resilience Grant Program. Summaries of and details on each project follow the table.



*2021 Immediate Action Wildfire and Forest Resilience Grant Program: Recommended Projects.*

<b>Project Number</b>	<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Applicant</b>	<b>Subregion</b>	<b>County</b>	<b>Acres to be Treated</b>	<b>Funding Requested</b>
1300	West Fork Carson and Monitor Pass Project	The National Forest Foundation	East	Alpine	494	\$1,401,520
1305	Thompson Peak Initiative Bootsole Forest and Watershed Restoration Project	Lassen Fire Safe Council, Inc.	North	Lassen, Plumas	3,770	\$3,671,725
1312	Concow Resilience Project: Implementation	Butte County Resource Conservation District	North Central	Butte	784	\$2,127,857
1314	Sierra Brooks - Smithneck Wildland Urban Interface Fuels Reduction Project	Sierra Valley Resource Conservation District	North Central	Sierra	723	\$1,075,059
1317	Quincy Wildfire Protection Project	Plumas County Fire Safe Council	North Central	Plumas	151	\$433,280
1319	Mohawk Valley Wildfire Resilience Project	Feather River Resource Conservation District	North Central	Plumas	762	\$1,022,082
1322	Michigan Bluff Community Protection Project	The National Forest Foundation	Central	Placer	1,266	\$3,042,670
1325	Twofer Pillikin Fuels Reduction Project	Great Basin Institute	Central	El Dorado	1,300	\$1,255,225

Sierra Nevada Conservancy

Agenda Item 4: Immediate Action Wildfire and Forest Resilience Funding Grant Award

Recommendations

Page 4

1327	Trestle Mastication	National Wild Turkey Federation	Central	El Dorado	317	\$370,300
1328	Wagner Ridge Fuel Break	Mariposa County Fire Safe Council	South Central	Mariposa	213	\$607,782
1330	Tiger Creek Fuel Break Enhancement	Amador Fire Safe Council	South Central	Amador	41	\$220,200
1337	Middle Fork American River Watershed Restoration Project	Placer County Water Agency	Central	Placer	494	\$1,000,000
1338	Rim Fire Plantation Thin/Biomass Treatment	Stanislaus National Forest	South Central	Tuolumne	684	\$1,368,000
1341	Big Chico Creek Forest Resilience Project	Butte County Fire Safe Council	North Central	Butte	451	\$1,000,000
1343	Forbestown Forest Resilience Project	Butte County Fire Safe Council	North Central	Butte	219	\$500,000



***4a) Project #1300***

***West Fork Carson and Monitor Pass Project***

National Forest Foundation

\$1,401,520

Alpine County

The National Forest Foundation, in partnership with the Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest (HTNF), will implement 494 acres of hazardous fuel reduction and aspen restoration treatments in Alpine County, in the Hope Valley and Pickett's Junction area at the intersection of Highway 88 and 89 as well as along Highway 89 near Monitor Pass. The project area is in Alpine County, at the headwaters of the Carson River watershed. This project is one component of a larger landscape strategy on the HTNF-Carson District (District) and has been identified as a priority by the District due to the extensive fuel loading, risk of loss/conversion of aspen stands, and proximity to high-value resources. Treatment outcomes will include reduced fuel loading, stand density, and conifer encroachment in aspen and meadow habitats, resulting in improved forest health and fire resiliency, improved hydrologic benefits, lower risk of high-intensity wildfire, and restored high-value aspen communities. Additionally, this project will increase local capacity and the pace and scale of forest treatments in Alpine County and within SNC's East Subregion by supporting new partnerships and developing local workforce.

CEQA Compliance: The project is statutorily exempt under Public Resources Code Section 4799.05(d)(1) for projects undertaken on federal lands to reduce the risk of high-severity wildfire that have been reviewed under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, under specified circumstances.

[Access the Project Details and the Notice of Exemption \(Project #1300\)](#)

***4b) Project #1305***

***Thompson Peak Initiative Bootsole Forest and Watershed Restoration Project***

Lassen Fire Safe Council, Inc.

\$3,671,725

Lassen and Plumas Counties

The Lassen Fire Safe Council Inc., in partnership with Plumas National Forest (PNF), will implement the 3,770-acre Thompson Peak Initiative Bootsole Forest and Watershed Restoration Project located within the PNF, southwest of the communities of Janesville and Milford and north of Antelope Lake. The purpose of the project is to reduce hazardous fuels, reduce risk to communities and the landscape from large, severe wildfires, restore forest health and resilience, improve wildlife habitat, and improve watershed condition. The project is located in Lassen and Plumas Counties, and is a component of the large landscape-scale Thompson Peak Initiative (TPI) covering

approximately 92,713 acres. The project has been developed under the community-led TPI, with partners including PNF, Susanville Indian Rancheria, California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, Bureau of Land Management, Lassen County, Honey Lake Valley Resource Conservation District, and the Janesville and Milford Fire Protection Districts.

California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Compliance: The project is statutorily exempt under Public Resources Code Section 4799.05(d)(1) for projects undertaken on federal lands to reduce the risk of high-severity wildfire that have been reviewed under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, under specified circumstances.

[Access the Project Details and the Notice of Exemption \(Project #1305\)](#)

#### ***4c) Project #1312***

##### ***Concow Resilience Project: Implementation***

Butte County Resource Conservation District

\$2,127,857

Butte County

The Concow Resilience Project is in the Wildland Urban Interface of Butte County where dense conifer forest burned at high severity in the 2018 Camp Fire, resulting in almost 100 percent forest loss. The Butte County Resource Conservation District will implement the project on United States Forest Service lands that surround the rural community of Concow, 25 miles north of Oroville. The project will restore 784 acres of severely burned Sierra foothill forestland using methods that will make future fire behavior less severe and result in a climate-resilient, carbon-stable woodland. Project collaborators seek to actively manage the project area toward open, oak-dominated woodlands, conditions that are consistent with the pre-settlement landscape in addition to being drought- and fire-resilient. The project is part of the Upper Feather River Integrated Regional Water Management Plan and is linked the post-Camp Fire strategy of climate-resilient reforestation. It was developed with an SNC Forest Health planning grant, in partnership with Plumas National Forest, the Pacific Southwest Research Station, American Forests, and Konkow Valley Cultural Preservation LLC.

CEQA Compliance: The project is statutorily exempt under Public Resources Code Section 4799.05(d)(1) for projects undertaken on federal lands to reduce the risk of high-severity wildfire that have been reviewed under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, under specified circumstances.

[Access the Project Details and the Notice of Exemption \(Project #1312\)](#)

**4d) Project #1314**

***Sierra Brooks - Smithneck Wildland Urban Interface Fuels Reduction Project***

Sierra Valley Resource Conservation District  
\$1,075,059  
Sierra County

The Sierra Valley Resource Conservation District will reduce heavy fuel loads on 723 acres of United States Forest Service and California Department of Fish and Wildlife lands adjacent to the Sierra Brooks Subdivision and one mile southeast of the community of Loyalton in Sierra County. Implementation of proposed treatments will benefit wildlife, including critical winter range for the Truckee-Loyalton deer herd, increase forest resilience and resistance to destructive wildfire, disease and insect infestation, and protect the community of, and water supply for, Sierra Brooks. The long-term goal of the project is to return the landscape to a condition within the range of natural variability, allowing for prescribed underburns that will maintain healthy forest conditions. Treatments were identified as high priorities for fuels reduction in the Sierra County Community Wildfire Protection Plan, by the Sierraville Ranger District and the Sierra Brooks Firewise Community.

CEQA Compliance: The project is statutorily exempt under Public Resources Code Section 4799.05(d)(1) for projects undertaken on federal lands to reduce the risk of high-severity wildfire that have been reviewed under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, under specified circumstances and categorically exempt under Section 15304 Class 4 Minor Alterations to Land.

[Access the Project Details and the Notice of Exemption \(Project #1314\)](#)

**4e) Project #1317**

***Quincy Wildfire Protection Project***

Plumas County Fire Safe Council  
\$433,280  
Plumas County

The Plumas County Fire Safe Council will provide hazardous fuel reduction on 151 acres of private land southwest of Quincy in northeastern California. The Quincy Wildfire Protection Project's primary purpose is to reduce wildfire risk to the community of Quincy and its critical infrastructure, and to create a fire-resistant forest structure. The project is directly adjacent to residential neighborhoods, the Plumas District Hospital, and the SNC-funded Quincy Watershed Improvement Project, which includes the American Valley Community Services District's primary water source for Quincy. The project is included in the Plumas Communities Wildfire Protection Plan and addresses the Quincy Firewise Action Plan priority to "reduce vegetative material along roadway right of way." The project area is within a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone in a



Disadvantaged Community. Partners include the CHY Company, Plumas Corporation, and Plumas County Department of Public Works.

CEQA Compliance: The project is categorically exempt under Section 15304 Class 4 Minor Alterations to Land.

[Access the Project Details and the Notice of Exemption \(Project #1317\)](#)

**4f) Project #1319**

***Mohawk Valley Wildfire Resilience Project***

Feather River Resource Conservation District

\$1,022,082

Plumas County

The Feather River Resource Conservation District, in partnership with the landowners, will lead a project to treat 762 acres of hazardous fuel loads on Plumas National Forest and Plumas Eureka Community Services District land. The project is located in Plumas County along the Middle Fork Feather River and the California Highway 70/89 corridor near the communities of Blairsden, Graeagle, Johnsville, and Plumas Pines. The primary purpose of the project is to reduce hazardous fuel loads in overstocked forest stands to create conditions that are more resilient to wildfire. Treatment units were identified through a collaborative plan development process funded through an SNC grant under the Regional Forest and Fire Capacity Program. The project has been identified as a regional priority due to its location, current ecological condition, ability to impact water resources, wildlife, and wildfire resiliency as well as its proximity to critical infrastructure including water treatment centers.

CEQA Compliance: The project is statutorily exempt under Public Resources Code Section 4799.05(d)(1) for projects undertaken on federal lands to reduce the risk of high-severity wildfire that have been reviewed under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, under specified circumstances and categorically exempt under Section 15304 Class 4 Minor Alterations to Land.

[Access the Project Details and the Notice of Exemption \(Project #1319\)](#)

**4g) Project #1322**

***Michigan Bluff Community Protection Project***

National Forest Foundation

\$3,042,670

Placer County

The National Forest Foundation, in partnership with the American River Ranger District of the Tahoe National Forest, will treat 1,266 acres of hazardous fuels on United States Forest Service land around the community of Michigan Bluff in Placer County. The

Project immediately surrounds the rural community of Michigan Bluff and is about three miles east of the larger community of Foresthill. It is near the top of a ridge on the north side of the Middle Fork American River above Oxbow Reservoir and the Ralston Powerhouse, and will help protect a major tributary of Folsom Lake. Due to fuels, terrain, and weather patterns, the project area is classified by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) as a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone. This project is currently the top priority of the Tahoe National Forest.

CEQA Compliance: The project is statutorily exempt under Public Resources Code Section 4799.05(d)(1) for projects undertaken on federal lands to reduce the risk of high-severity wildfire that have been reviewed under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, under specified circumstances.

[Access the Project Details and the Notice of Exemption \(Project #1322\)](#)

#### **4h) Project #1325**

##### ***Twofer Pillikin Fuels Reduction Project***

Great Basin Institute

\$1,255,225

El Dorado County

The Great Basin Institute, in partnership with the Eldorado National Forest (ENF) and the Bonneville Foundation, will treat 1,300 acres of land managed by the ENF along Highway 50. The project area is located between Pollock Pines and Kyburz in El Dorado County, midway between Placerville and Echo Summit. The Twofer project will help protect the headwaters of the American River, and water and power infrastructure managed by the El Dorado Irrigation District and Sacramento Municipal Utility District, from catastrophic wildfire. This effort is part of the Crystal Basin Focus Area, a large watershed encompassing Union Valley and Ice House Reservoirs, Alder Ridge, and a portion of the South Fork American River. The Crystal Basin Focus Area stems from the South Fork American River (SOFAR) Cohesive Strategy and is supported by a broad range of partners within SOFAR.

CEQA Compliance: The project is statutorily exempt under Public Resources Code Section 4799.05(d)(1) for projects undertaken on federal lands to reduce the risk of high-severity wildfire that have been reviewed under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, under specified circumstances.

[Access the Project Details and the Notice of Exemption \(Project #1325\)](#)

**4i) Project #1327**

***Trestle Mastication***

National Wild Turkey Federation

\$370,300

El Dorado County

The National Wild Turkey Federation is partnering with the Placerville Ranger District of the El Dorado National Forest to treat 317 acres for fuels reduction as part of the larger 16,000-acre Trestle Project. This specific project site is situated south and east of the community of Grizzly Flats in El Dorado County about 15 miles southeast of Placerville. Grizzly Flats is rural community with approximately 1,200 residents and is completely enveloped within the Wildland Urban Interface and surrounded on 90 percent of its borders by United States Forest Service land. It is considered a Community at Risk. The purpose of the project is to improve forest health and wildfire resiliency around the community of Grizzly Flats and to protect surrounding assets.

CEQA Compliance: The project is statutorily exempt under Public Resources Code Section 4799.05(d)(1) for projects undertaken on federal lands to reduce the risk of high-severity wildfire that have been reviewed under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, under specified circumstances.

[Access the Project Details and the Notice of Exemption \(Project #1327\)](#)

**4j) Project #1328**

***Wagner Ridge Fuel Break***

Mariposa County Fire Safe Council

\$607,782

Mariposa County

The Mariposa County Fire Safe Council, in partnership with the landowners, will treat 213 acres across Stanislaus National Forest and Bureau of Land Management lands. The project will expand and widen a current fuel break that ties into the National Disaster Resiliency projects located on the Tuolumne County side of the ridgetop and lies on the watershed boundary between the Merced and Tuolumne River Watersheds. Tying in with other ongoing work and existing fuel breaks, the project will ultimately result in a 400-foot fuel break along the entirety of the ridgetop. This will improve the abilities of land managers and firefighting agencies to contain and suppress wildfires and protect nearby communities as well as forest and watershed resources. Project planning was completed with support from an SNC Forest Health planning grant. The Project is named in several strategic fuels plans and is a high priority project of the South West Interface Team collaborative.

CEQA Compliance: The project is statutorily exempt under Public Resources Code Section 4799.05(d)(1) for projects undertaken on federal lands to reduce the risk of

high-severity wildfire that have been reviewed under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, under specified circumstances.

[Access the Project Details and the Notice of Exemption \(Project #1328\)](#)

***4k) Project #1330***

***Tiger Creek Fuel Break Enhancement***

Amador Fire Safe Council

\$220,200

Amador County

The Amador Fire Safe Council, in partnership with the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), will reduce fuels on 41 acres of BLM land in eastern Amador County near the communities of Pioneer and Buckhorn. These 41 acres of steep terrain will connect the major units of the Tiger Creek Fuel Break Project, a completed SNC-funded fuel reduction project designed to protect mountain communities along Highway 88 and lands and infrastructure around Tiger Creek Reservoir. The project lies entirely within the Mokelumne River Watershed and has direct impact on Tiger Creek Reservoir. This project enhances the effectiveness of a previous 220-acre Tiger Creek Fuel Break Project and is part of a larger, 3000-acre fuel reduction strategy developed by the Amador Fuels Reduction Collaborative, which involves multiple partners including CAL FIRE, BLM, Eldorado National Forest, Sierra Pacific Industries, Pacific Gas & Electric, and other stakeholders in the region.

CEQA Compliance: The project is statutorily exempt under Public Resources Code Section 4799.05(d)(1) for projects undertaken on federal lands to reduce the risk of high-severity wildfire that have been reviewed under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, under specified circumstances.

[Access the Project Details and the Notice of Exemption \(Project #1330\)](#)

***4l) Project #1337***

***Middle Fork American River Watershed Restoration Project***

Placer County Water Agency

\$1,000,000

Placer County

Through participation in the French Meadows Partnership, Placer County Water Agency (PCWA) is partnering with Placer County and the Tahoe National Forest American River Ranger District (ARRD) to implement the Middle Fork American River Watershed Restoration Project in Placer County. This project will implement 494 acres of forest treatments on land managed by the ARRD adjacent to French Meadows Reservoir and in the upper Middle Fork American River watershed above it. This project is part of the ongoing 28,000-acre French Meadows Restoration Project, supported by SNC,



CAL FIRE, and United States Forest Service grants, among other funding. The outcome will be a landscape in an ecological condition that can support naturally occurring fires, while enhancing the region's water supply and habitat for critical species by improving forest structure. The project will help protect critical water infrastructure and reduce the risk of catastrophic wildfire in the upper watershed. Partners on the French Meadows Project include the Tahoe National Forest, Placer County, PCWA, The Nature Conservancy, and the American River Conservancy.

CEQA Compliance: The project is statutorily exempt under Public Resources Code Section 4799.05(d)(1) for projects undertaken on federal lands to reduce the risk of high-severity wildfire that have been reviewed under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, under specified circumstances.

[Access the Project Details and the Notice of Exemption \(Project #1337\)](#)

#### ***4m) Project #1338***

##### ***Rim Fire Plantation Thin / Biomass Treatment***

Stanislaus National Forest

\$1,368,000

Tuolumne County

The Stanislaus National Forest will thin 684 acres of pine plantation in southern Tuolumne County near the communities of Groveland and Greely Hill. The areas of pine plantation selected for this project burned at low or moderate severity within the 2013 Rim Fire, leaving a high density of live trees and excessive amounts of ground and surface fuels. The planned treatments will improve forest structure and increase resilience to wildfire, drought, and pest infestations. The treatment area is within the Wildland Urban Interface and will protect communities and public infrastructure. This project is an integral part of the overall Rim Fire Recovery effort. The Stanislaus National Forest will partner closely with the Yosemite Stanislaus Collaborative and the Mule Deer foundation to implement this project.

CEQA Compliance: The project is statutorily exempt under Public Resources Code Section 4799.05(d)(1) for projects undertaken on federal lands to reduce the risk of high-severity wildfire that have been reviewed under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, under specified circumstances, and under Executive Order B-23-13 relative to the implementation of the Federal Phase I Restoration Plan for the Rim Fire.

[Access the Project Details and the Notice of Exemption \(Project #1338\)](#)

***4n) Project #1341***

***Big Chico Creek Forest Resilience Project***

Butte County Fire Safe Council

\$1,000,000

Butte County

Butte County Fire Safe Council, in partnership with the Big Chico Creek Ecological Reserve (BCCER) and Grossman Family Trust, will reduce fuel loading and improve forest structure on 451 acres in northern Butte County adjacent to the community of Forest Ranch and close to the City of Chico and the community of Cohasset. This project was planned with support of an SNC Forest Health planning grant, is guided by the project's Forest Management Plan, and is supported by the local Community Wildfire Protection Plan. The treatments will reduce wildfire spread and intensity while retaining excellent habitat and water resource values. The project protects communities as well as the BCCER, an important educational resource for CSU, Chico, and the region.

CEQA Compliance: In April 2020, the Butte County Resource Conservation District completed an Initial Study / Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) for 1,500 acres, which includes the entire project area. In June 2020, the SNC Board reviewed the IS/MND and filed a Notice of Determination for a grant award on an earlier phase of the project. The SNC may now file a Notice of Determination as a Responsible Agency on the IS/MND for the remainder of the project.

[Access the Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration \(SCH 2020040195\)](#)

[Access the Project Details and the Notice of Determination \(Project #1341\)](#)

***4o) Project #1343***

***Forbestown Forest Resilience Project***

Butte County Fire Safe Council

\$500,000

Butte County

The Butte County Fire Safe Council (BCFSC) will treat a minimum of 219 acres of private lands in Clipper Mills adjacent to the Merry Mountain Village subdivision in eastern Butte County, spanning a ridgetop that divides the South Fork Feather River and Yuba River watersheds. The project's primary purpose is to prevent catastrophic wildfire by removing ladder fuels and thinning overstocked forests. Located within a CAL FIRE Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone and targeting five properties, the project is a priority due to its proximity to Grizzly Creek and Merry Mountain Village subdivision. The project is part of the CAL FIRE Butte Unit Community Wildfire Protection Plan for the Forbestown Ridge area and is included in the Butte County Local Hazard Mitigation Plan. The project was developed in consultation with multiple partners

including CAL FIRE, United States Forest Service, Forbestown Ridge Fire Safe Council/Firewise USA, Mooretown Rancheria, American Forest Foundation, and Merry Mountain Village USA Firewise Community. Partnership funding will be provided by the United States Forest Service Steves Fund, CAL FIRE California Climate Investments, and the Western States Landscape Scale Restoration Program.

CEQA Compliance: The project is categorically exempt under Section 15304 Class 4 Minor Alterations to Land.

[Access the Project Details and the Notice of Exemption \(Project #1343\)](#)

## **Next Steps**

Upon authorization by the Board, staff will file all adopted CEQA documentation and prepare agreements for each authorized grant.

Staff will continue consultation with proponents of projects that were not recommended for funding regarding additional project development and identification of alternate potential funding sources.

## **Recommendation**

**Staff recommends the Board:**

**4a. Authorize the Executive Officer to file a Notice of Exemption for the West Fork Carson and Monitor Pass Project (1300), authorize a grant award in the amount of \$1,401,520 to the National Forest Foundation, and authorize staff to enter into agreements necessary for project implementation.**

**4b. Authorize the Executive Officer to file a Notice of Exemption for the Thompson Peak Initiative Bootsole Forest and Watershed Restoration Project (1305), authorize a grant award in the amount of \$3,671,725 to the Lassen Fire Safe Council, Inc., and authorize staff to enter into agreements necessary for project implementation.**

**4c. Authorize the Executive Officer to file a Notice of Exemption for the Concow Resilience Project: Implementation project (1312), authorize a grant award in the amount of \$2,127,857 to the Butte County Resource Conservation District, and authorize staff to enter into agreements necessary for project implementation.**

**4d. Authorize the Executive Officer to file a Notice of Exemption for the Sierra Brooks - Smithneck Wildland Urban Interface Fuels Reduction Project (1314), authorize a grant award in the amount of \$1,075,059 to the Sierra Valley Resource Conservation District, and authorize staff to enter into agreements necessary for project implementation.**

**4e. Authorize the Executive Officer to file a Notice of Exemption for the Quincy Wildfire Protection Project (1317), authorize a grant award in the amount of \$433,280 to the Plumas County Fire Safe Council, and authorize staff to enter into agreements necessary for project implementation.**

**4f. Authorize the Executive Officer to file a Notice of Exemption for the Mohawk Valley Wildfire Resilience Project (1319), authorize a grant award in the amount of \$1,022,082 to the Feather River Resource Conservation District, and authorize staff to enter into agreements necessary for project implementation.**

**4g. Authorize the Executive Officer to file a Notice of Exemption for the Michigan Bluff Community Protection Project (1322), authorize a grant award in the amount of \$3,042,670 to the National Forest Foundation, and authorize staff to enter into agreements necessary for project implementation.**

**4h. Authorize the Executive Officer to file a Notice of Exemption for the Twofer Pillikin Fuels Reduction Project (1325), authorize a grant award in the amount of \$1,255,225 to the Great Basin Institute, and authorize staff to enter into agreements necessary for project implementation.**

**4i. Authorize the Executive Officer to file a Notice of Exemption for the Trestle Mastication project (1327), authorize a grant award in the amount of \$370,300 to the National Wild Turkey Federation, and authorize staff to enter into agreements necessary for project implementation.**

**4j. Authorize the Executive Officer to file a Notice of Exemption for the Wagner Ridge Fuel Break project (1328), authorize a grant award in the amount of \$607,782 to the Mariposa County Fire Safe Council, and authorize staff to enter into agreements necessary for project implementation.**

**4k. Authorize the Executive Officer to file a Notice of Exemption for the Tiger Creek Fuel Break Enhancement project (1330), authorize a grant award in the amount of \$220,200 to the Amador Fire Safe Council, and authorize staff to enter into agreements necessary for project implementation.**

**4l. Authorize the Executive Officer to file a Notice of Exemption for the Middle Fork American River Watershed Restoration Project (1337), authorize a grant award in the amount of \$1,000,000 to the Placer County Water Agency, and authorize staff to enter into agreements necessary for project implementation.**

**4m. Authorize the Executive Officer to file a Notice of Exemption for the Rim Fire Plantation Thin / Biomass Treatment project (1338), authorize a grant award in the amount of \$1,368,000 to the Stanislaus National Forest, and authorize staff to enter into agreements necessary for project implementation.**

**4n. Authorize the Executive Officer to file a Notice of Determination as a Responsible Agency for the Big Chico Creek Forest Resilience Project (1341), authorize a grant award in the amount of \$1,000,000 to the Butte County Fire Safe Council, and authorize staff to enter into agreements necessary for project implementation.**

**4o. Authorize the Executive Officer to file a Notice of Exemption for the Forbestown Forest Resilience Project (1343), authorize a grant award in the amount of \$500,000 to the Butte County Fire Safe Council, and authorize staff to enter into agreements necessary for project implementation.**



## Exhibit A

### Sierra Nevada Conservancy Forest Health Grant Program SNC Project Number 1300

**SNC ID Number:** 1300

**Applicant:** National Forest Foundation

**Project Title:** West Fork Carson and Monitor Pass Project

**SNC Subregion:** East

**County:** Alpine

**Funding Amount Requested:** \$1,401,520

**Funding Amount Recommended:** \$1,401,520

**Total Project Cost:** \$1,568,710

**Funding Authority:** State of California Budget Act of 2020

#### **Project Scope / Description**

The West Fork Carson and Monitor Pass Project is located on lands managed by the Carson Ranger District (District) of the Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest (HTNF) in Alpine County. In partnership with the HTNF, The National Forest Foundation (NFF) will implement 494 acres of hazardous fuel reduction and aspen restoration treatments in the Hope Valley and Pickett's Junction area at the intersection of Highway 88 and 89, and along Highway 89 near Monitor Pass. This project will reduce fuel loading and risk of severe wildfire, restore aspen and meadow ecosystems, and enhance and protect the headwaters of the Carson River watershed.

The project area includes 370 acres of mixed-conifer forest and 124 acres of aspen stands. Current conditions are overstocked stands with horizontally and vertically continuous fuels that pose a high risk of high-severity crown fire. The aspen stands are currently in a declining state and at risk of loss due to conifer encroachment and dense fuel loading. The project treatment approach includes hand cutting and piling conifers 12-inch and less diameter at breast height, removal and hand piling of dead and downed material, and removal of brush. Piles will be located outside of the dripline of overstory trees, where possible, and 15 feet away from any aspen tree or sprout and outside of a riparian buffer. Treatment outcomes will include reduced fuel loading, stand density, and conifer encroachment in aspen and meadow habitats, resulting in improved forest health and fire resiliency, improved hydrologic benefits, lower risk of high-intensity wildfire, and restored high-value aspen communities.

This project is one component of a larger landscape strategy on the HTNF, Carson District, and has been identified as a priority by the District due to the extensive fuel loading, risk of loss/conversion of aspen stands, and proximity to high-value resources. The HTNF currently has an additional 310 acres of similar treatments under contract for implementation within the larger West Fork Carson and Monitor Pass planning areas. The NFF has also applied to California Department of Fish and Wildlife to support another 350 acres of fuels reduction and aspen/meadow restoration in the Hope Valley area around the West Fork Carson unit of this project. Additionally, HTNF has scheduled National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) planning to prepare more acreage for treatment directly adjacent to the project.

The NFF was founded by the U.S. Congress in 1991 and is solely dedicated to enhancing the ecological health and promoting sustainable public enjoyment of America's 193-million-acre National Forest System. The NFF has significant experience administering public and private funds to complete forest health projects on National Forest lands, including previous work with Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC) on projects within the Tahoe-Central Sierra Initiative area. Local staff in NFF's Tahoe Program will be managing and coordinating this project with the HTNF.

The NFF and the HTNF, Carson District, are the primary partners for this project. The HTNF led NEPA planning activities and the project scope was designed collaboratively by the HTNF and NFF. Specialists from the HTNF will serve as expert technical staff and provide in-kind staff time to support to the project. Other project partners include the Alpine Watershed Group and Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California, both of which provided letters of support for the project. The NFF also intends to partner with a tribal workforce, such as the Calaveras Healthy Impact Product Solutions Hung a Lel Ti crew, that is based in Alpine County, for project implementation.

This project supports the SNC Strategic Plan, and aligns with the intent of the Wildfire and Forest Resilience funding, by improving forest and watershed health through hazardous fuel reduction and aspen restoration in the headwaters of the Carson River. This will result in a direct benefit to water quality and quantity for downstream users in Markleeville, Woodfords, and the Hung a Lel Ti community. This project will also enhance and sustain recreation opportunities for the public and associated revenue for communities in Alpine County, especially related to the regionally renowned aspen leaf color change every fall. Additionally, this project will increase local capacity and the pace and scale of forest treatments in Alpine County and within SNC's East Subregion by supporting new partnerships and developing local workforce.

## Project Schedule

Project Tasks and Deliverables	Timeline
Progress reports	Every 6 months
Complete project layout and install signage	July – August 2021
Implementation of 494 acres of treatment	September 2021 – November 2024
Final report	December 2024
<b>Estimated Project Completion Date</b>	<b>November 2024</b>

## Project Costs

Project Costs	SNC Funding
Project implementation	\$1,138,000
Project management	\$75,000
Travel, signage, and supplies	\$6,000
Administrative costs	\$182,520
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,401,520</b>

## Project Letters of Support or Opposition

### *Support:*

- USDA Forest Service – Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest, Carson Ranger District
- Alpine Watershed Group
- Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California

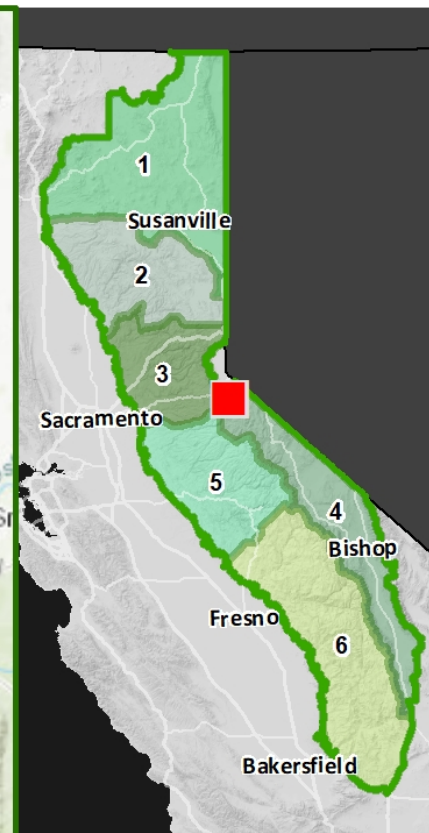
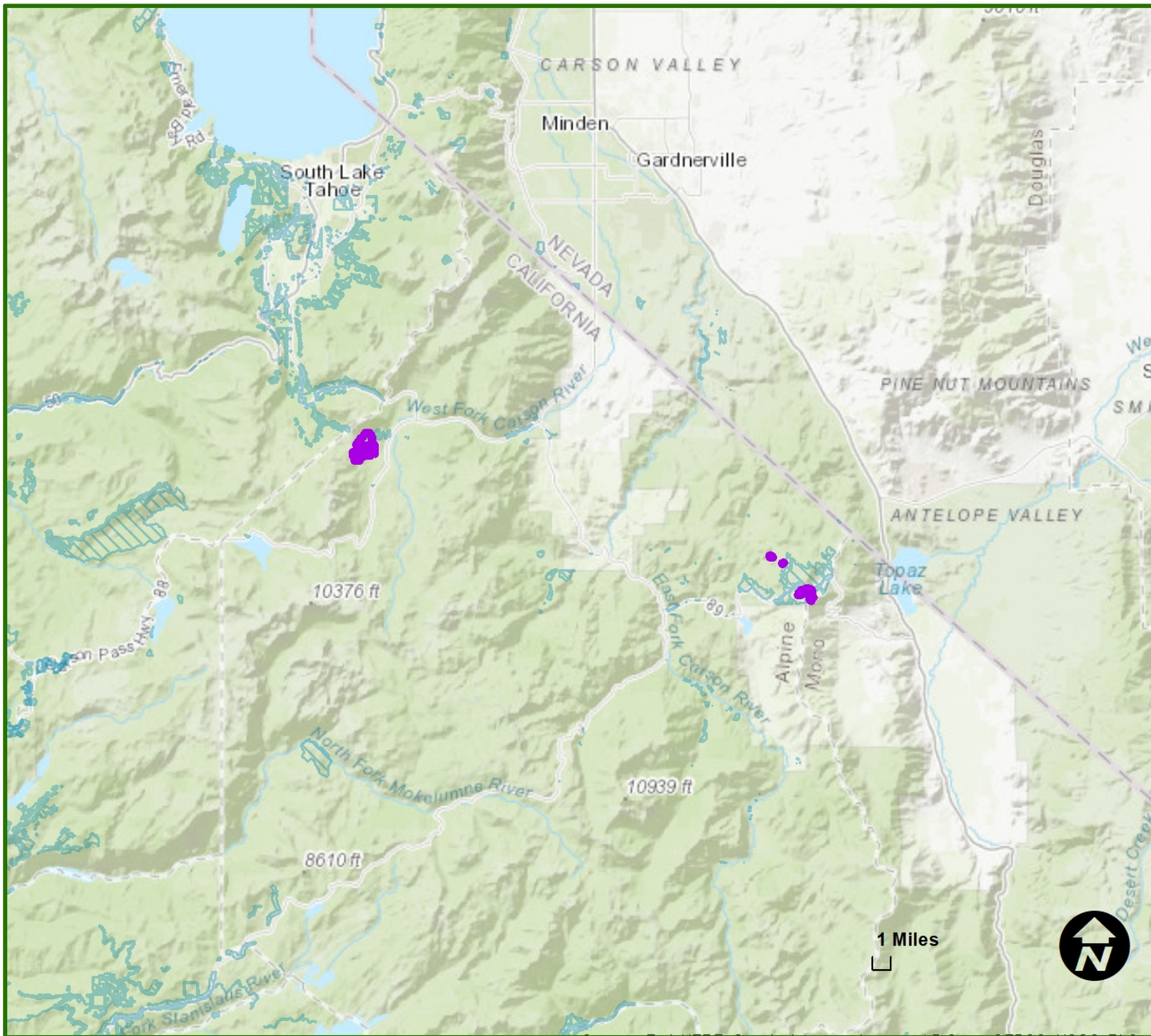
### *Opposition:*










- None received

## 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

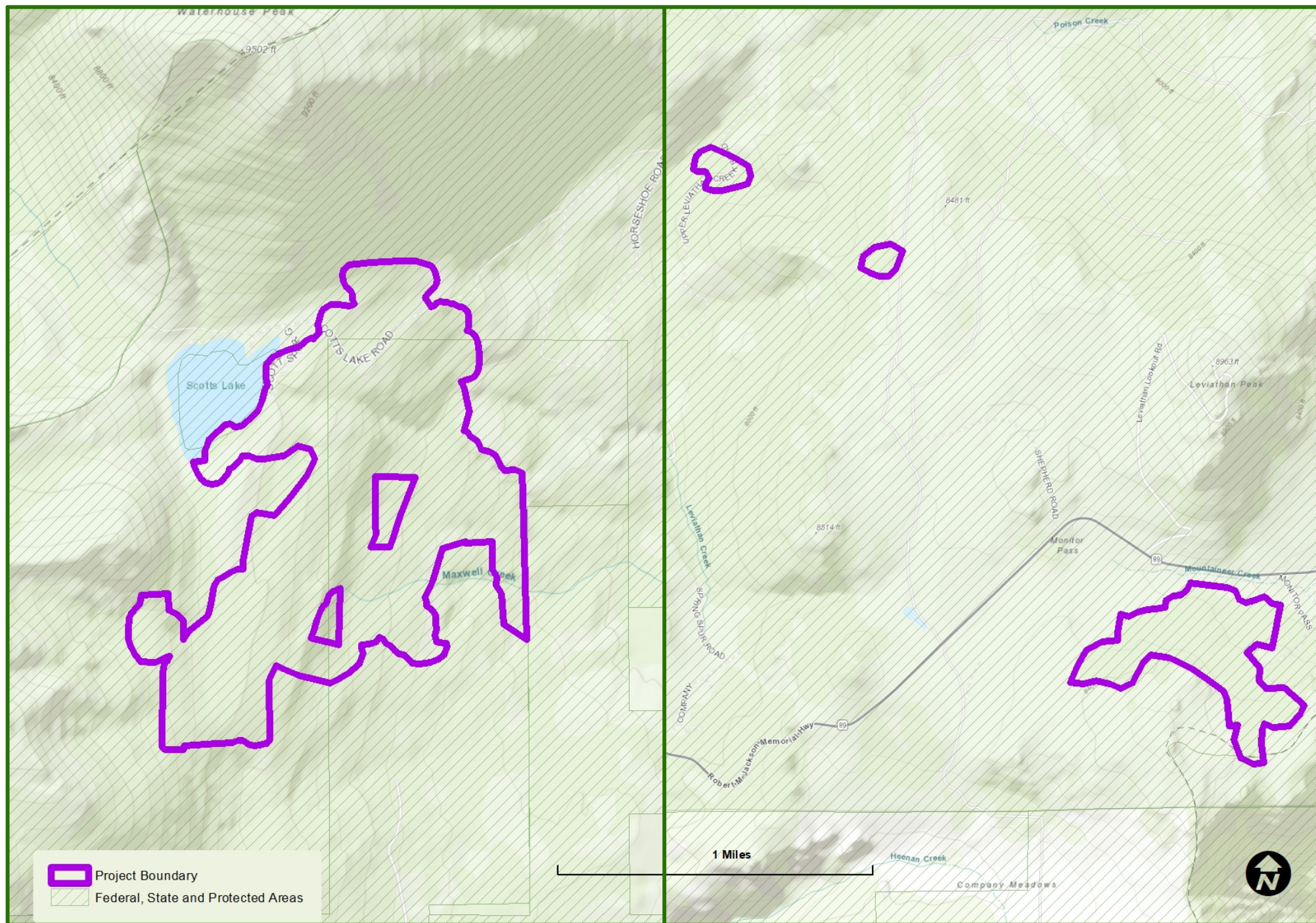


-  Project Boundary (Primary Map)
-  Other Projects (Primary Map)
-  Project Location (Regional Map)
-  1 North Subregion
-  2 North Central Subregion
-  3 Central Subregion
-  4 East Subregion
-  5 South Central Subregion
-  6 South Subregion

## 1300 West Fork Carson and Monitor Pass Project

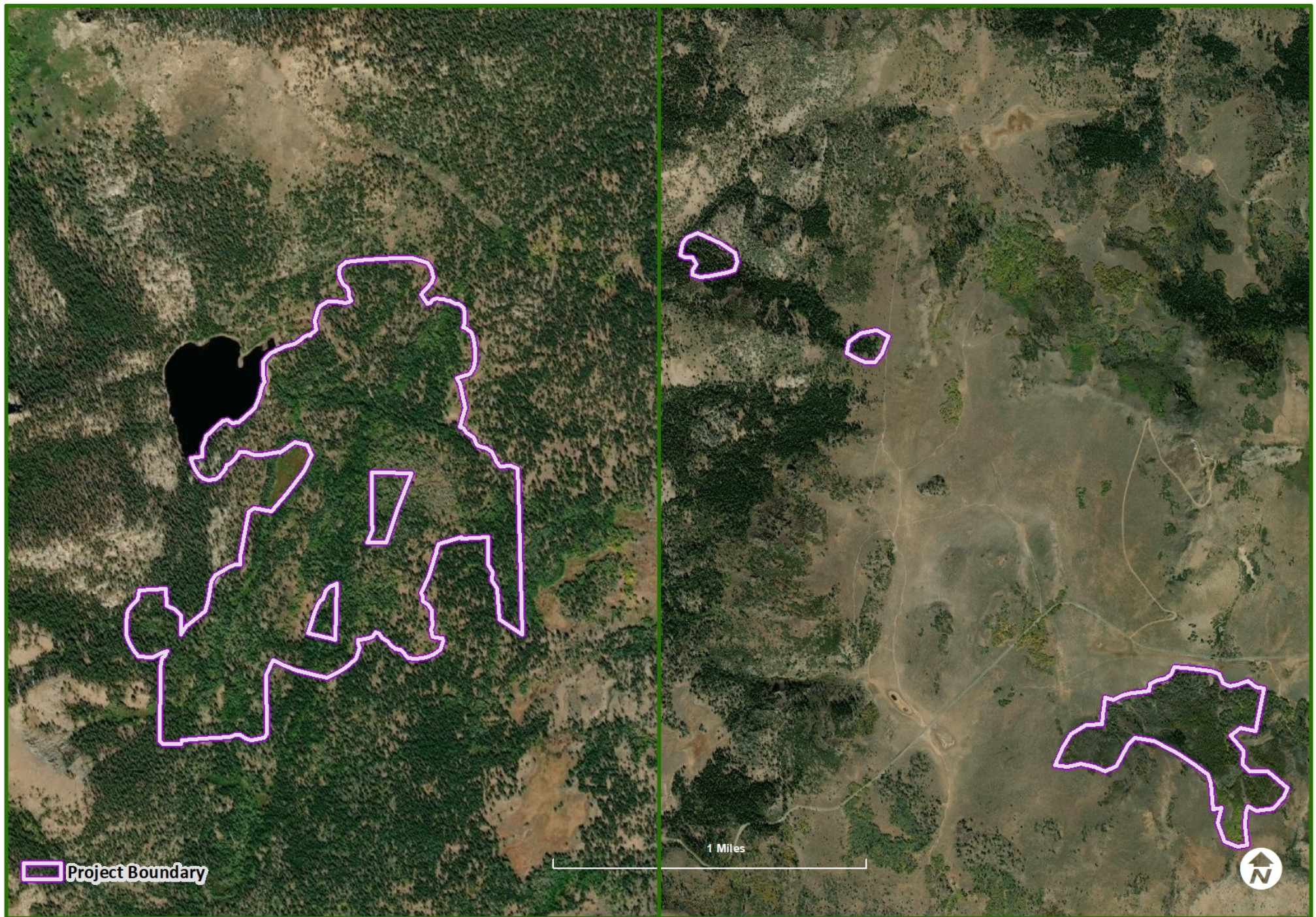
The National Forest Foundation





**1300 West Fork Carson and Monitor Pass Project**  
**The National Forest Foundation**





**1300 West Fork Carson and Monitor Pass Project**  
The National Forest Foundation



# Notice of Exemption

## Appendix E

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: Alpine  
PO Box 158  
Markleeville, CA 96120

Project Title: West Fork Carson and Monitor Pass Project - SNC 1300

Project Location – Specific:

Four treatment areas centered at approximately 38°45'16.10"N and 119°57'02.50"W; 38°40'09.39"N and 119°36'48.06"W; 38°41'17.98"N and 119°37'52.38"W; 38°41'33.26"N and 119°38'26.15"W

Project Location - City: Markleeville, CA

Project Location - County: Alpine

Description of Nature, Purpose and Beneficiaries of Project:

The Sierra Nevada Conservancy would provide funding for hazardous fuels reduction treatments on at least 494 acres of federal land within the Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest. The primary goals of the treatments are to reduce the risk of high severity wildfire, as well as restoring aspen stands and protecting watershed function. The treatments would provide increased resilience to wildfire, protect aspen stand habitat from conversion to conifer forest, and increase carbon sequestration in surrounding trees through the removal of small-diameter conifers.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: Sierra Nevada Conservancy

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: The National Forest Foundation and the Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest

Exempt Status:

Statutory Exemptions. State code number: Public Resources Code Section 4799.05(d)(1)

Reasons why project is exempt:

CEQA 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 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 treatments on at least 494 acres of federal land within the Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest. The proposed activities were reviewed in their entirety under NEPA in the West Carson River Habitat Improvement Project Decision Memo signed in September 2019 and the Monitor Pass Habitat Restoration Project Decision Memo signed in March 2016.

Lead Agency

Contact Person: Shannon Ciotti

Area Code/Telephone/Extension: (530) 906-7345

**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: Yes

Signed by Applicant: No

Authority cited: Sections 21083 and 21110, Public Resources Code.

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

Reference: Sections 21108, 21152, and 21152.1, Public Resources Code.

## Exhibit A

### Sierra Nevada Conservancy Forest Health Grant Program SNC Project Number 1305

**SNC ID Number:** 1305

**Applicant:** Lassen Fire Safe Council, Inc.

**Project Title:** Thompson Peak Initiative Bootsole Forest & Watershed Restoration Project

**SNC Subregion:** North

**Counties:** Lassen & Plumas

**Funding Amount Requested:** \$3,671,725

**Funding Amount Recommended:** \$3,671,725

**Total Project Cost:** \$7,611,725

**Funding Authority:** State of California Budget Act of 2020

#### **Project Scope / Description**

The Lassen Fire Safe Council Inc. (LFSC) will implement the 3,770-acre Thompson Peak Initiative Bootsole Forest and Watershed Restoration Project located within the Plumas National Forest (PNF) southwest of the communities of Janesville and Milford, CA and north of Antelope Lake. The purpose of the project is to reduce hazardous fuels, reduce risk to communities and the landscape from large, severe wildfires, restore forest health and resilience, improve wildlife habitat, and improve watershed condition. The project is located in Lassen and Plumas counties atop the Thompson Peak escarpment at elevations of approximately 6,000 to 6,600 feet.

The project will treat overly dense conifer stands using variable density silviculture prescriptions to promote a mixture of tree sizes and structural diversity throughout the project area. Treatments will include mechanical and hand thinning, including sawlog and biomass removal. Implementation of the project would result in reduced stand densities and would shift the species composition to a greater percentage of drought-tolerant, fire-resistant pine resulting in a landscape more resilient to drought, wildfire, and climate change. Conifers would be removed from within meadows, aspen stands, and where aspen occurs as a minor component within other forest types. The project includes up to 1,000 acres of restored aspen and meadow. Prescriptions would retain old-growth and large trees and promote more fire-resistant stands. Following treatment, prescribed fire could be used to reduce surface fuels through the project area. The PNF proposes an additional 463 acres of prescribed fire and 3,770 acres of underburning as a follow-up treatment throughout the project area, although these

actions are not proposed for Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC) funding or included as deliverables for this project.

The project is a component of the large landscape-scale Thompson Peak Initiative (TPI) covering approximately 92,713 acres. Projects in the TPI include forest health projects, community protection treatments funded with California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) California Climate Investment (CCI) funds and planning projects funded in partnership with the SNC (project #1275), PNF, and Lassen County Resource Advisory Committee (RAC). The Diamond Mountain Initiative to the northwest has treated over 7,000 acres on both United States Forest Service and private lands (SNC project #1065 and other funding sources).

The LFSC has a Master Stewardship Agreement with the land manager, the PNF. PNF staff will work closely with LFSC staff and contractors to implement the proposed project. The LFSC is a 501(c)(3) organization with limited paid staff that relies heavily on contract services provided by industry professionals. The LFSC has received numerous awards from SNC in the past, including two currently active projects in the vicinity of the Bootsole Project (SNC #'s 1065 and 1275).

The project has been developed under a community-led effort, the TPI, and partners include PNF, Susanville Indian Rancheria, CAL FIRE, Bureau of Land Management, Lassen County, Honey Lake Valley Resource Conservation District, LFSC and the Janesville and Milford Fire Protection Districts. Additional funding for the project (approx. \$3,990,000) includes PNF in-kind personnel for project oversight, revenue from biomass material (estimated in coordination with Honey Lake Power), and a challenge match from CCI funds secured by LFSC.

The project will increase the pace and scale of forest health projects, strengthen protection of communities, and manage forests to achieve the state's economic and environmental goals. The project addresses the importance of climate change and will implement locally driven solutions by restoring forest health to build resistance to wildfire. The project will contribute forest materials to industries reliant on a market for sustainable wood products and further develop strong partnerships among federal, state, local, tribal, and private entities. Most of the treatment area is located within the Feather River watershed. The communities of Janesville and Milford (California Disadvantaged Communities) as well as surrounding working forest and agricultural landscapes adjacent to the project area will be protected by treatments on the PNF.

## Project Schedule

Project Tasks and Deliverables	Timeline
Progress report #1	2/1/22
Progress report #2	8/1/22
Progress report #3	2/1/23
Progress report #4	8/1/23
Progress report #5	2/1/24
Progress report #6	8/1/24
Layout, cruise, marking & frog surveys	8/1/21 – 11/1/21
Hand thinning & mastication treatments	10/1/21 – 11/1/21
Frog surveys (second year)	6/1/2022
Biomass utilization thinning treatments	6/1/22 – 11/1/24
Final report with performance measures reporting	12/31/24
<b>Estimated Project Completion Date</b>	<b>12/31/2024</b>

## Project Costs

Project Costs	SNC Funding
LFSC personnel / assistant project manager	\$34,200
Project management, monitoring & reporting	\$142,000
Frog surveys	\$8,200
Cruise, layout, and marking	\$365,000
Registered Professional Forester services – project oversight	\$80,000
Hand thinning treatments & piling	\$496,500
Biomass thinning treatments	\$2,037,600
Mastication treatments	\$25,800
Travel / mileage	\$5,600
Supplies (paint & flagging)	\$5,000
Administrative costs (14.7 percent)	\$471,825
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$3,671,725</b>

## Project Letters of Support or Opposition

### *Support:*

- Susanville Indian Rancheria
- Bureau of Land Management, Eagle Lake Field Office
- California Department of Forestry & Fire Protection, Scott Packwood, Unit Chief
- County of Lassen, Board of Supervisors
- County of Plumas Board of Supervisors
- Honey Lake Valley Resource Conservation District



- Lassen County Chamber of Commerce
- Greenleaf Power
- Susan River Fire Protection District
- Janesville Fire Protection District
- Milford Fire District

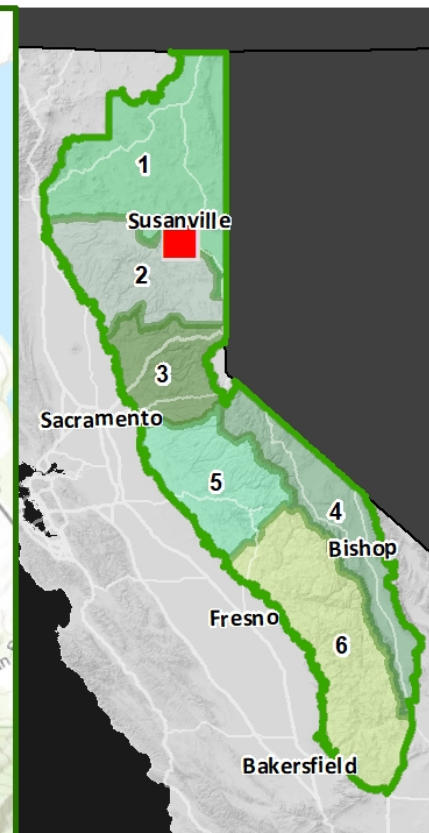
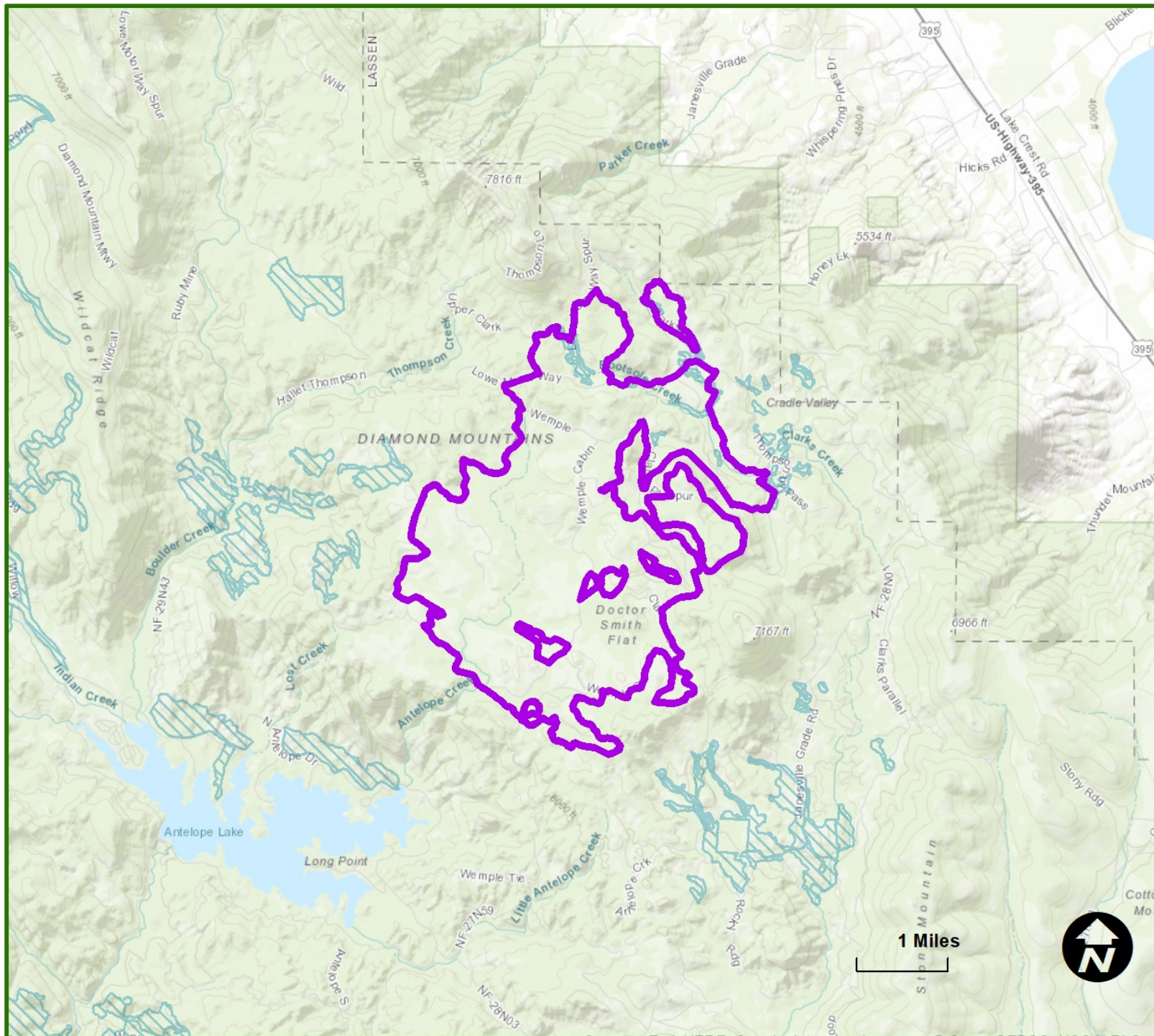
*Opposition:*










- None received

**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
- Kilowatts of Renewable Energy Production Capacity Maintained or Created

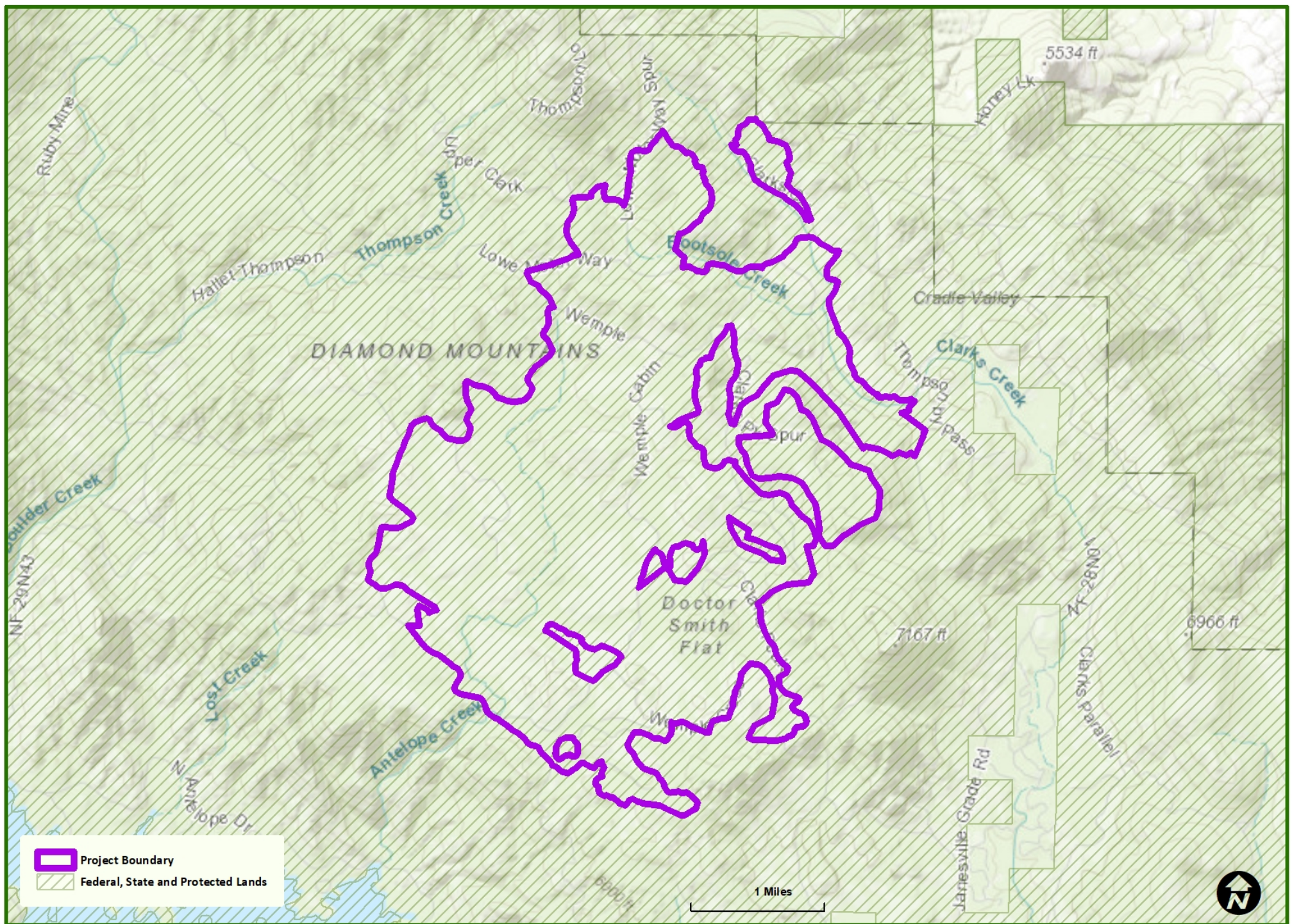


-  Project Boundary (Primary Map)
-  Other Projects (Primary Map)
-  Project Location (Regional Map)
-  1 North Subregion
-  2 North Central Subregion
-  3 Central Subregion
-  4 East Subregion
-  5 South Central Subregion
-  6 South Subregion

## 1305 Thompson Peak Initiative Bootsole Forest and Watershed Restoration Project

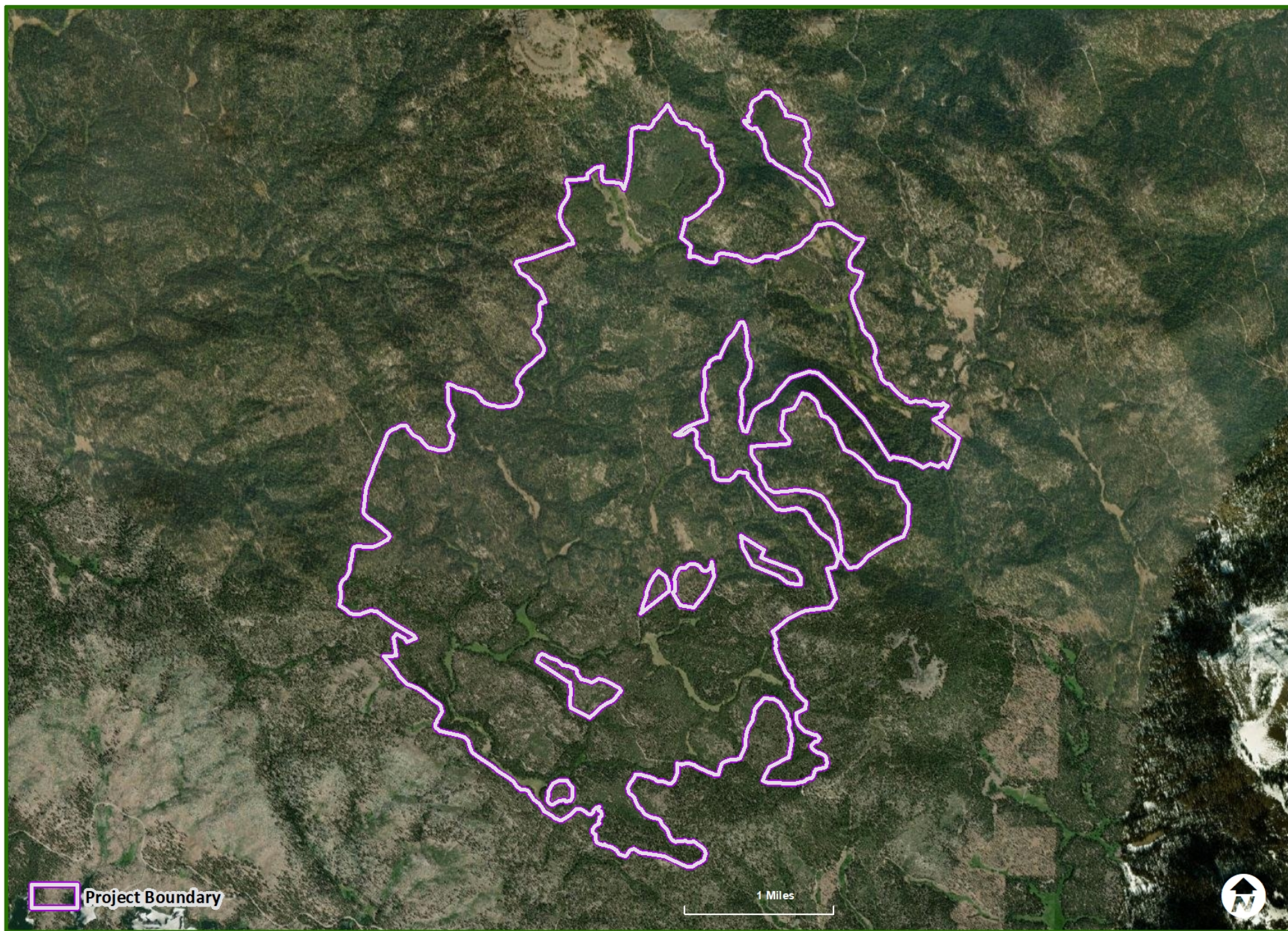
Lassen Fire Safe Council, Inc.





**1305 Thompson Peak Initiative Bootsole Forest and Watershed Restoration Project**  
Lassen Fire Safe Council, Inc.





**1305 Thompson Peak Initiative Bootsole Forest and Watershed Restoration Project**  
Lassen Fire Safe Council, Inc.



# Notice of Exemption

Appendix E

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: Plumas County  
520 Main Street, Room 102  
Quincy, CA 95971

Project Title: Thompson Peak Initiative Bootsole Forest & Watershed Restoration Project - SNC 1305

Project Location – Specific:

One treatment location centered at approximately 40°13'03.70"N and 120°32'52.86"W

Project Location - City: Janesville and Milford, CA

Project Location - County: Plumas and Lassen

Description of Nature, Purpose and Beneficiaries of Project:

The Sierra Nevada Conservancy would provide funding for hazardous fuels reduction treatments on the 4,233-acre project located on federal lands within the Plumas National Forest. Treatments would include ground-based mechanical thinning, hand thinning, hand piling, grapple piling, mastication, and prescribed burning of select conifers. The treatment goals are to reduce hazardous fuels and reduce risk to communities and the landscape from large and severe wildfires. Treatments would result in reduced stand density and would shift the species composition to a greater percentage of drought-tolerant, fire-resistant pine resulting in a landscape more resilient to wildfire, drought, and future climate conditions.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: Sierra Nevada Conservancy

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: Lassen Fire Safe Council, Inc.

Exempt Status:

Statutory Exemptions. State code number: Public Resources Code Section 4799.05(d)(1)

Reasons why project is exempt:

CEQA 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 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 treatments on the 4,233-acre project located on federal lands within the Plumas National Forest. The proposed activities were reviewed in their entirety under NEPA in the Bootsole Decision Memo signed in April 2021.

Lead Agency

Contact Person: Shannon Ciotti

Area Code/Telephone/Extension: (530) 906-7345

**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: Yes

Signed by Applicant: No

Authority cited: Sections 21083 and 21110, Public Resources Code.

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

Reference: Sections 21108, 21152, and 21152.1, Public Resources Code.

## Exhibit A

### Sierra Nevada Conservancy Forest Health Grant Program SNC Project Number 1312

**SNC ID Number:** 1312

**Applicant:** Butte County Resource Conservation District

**Project Title:** Concow Resilience Project: Implementation

**SNC Subregion:** North Central

**County:** Butte

**Funding Amount Requested:** \$2,127,857

**Funding Amount Recommended:** \$2,127,857

**Total Project Cost:** \$2,573,272

**Funding Authority:** State of California Budget Act of 2020

#### **Project Scope / Description**

The Concow Resilience Project is in the Wildland Urban Interface of Butte County where dense conifer forest burned at high severity in the 2018 Camp Fire, resulting in almost 100 percent forest loss. The project is located on United States Forest Service (USFS) lands that surround the rural community of Concow, 25 miles north of Oroville. Submitted by the Butte County Resource Conservation District (BCRCD), the project will restore 784 acres of severely burned Sierra foothill forestland using methods that will make future fire behavior less severe and result in a climate-resilient, carbon-stable woodland.

Project collaborators seek to actively manage the project area toward open, oak-dominated woodlands, conditions that are consistent with the presettlement landscape in addition to being drought- and fire-resilient. The full project consists of seven units arranged across the landscape to create a resilient mosaic and tie into existing fuel reduction and prescribed fire projects. The project consists of four treatment types: oak/hardwood release (387 acres), oak-pine savannah (106 acres), assisted migration experimental plots (50 acres – funded separately through Pacific Southwest Research Station (PSWRS)), and founder stand pyrosilviculture (241 acres). The goals of the project are: 1) to break up unnaturally large patches of continuous brush, prevent large-scale type conversion from forestland to brushland, and instead create an open, hardwood dominated woodland adapted to the anticipated future climate; 2) plant small numbers of the most drought- and climate-resilient native conifers (e.g., ponderosa pines); 3) pilot the feasibility of “assisted migration” by planting experimental plots of native tree seeds sourced from hotter and drier subregions of California (funded by PSWRS); 4) plant native grasses as needed to develop a fuel



type/vegetation community consistent with maintenance via low-intensity fire; and 5) solicit and incorporate Maidu traditional knowledge during project implementation. The project is part of the Upper Feather River Integrated Regional Water Management Plan and is philosophically and biologically linked to BCRCD's and partners' post-Camp Fire strategy of climate-resilient reforestation.

The project is strategically tied into other local forest health projects such as Sierra Pacific Industries' V-Line fuelbreak, the Crain Ridge fuelbreak, the planned Concow Pyrodiversity Project (where environmental analysis and compliance is currently being supported by Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC) project #929), Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) planned climate-resilient reforestation initiative on Jordan Hill, south of Concow, and BCRCD's Emergency Forest Restoration Project technical assistance to private landowners affected by the Camp Fire. The Concow Resilience Project's vegetation management has been planned to fit in and around the Concow Pyrodiversity Project's 3,000+ acres.

The BCRCD is an independent special district with extensive fuels reduction and post-fire restoration project experience. The BCRCD has secured and managed numerous large post-fire restoration grants, completed California Environmental Quality Act/National Environmental Policy Act on the Concow Resilience Project, and has a master stewardship agreement with the Plumas National Forest, the project's land manager.

The project is a partnership between the Plumas National Forest, BCRCD, PSWRS, American Forests, and Konkow Valley Cultural Preservation LLC, and was developed using SNC planning grant #929. Consultations with California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, local fire safe councils, the Butte County Fire Safe Council, and local residents have also been part of the planning process. The project is part of an overarching climate-resilient reforestation framework applied across private and public lands by collaborators including BLM and the Natural Resources Conservation Service, and through BCRCD's technical assistance outreach to private landowners. The PSWRS and American Forests will provide a total of about \$125,513 to fund the research plots. The USFS will contribute about \$319,900 in pile burning and in-kind support.

The SNC Strategic Plan 2019-2024 recognizes climate change "will require innovative, science-based approaches to address changes in plant and animal communities," a challenge this project tackles by implementing an assisted migration project to restore severely burned forests so they are more climate-resilient in a warmer and drier future. The project supports California's Wildfire and Forest Resilience Action Plan Goal of increasing the pace and scale of forest health treatments by allowing a local Resource Conservation District, using a shared stewardship agreement, to treat federal acres which may otherwise burn repeatedly and remain brushfields. Additionally, Konkow Valley Cultural Preservation Association's monitoring of cultural botanical resources will improve opportunities for future cultural fire and cultural gathering in the restored woodland. Most of the project area drains to Lake Concow, the source of drinking water

for the 10,000 people served by the Thermalito Water and Sewer District, and all of the project area drains to Lake Oroville, the source of drinking and irrigation water for 23,000,000 Californians as part of the State Water Project.

## Project Schedule

Project Tasks and Deliverables	Timeline
Progress reports	Every 6 months
Site prep for 156 acres of restoration planting	Fall 2021 – Early 2022
Planting on 156 acres: 106 acres oak-pine savannah and 50 acres of pyrosilvicultural founder stands followed by manual shrub control and oak release (multiple entries)	Spring 2022 – Fall 2024
Oak release and improvement on 578 acres (multiple entries) including mastication, hand-cut-piling, selective chemical control, bunchgrass planting	Summer 2022 – Summer 2024
Tribal monitoring	Ongoing thru December 2024
<b>Estimated Project Completion Date</b>	<b>December 2024</b>

## Project Costs

Project Costs	SNC Funding
Project management, Forester, Assistant	\$157,375
Implementation – site prep, mastication, planting, oak release, hand cutting, native grasses, etc.	\$1,644,405
Tribal monitoring	\$48,530
Administrative costs	\$277,547
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$2,127,857</b>

## Project Letters of Support or Opposition

### *Support:*

- Plumas National Forest - Feather River District Ranger
- Konkow Valley Band of Maidu Indians
- American Forests
- Butte County Fire Safe Council
- Butte County Federal/State Land Use Coordinating Committee
- University of California, Davis – Department of Plant Sciences
- Sierra Forest Legacy
- Wildlife Conservation Board

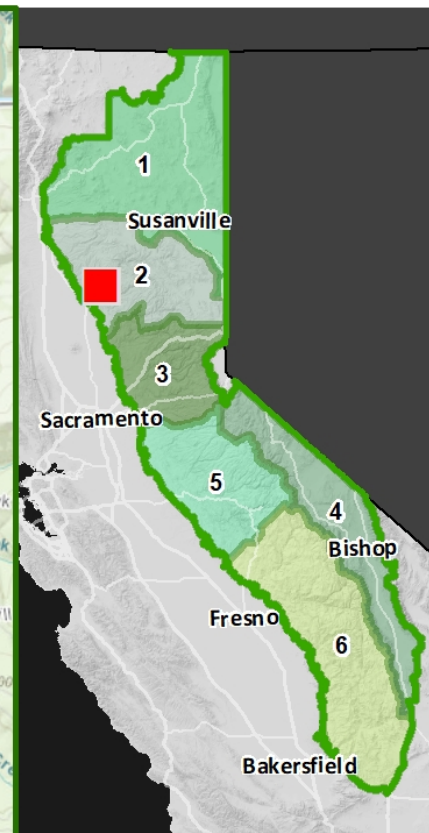
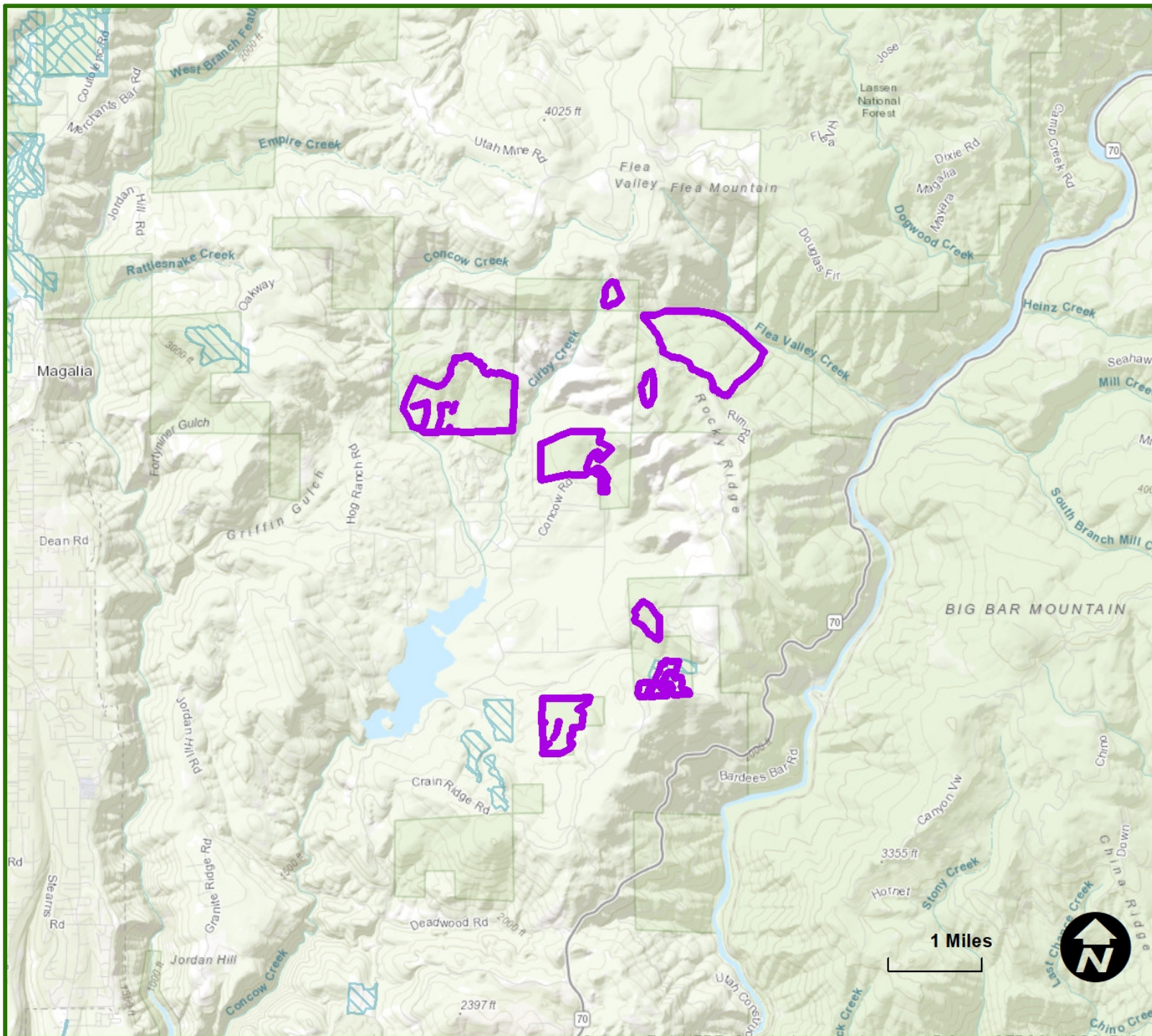
*Opposition:*

- None received

**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

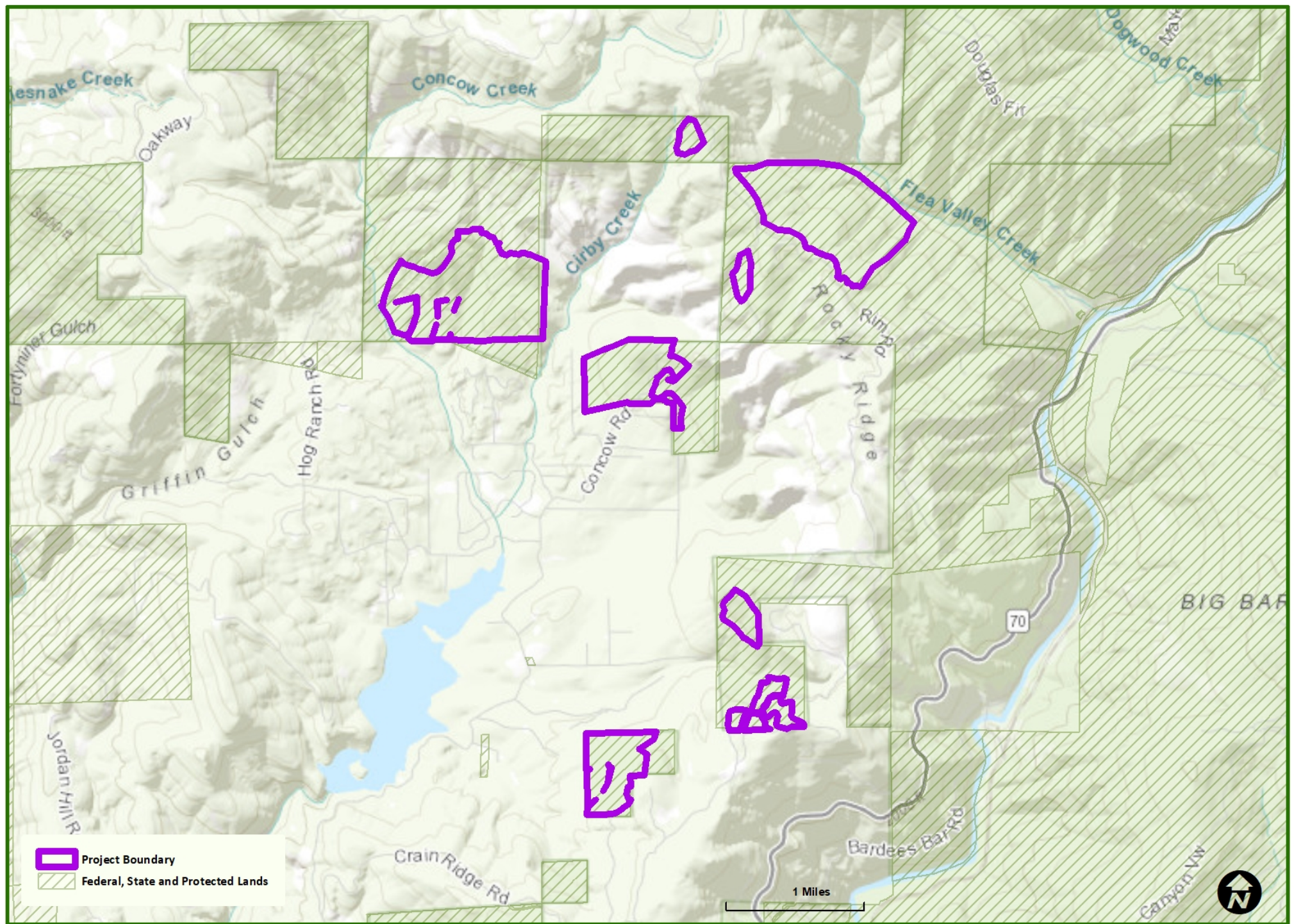


- Project Boundary (Primary Map)
- Other Projects (Primary Map)
- Project Location (Regional Map)
- 1 North Subregion
- 2 North Central Subregion
- 3 Central Subregion
- 4 East Subregion
- 5 South Central Subregion
- 6 South Subregion

## 1312 Concow Resilience Project: Implementation

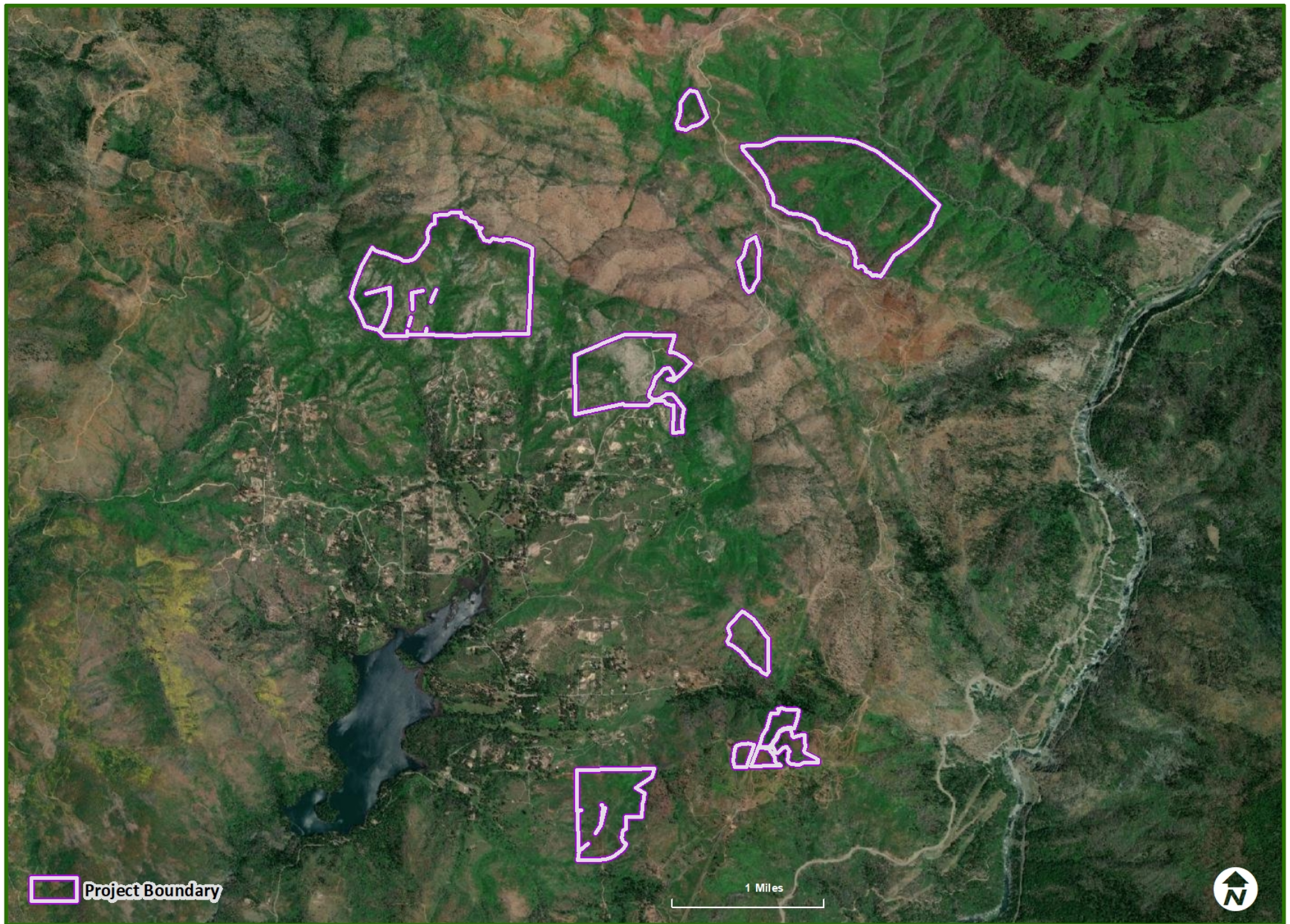
### Butte County Resource Conservation District





**1312 Concow Resilience Project: Implementation**  
**Butte County Resource Conservation District**





**1312 Concow Resilience Project: Implementation**  
**Butte County Resource Conservation District**



# Notice of Exemption

Appendix E

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: Butte  
155 Nelson Avenue  
Oroville, CA 95965-3411

Project Title: Concow Resilience Project: Implementation - SNC 1312

Project Location – Specific:

Nineteen treatments locations centered at approximately 39°48'19.15"N and 121°28'35.37"W

Project Location - City: Concow, CA

Project Location - County: Butte

Description of Nature, Purpose and Beneficiaries of Project:

The Sierra Nevada Conservancy would provide funding for fuel reduction treatments, brush removal and thinning, and associated low-density oak-pine planting on at least 784 acres of federal land within the Lassen National Forest (managed by the Plumas National Forest, Feather River Ranger District). The treatment areas burned in the 2018 Camp Fire, and future projections indicate that these burned areas will convert to brushland and will likely burn again at a very high severity within the next ten years. To reduce the risk of high severity wildfire, the treatments proposed for the Concow Resilience Project would actively manage the project area to open, oak-dominant woodlands that are drought- and fire-resilient.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: Sierra Nevada Conservancy

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

Exempt Status:

Statutory Exemptions. State code number: Public Resources Code Section 4799.05(d)(1)

Reasons why project is exempt:

CEQA 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 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 fuels reduction treatments, brush removal and thinning, and associated low-density pine planting on at least 784 acres of federal land within the Lassen National Forest (managed by the Plumas National Forest, Feather River Ranger District). The proposed activities were reviewed in their entirety under NEPA in the Concow Resilience Project Decision Memorandum signed in September 2020.

Lead Agency

Contact Person: Shannon Ciotti

Area Code/Telephone/Extension: (530) 906-7345

**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: Yes

Signed by Applicant: No

Authority cited: Sections 21083 and 21110, Public Resources Code.

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

Reference: Sections 21108, 21152, and 21152.1, Public Resources Code.

## Exhibit A

### Sierra Nevada Conservancy Forest Health Grant Program SNC Project Number 1314

**SNC ID Number:** 1314

**Applicant:** Sierra Valley Resource Conservation District

**Project Title:** Sierra Brooks – Smithneck Wildland Urban Interface Fuels Reduction Project

**SNC Subregion:** North Central

**County:** Sierra

**Funding Amount Requested:** \$1,075,059

**Funding Amount Recommended:** \$1,075,059

**Total Project Cost:** \$1,138,309

**Funding Authority:** State of California Budget Act of 2020

#### **Project Scope / Description**

Submitted by the Sierra Valley Resource Conservation District (SVRCD), the Sierra Brooks – Smithneck Wildland Urban Interface Fuels Reduction Project (Project) is in Sierra County, one mile southeast of the community of Loyalton on 723 acres of state and Tahoe National Forest lands. The Tahoe National Forest portion consists of 558 acres and the Smithneck Wildlife Management Area, managed by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), adds an additional 165 acres. The Project area is adjacent to the Sierra Brooks Subdivision, which is composed of approximately 200 single family homes and 400 private parcels. The primary purpose of the Project is to improve forest health, increase forest resiliency, reduce the risk of catastrophic wildfire adjacent to the community and provide for future opportunities to manage fuels using prescribed fire.

The Project site is predominately ponderosa pine with heavy fuel loading, dense brush, and forest stand conditions that are highly susceptible to high-intensity wildfire. The primary treatment method will be mechanical mastication in the Wildland Urban Interface. The long-term goal of the Project is to return the landscape to a condition within the range of natural variability, allowing for prescribed underburns that will maintain healthy forest conditions. The implementation of proposed treatments will benefit wildlife, including critical winter range for the Truckee-Loyalton Deer Herd; increase forest resilience and resistance to destructive wildfire, disease, and insect infestation; and protect the community of and water supply for Sierra Brooks. Treatments were identified as high priorities for fuels reduction in the Sierra County Community Wildfire Protection Plan, by the Sierraville Ranger District and the Sierra

Brooks Firewise Community. The Project furthers the Integrated Regional Water Management Plan for the Upper Feather River Watershed and meets the goals of improving local water retention and improving water quality.

The Project will complement existing adjacent forest health and fuels reduction projects which have recently been completed by private landowners. Several minor projects have been executed within the last five years and include manual fuel treatments along the Forest Service 04 Road, mastication and manual thinning in the Loyalton Pines Subdivision, and thinning/brush abatement within the Sierra Brooks Subdivision.

The SVRCD has been conducting ecosystem restoration and providing forest health assistance with landowners in Sierra County for over 25 years. They have successfully completed several SNC-funded projects including Carmen Creek Watershed Ecosystem Health improvement Project, (project #509) and several agricultural lands improvement projects (projects #94, #666, and #699) funded by Proposition 84.

The primary Project partners are the Tahoe National Forest's Sierraville Ranger District, providing \$28,750 of in-kind contributions and the CDFW, providing \$34,500 of in-kind support. Additional collaborators include the County of Sierra and University of California Agricultural and Natural Resources Cooperative Extension (Sierra and Plumas counties). The Project is a high priority for the Sierra County Fire Department, Sierra Brooks Homeowners Association, Sierra County Fire Safe and Watershed Council, Sierra County Board of Supervisors, United States Forest Service Wildlife Forum, and the Sierra County Fire Commissioner.

Consistent with the Sierra Nevada Watershed Improvement Program and the California Budget Act of 2020, the Project will increase the pace and scale of science-based, ecological restoration to reduce the potential for high-intensity wildfire and degradation of forest ecosystems. Smithneck Creek contributes to the municipal water supply for the disadvantaged communities of Sierra Brooks and Loyalton and contains two well sites for domestic water, as well as pumphouses and storage tanks. The watershed also contributes to the Middle Fork Feather River and the State Water Project, which delivers water to over 25 million Californians.

## Project Schedule

Project Tasks and Deliverables	Timeline
Progress reports	Every 6 months
Pre-project monitoring	August 2021
Project area delineation	August 2021
Communication/outreach	August 2021 – September 2024
Contractor bids	September – October 2021
Implementation – mastication	October 2021 – October 2023
Post-project monitoring	June – September 2024
<b>Estimated Project Completion Date</b>	<b>December 30, 2024</b>

## Project Costs

Project Costs	SNC Funding
Project and fiscal management	\$28,500
Implementation - mastication	\$957,975
Travel	\$3,800
Publications, printing, reporting	\$3,500
Meetings	\$1,650
Administrative costs	\$79,634
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,075,059</b>

## Project Letters of Support or Opposition

### *Support:*

- Tahoe National Forest, Sierraville Ranger District
- Sierra County Board of Supervisors
- Sierra County Fire Protection District #1
- Sierra Brooks Firewise Committee

### *Opposition:*

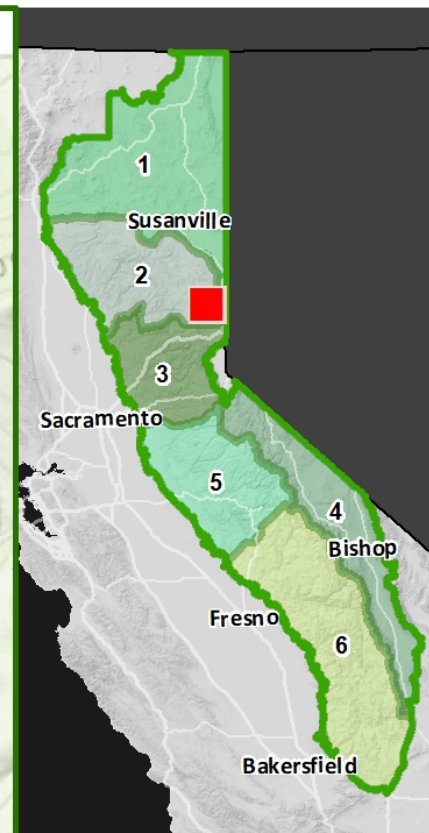
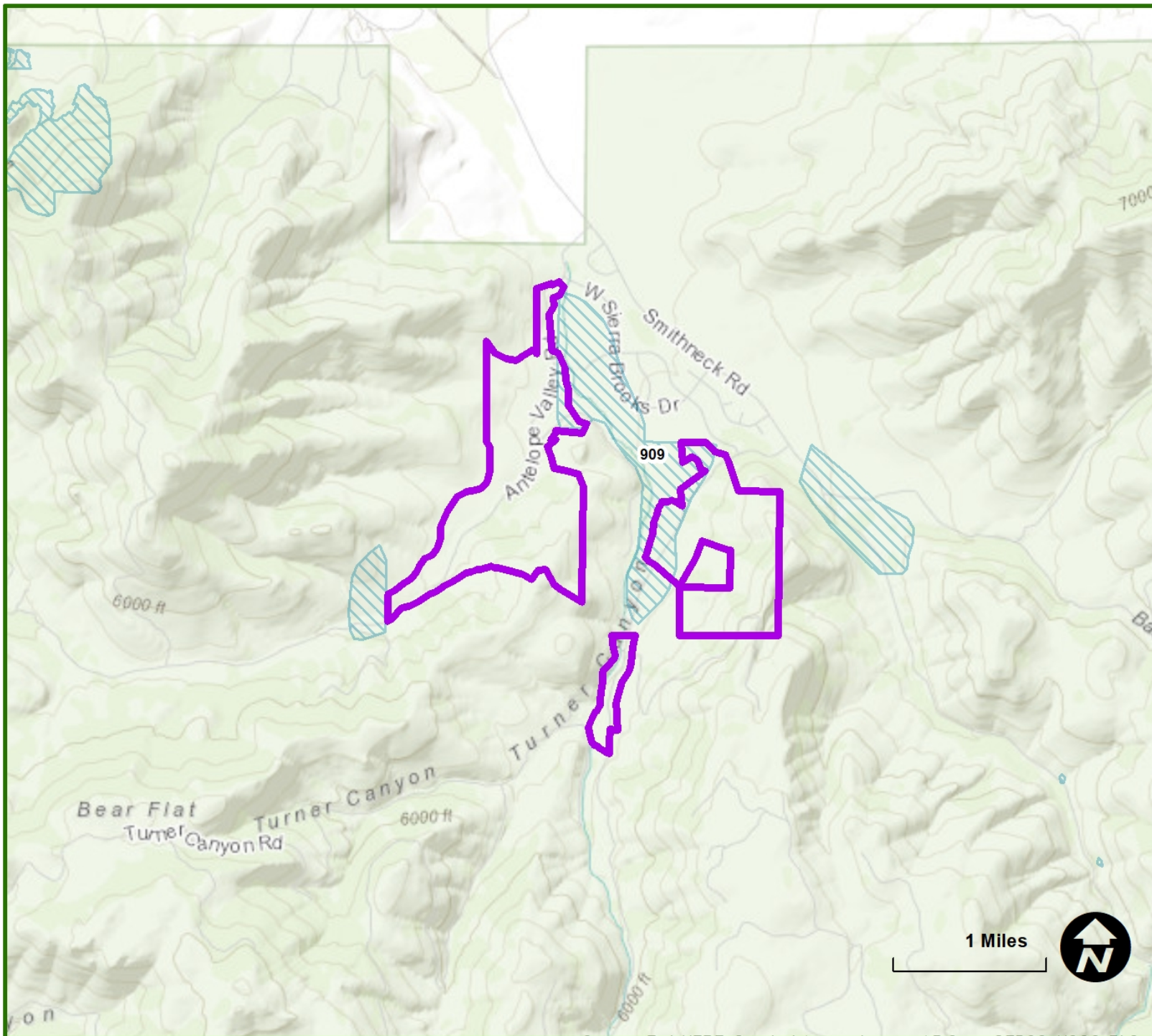
- None received

## 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

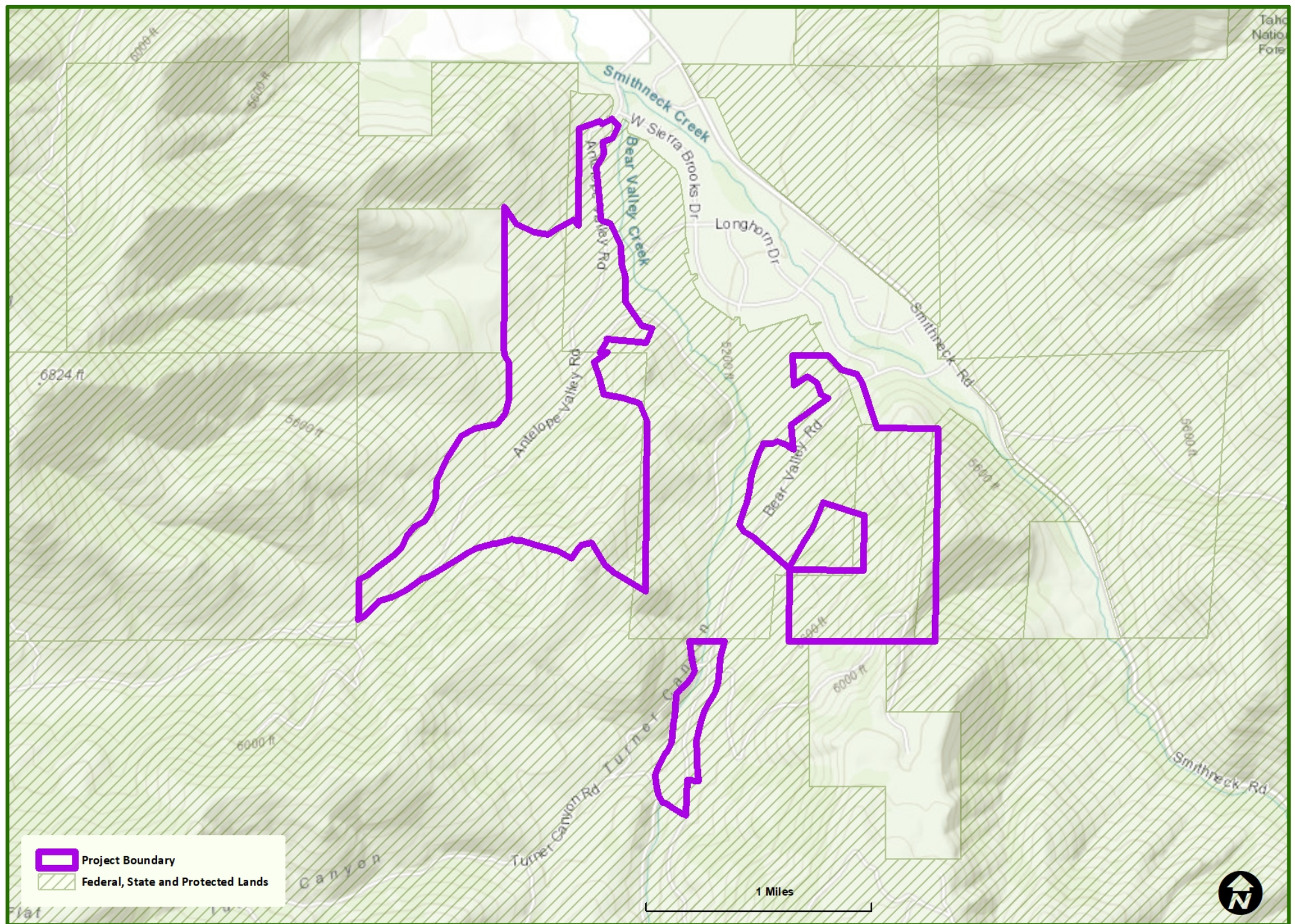




- Project Boundary (Primary Map)
- Other Projects (Primary Map)
- Project Location (Regional Map)
- 1 North Subregion
- 2 North Central Subregion
- 3 Central Subregion
- 4 East Subregion
- 5 South Central Subregion
- 6 South Subregion

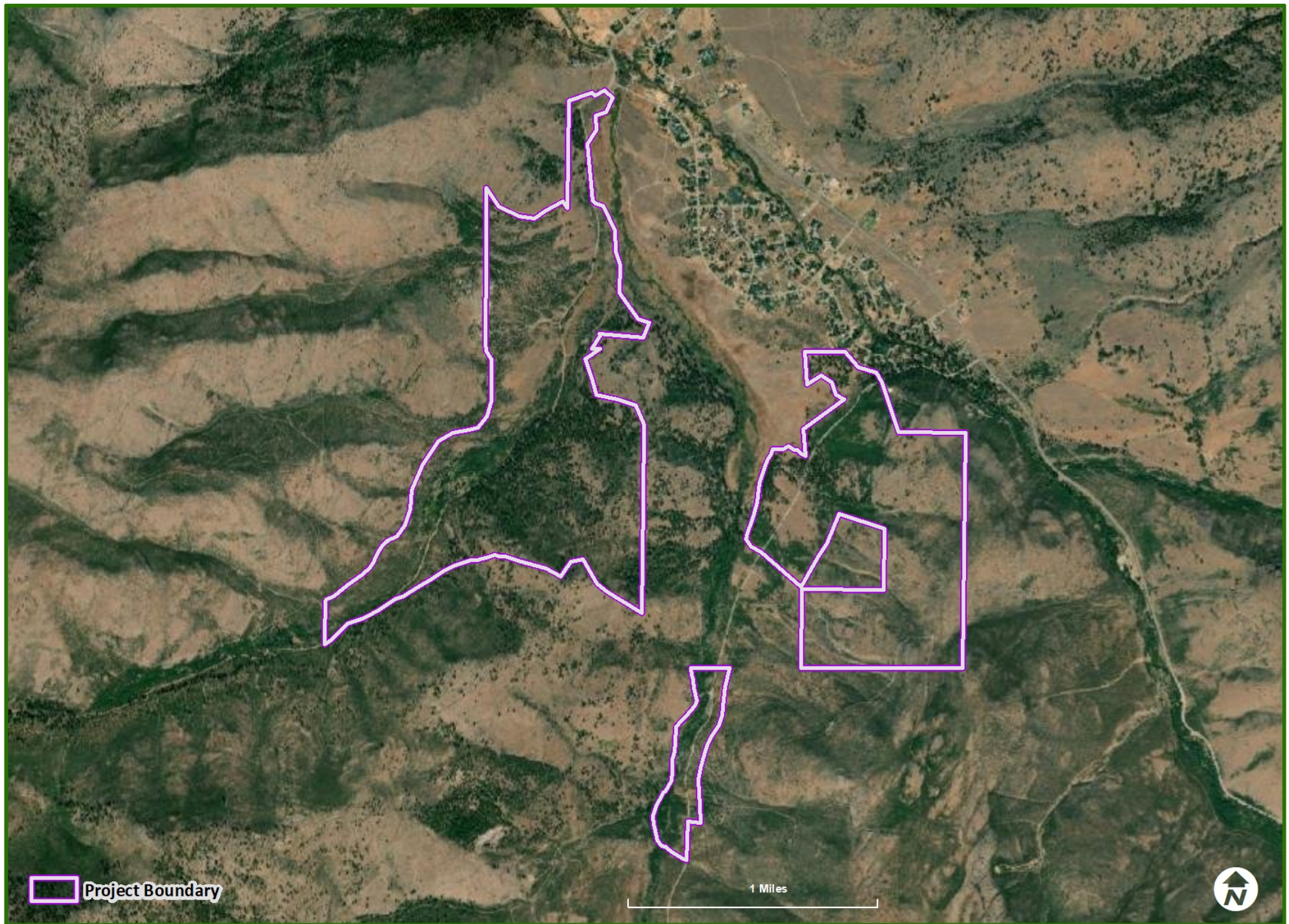
**1314 Sierra Brooks - Smithneck Wildland Urban Interface Fuels Reduction Project**  
**Sierra Valley Resource Conservation District**





**1314 Sierra Brooks - Smithneck Wildland Urban Interface Fuels Reduction Project**  
**Sierra Valley Resource Conservation District**





**1314 Sierra Brooks - Smithneck Wildland Urban Interface Fuels Reduction Project**  
Sierra Valley Resource Conservation District

# Notice of Exemption

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

From: Sierra Nevada Conservancy  
11521 Blocker Drive, Suite 205  
Auburn, CA 95603

County Clerk  
County of: Sierra  
100 Courthouse Square  
Downieville, CA 95936

Project Title: Sierra Brooks - Smithneck WUI Fuels Reduction Project - SNC 1314

Project Location – Specific: T21N, R15, 16E S 2-36

Project Location - City: Loyalton, CA

Project Location - County: Sierra

Description of Nature, Purpose and Beneficiaries of Project:

The Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC) would provide funding to the Sierra Valley Resource Conservation District for forest health restoration and fuel reduction activities on lands within California Department of Fish and Wildlife's (CDFW) Smithneck Creek Wildlife Area and Tahoe National Forest. This project would complete fuel reduction and thinning treatments on at least 723 acres of heavily overstocked forests and dense brush with degraded forest health conditions. These activities would also provide for future opportunities for applications of prescribed understory burning. The purpose of the project is to reduce hazardous fuels in the wildland-urban interface (WUI), reduce the risk of wildfire, and improve forest health and fire resiliency.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: Sierra Nevada Conservancy

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

Exempt Status:

Categorical Exemption. CEQA Guidelines Section 15304

Statutory Exemptions. State code number: Public Resources Code Section 4799.05(d)(1)

Reasons why project is exempt:

The portion of the Project on CDFW's Wildlife Area is categorically exempt from the provisions of CEQA pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15304, Class 4, which consists of minor public or private alterations in the condition of land, water, and/or vegetation which do not involve removal of mature, scenic trees except for forestry and agricultural purposes. The minor land alterations proposed by the project consist of forestry treatments to reduce hazardous fuels and improve forest health. The project has been reviewed and would not result in significant adverse effects. Additionally, CEQA 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 NEPA if the primary role of a state or local agency is providing funding or staffing for those projects. SNC would provide funding for fuel reduction treatments on federal lands within the Tahoe National Forest. The proposed activities on federal lands were reviewed in their entirety pursuant to NEPA in the Record of Decision for the Cottonwood Fire Vegetation Management Project Environmental Impact Statement, signed in 2005 with an SIR completed in 2017 by the U.S. Forest Service.

Lead Agency

Contact Person: Shannon Ciotti Area Code/Telephone/Extension: (530) 906-7345

**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: Yes

Signed by Applicant: No

Authority cited: Sections 21083 and 21110, Public Resources Code. Date received for filing at OPR: \_\_\_\_\_  
Reference: Sections 21108, 21152, and 21152.1, Public Resources Code.



## Exhibit A

### Sierra Nevada Conservancy Forest Health Grant Program SNC Project Number 1317

**SNC ID Number:** 1317

**Applicant:** Plumas County Fire Safe Council

**Project Title:** Quincy Wildfire Protection Project

**SNC Subregion:** North Central

**County:** Plumas

**Funding Amount Requested:** \$433,280

**Funding Amount Recommended:** \$433,280

**Total Project Cost:** \$453,280

**Funding Authority:** State of California Budget Act of 2020

#### **Project Scope / Description**

The Quincy Wildfire Protection Project (Project) will provide hazardous fuel reduction on 151 acres of private land southwest of Quincy in northeastern California. The Plumas County Fire Safe Council (PCFSC) Project's primary purpose is to reduce wildfire risk to the community of Quincy and its critical infrastructure, and to create a fire-resistant forest structure. The Project is directly adjacent to residential neighborhoods, the Plumas District Hospital, and the Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC)-funded Quincy Watershed Improvement Project (QWIP) (#1081), which includes the American Valley Community Services District's (CSD) primary water source for Quincy.

Treatment will mechanically remove biomass on 73 acres and masticate, hand thin and/or mechanically thin 78 acres across three landownerships in the Wildland Urban Interface. Expected outcomes include reduction of hazardous fuels adjacent to homes in downtown Quincy neighborhoods, around Plumas District Hospital's facilities, and protection of water infrastructure within the adjacent QWIP. The Plumas District Hospital campus is one of three hospitals in the county and is the primary medical provider for Quincy and surrounding communities. The Project is included in the Plumas Communities Wildfire Protection Plan and addresses the Quincy Firewise Action Plan priority to "reduce vegetative material along roadway right of way." The Project area is within a very high fire hazard severity zone in a disadvantaged community.

The nearby 19,000-acre Claremont Forest Resiliency Project will improve forest health, reduce fuels around the Wildland Urban Interface of Quincy and Meadow Valley, and restore some areas burned in 2020 by the North Complex fire. The SNC-funded QWIP

is a planning project led by Plumas Audubon that will treat American Valley CSD property adjacent to this Project.

The PCFSC has provided fuels reduction assistance to landowners in Plumas County for over 18 years. They have successfully closed five SNC grants and are currently working on three active SNC grants: #1032 Butterfly-Twain (closing soon), #1232 Lakes Basin Phase II, and #1012 Little Grass Valley Reservoir. Three landowners are involved with this Project: the CHY Company with 132 acres; Brian Wayland, a private individual with 16 acres; and the Plumas District Hospital with three acres.

The CHY Company will provide a registered Professional Forester for project layout, California Environmental Quality Act compliance, and operator oversight with a match of \$20,000. Landowner cost-share has been waived for Brian Wayland to ensure treatment, which provides public benefit. Other partners include Plumas Corporation (fiscal agent) and Plumas County Department of Public Works. Others engaged are American Valley CSD, Plumas Audubon Society, Quincy Firewise, Feather River Stewardship Coalition, and Plumas National Forest.

This Project supports the SNC Strategic Plan and Sierra Nevada Watershed Improvement Program priorities to improve community resilience by protecting water conveyance infrastructure, including municipal water tanks, adjacent to the Project area and protecting life and property within the Wildland Urban Interface. The Project specifically addresses priorities of the California's Wildfire and Forest Resilience Action Plan to accelerate restoration across all lands and increase assistance to small private landowners.

## Project Schedule

Project Tasks and Deliverables	Timeline
Progress reports	Every 6 months
Pre-project photo monitoring	July 2021
Operator contract - solicit bids, contract with operator	July – August 15, 2021
Implementation – 151 acres	August 2021 – November 2022
Post-project photo monitoring	November 2022
Sign installation	Before November 2022
Public tour	Before November 2022
<b>Estimated Project Completion Date</b>	<b>December 31, 2022</b>

## Project Costs

Project Costs	SNC Funding
Project management	\$5,841
Contractual: Forester, mechanical biomass, mastication, hand thin and chip	\$388,050
Administrative costs	\$39,389
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$433,280</b>

## Project Letters of Support or Opposition

### *Support:*

- Quincy Fire Protection District
- Plumas County Board of Supervisors – District 4 Supervisor Greg Hagwood
- Quincy Firewise
- Plumas District Hospital
- Plumas National Forest
- Plumas Audubon Society
- Feather River Stewardship Coalition

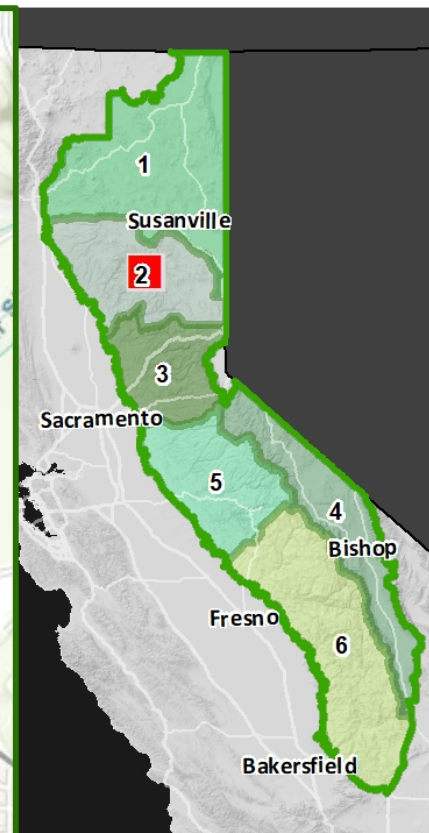
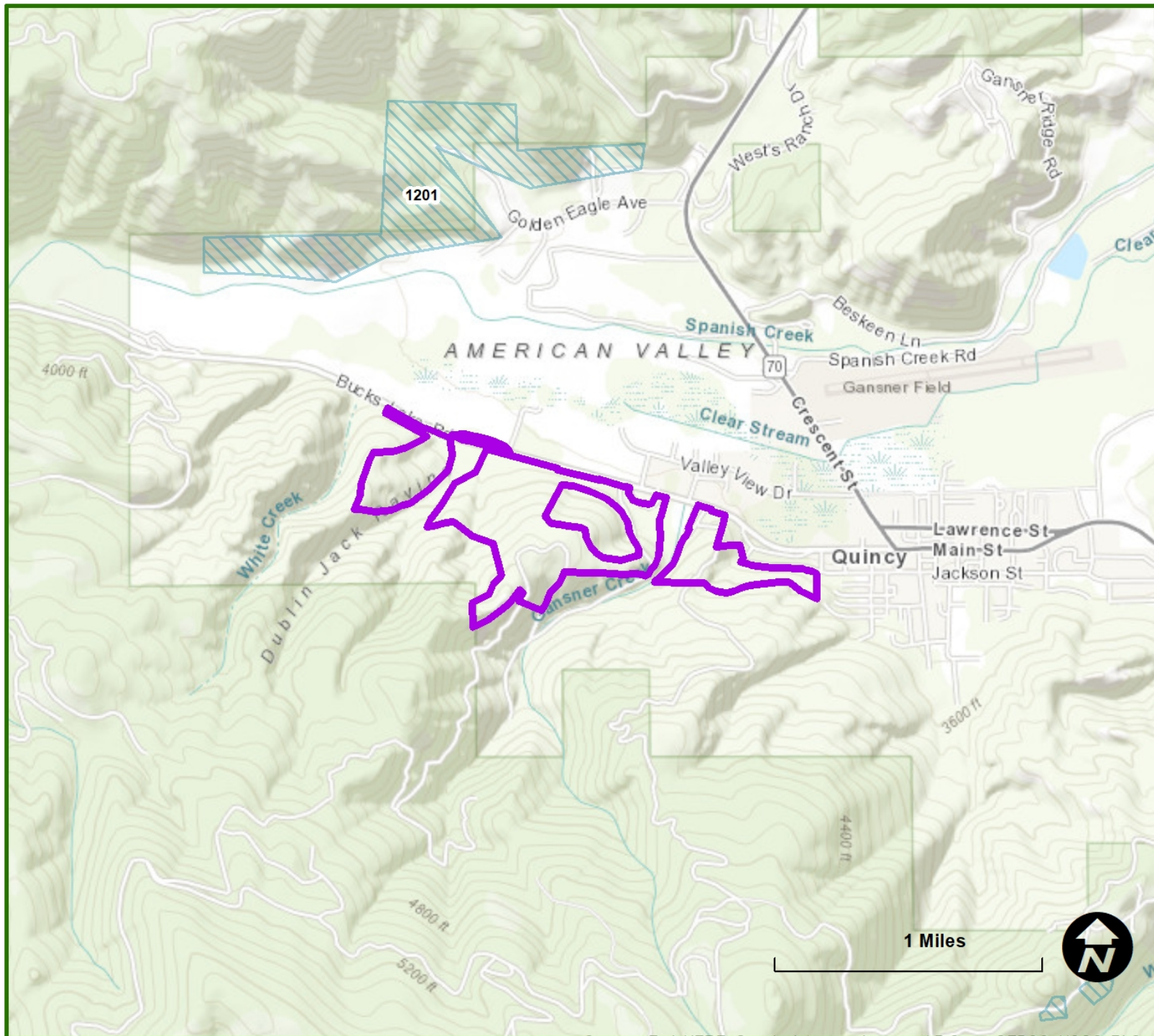
### *Opposition:*

- None received

## 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

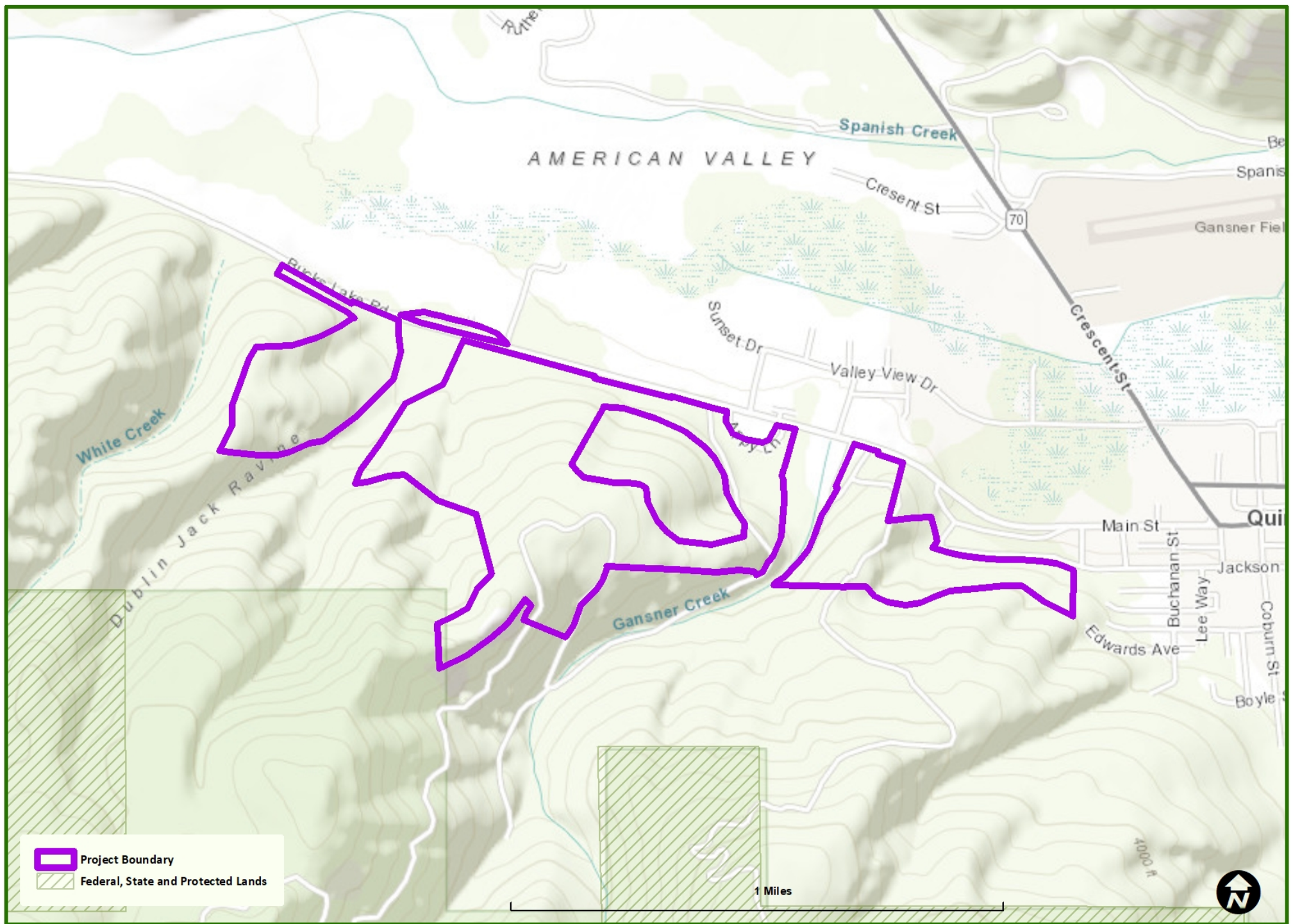


- Project Boundary (Primary Map)
- Other Projects (Primary Map)
- Project Location (Regional Map)
- 1 North Subregion
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- 6 South Subregion

## 1317 Quincy Wildfire Protection Project

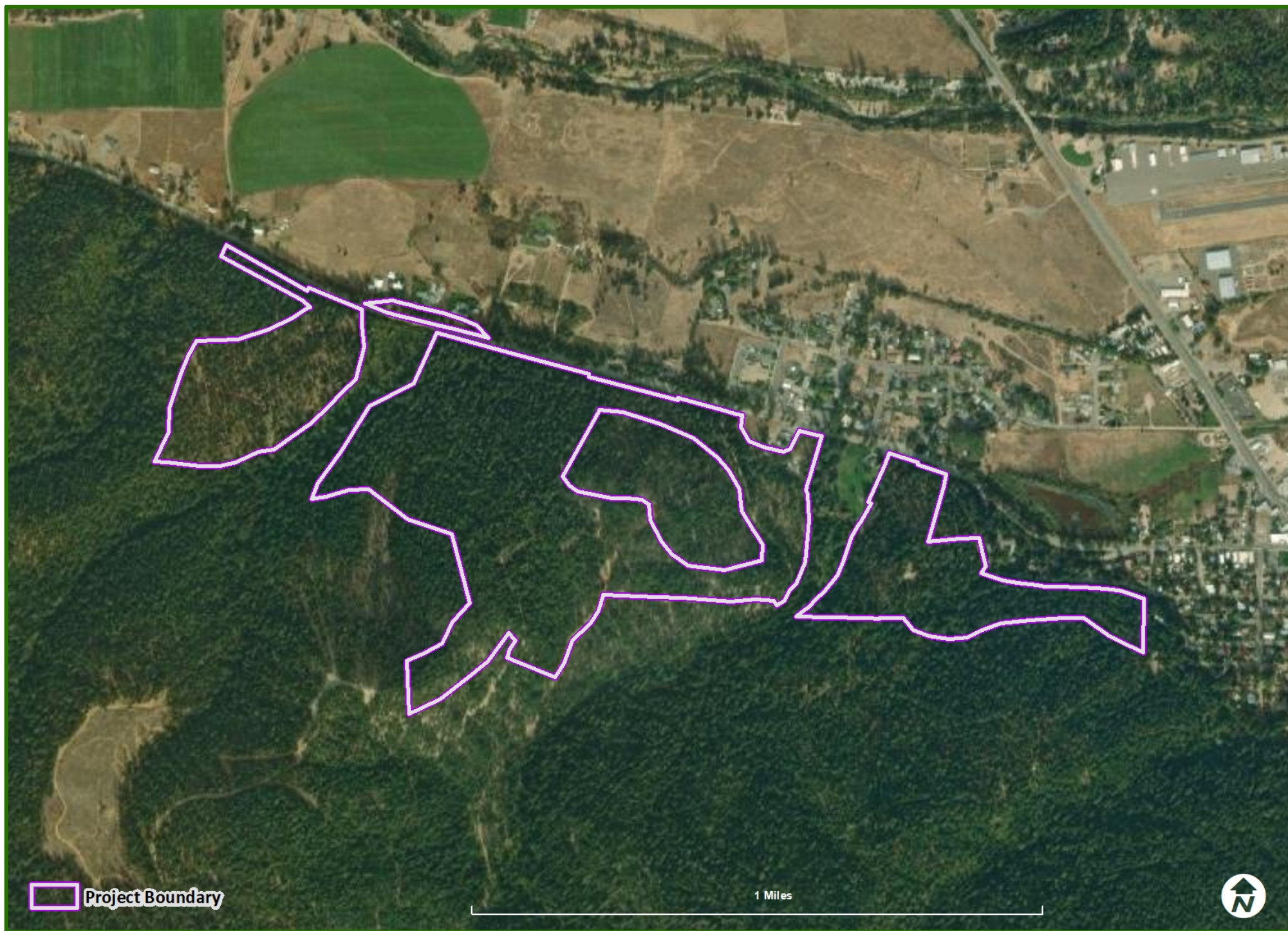
### Plumas County Fire Safe Council





**1317 Quincy Wildfire Protection Project**  
**Plumas County Fire Safe Council**





**1317 Quincy Wildfire Protection Project**  
Plumas County Fire Safe Council

# Notice of Exemption

---

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

**From:** Sierra Nevada Conservancy  
11521 Blocker Drive, Suite 205  
Auburn, CA 95603

County Clerk  
County of: Plumas  
520 Main Street  
Quincy, CA 95971

Project Title: Quincy Wildfire Protection Project - SNC 1317

Project Location – Specific: T24N, R9E, S 16

Project Location - City: Quincy, CA

Project Location - County: Plumas

Description of Nature, Purpose and Beneficiaries of Project:

The Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC) would provide funding to the Plumas County Fire Safe Council for hazardous fuel reduction activities on at least 151 acres of privately owned land southwest of Quincy, California. Fuel treatments would include manual and mechanical thinning, mastication, and chipping. Hand thinning would be used on slopes too steep for mechanical equipment and chips would be removed from project area for utilization. The intent of the project is to reduce risks from wildfire to the community and its critical infrastructure, as well as create a forest structure resilient to the effects of fire.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: Sierra Nevada Conservancy

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: Plumas County Fire Safe Council

Exempt Status:

Categorical Exemption. CEQA Guidelines Section 15304

Reasons why project is exempt:

The Quincy Wildfire Protection Project is categorically exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15304, Class 4, which consists of minor public or private alterations in the condition of land, water, and/or vegetation which do not involve removal of mature, scenic trees except for forestry and agricultural purposes. The minor land alterations proposed by the project consist of forestry treatments to reduce hazardous fuels in the WUI and improve forest health. The project activities have been analyzed and would not result in significant adverse impacts or any exceptions to the exemption.

Lead Agency

Contact Person: Shannon Ciotti

Area Code/Telephone/Extension: (530) 906-7345

**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: Yes

Signed by Applicant: No

Authority cited: Sections 21083 and 21110, Public Resources Code.

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

Reference: Sections 21108, 21152, and 21152.1, Public Resources Code.

## Exhibit A

### Sierra Nevada Conservancy Forest Health Grant Program SNC Project Number 1319

**SNC ID Number:** 1319

**Applicant:** Feather River Resource Conservation District

**Project Title:** Mohawk Valley Wildfire Resilience Project

**SNC Subregion:** North Central

**County:** Plumas

**Funding Amount Requested:** \$1,022,082

**Funding Amount Recommended:** \$1,022,082

**Total Project Cost:** \$1,140,532

**Funding Authority:** State of California Budget Act of 2020

#### **Project Scope / Description**

The Mohawk Valley Wildfire Resilience Project (Project) is located in Plumas County along the Middle Fork Feather River and the California Highway 70/89 corridor near the communities of Blairsden, Graeagle, Johnsville, and Plumas Pines. Submitted by the Feather River Resource Conservation District (RCD), the Project will treat 727 acres of land managed by the Beckwourth Ranger District of the Plumas National Forest and 35 acres of Plumas Eureka Community Services District (CSD), for a total of 762 treatable acres. The primary purpose of the Project is to reduce hazardous fuel loads in overstocked forest stands to create conditions that are more resilient to wildfire.

The Project is a combination of private and public ownership in mixed conifer forest that will be treated with hand thinning and grapple piling to control insect and disease infestation and reduce hazardous fuels in the Wildland Urban Interface. Field surveys conducted in 2016 revealed extremely dense mixed conifer stands with elevated levels of tree mortality and high fuel loads. Units were identified in plan development funded through Sierra Nevada Conservancy's (SNC) Regional Forest and Fire Capacity Program (RFFCP) and were selected after being deemed unsuitable for mechanical thinning due to steep terrain, access issues, and sensitive habitat concerns. The collaboratively planned Project has been identified as a regional priority due to its location, current ecological condition, ability to impact water resources, wildlife, and wildfire resiliency as well as its proximity to critical infrastructure including water treatment centers.

The Project has been planned in tandem with California State Parks and shares a boundary with their proposed Madora project that would create a fuel break, hand thin fuel reduction, and broadcast burning. The Project is near hazardous fuels reduction projects currently pursued by the Plumas County Fire Safe Council in eastern Plumas County and the SNC-funded Lakes Basin projects (#1088 and #1232).

Originally established in 1954, the Feather River RCD is a special district whose mission is to advocate for resource conservation through education and collaborative efforts with willing landowners and organizations that promote economic and ecological sustainability. Managing forest health projects since 2012, the RCD currently manages several SNC-funded projects including two RFFCP grants and the Moonlight Fire Restoration Program through a Good Neighbor Agreement between SNC and the Plumas National Forest. The RCD's programs and projects include management of reforestation, hand thinning, mastication, and oversight of the Plumas Underburn Cooperative.

Direct Project partners include the Plumas National Forest and Plumas Eureka CSD. Both partners have assisted with scoping, layout, and identifying needs for the Project and have committed to implementing pile burning to remove residual forest materials in their respective areas. A match of \$118,450 in the form of pile burning and project management will be contributed by Plumas National Forest.

Consistent with California's Wildfire and Forest Resilience Action Plan and the Sierra Nevada Watershed Improvement Program, the Project will create conditions that are more resilient to wildfire and have characteristics that promote clean water, biodiversity, and a mixed-aged forest as well as allowing for safer reintroduction of fire as a management tool. Public benefits include positive impacts on fish and wildlife habitat, decreasing the likelihood of high severity fires affecting the popular Lakes Basin Recreation Area and Plumas Eureka State Park, and bolstering the local tourism economy. The Project will treat Plumas Eureka CSD property which provides drinking water and wastewater treatment for the community of Plumas Pines. The majority of the Project is located along the Middle Fork Feather River, which provides water for Lake Oroville and the State Water Project, and has the potential to affect the downstream communities of Sloat, Cromberg, and Greenhorn before entering the uninhabited wild and scenic section of the Middle Fork Feather River.



## Project Schedule

Project Tasks and Deliverables	Timeline
Progress reports	Every 6 months
Layout and flagging	February – April 2022
Project implementation – hand thin, grapple pile	May 2022 – December 2024
<b>Estimated Project Completion Date</b>	<b>January 1, 2025</b>

## Project Costs

Project Costs	SNC Funding
Project management, reporting, and travel	\$15,487
Flagging and layout	\$5,278
Hand thin/hand pile 386 acres	\$540,400
Hand thin/grapple pile 296 acres	\$296,000
Brush grapple pile 80 acres	\$72,000
Administrative costs	\$92,917
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,022,082</b>

## Project Letters of Support or Opposition

### *Support:*

- Plumas National Forest, Beckwourth Ranger District
- Plumas County Fire Safe Council
- Plumas Eureka Community Services District
- Feather River Stewardship Coalition

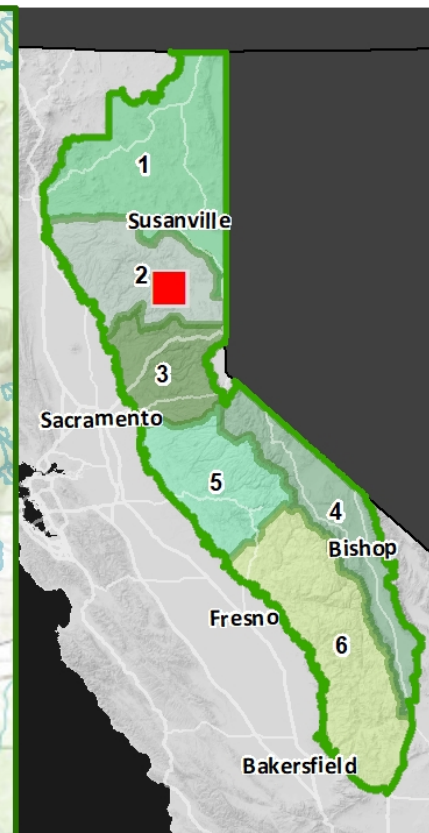
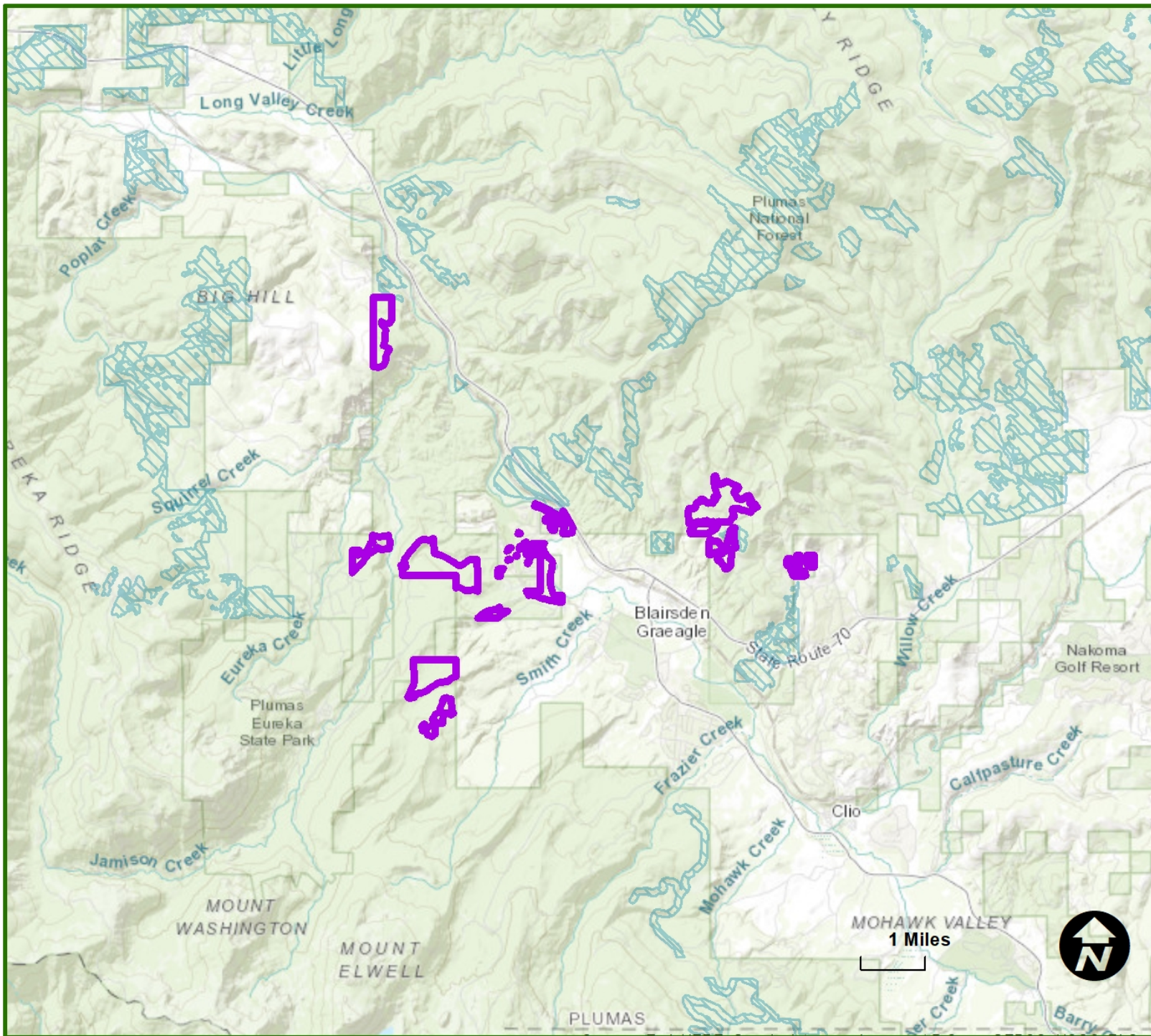
### *Opposition:*










- None received

## 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.

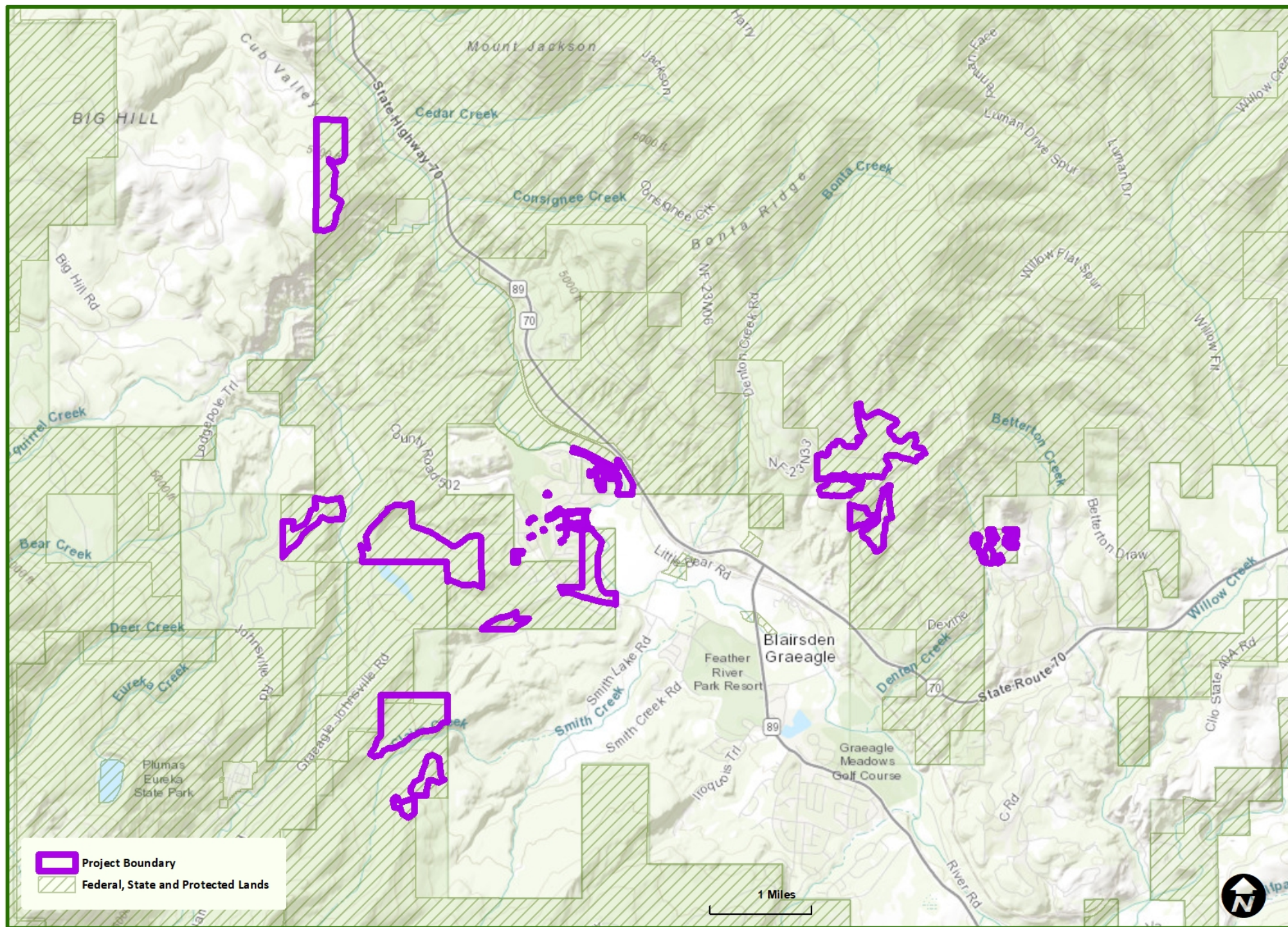
- Acres of Land Improved or Restored



-  Project Boundary (Primary Map)
-  Other Projects (Primary Map)
-  Project Location (Regional Map)
-  1 North Subregion
-  2 North Central Subregion
-  3 Central Subregion
-  4 East Subregion
-  5 South Central Subregion
-  6 South Subregion

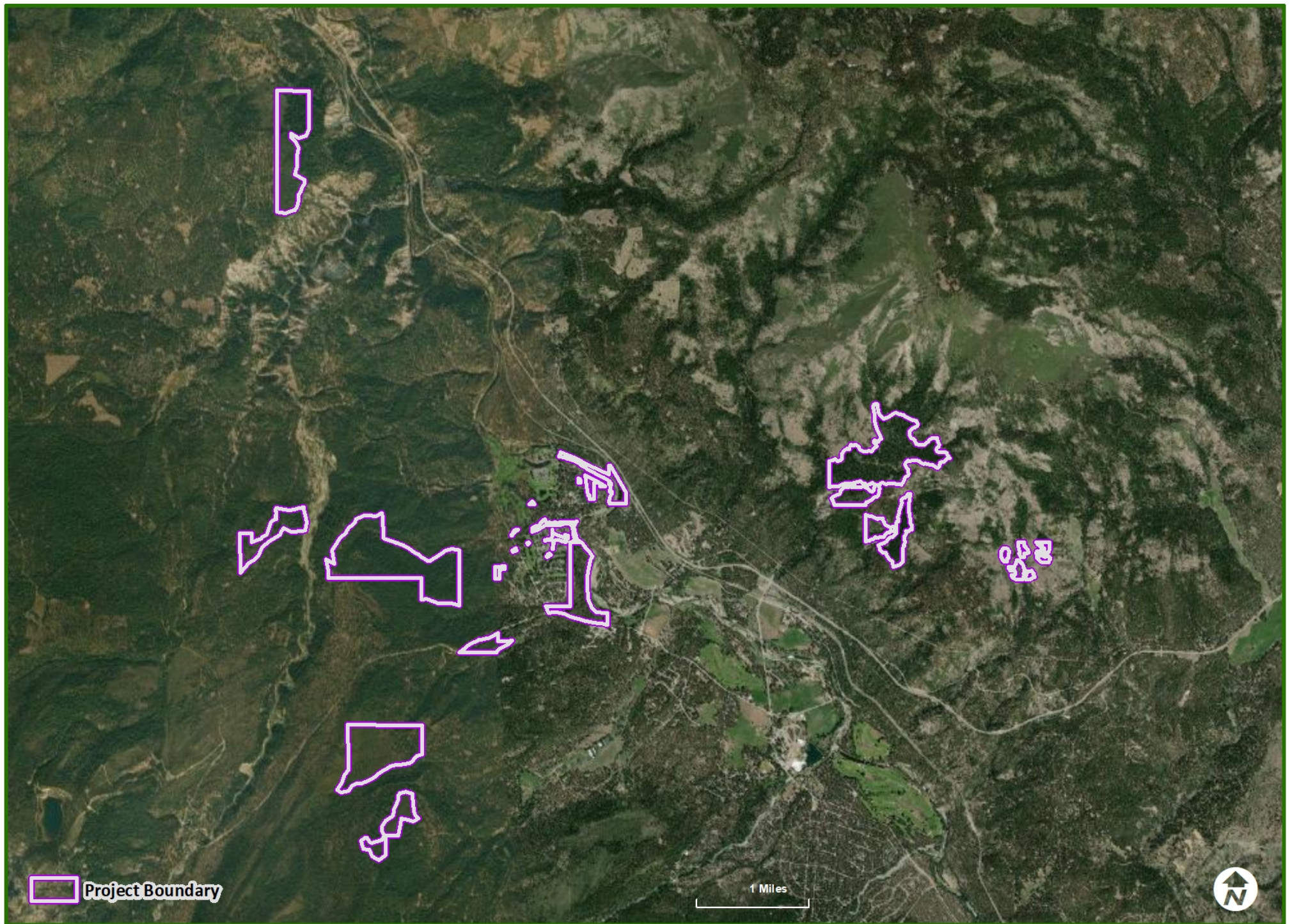
**1319 Mohawk Valley Wildfire Resilience Project**  
**Feather River Resource Conservation District**





**1319 Mohawk Valley Wildfire Resilience Project**  
**Feather River Resource Conservation District**





**1319 Mohawk Valley Wildfire Resilience Project**  
Feather River Resource Conservation District

# Notice of Exemption

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

From: Sierra Nevada Conservancy  
11521 Blocker Drive, Suite 205  
Auburn, CA 95603

County Clerk  
County of: Plumas  
520 Main Street  
Quincy, CA 95971

Project Title: Mohawk Valley Wildfire Resilience Project - SNC 1319

Project Location – Specific: Plumas National Forest and Plumas-Eureka Community Services District lands along the Middle Fork Feather River near the communities of Blairsden, Graeagle, Johnsville, and Plumas Pines (T22N, R12E S 4,8,9; T22N, R11E S 4,5,9,8,7,12,18,19; T22N, R12E S 2,3,11,12)

Project Location - City: Blairsden, CA

Project Location - County: Plumas

Description of Nature, Purpose and Beneficiaries of Project:

The Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC) would provide funding to the Feather River Resource Conservation District for fuel reduction and thinning treatments on lands within Plumas National Forest and on lands owned by Plumas Eureka Community Services District. This project aims to reduce hazardous fuels in the wildland-urban interface (WUI) and restore at least 762 acres of mixed conifer forest along the Middle Fork Feather River to an improved state of ecosystem health through manual and mechanical thinning and prescribed fire, including pile burning.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: Sierra Nevada Conservancy

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

Exempt Status:

Categorical Exemption. CEQA Guidelines Section 15304

Statutory Exemptions. State code number: Public Resources Code Section 4799.05(d)(1)

Reasons why project is exempt:

A portion of the Mohawk Valley Wildfire Resilience Project is categorically exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15304, Class 4, which consists of minor public or private alterations in the condition of land, water, and/or vegetation which do not involve removal of mature, scenic trees except for forestry and agricultural purposes. The minor land alterations proposed by the project consist of forestry treatments and pile burning to reduce hazardous fuels in the WUI and improve ecosystem health. The project activities have been analyzed and would not result in significant adverse impacts or any exceptions to the exemption. Additionally, CEQA 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 NEPA if the primary role of a state or local agency is providing funding or staffing for those projects. SNC would provide funding for fuels reduction treatments on federal lands within the Plumas National Forest that comprise the rest of the project area. The proposed activities on federal land were reviewed in their entirety under NEPA in the Mohawk Vista Forest Health Project Decision Memo, signed in 2017 by the U.S. Forest Service, and the Plumas-Eureka Forest Health Project Decision Memo, signed in 2018 by the U.S. Forest Service.

Lead Agency

Contact Person: Shannon Ciotti Area Code/Telephone/Extension: (530) 906-7345

**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: Yes

Signed by Applicant: No

Authority cited: Sections 21083 and 21110, Public Resources Code.

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

Reference: Sections 21108, 21152, and 21152.1, Public Resources Code.



## Exhibit A

### Sierra Nevada Conservancy Forest Health Grant Program SNC Project Number 1322

**SNC ID Number:** 1322

**Applicant:** National Forest Foundation

**Project Title:** Michigan Bluff Community Protection Project

**SNC Subregion:** Central

**County:** Placer

**Funding Amount Requested:** \$3,042,670

**Funding Amount Recommended:** \$3,042,670

**Total Project Cost:** \$3,067,670

**Funding Authority:** State of California Budget Act of 2020

#### **Project Scope / Description**

The Michigan Bluff Community Protection Project (Project) is in Placer County on lands managed by the American River Ranger District (ARRD) of the Tahoe National Forest. The National Forest Foundation (NFF) is applying in partnership with the ARRD. The Project immediately surrounds the rural community of Michigan Bluff and is about three miles east of the larger community of Foresthill. It is near the top of a ridge on the north side of the Middle Fork American River above Oxbow Reservoir. Due to fuels, terrain, and weather patterns, the Project area is classified by California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection as a “very high” Fire Hazard Severity Zone. This project is currently the top priority of the Tahoe National Forest.

The Project will treat 1,266 acres of hazardous fuels on United States Forest Service land around the community of Michigan Bluff. The forest in this area has an abundance of high-density stands and substantial surface and ladder fuels that are vulnerable to fire sweeping up from the canyon below. A combination of mastication and hand thinning will reduce hazardous surface and ladder fuels. Trees up to 10 inches diameter at breast height and brush will be shredded or cut. Concentrations of hazardous fuels will also be reduced 300 feet along 4.3 miles of roads. Approximately 494 acres will be masticated, 707 acres will be hand cut/piled or lopped and scattered, and 65 acres treated for invasive plants. Of these acres, 879 are directly along Foresthill Divide Road, and 109 acres of fuels treatment will focus on improving habitat for the threatened perennial herb Layne's butterweed. The Project will also maximize the retention of old growth and large trees, and utilize radial thinning around large full-crowned conifers to provide additional growing space.



The Michigan Bluff Project supports the larger program work on the ARRD and complements the adjacent forest health projects of Deadwood and Sunny South. The total area of these three projects is 9,030 acres. These strategic treatments all occur in close proximity to Foresthill Divide, a broad ridgetop that separates the North and Middle Forks of the American River.

The NFF is a federally chartered organization that assists the United States Department of Agriculture Forest Service in the protection and restoration of the nation's forests. The NFF is partnering with the Tahoe National Forest, and specifically the American River Ranger District, to expand the ARRD's capacity to increase pace and scale of forest restoration on the District. The NFF has managed nearly \$26 million in combined private and public funding between 2017 and 2021 across the Tahoe Headwaters Treasured Landscape (THTL). They are implementing work with the ARRD on the Biggie Phase 3 project, and successfully completed a \$350,000 grant from the Sierra Nevada Conservancy for a project (#773) at the Sagehen Experimental Research Station.

The Tahoe National Forest is providing \$25,000 in-kind resources for project management. The ARRD has invested \$250,000 in project planning and \$200,000 in preparation and layout of associated commercial thinning units.

The Michigan Bluff Community Protection Project is a part of the 2.4 million acre Tahoe-Central Sierra Initiative and NFF's 614,000 acre THTL. This project is part of Placer County's "foothills-to-headwaters" fuel break in the American River basin and is within the Placer County Community Wildfire Protection Plan. This grant is supported by the Placer County Fire Safe Alliance. The Project rests at the top of the Middle Fork American River watershed, directly above Oxbow Reservoir and the Ralston Powerhouse, and will help protect a major tributary of Folsom Lake.

## Project Schedule

Project Tasks and Deliverables	Timeline
Project management and reporting	September 2021 – January 2025
Hire RPF to complete implementation layout and provide project oversight	October 2021
Solicit and hire implementation contractor(s)	October 2021 – December 2021
Implementation layout	September 2021 – May 2022
Contractors complete 1,266 acres of fuel reduction, forest health and invasive species treatments	October 2021 – December 2024
RPF oversight of forest treatment work	October 2021 – December 2024
<b>Estimated Project Completion Date</b>	<b>January 2025</b>

## Project Costs

Project Costs	SNC Funding
Project management (inc. travel)	\$75,000
Registered Professional Forester – Implementation layout and project oversight	\$200,000
Forest health and hazardous fuels reduction treatments	\$2,253,800
Invasive plant removal	\$117,000
Administrative costs	\$396,870
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$3,042,670</b>

## Project Letters of Support or Opposition

### *Support:*

- Tahoe National Forest – American River Ranger District
- Tahoe National Forest – Supervisor's Office
- Placer County Fire Safe Alliance

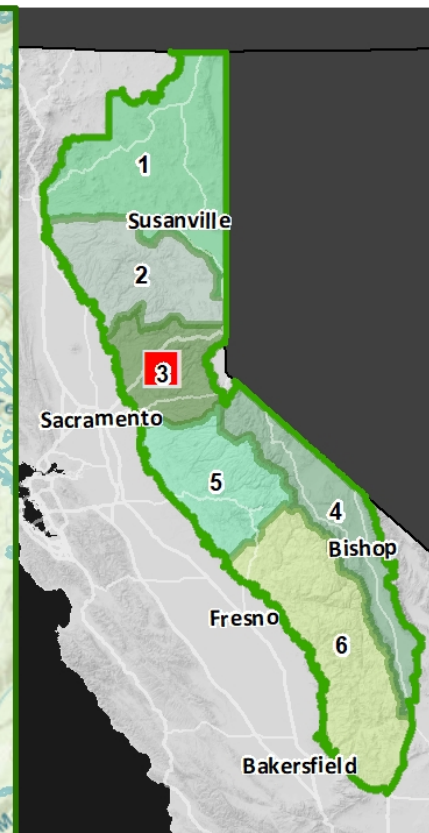
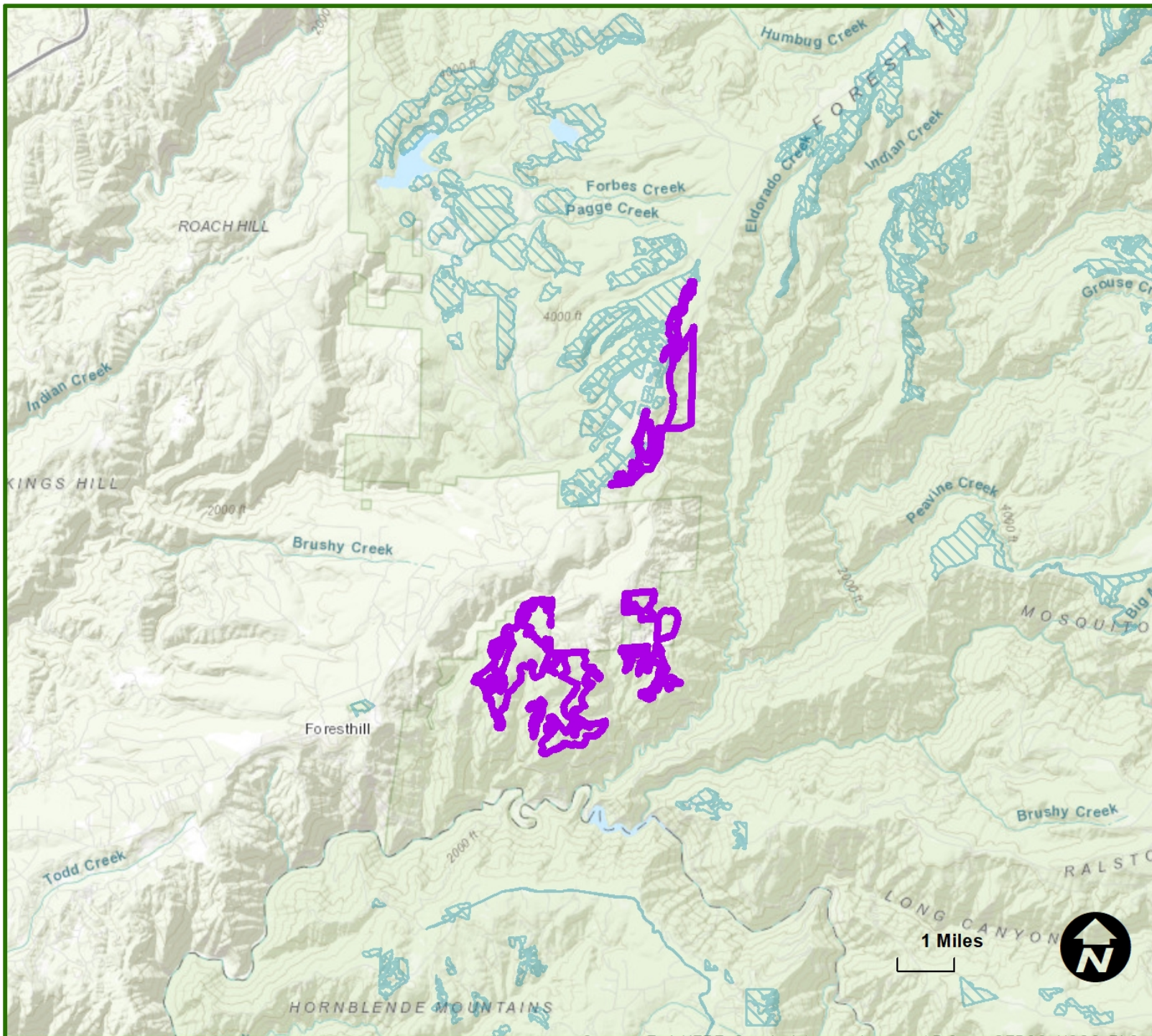
### *Opposition:*










- None received

## 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

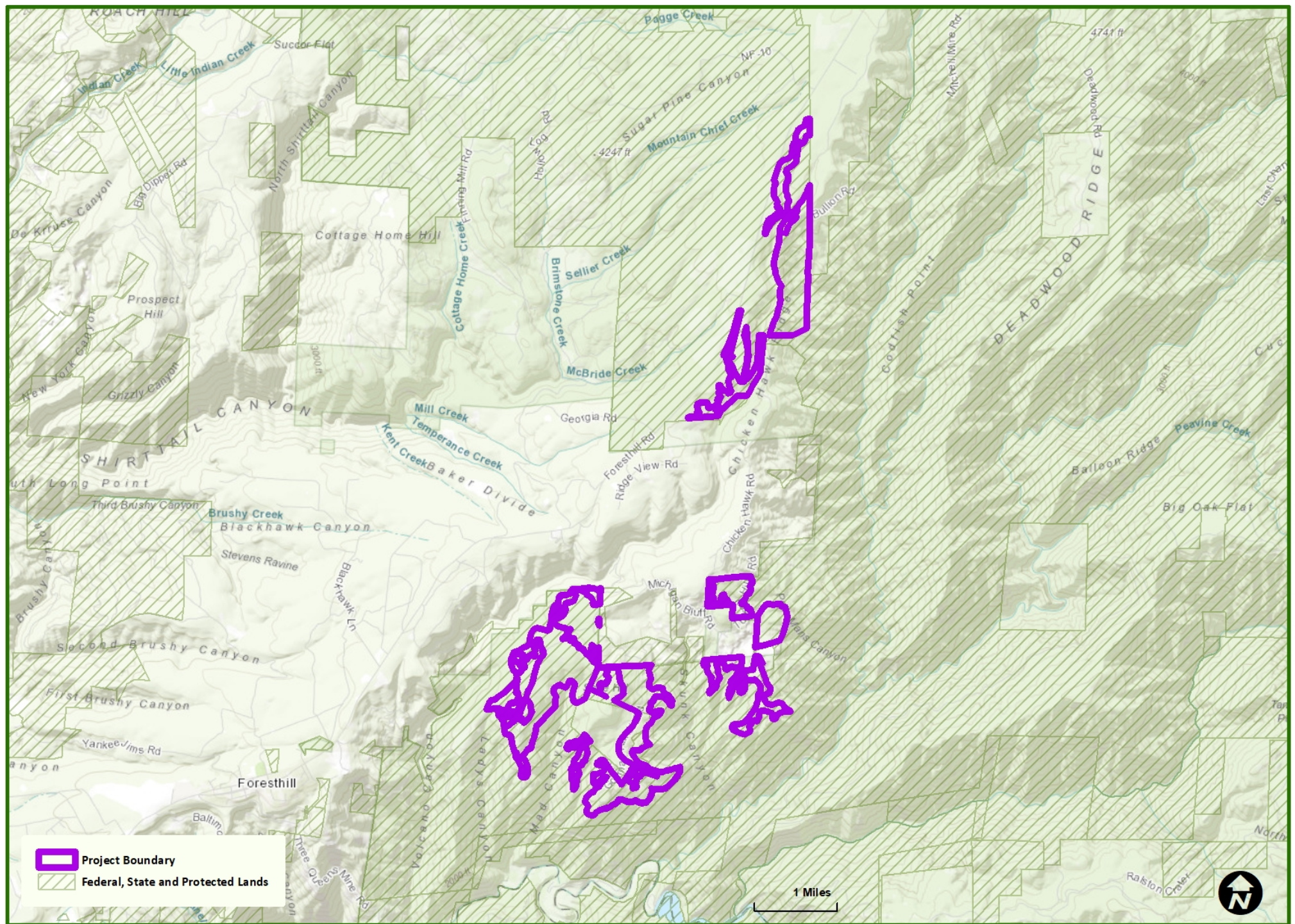


-  Project Boundary (Primary Map)
-  Other Projects (Primary Map)
-  Project Location (Regional Map)
-  1 North Subregion
-  2 North Central Subregion
-  3 Central Subregion
-  4 East Subregion
-  5 South Central Subregion
-  6 South Subregion

## 1322 Michigan Bluff Community Protection Project

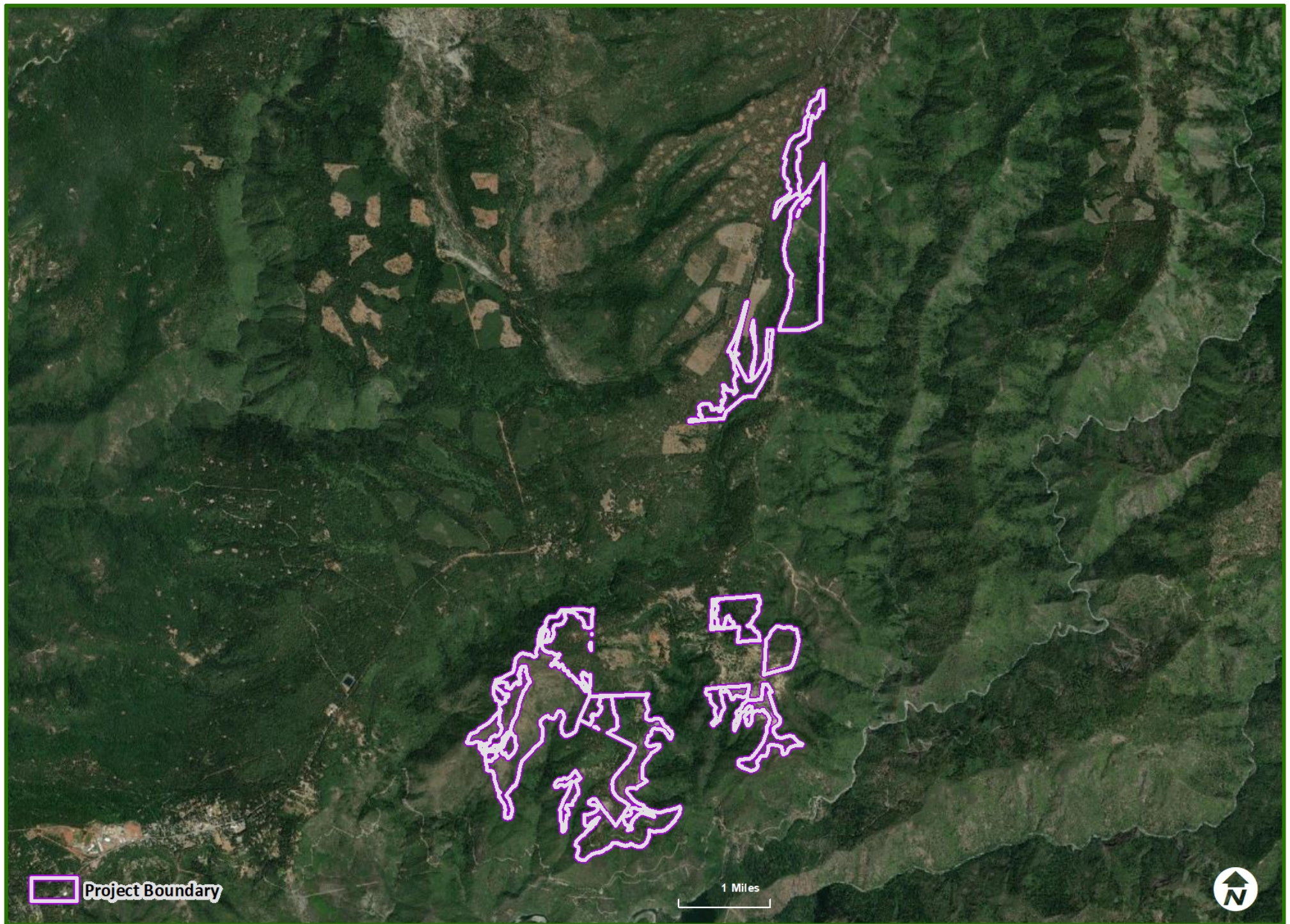
The National Forest Foundation





**1322 Michigan Bluff Community Protection Project**  
**The National Forest Foundation**





**1322 Michigan Bluff Community Protection Project**  
The National Forest Foundation



# Notice of Exemption

Appendix E

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: Placer  
2954 Richardson Drive  
Auburn, CA 95603

Project Title: Michigan Bluff Community Protection Project - SNC 1322

Project Location – Specific:

Multiple treatment locations centered at approximately 39°03'53.73"N and 120°44'52.67"W

Project Location - City: Unincorporated Michigan Bluff

Project Location - County: Placer

Description of Nature, Purpose and Beneficiaries of Project:

The Sierra Nevada Conservancy would provide funding for fuel reduction and thinning treatments, including hand thinning, mastication, and lop and scatter treatments, on at least 1,266 acres of federal land within the Tahoe National Forest. The treatment areas contain stands of beetle-killed trees intermixed with live trees that are highly susceptible to further beetle infestations and pose a severe fire hazard to the community of Michigan Bluff. The primary goals of the fuel reduction treatments are to reduce fuel loads around communities, improve forest health and resilience, and provide safer ingress and egress on existing roads for the public and emergency personnel in the event of wildfire.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: Sierra Nevada Conservancy

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: National Forest Foundation

Exempt Status:

Statutory Exemptions. State code number: Public Resources Code Section 4799.05(d)(1)

Reasons why project is exempt:

CEQA 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 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 fuels reduction treatments on at least 1,266 acres of federal land within the Tahoe National Forest. The proposed activities were reviewed in their entirety under NEPA in the Michigan Bluff Community Protection Project Decision Memo signed in October 2019 by the U.S. Forest Service.

Lead Agency

Contact Person: Shannon Ciotti

Area Code/Telephone/Extension: (530) 906-7345

## 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: Yes

Signed by Applicant: No

Authority cited: Sections 21083 and 21110, Public Resources Code.

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

Reference: Sections 21108, 21152, and 21152.1, Public Resources Code.



## Exhibit A

### Sierra Nevada Conservancy Forest Health Grant Program SNC Project Number 1325

**SNC ID Number:** 1325

**Applicant:** Great Basin Institute

**Project Title:** Twofer Pillikin Fuels Reduction Project

**SNC Subregion:** Central

**County:** El Dorado

**Funding Amount Requested:** \$1,255,225

**Funding Amount Recommended:** \$1,255,225

**Total Project Cost:** \$1,655,225

**Funding Authority:** State of California Budget Act of 2020

#### **Project Scope / Description**

The Twofer Pillikin Fuels Reduction Project (Project) will treat 1,300 acres of land managed by the Eldorado National Forest (ENF) along Highway 50. The Project is located between Pollock Pines and Kyburz in El Dorado County, midway between Placerville and Echo Summit. The Project is part of ENF's Crystal Basin Focus Area, a large watershed encompassing Union Valley and Ice House reservoirs, Alder Ridge, and a portion of the South Fork American River. Great Basin Institute (GBI) is partnering with the ENF to increase the pace and scale of forest restoration on public lands.

Work funded through this grant will complement other fuel reduction efforts within the 10,400-acre Twofer Pillikin Project. Separately funded fuels treatment will occur on 748 acres north of Hwy 50 beginning in summer of 2021 through separate contracts with GBI and the National Wild Turkey Federation. Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC) funding will thin 900 acres south of Hwy 50. Mastication will target woody shrubs and small trees up to 11 inches diameter at breast height, leaving a mixed species composition of 80-100 trees per acre, and resulting in reduced density of understory and ladder fuels and a more heterogeneous stand structure. In addition, this grant will implement follow-up shrub control (targeted herbicide application) on 400 acres, following the mastication on the north side of Hwy 50. Shrub control soon after mastication will substantially reduce the need for follow-up treatments. Follow-up shrub control on the mastication funded through this grant on the south side of Hwy 50 will be undertaken, along with remaining fuels treatments to complete the larger project, with future funding.

Great Basin Institute is an interdisciplinary field studies organization founded at the University of Nevada and based in Reno. The GBI has successfully managed over \$135 million in grants and contracts in support of conservation initiatives. The GBI collaborates with the United States Forest Service through master participating and stewardship agreements. The GBI has two active SNC grants: one for Sierra Nevada Watershed Improvement Program capacity technical assistance through the Regional Forest and Fire Capacity Program (#945) and the Grant Grove Big Stump Ecological Restoration Project in the South Subregion (#1246).

Match funding of \$400,000 has been secured, with \$200,000 from the Bonneville Foundation and \$200,000 from Eldorado National Forest. This funding will complete a substantial portion of the mastication on the north side of Hwy 50. The Project is a component of the Crystal Basin Focus Area stemming from the South Fork American River (SOFAR) Cohesive Strategy, and is supported by a broad range of partners within SOFAR.

The Project is within the Crystal Basin Focus Area, which covers an important headwaters region within the Tahoe-Central Sierra Initiative and within SOFAR. The Crystal Basin contains major reservoirs, Union Valley and Ice House, as well as the outflow from Loon Lake and other smaller water sources. It is a major input to the South Fork American River, which provides water to the residents of El Dorado County, and flows into Folsom Lake, providing water to farms and other Californians. The Twofer Project will help protect the headwaters of the American River, and millions of dollars of water and power infrastructure managed by the El Dorado Irrigation District and Sacramento Municipal Utility District, from catastrophic wildfire.

## Project Schedule

Project Tasks and Deliverables	Timeline
Project management and reporting	August 2021 – December 2024
Mastication on 900 acres	August 2021 – December 2024
Shrub control on 400 acres	July 2022 – December 2024
Project signage	December 2021
<b>Estimated Project Completion Date</b>	<b>January 2025</b>

## Project Costs

Project Costs	SNC Funding
Project management	\$50,000
Mastication (900 acres at \$1,000 per acre)	\$900,000
Shrub control (400 acres at \$350 per acre)	\$140,000
Project signage	\$1,500
Administrative Costs	\$163,725
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,255,225</b>

## Project Letters of Support or Opposition

### *Support:*

- Eldorado National Forest, Supervisor's Office
- GBI Board of Directors, College of Agriculture, Biotechnology and Natural Resources, University of Nevada, Reno
- Blue Forest Conservation
- National Wild Turkey Federation
- Sacramento Municipal Utility District

### *Opposition:*

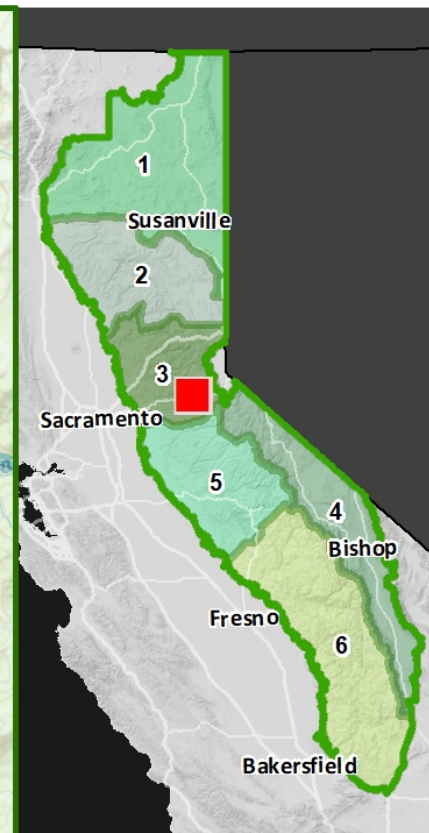
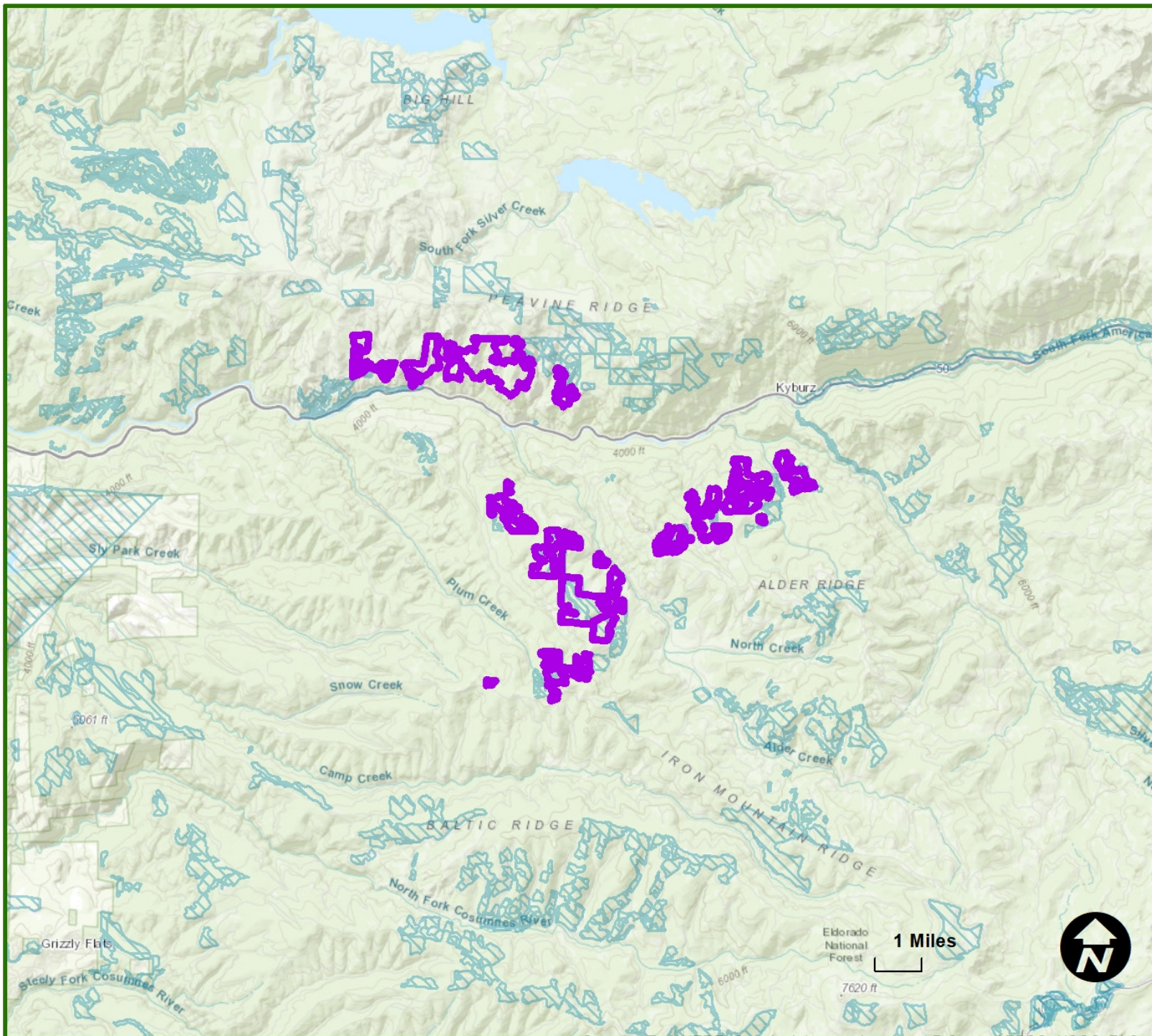
- None received










## 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



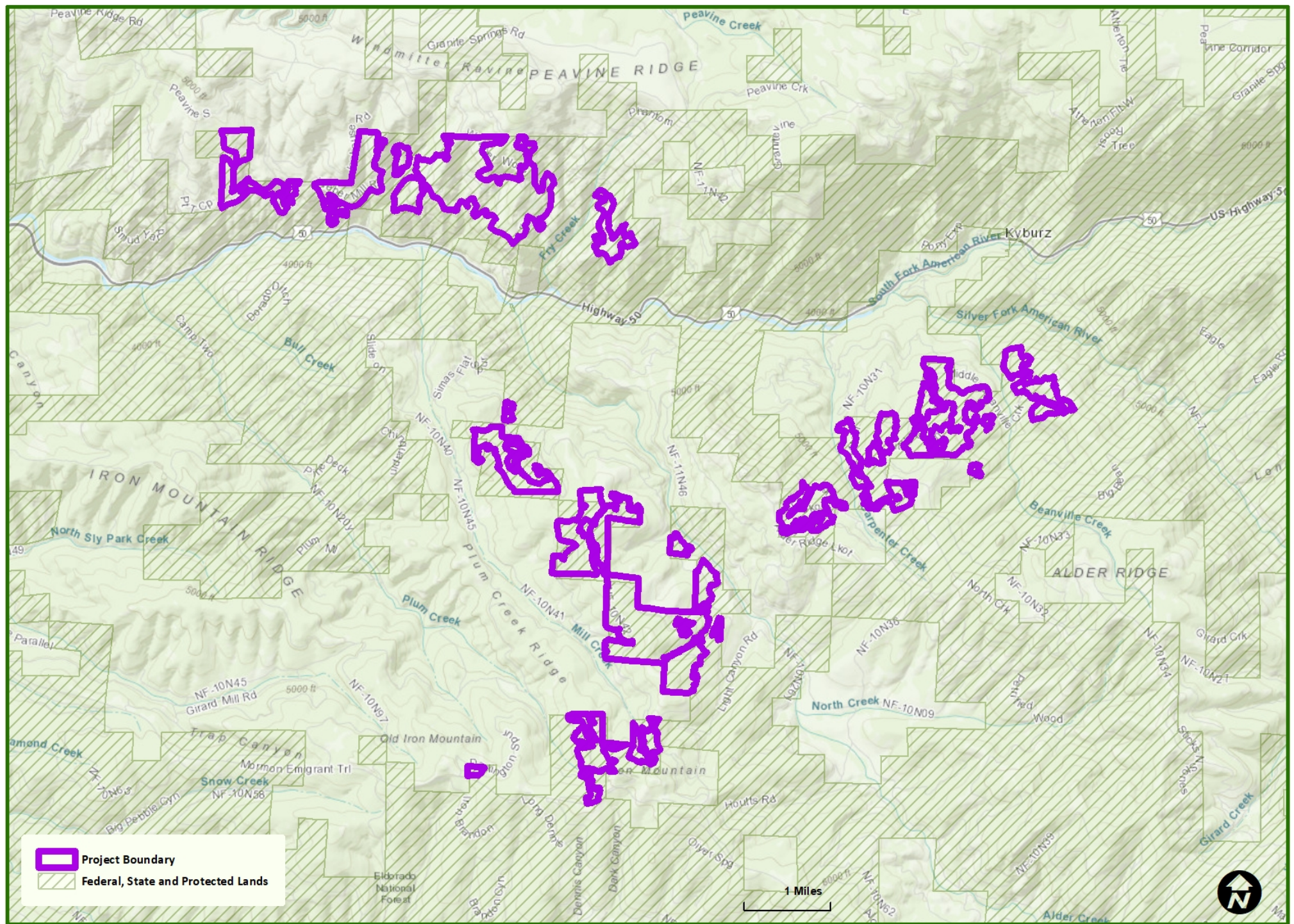


-  Project Boundary (Primary Map)
-  Other Projects (Primary Map)
-  Project Location (Regional Map)
-  1 North Subregion
-  2 North Central Subregion
-  3 Central Subregion
-  4 East Subregion
-  5 South Central Subregion
-  6 South Subregion

## 1325 Twofer Pillikin Fuels Reduction Project

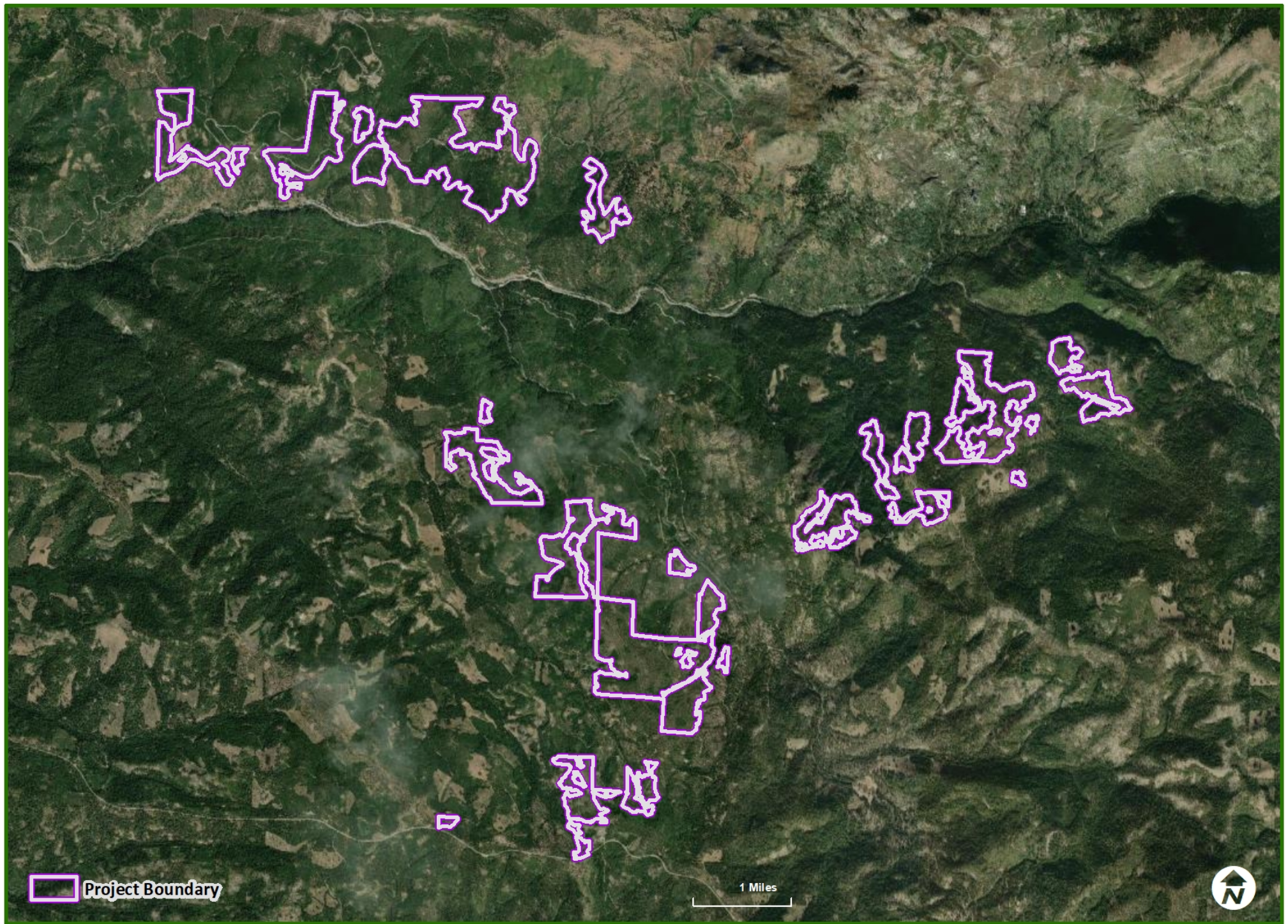
Great Basin Institute





**1325 Twofer Pillikin Fuels Reduction Project**  
**Great Basin Institute**





**1325 Twofers Pillikin Fuels Reduction Project**  
Great Basin Institute



# Notice of Exemption

## Appendix E

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: El Dorado  
360 Fair Lane  
Placerville, CA 95667

Project Title: Twofer Pillikin Fuels Reduction Project - SNC 1325

Project Location – Specific:

Ten treatment areas centered at approximately 38°44'41.18"N and 120°21'24.74"W

Project Location - City: Unincorporated communities of White Hall, Kyburz, and Strawberry

Project Location - County: El Dorado

Description of Nature, Purpose and Beneficiaries of Project:

The Sierra Nevada Conservancy would provide funding for fuel reduction and thinning treatments on at least 1,300 acres of federal land within the Eldorado National Forest. The treatment area is classified as a Tier 2 High Fire-Threat District, a designation for extreme risk of destructive utility-associated wildfires, due to the presence of dense mixed conifer forest that proliferated after the Pilliken Fire (1973) and Cleveland Fire (1992). These fuel reduction treatments seek to establish and link fuel breaks on ridges, roads, and infrastructure across the Placerville and Pacific Ranger Districts of the Eldorado National Forest.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: Sierra Nevada Conservancy

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: Great Basin Institute

Exempt Status:

Statutory Exemptions. State code number: Public Resources Code Section 4799.05(d)(1)

Reasons why project is exempt:

CEQA 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 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 fuels reduction treatments on at least 1,300 acres of federal land within the Eldorado National Forest. The proposed activities were reviewed in their entirety under NEPA in the Twofer Fuels Reduction Environmental Assessment and Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI). The Decision Notice and FONSI for the project was signed by the U.S. Forest Service on October 23, 2019.

Lead Agency

Contact Person: Shannon Ciotti

Area Code/Telephone/Extension: (530) 906-7345

**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: Yes

Signed by Applicant: No

Authority cited: Sections 21083 and 21110, Public Resources Code.

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

Reference: Sections 21108, 21152, and 21152.1, Public Resources Code.

## Exhibit A

### Sierra Nevada Conservancy Forest Health Grant Program SNC Project Number 1327

**SNC ID Number:** 1327

**Applicant:** National Wild Turkey Federation

**Project Title:** Trestle Mastication Project

**SNC Subregion:** Central

**County:** El Dorado

**Funding Amount Requested:** \$370,300

**Funding Amount Recommended:** \$370,300

**Total Project Cost:** \$748,700

**Funding Authority:** State of California Budget Act of 2020

#### **Project Scope / Description**

The National Wild Turkey Federation (NWTF) is partnering with the Placerville Ranger District of the Eldorado National Forest on the Trestle Mastication Project, situated south and east of the community of Grizzly Flats. Grizzly Flats is a community in El Dorado County surrounded by National Forest Lands about 15 miles southeast of Placerville. The overall United States Forest Service (USFS) Trestle Project encompasses 16,000 acres. This Trestle Mastication project continues fuels work within the greater project and will complete 790 acres of mastication. This Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC) grant will treat 317 acres with an additional 473 acres funded directly by the USFS. The purpose of the project is to improve forest health and wildfire resiliency around the community of Grizzly Flats and to protect surrounding assets.

This grant will fund mastication of brush and small trees on 317 acres within five strategic areas of heavily overgrown forest just south of Grizzly Flats. Trees less than ten inches in diameter (excluding designated 'leave' trees) and all brush greater than six inches in height will be machine masticated (shredded, mulched, or chipped), with the exception of Pacific yews, black oaks, dogwoods, aspen, elderberry, and California nutmeg. The project will retain 20-25 foot spacing between 'leave' trees. Within units designated for mastication greater than 10 acres in size, the NWTF may identify small groups (0.25-0.5 acres) of conifers, hardwoods, and brush to be retained to meet wildlife cover objectives. This project may be completed before the end of 2021.

Activities completed, ongoing, or planned for implementation in the 16,000-acre Trestle project include: 3,586 acres of commercial and non-commercial mechanical thinning,



520 acres of hand thinning and piling (most within 500 feet of private property boundaries), and 790 acres of small tree mastication. In 2018, NWTF completed 270 acres of hand thinning and piling in the Grizzly Flats Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) at a cost of \$475,000 with a grant provided by SNC.

The NWTF is a national nonprofit organization that has engaged in over 90 Stewardship Agreements with the USFS to improve forest health, including current projects with the Eldorado National Forest. The NWTF successfully completed the SNC grant for hand thinning within the Trestle Project (#1034) in 2018. In fact, they completed the project in just a few months after execution of the grant agreement.

The Trestle Mastication project is a joint effort between the NWTF and the Eldorado National Forest. The 790-acre project will be funded jointly by SNC (317 acres) and Eldorado National Forest (473 acres). The community of Grizzly Flats is exceptionally isolated and vulnerable to catastrophic wildfire. The Grizzly Flats Fire Safe Council is recognized as one of the most active local Fire Safe Councils in the state and has secured over \$3 million toward completion of multiple fuels reduction projects in and around the community.

Grizzly Flats is a rural community with approximately 1,200 residents and is completely enveloped within the WUI and surrounded on 90 percent of its borders by USFS land. It is considered a Community at Risk. There is only one municipal water supply for the community, the protection of which was the primary focus of the prior SNC grant for the Trestle Project. Additionally, Leoni Meadows, a 1,000-acre private camp and retreat center, lies within the footprint of Trestle Project. Leoni Meadows hosts several thousand youth and adults annually at their facility.

## Project Schedule

Project Tasks and Deliverables	Timeline
Project management and reporting	August 2021 – July 2022
Solicit and hire contractor	August 2021
Mastication	September 2021 – June 2022
<b>Estimated Project Completion Date</b>	<b>June 30, 2022</b>

## Project Costs

Project Costs	SNC Funding
Project management	\$5,000
317 acres of mastication	\$317,000
Administrative costs	\$48,300
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$370,300</b>

## Project Letters of Support or Opposition

### *Support:*

- Grizzly Flats Fire Safe Council
- Grizzly Flats Community Services District
- Leoni Meadows Camp
- Great Basin Institute
- Eldorado National Forest, Supervisor's Office

### *Opposition:*

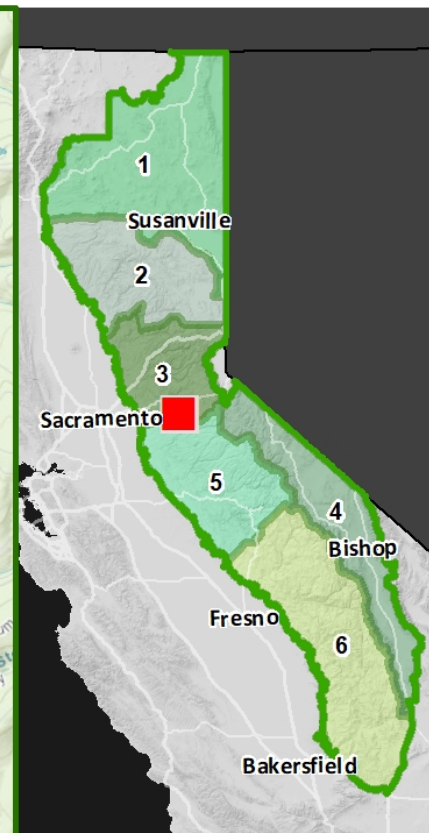
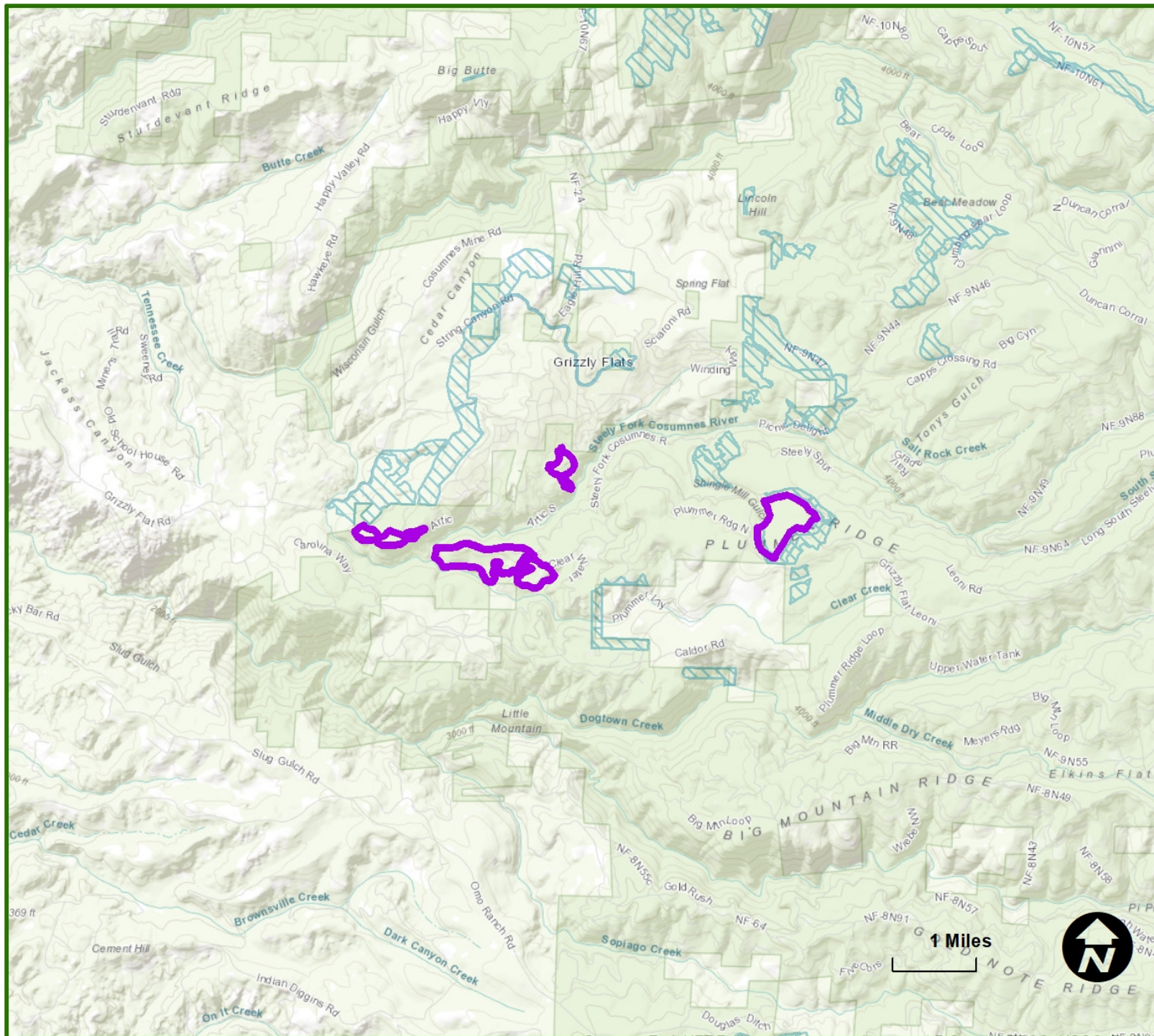
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



## 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



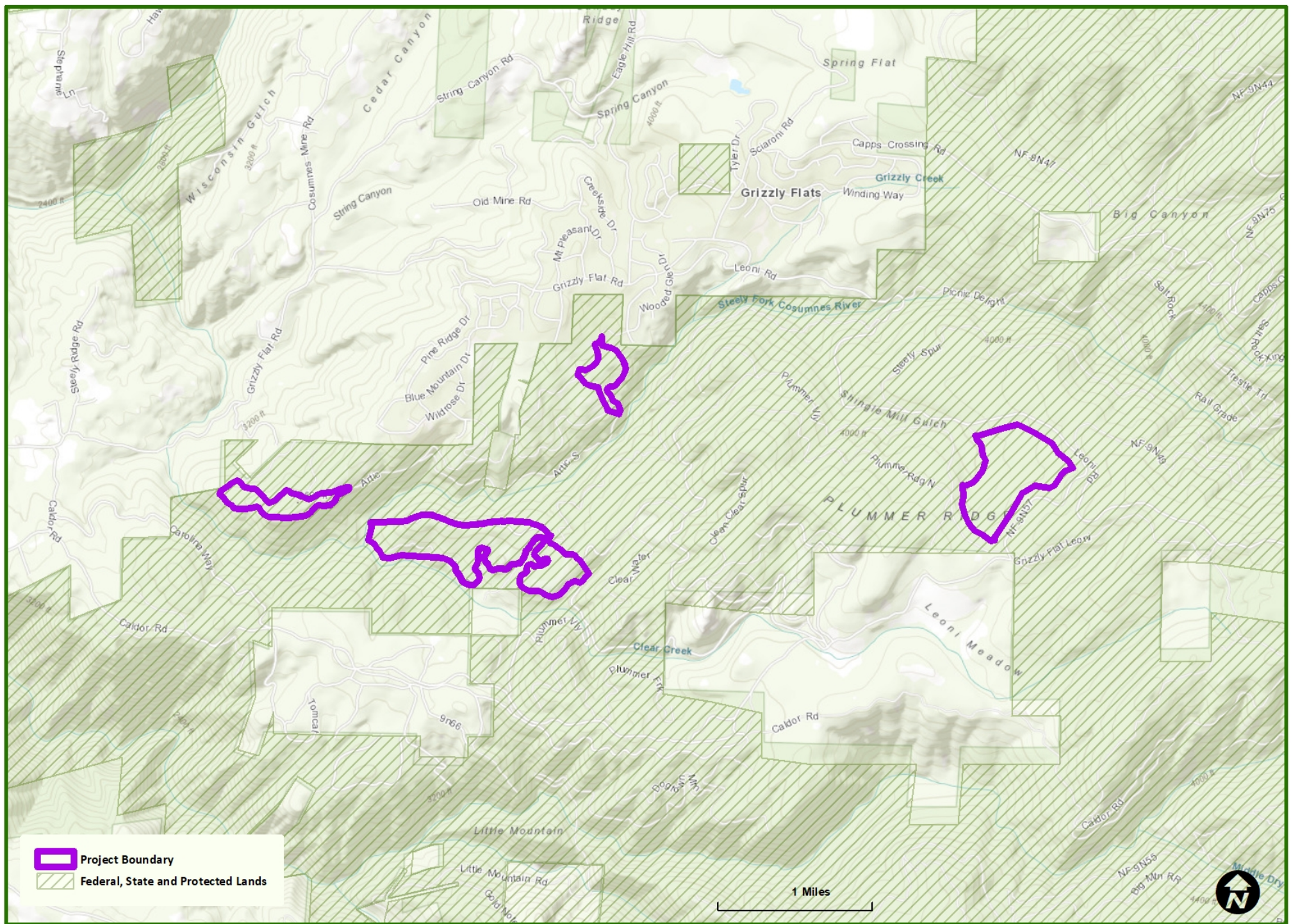


-  Project Boundary (Primary Map)
-  Other Projects (Primary Map)
-  Project Location (Regional Map)
-  1 North Subregion
-  2 North Central Subregion
-  3 Central Subregion
-  4 East Subregion
-  5 South Central Subregion
-  6 South Subregion

## 1327 Trestle Mastication

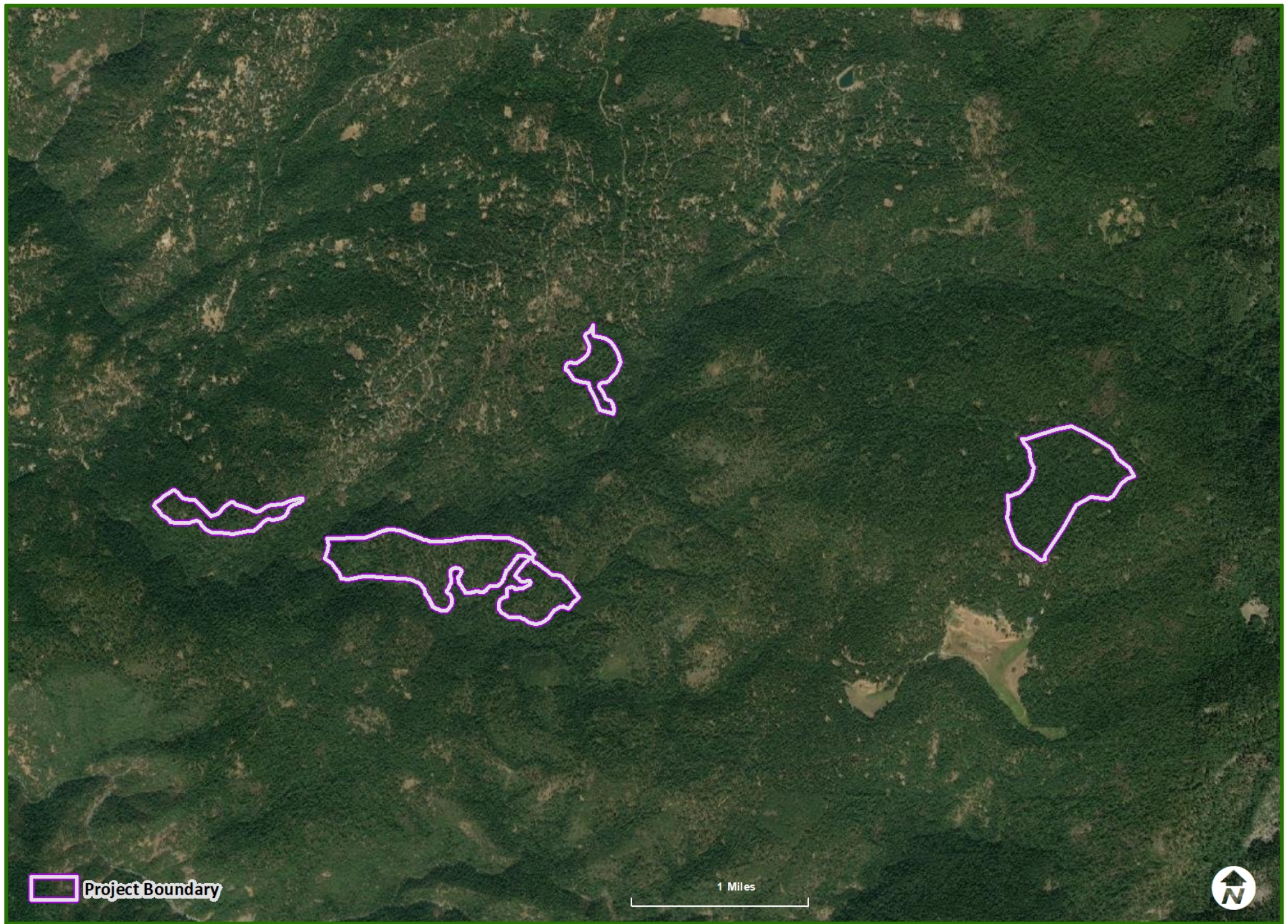
### National Wild Turkey Federation





**1327 Trestle Mastication**  
**National Wild Turkey Federation**





**1327 Trestle Mastication**  
National Wild Turkey Federation



# Notice of Exemption

## Appendix E

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: El Dorado  
360 Fair Lane  
Placerville, CA 95667

Project Title: Trestle Mastication Project - SNC 1327

Project Location – Specific:

Five treatment areas centered at approximately 38°36'58.28"N and 120°34'4.77"W; 38°36'49.77"N and 120°33'7.30"W; 38°36'40.35"N and 120°32'33.82"W; 38°37'34.67"N and 120°32'16.13"W; 38°37'6.20"N and 120°30'0.71"W

Project Location - City: Grizzly Flats

Project Location - County: El Dorado

Description of Nature, Purpose and Beneficiaries of Project:

The Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC) would provide funding for hazardous fuel reduction and thinning treatments on at least 317 acres of federal land within the Eldorado National Forest. The treatment area is located within the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) of the community of Grizzly Flats, which is a designated Community at Risk in the Federal Register due to its location within a high fire threat area. Implementation of the fuel reduction and forest thinning treatments would create buffers and shaded fuel breaks at strategic locations throughout the WUI to reduce the risk of high severity wildfire.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: Sierra Nevada Conservancy

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: National Wild Turkey Federation

Exempt Status:

Statutory Exemptions. State code number: Public Resources Code Section 4799.05(d)(1)

Reasons why project is exempt:

CEQA 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 NEPA if the primary role of a state or local agency is providing funding or staffing for those projects. The SNC would provide funding for fuels reduction treatments on at least 317 acres of federal land within the Eldorado National Forest. The proposed activities were reviewed in their entirety under NEPA in the Trestle Forest Health Project Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and the Record of Decision. The Record of Decision for the Trestle Forest Health Project was signed by the U.S. Forest Service on September 12, 2017.

Lead Agency

Contact Person: Shannon Ciotti

Area Code/Telephone/Extension: (530) 906-7345

**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: Yes

Signed by Applicant: No

Authority cited: Sections 21083 and 21110, Public Resources Code.

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

Reference: Sections 21108, 21152, and 21152.1, Public Resources Code.

## Exhibit A

### Sierra Nevada Conservancy Forest Health Grant Program SNC Project Number 1328

**SNC ID Number:** 1328

**Applicant:** Mariposa County Fire Safe Council

**Project Title:** Wagner Ridge Fuel Break Project

**SNC Subregion:** South Central

**County:** Mariposa

**Funding Amount Requested:** \$607,782

**Funding Amount Recommended:** \$607,782

**Total Project Cost:** \$608,982

**Funding Authority:** State of California Budget Act of 2020

#### **Project Scope / Description**

The Wagner Ridge Fuel Break Project (Project) is located along the northern boundary of Mariposa County, near the communities of Greely Hill and Coulterville. The applicant, Mariposa County Fire Safe Council (MCFSC), will treat 213 acres across Stanislaus National Forest and Bureau of Land Management (BLM) lands. The Project will expand and widen a current fuel break that ties into the National Disaster Resiliency projects located on the Tuolumne County side of the ridgetop and lies on the watershed boundary between the Merced and Tuolumne River Watersheds.

This Project is result of a Planning Grant (SNC #1004) that was awarded to the MCFSC in 2018. The Project is named in several strategic fuels plans and is a high priority project of the South West Interface Team collaborative (SWIFT). The Project aims to treat 213 acres of Stanislaus National Forest and BLM land using mechanical mastication and hand thinning. Treatment objectives include removal of all surface and ladder fuels and thinning the remaining trees to develop a shaded fuel break. The Project will break up fuel loading and create a more heterogenous and resilient forest system. This will also greatly improve fire suppression operations within the region.

Fuel reduction initiatives throughout Tuolumne and Mariposa counties are coordinated by SWIFT, resulting in a cohesive approach by multiple state, federal, and local agencies. The SNC has funded multiple projects in this region including the planning grant for Wagner Ridge Fuel Break (#1004) and the Gentry Creek Watershed Restoration Project (#911), awarded in 2016, which was a critical anchor point for



California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) operations in the 2017 Detwiler Fire.

The Mariposa County Fire Safe Council is a local 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization with a mission to preserve Mariposa County's natural and manmade resources and by working with local residents to make their homes, neighborhoods, and communities fire safe.

Partners on the Project include all the participating members of the SWIFT; however, Stanislaus National Forest and the BLM will be the main project partners. These partners are expected to provide in-kind support and guidance throughout the implementation of the project and will be responsible for ongoing maintenance of the fuel break.

The Project meets the goals of both the SNC Strategic Plan and the State of California Budget Act of 2020. By treating fuels in a strategic location, the Project will improve the abilities of land managers and firefighting agencies to contain and suppress wildfires and protect nearby communities as well as forest and watershed resources. Downstream beneficiaries of these treatments include the Merced Irrigation District, Turlock Irrigation District and Modesto Irrigation District who manage Lake McClure reservoir on the Merced River and Don Pedro Reservoir on the Tuolumne River.

## Project Schedule

Project Tasks and Deliverables	Timeline
Six-month progress report	January, July 2022 January, July 2023
Site preparation and contractor bidding	August – December 2021
Fuel reduction treatments	March – June 2022 October – December 2022 March – June 2023 October – December 2023
SNC sign installed	December 2023
Final report submitted	December 2023
<b>Estimated Project Completion Date</b>	<b>January 1, 2024</b>

## Project Costs

Project Costs	SNC Funding
Project management and travel	\$29,719
SNC signage and outreach	\$388
Contractor costs	\$498,400
Administrative costs	\$79,275
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$607,782</b>

## Project Letters of Support or Opposition

### *Support:*

- Mariposa County Board of Supervisors
- Tuolumne County Board of Supervisors
- Jason Kuiken, Forest Supervisor, Stanislaus National Forest
- Liz Meyer-Shields, Field Manager, Mother Lode Field Office, Bureau of Land Management
- South West Interface Team
- Mariposa County Fire Advisory Committee
- Mariposa County Fire Department
- Mike van Loben Sels, Unit Chief, Mariposa Madera Merced Unit, CAL FIRE
- Mariposa County Sheriff's Office and Office of Emergency Services
- Turlock Irrigation District
- Merced Irrigation District



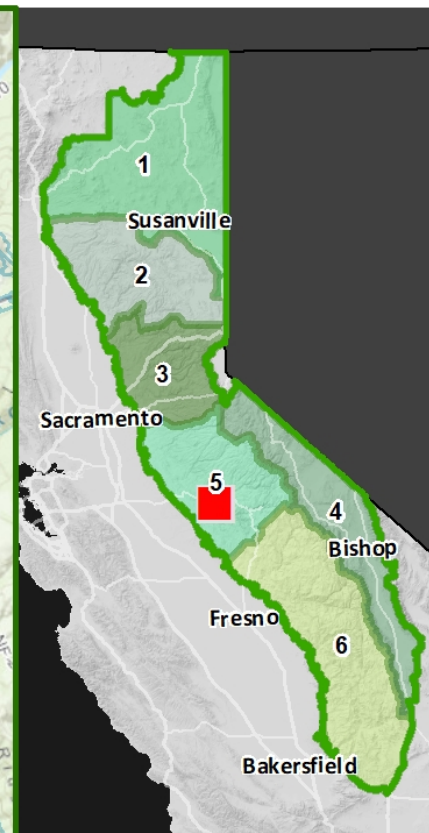
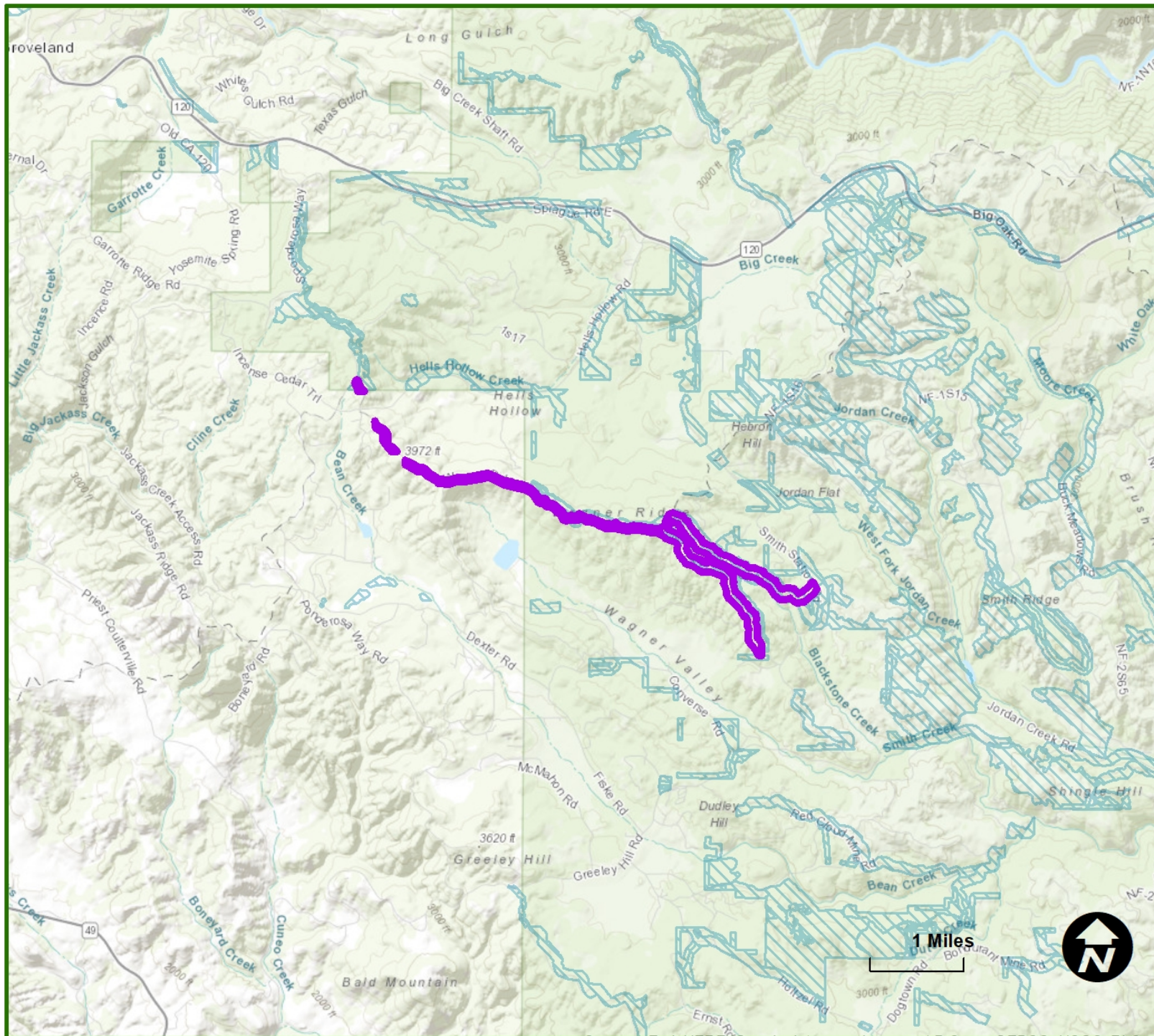
*Opposition:*










- None received.

**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

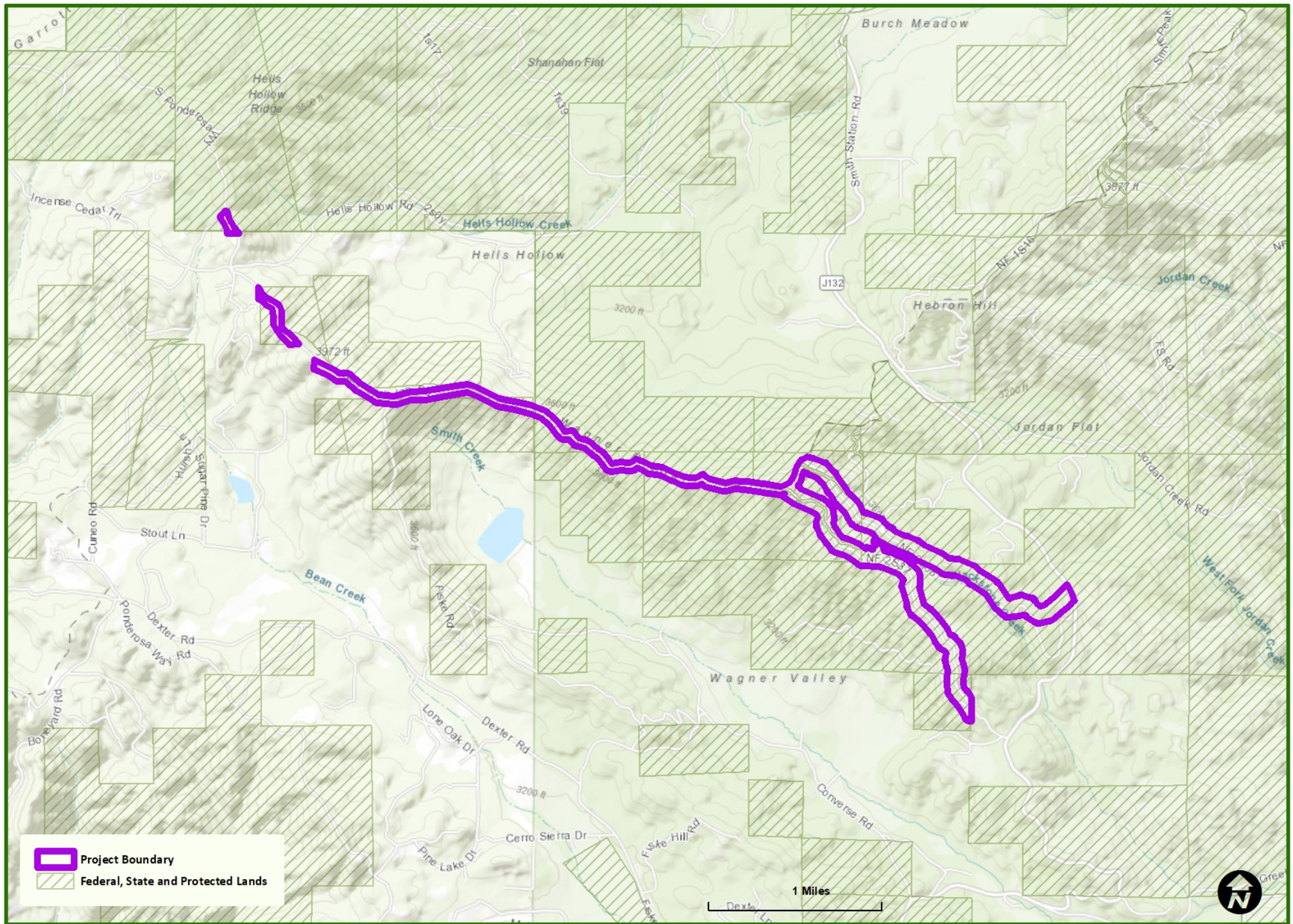


-  Project Boundary (Primary Map)
-  Other Projects (Primary Map)
-  Project Location (Regional Map)
-  1 North Subregion
-  2 North Central Subregion
-  3 Central Subregion
-  4 East Subregion
-  5 South Central Subregion
-  6 South Subregion

## 1328 Wagner Ridge Fuel Break

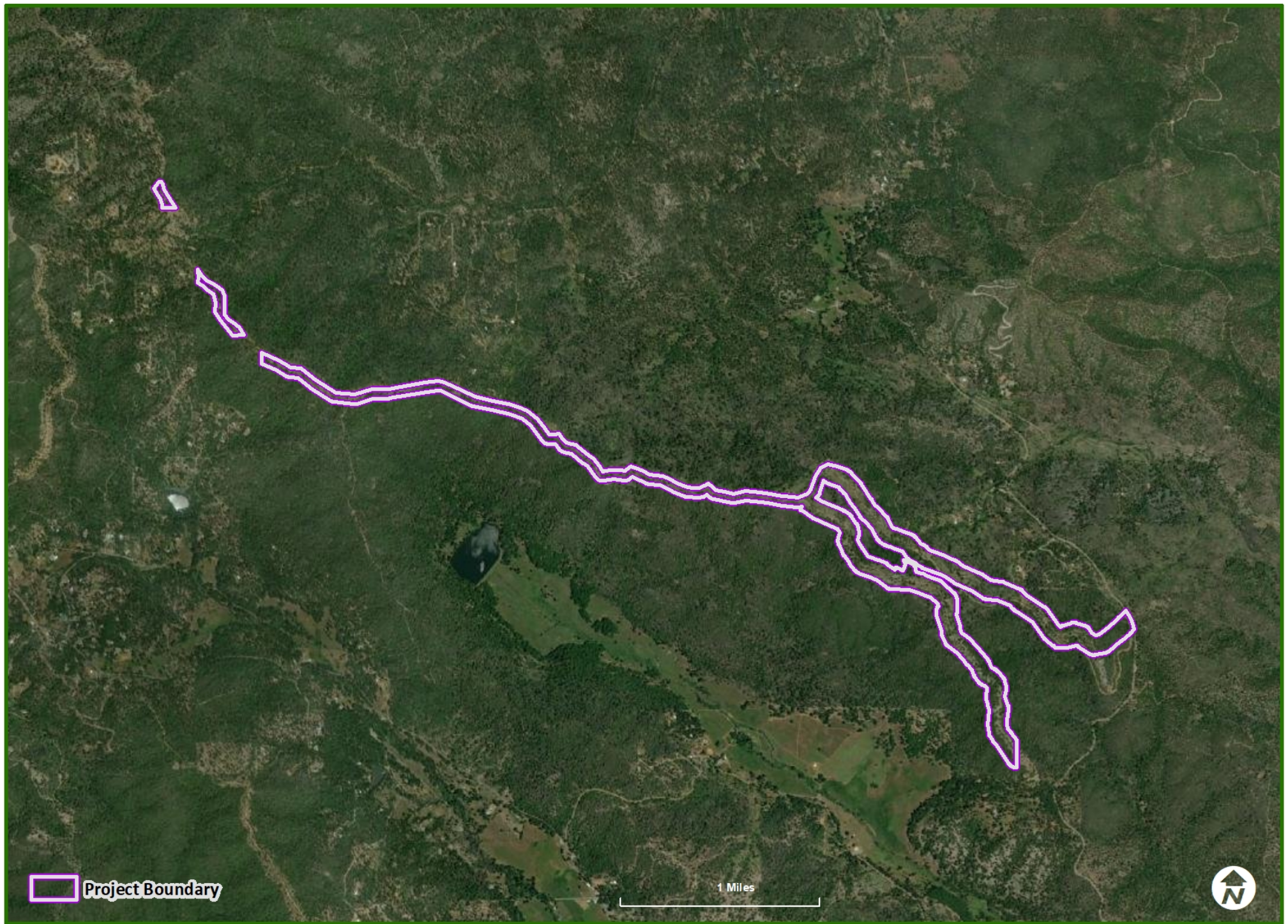
### Mariposa County Fire Safe Council





**1328 Wagner Ridge Fuel Break**  
**Mariposa County Fire Safe Council**





**1328 Wagner Ridge Fuel Break**  
**Mariposa County Fire Safe Council**



# Notice of Exemption

## Appendix E

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

From: Sierra Nevada Conservancy  
11521 Blocker Drive, Suite 205  
Auburn, CA 95603

County Clerk  
County of: Mariposa  
4982 10th Street  
Mariposa, CA 95338

Project Title: Wagner Ridge Fuel Break Project – SNC 1328

Project Location – Specific: 4.2 miles along Wagner Ridge in northern Mariposa County bordering Tuolumne County, centered approximately at 37°47'10.5"N 120°07'10.6"W

Project Location - City: Greeley Hill, Wagner Ridge, and Buck Meadows communities

Project Location - County: Mariposa

Description of Nature, Purpose and Beneficiaries of Project:

The Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC) would provide funding for fuel reduction and thinning treatments to widen the existing 4.2-mile-long Wagner Ridge Fuel Break by at least 100-200 feet, ultimately creating an approximately 400-foot shaded fuel break along the entirety of the ridgetop to reduce risk of high severity wildfire. The project consists of lands managed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and lands managed by Stanislaus National Forest, totaling at least 213 acres of treatments. The project would provide a location for: 1) fire to remain as a surface fire and not transition to a destructive, fast moving tree crown fire, and 2) suppression crews to safely make a tactical fight against the next approaching wildfire. The proposed activities serve to reduce wildfire risks to wildland-urban interface communities.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: Sierra Nevada Conservancy

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: Mariposa County Fire Safe Council

Exempt Status:

Statutory Exemption. Public Resources Code Section 4799.05(d)(1)

Reasons why project is exempt:

CEQA 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 NEPA if the primary role of a state or local agency is providing funding or staffing for those projects. The SNC would provide funding to implement fuel reduction and thinning treatments on federal land within Stanislaus National Forest and land managed by BLM. The proposed activities within Stanislaus National Forest were reviewed in their entirety under NEPA in the Monotti Urban Fuel Reduction and Plantation Thinning Project Environmental Assessment (EA) and Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI). The Decision Notice for the EA/FONSI was signed by the U.S. Forest Service on May 12, 2011. Although the decision was signed 10 years ago, it has been determined that the NEPA decision is still relevant and viable. The proposed activities within BLM-managed lands were reviewed in their entirety under NEPA in the Wagner Ridge Fuel Break Watershed Protection Project Initial Study/EA and Proposed Negative Declaration. The Initial Study/Proposed Negative Declaration was never approved or adopted; however, the Decision Record for the EA/FONSI was signed by BLM on July 24, 2019.

Lead Agency

Contact Person: Shannon Ciotti Area Code/Telephone/Extension: (530) 906-7345

**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: Yes

Signed by Applicant: No

Authority cited: Sections 21083 and 21110, Public Resources Code.

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

Reference: Sections 21108, 21152, and 21152.1, Public Resources Code.

## Exhibit A

### Sierra Nevada Conservancy Forest Health Grant Program SNC Project Number 1330

**SNC ID Number:** 1330

**Applicant:** Amador Fire Safe Council

**Project Title:** Tiger Creek Fuel Break Enhancement Project

**SNC Subregion:** South Central

**County:** Amador

**Funding Amount Requested:** \$220,200

**Funding Amount Recommended:** \$220,200

**Total Project Cost:** \$235,200

**Funding Authority:** State of California Budget Act of 2020

#### **Project Scope / Description**

The Tiger Creek Fuel Break Enhancement Project (Project) is located in eastern Amador County near the communities of Pioneer and Buckhorn. The applicant, Amador Fire Safe Council (AFSC), will reduce fuels on 41 acres of Bureau of Land Management (BLM) land, connecting major units of the previously Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC)-funded Tiger Creek Fuel Break Project (#1200). The Project lies entirely within the Mokelumne River Watershed and has direct impact on Tiger Creek Reservoir.

The Project connects the major units of the Tiger Creek Fuel Break Project, a completed SNC-funded fuel reduction project designed to protect mountain communities along Highway 88 and lands and infrastructure around Tiger Creek Reservoir. The Project lies between 2000 feet and 3500 feet in elevation with a dominant forest type of Sierra Nevada mixed conifer. This Project will focus on the 41 acres of steep terrain that separate the larger fuelbreak units. Treatment will consist of hand thinning and brushing and will lop-and-scatter all slash. This treatment will create one continuous area of reduced fuels.

The Project enhances the effectiveness of a previous 220-acre Tiger Creek Fuel Break Project and is part of a larger, 3000-acre fuel reduction strategy developed by the Amador Fuels Reduction Collaborative that involves neighboring parcels owned by Sierra Pacific Industries (SPI), Pacific Gas and Electric (PG&E), and the Eldorado National Forest (ENF). The Project builds on a planning grant awarded by the SNC in 2019 (#1096) that completed National Environmental Policy Act and California Environmental Quality Act compliance on BLM property. The Project is also very close



to the SNC-funded Lily Gap Phase II project (#915) and South Fork Mokelumne Project (#1030 / 1068) on the south side of the Mokelumne River.

The AFSC is a local 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization with a mission to “protect the people of Amador County and their property from the catastrophic effects of wildfire through education and outreach, innovation and action.” The AFSC has been a participating member of the Amador Calaveras Consensus Group since its inception and has been instrumental in organizing the Amador Fuels Reduction Collaborative. The AFSC and its members have worked with SNC on many fuels reduction projects within the subregion. The BLM is a public land-management agency under the Department of the Interior and manages approximately 14,500 acres of scattered, low-elevation parcels in the Mokelumne Watershed.

The Project is part of a larger fuels reduction strategy that involves multiple partners including California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE), BLM, ENF, SPI, PG&E, and other stakeholders in the region. PG&E, SPI, and the ENF own and manage the neighboring parcels included within this effort and have dedicated resources to complete their parts of the fuelbreak to create a larger and more effective cross-boundary fuelbreak network. The Calaveras-Amador Forestry Team, a dedicated group of volunteer natural resource professionals, have pledged \$15,000 of in-kind support to ensure the Project’s completion.

The Project supports both the SNC Strategic Plan and the California Budget Act of 2020 by reducing fuels and protecting communities and critical infrastructure. The Project creates a more connected and effective fuelbreak and directly protects municipal water supplies for local water agencies and downstream beneficiaries including the East Bay Municipal Utility District, which provides water for millions of Californians in the eastern San Francisco Bay Area.

## Project Schedule

Project Tasks and Deliverables	Timeline
Six month progress report	February, August 2022 February 2023
Site preparation	August – December 2021
Hand thinning	March – June 2022 March – June 2023
<b>Estimated Project Completion Date</b>	<b>June 30, 2023</b>

## Project Costs

Project Costs	SNC Funding
Project management	\$10,000
Registered Professional Forester oversight	\$18,000
Hand thinning	\$172,200
Administrative costs	\$20,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$220,200</b>

## Project Letters of Support or Opposition

### *Support:*

- Elizabeth Meyer-Shields, Field Manager, Mother Lode Field Office, Bureau of Land Management
- Amador County Board of Supervisors
- Robert Withrow, Unit Chief, CAL FIRE, Amador El Dorado Unit
- Matthew Waverly, Senior Land Consultant, Pacific Gas and Electric
- Craig Ostergaard, Southern Reforestation Manager, Sierra Pacific Industries
- Rick Hopson, District Ranger, Amador District, Eldorado National Forest
- Paul Molinelli Jr., Board President, Amador Water Agency

### *Opposition:*

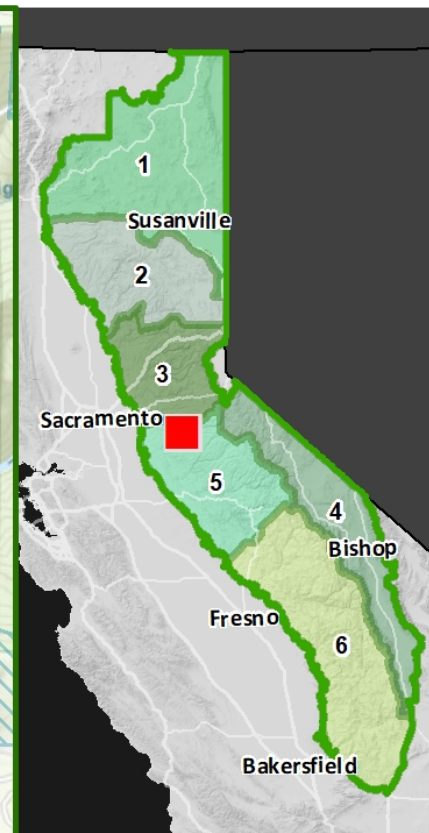
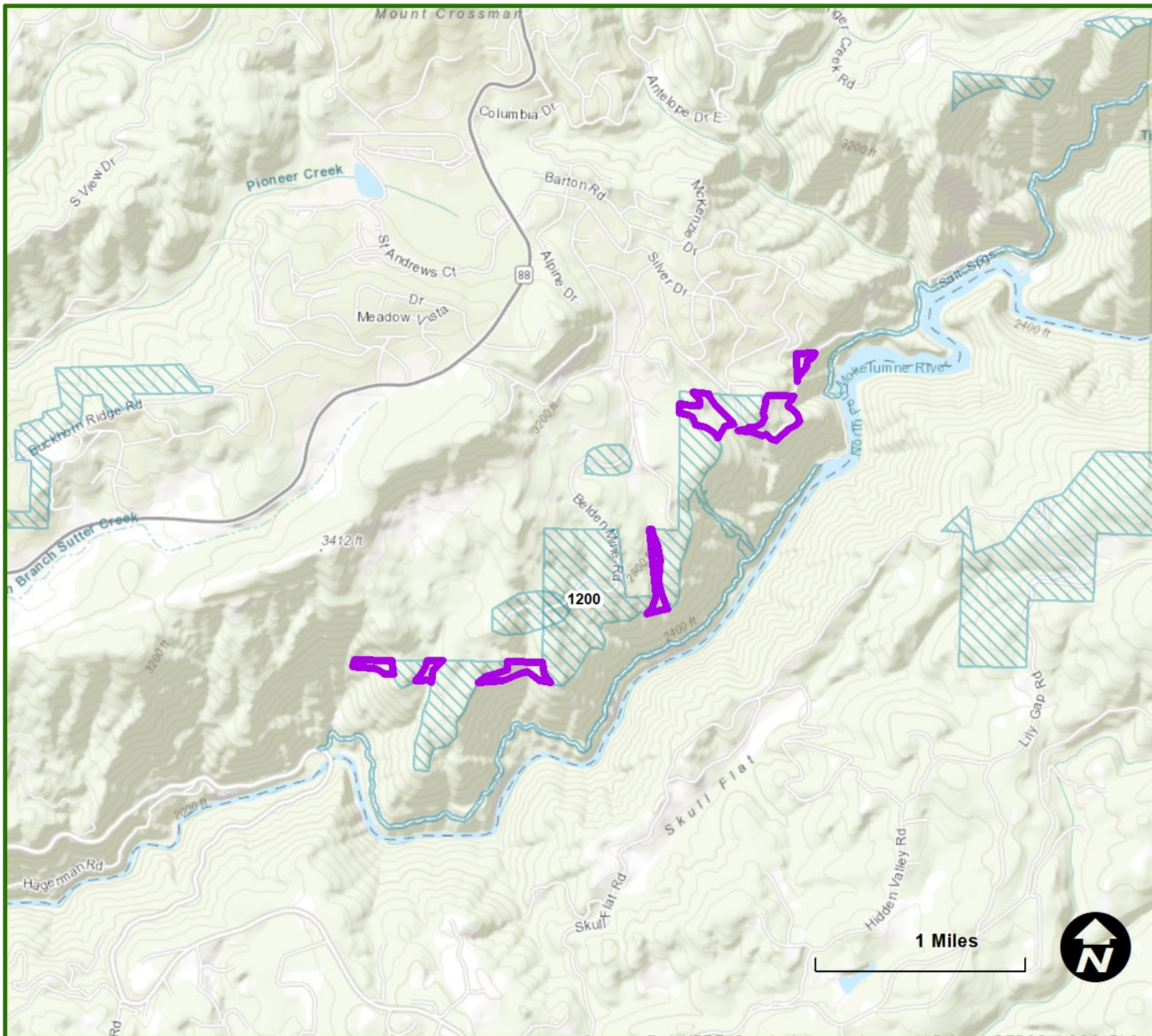
- None received

## 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



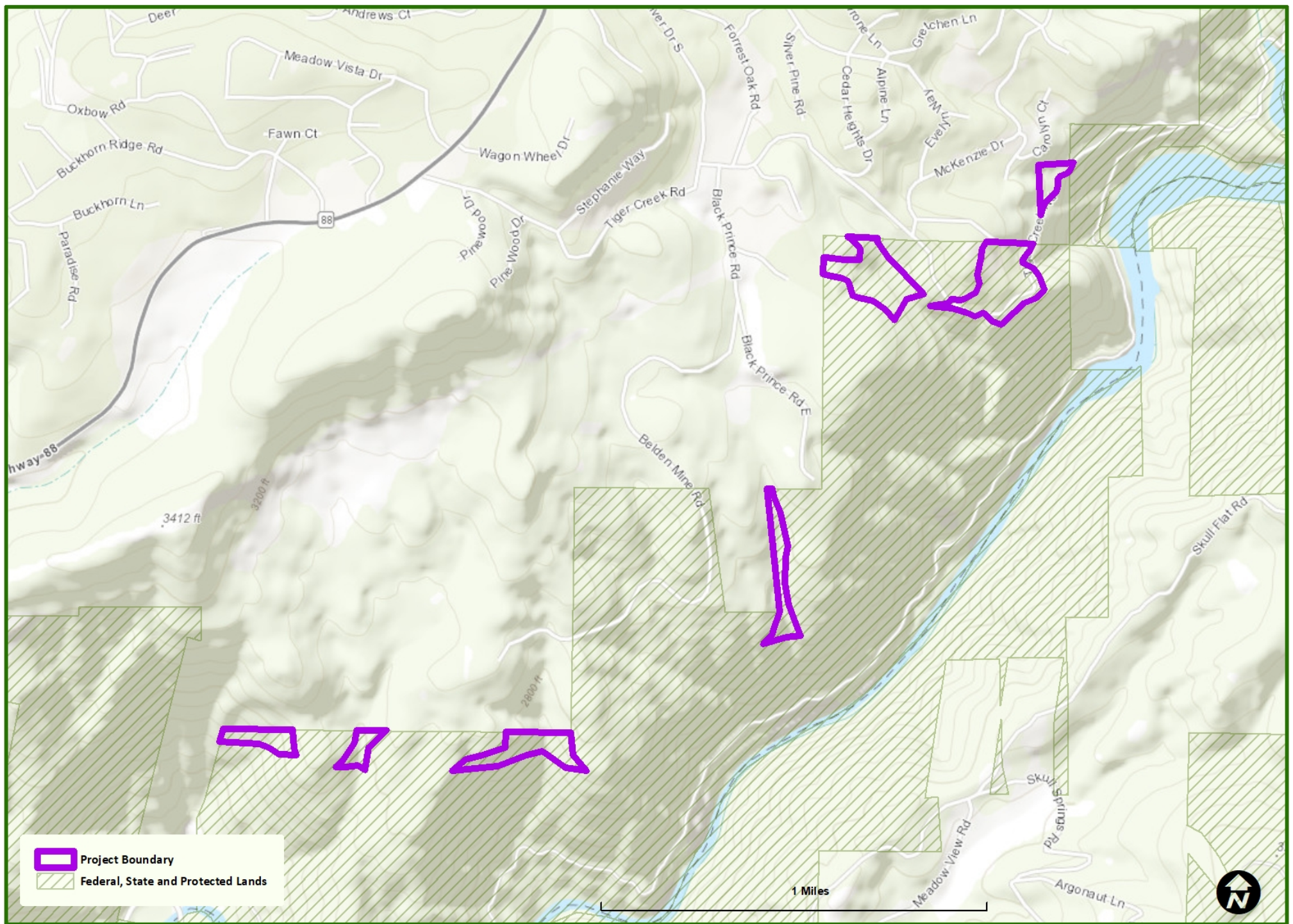


- Project Boundary (Primary Map)
- Other Projects (Primary Map)
- Project Location (Regional Map)
- 1 North Subregion
- 2 North Central Subregion
- 3 Central Subregion
- 4 East Subregion
- 5 South Central Subregion
- 6 South Subregion

## 1330 Tiger Creek Fuel Break Enhancement

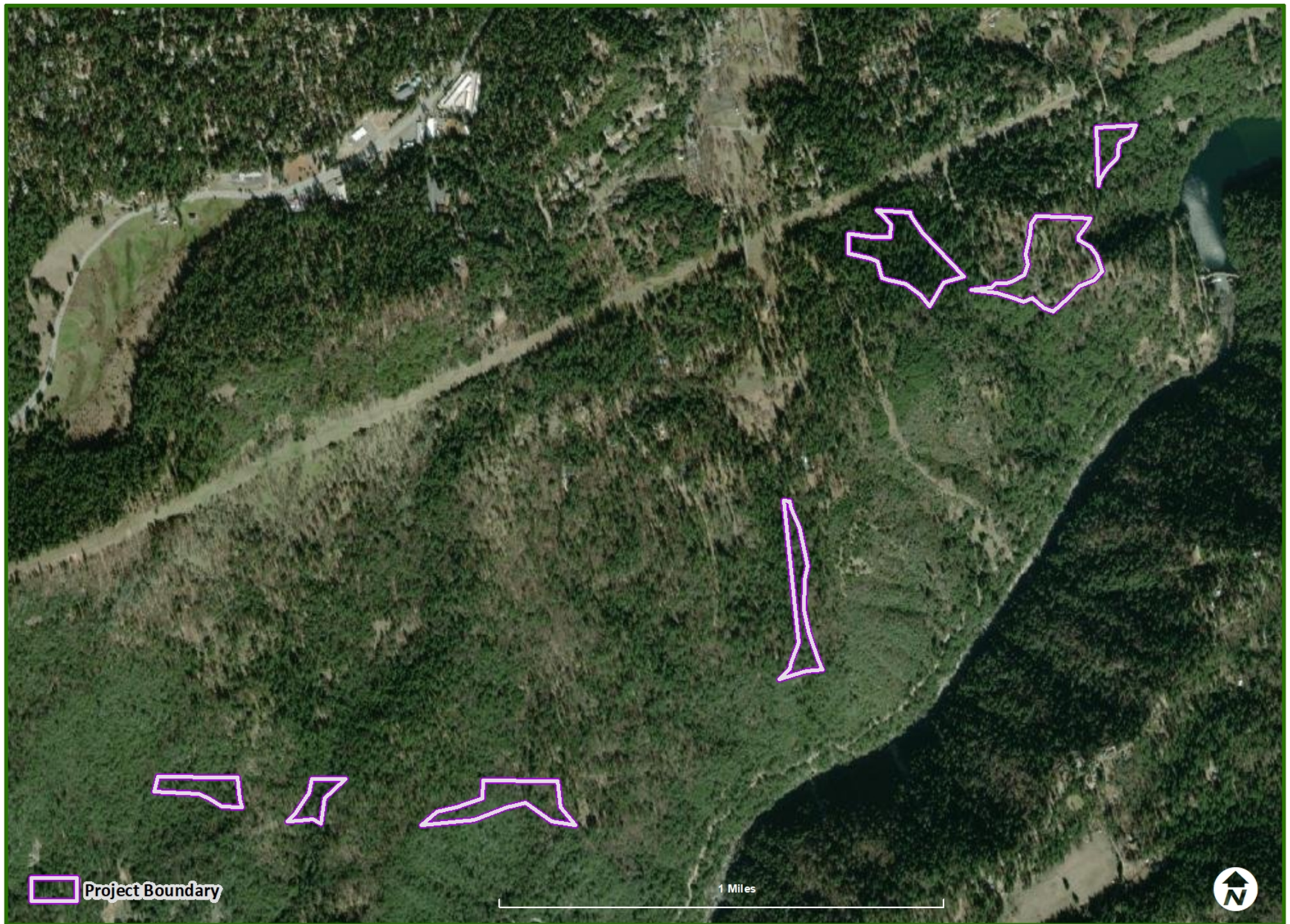
### Amador Fire Safe Council





**1330 Tiger Creek Fuel Break Enhancement**  
**Amador Fire Safe Council**





**1330 Tiger Creek Fuel Break Enhancement**  
Amador Fire Safe Council



# Notice of Exemption

## Appendix E

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: Amador  
810 Court Street  
Jackson, CA 95642

Project Title: Tiger Creek Fuel Break Enhancement Project - SNC 1330

Project Location – Specific:  
Eleven treatment areas centered at approximately 38°26'31.35"N and 120°30'44.03"W

Project Location - City: North of Buckhorn/Rabb Park/Deer Ridge/Mace Meadows/Silver Lake Pines/Pioneer subdivisions

Project Location - County: Amador

Description of Nature, Purpose and Beneficiaries of Project:

The Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC) would provide funding for fuel reduction treatments on at least 41 acres of federal land under Bureau of Land Management (BLM) jurisdiction. The treatment area is a part of a larger 1,195-acre fuel and fire hazard reduction project previously funded by SNC. This project includes using hand treatments to reduce fuel on steep slopes where prior mechanical treatments were not able to reach. This project would reduce the risk of catastrophic wildfire for local communities.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: Sierra Nevada Conservancy

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: Amador Fire Safe Council

Exempt Status:

Statutory Exemptions. State code number: Public Resources Code Section 4799.05(d)(1)

Reasons why project is exempt:

CEQA 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 NEPA if the primary role of a state or local agency is providing funding or staffing for those projects. The SNC would provide funding for fuels reduction treatments on at least 41 acres of federal land under BLM jurisdiction. The proposed activities were reviewed in their entirety under NEPA in the Tiger Creek Fuels Reduction and Watershed Protection Project Environmental Assessment, Decision Record, and Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI). The Decision Record/FONSI for the Tiger Creek Fuels Reduction and Watershed Protection Project was signed by BLM on August 22, 2019.

Lead Agency

Contact Person: Shannon Ciotti

Area Code/Telephone/Extension: (530) 906-7345

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: Yes

Signed by Applicant: No

Authority cited: Sections 21083 and 21110, Public Resources Code.

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

Reference: Sections 21108, 21152, and 21152.1, Public Resources Code.



## Exhibit A

### Sierra Nevada Conservancy Forest Health Grant Program SNC Project Number 1337

**SNC ID Number:** 1337

**Applicant:** Placer County Water Agency

**Project Title:** Middle Fork American River Watershed Restoration Project

**SNC Subregion:** Central

**County:** Placer

**Funding Amount Requested:** \$1,000,000

**Funding Amount Recommended:** \$1,000,000

**Total Project Cost:** \$2,000,000

**Funding Authority:** State of California Budget Act of 2020

#### **Project Scope / Description**

Through participation in the French Meadows Partnership, Placer County Water Agency (PCWA) is partnering with Placer County and the American River Ranger District (ARRD) to implement the Middle Fork American River Watershed Restoration Project (Project) in Placer County. This Project will implement 494 acres of forest treatments on land managed by the ARRD adjacent to French Meadows Reservoir and in the upper Middle Fork American River watershed above it. This Project expands upon several thousand acres of forest treatments that have already been completed with grants through the Tahoe-Central Sierra Initiative (TCSI) as well as other funding. The Project will help protect critical water infrastructure and reduce the risk of catastrophic wildfire in the upper watershed.

This Project will restore 494 acres of forest within the greater French Meadows Restoration Project to an ecological condition that can support naturally occurring fires, while enhancing the region's water supply and habitat for critical species by improving forest structure. There are three steps to the treatment plan for this acreage: 1) Within the Project area, a variety of tree sizes between 10 and 30 inches diameter at breast height (DBH) (focusing on trees in the 10 to 24 inch range) will be harvested using guidance from General Technical Report 220 to promote tree species and spacing heterogeneity. Trees suitable for saw logs will be processed at the landings for loading and hauling under separate contract. Slash that is not suitable for lumber will be burned at the landings or chipped and used for biomass energy. 2) Once the above treatment is completed, approximately 432 of the 494 acres will receive mechanical thinning of trees between 4 and 10 inches DBH through mastication or chipping. 3) Approximately 330

acres in this area will receive further mastication of brush and small trees under 4 inches. It is estimated that total treatment will cost about \$4,100 per acre (\$2 million), of which this Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC) grant will cover half the cost. The other half of the cost will derive from net timber revenues and other funding contributions by the partners.

This Project is a continuation of the ongoing 28,000-acre French Meadows Restoration Project, which to date, has completed treatments on 3,300 acres of federal land and 1,100 acres of adjacent private land. The SNC has provided significant investment into the greater project. The SNC grants include \$100,000 toward National Environmental Policy Act planning, \$1 million for biomass removal, and \$942,000 for prescribed fire. In addition, SNC is the grantee on behalf of the Tahoe-Central Sierra Initiative and administers a \$3.5 million California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection grant for forest restoration. The SNC also provided a \$500,000 grant to the American River Conservancy for their American Headwaters forest restoration project, which is part of the overall French Meadows Project.

Placer County Water Agency (PCWA) has been a partner in the Project from the start and will be working directly with Placer County to manage this grant. Placer County has been providing leadership and management of the French Meadows Project since its inception. Tahoe National Forest is also one of the founding partners in the French Meadows Project.

Partners on the French Meadows Project include the Tahoe National Forest, Placer County, PCWA, The Nature Conservancy, and the American River Conservancy. The total estimated cost for this Middle Fork American River Watershed Restoration Project is \$2 million. Match funding to complete the 494 acres of treatments include an estimated \$400,000 from timber sales, \$300,000 from the Middle Fork Project Financing Authority (a joint Placer County/PCWA entity), and \$300,000 from Tahoe National Forest.

The French Meadows Project is one of the cornerstones of the TCSI and the Sierra Nevada Watershed Improvement Program. The use of a Partnership approach to expand the capacity of the Forest Service to restore the National Forest at a landscape level has provided a model of successfully increasing pace and scale of forest restoration and has secured many millions of dollars of leveraged funding. The Project's focus on improving the upper headwaters of the Middle Fork American River is an effort to protect vital water and power infrastructure of Placer County and PCWA, including French Meadows Reservoir and the Middle Fork Project. These assets provide water for Placer County and Folsom Lake. The water and power provided by the Middle Fork American River and the Middle Fork projects service downstream users far beyond the Sierra Nevada.



## Project Schedule

Project Tasks and Deliverables	Timeline
Project management and reporting	August 2021 – November 2022
Forest treatments	September 2021 – November 2022
<b>Estimated Project Completion Date</b>	<b>November 2022</b>

## Project Costs

Project Costs	SNC Funding
Thinning of trees from 10"-30" DBH on 494 acres	\$393,000
Thinning of trees from 4"-10" DBH on 432 acres	\$344,000
Thinning and mastication of trees under 4" diameter and brush on 330 acres	\$263,000
Administrative costs	\$0
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,000,000</b>

## Project Letters of Support or Opposition

### *Support:*

- None received. This is a project of the French Meadows Partnership with a broad range of partner support.

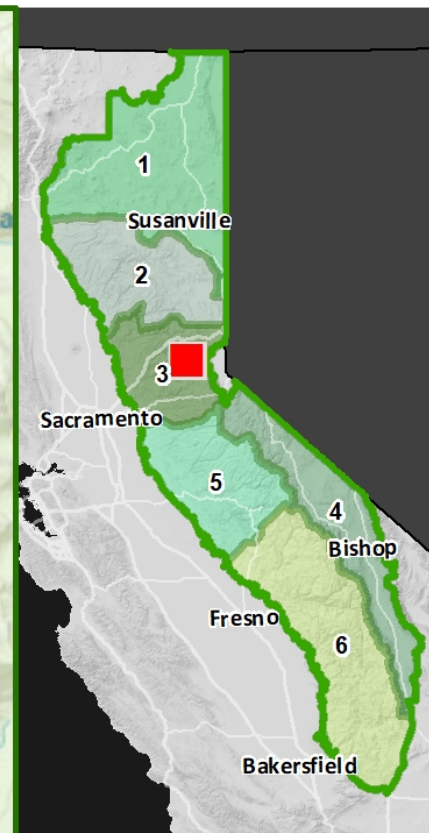
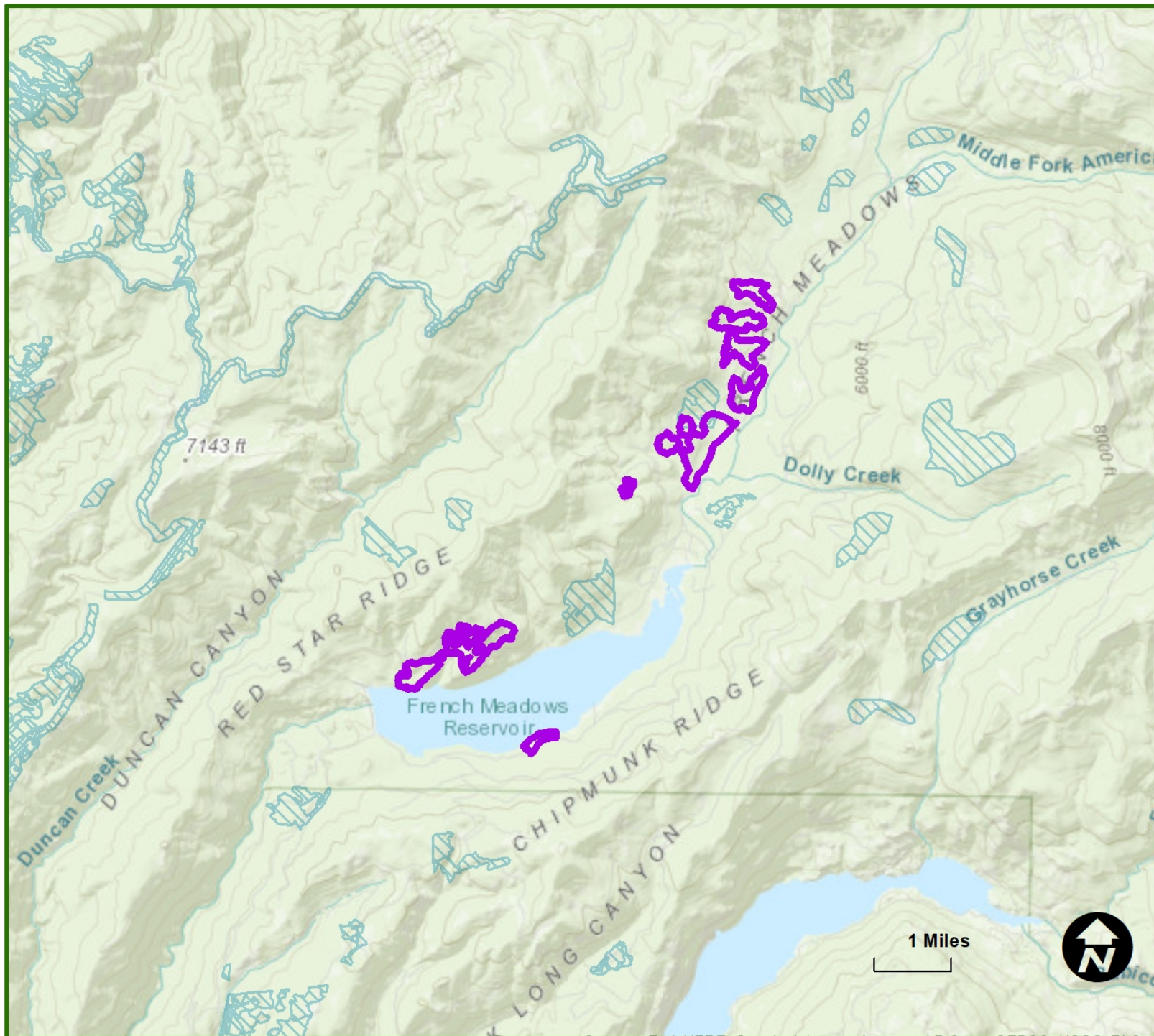
### *Opposition:*










- None received

## 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.

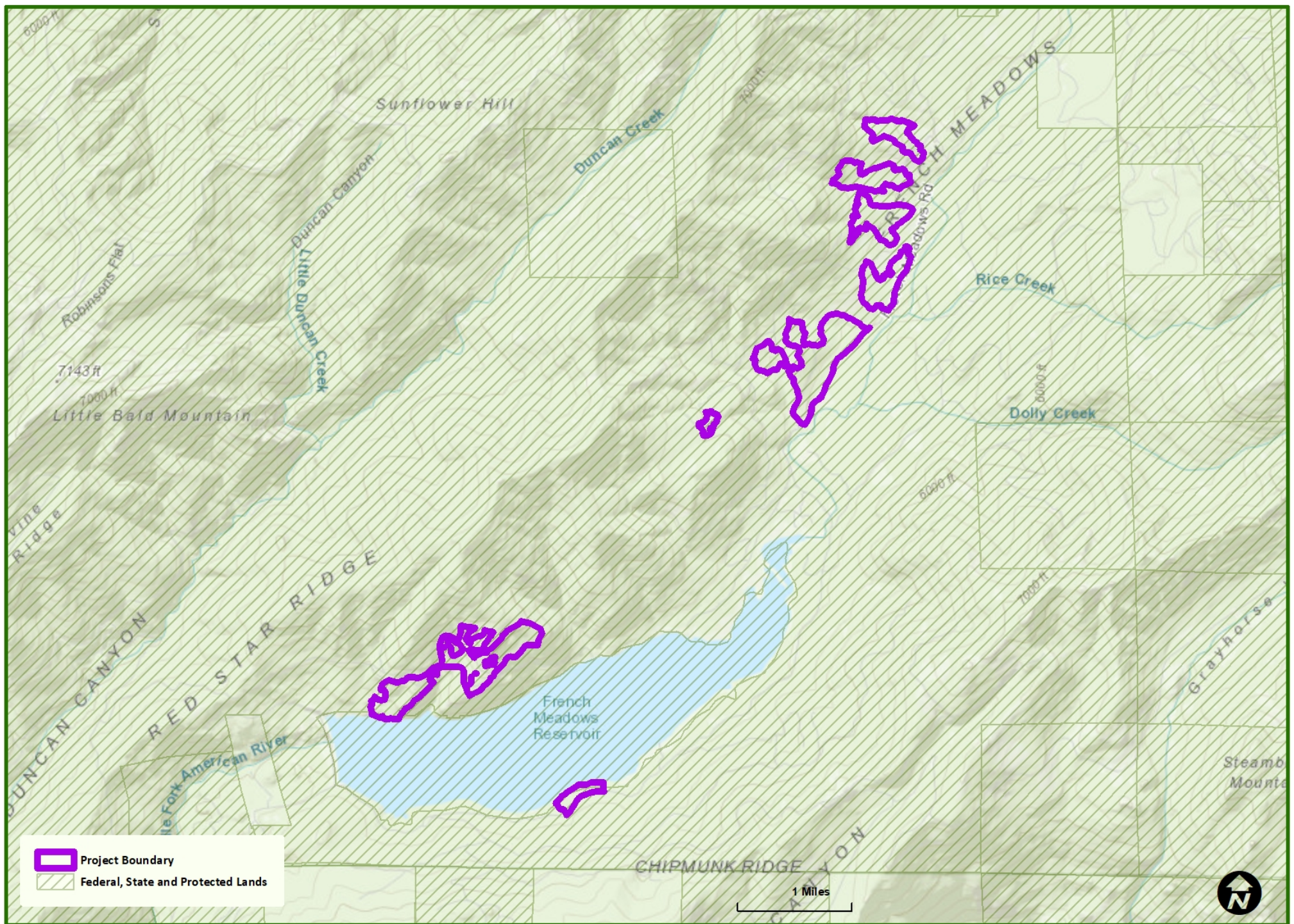
- Acres of Land Improved or Restored



-  Project Boundary (Primary Map)
-  Other Projects (Primary Map)
-  Project Location (Regional Map)
-  1 North Subregion
-  2 North Central Subregion
-  3 Central Subregion
-  4 East Subregion
-  5 South Central Subregion
-  6 South Subregion

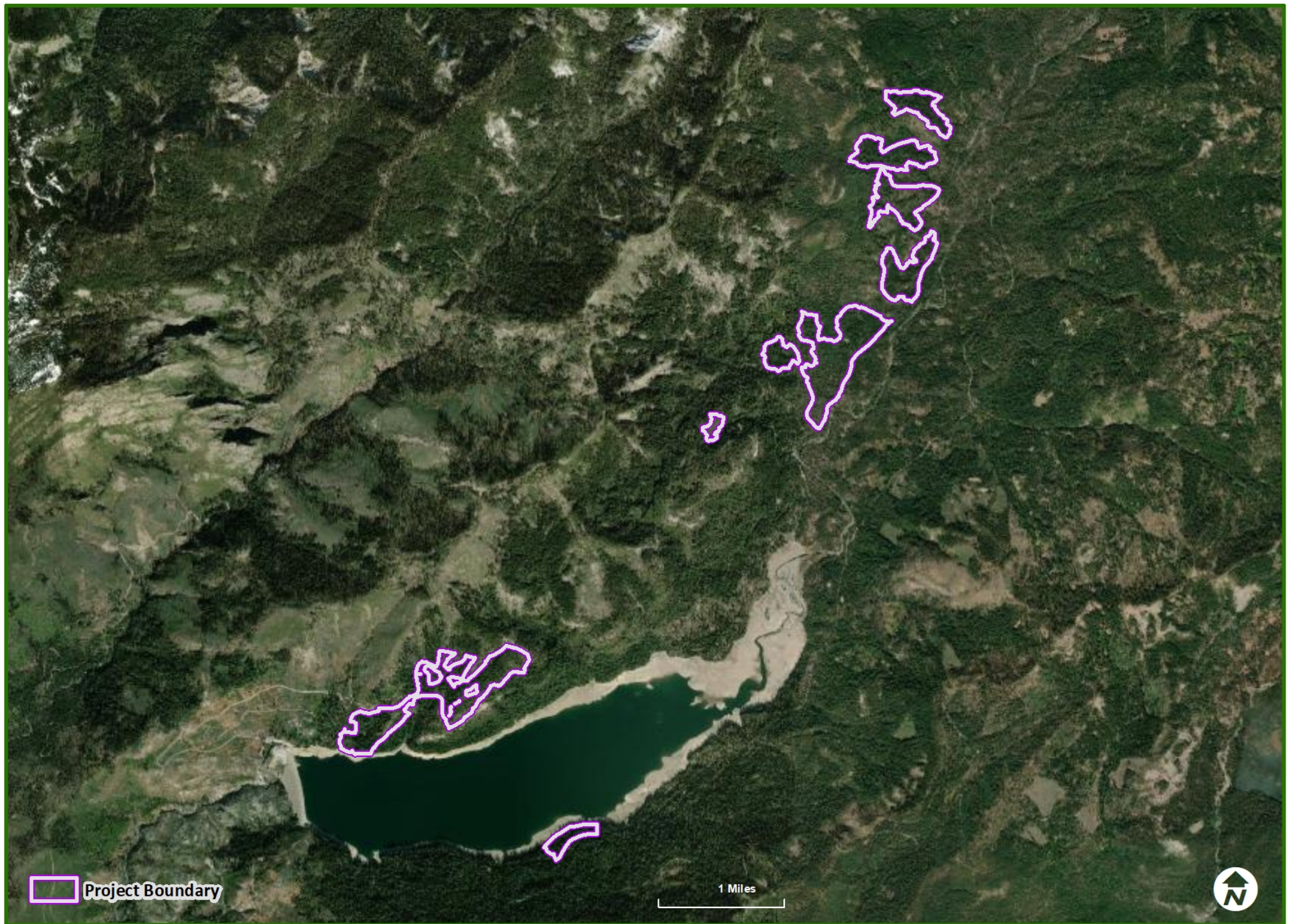
**1337 Middle Fork American River Watershed Restoration Project**  
Placer County Water Agency





**1337 Middle Fork American River Watershed Restoration Project**  
**Placer County Water Agency**





**1337 Middle Fork American River Watershed Restoration Project**  
Placer County Water Agency



# Notice of Exemption

## Appendix E

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

From: Sierra Nevada Conservancy  
11521 Blocker Drive, Suite 205  
Auburn, CA 95603

County Clerk  
County of: Placer  
2954 Richardson Drive  
Auburn, CA 95603

Project Title: Middle Fork American River Watershed Restoration Project – SNC 1337

Project Location – Specific: Approximately 1 mile northeast of the French Meadows Reservoir within the Tahoe National Forest.

Project Location - City: 14 miles northeast of Foresthill, CA      Project Location - County: Placer

Description of Nature, Purpose and Beneficiaries of Project:

The Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC) would provide funding for fuel reduction and thinning treatments on at least 494 acres of federal land within the Tahoe National Forest. The primary goals of the project are to address hazardous fuel conditions to reduce the risk and wildfire and to restore the natural condition of a portion of the American River Headwaters surrounding French Meadows Reservoir. The Middle Fork American River Restoration Project would restore the forest to an ecological condition that can better support naturally occurring fires and enhance habitat for critical species by reducing forest canopy and ladder and surface fuels, which are in excess of historic conditions.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: Sierra Nevada Conservancy

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: Placer County Water Agency

Exempt Status:

Statutory Exemption: Public Resources Code (PRC) 4799.05(d)(1)

Reasons why project is exempt:

CEQA does not apply to prescribed fire, thinning, or fuel reduction projects undertaken on federal lands to reduce the risk of high-severity wildlife 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 SNC would provide funding for fuel reduction and thinning activities on at least 494 acres of land within the Tahoe National Forest. The proposed activities were reviewed in their entirety pursuant to NEPA through an Environmental Assessment (EA) and Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI). The Decision Notice and FONSI were signed by the U.S. Forest Service on December 10, 2018.

Lead Agency

Contact Person: Shannon Ciotti

Area Code/Telephone/Extension: (530) 906-7345

**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: Yes

Signed by Applicant: No

Authority cited: Sections 21083 and 21110, Public Resources Code.

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

Reference: Sections 21108, 21152, and 21152.1, Public Resources Code.

## Exhibit A

### Sierra Nevada Conservancy Forest Health Grant Program SNC Project Number 1338

**SNC ID Number:** 1338

**Applicant:** Stanislaus National Forest

**Project Title:** Rim Fire Plantation Thin/Biomass Treatment Project

**SNC Subregion:** South Central

**County:** Tuolumne

**Funding Amount Requested:** \$1,368,000

**Funding Amount Recommended:** \$1,368,000

**Total Project Cost:** \$1,573,200

**Funding Authority:** State of California Budget Act of 2020

#### **Project Scope / Description**

The Rim Fire Plantation Thin/Biomass Treatment Project is an implementation project in southern Tuolumne County near the communities of Groveland and Greely Hill. The applicant, the Stanislaus National Forest, will thin 684 acres of pine plantation that survived the Rim Fire in 2013 to improve forest structure and increase resilience to wildfire, drought, and pest infestations.

The areas of pine plantation selected for this project burned at low- or moderate-severity within the 2013 Rim Fire leaving a high density of live trees and excessive amounts of ground and surface fuels. The Project will remove ground and ladder fuels within these plantations and establish a more open and heterogenous forest structure and composition mimicking the ICO (individual, clumps, and openings) patterns proposed by General Technical Report 220. The project proposes mechanical mastication for brush and ladder fuels, and where feasible, a biomass removal step for thinned trees. All acres are within the Wildland Urban Interface and will protect communities and public infrastructure.

This project is occurring alongside multiple restoration efforts within the Rim Fire footprint. The Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC) funded the Rim Fire Restoration Project (#856), awarded to Tuolumne River Trust, which restored and improved multiple springs, meadows, and stream crossing, and over 200 acres of deer migration habitat. The SNC is also managing funding from the National Disaster Resiliency Project which is completing 7,000 acres of post-fire fuel reduction and reforestation in adjacent and nearby sub-watersheds.



The Stanislaus National Forest is a federal land management agency under the United States Department of Agriculture with a mission to sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of our nation's forests and grasslands to meet the needs of present and future generations. The Stanislaus National Forest has been a longtime partner of the SNC and the various forest collaboratives in the Southern Sierra, and is also managing multiple SNC grants.

The Stanislaus National Forest has been partnering with the Yosemite Stanislaus Collaborative for the entirety of the Rim Fire Recovery. The Mule Deer Foundation (MDF) has also been a strong partner on other projects on the Stanislaus, including the Arnold Avery Healthy Forest Restoration Project (#1257), another SNC-funded effort. The MDF has taken over much of the project management duties for the Arnold Avery Project and may end up playing a similar role here. The Stanislaus National Forest has pledged \$205,200 in in-kind support.

The Project supports multiple goals of the SNC Strategic Plan and the State of California Budget Act of 2020. By thinning these plantations, the Project will move the forest structure to a more resilient state, protecting water resources in the Tuolumne River Watershed and the small neighboring communities from catastrophic wildfire. The protected water resources are used as irrigation for farmers within the San Joaquin valley and small foothill communities downstream.

## Project Schedule

Project Tasks and Deliverables	Timeline
Six-month progress reports	February, August 2022 February, August 2023
Site preparation	August – December 2021
Fuels reduction	July 2022 – December 2023
Contract monitoring and inspections	July 2022 – December 2023
<b>Estimated Project Completion Date</b>	<b>January 1, 2024</b>

## Project Costs

Project Costs	SNC Funding
Fuels reduction	\$1,231,200
Project management, inspection, and monitoring	\$136,800
Administrative costs	\$0
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,368,000</b>

## Project Letters of Support or Opposition

### *Support:*

- None received

### *Opposition:*

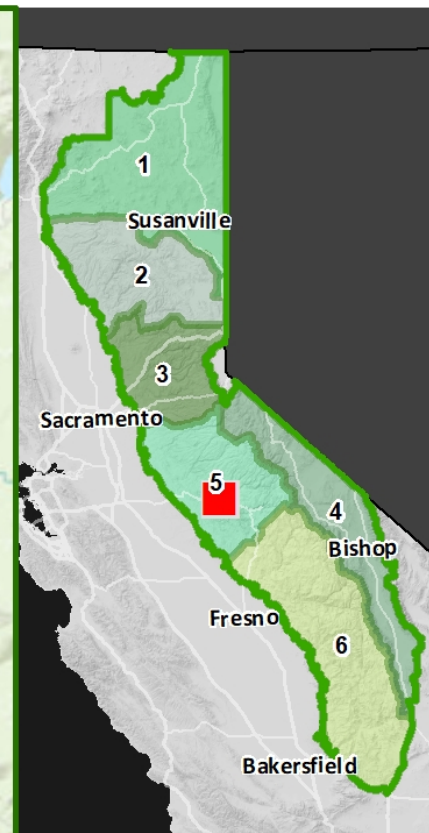
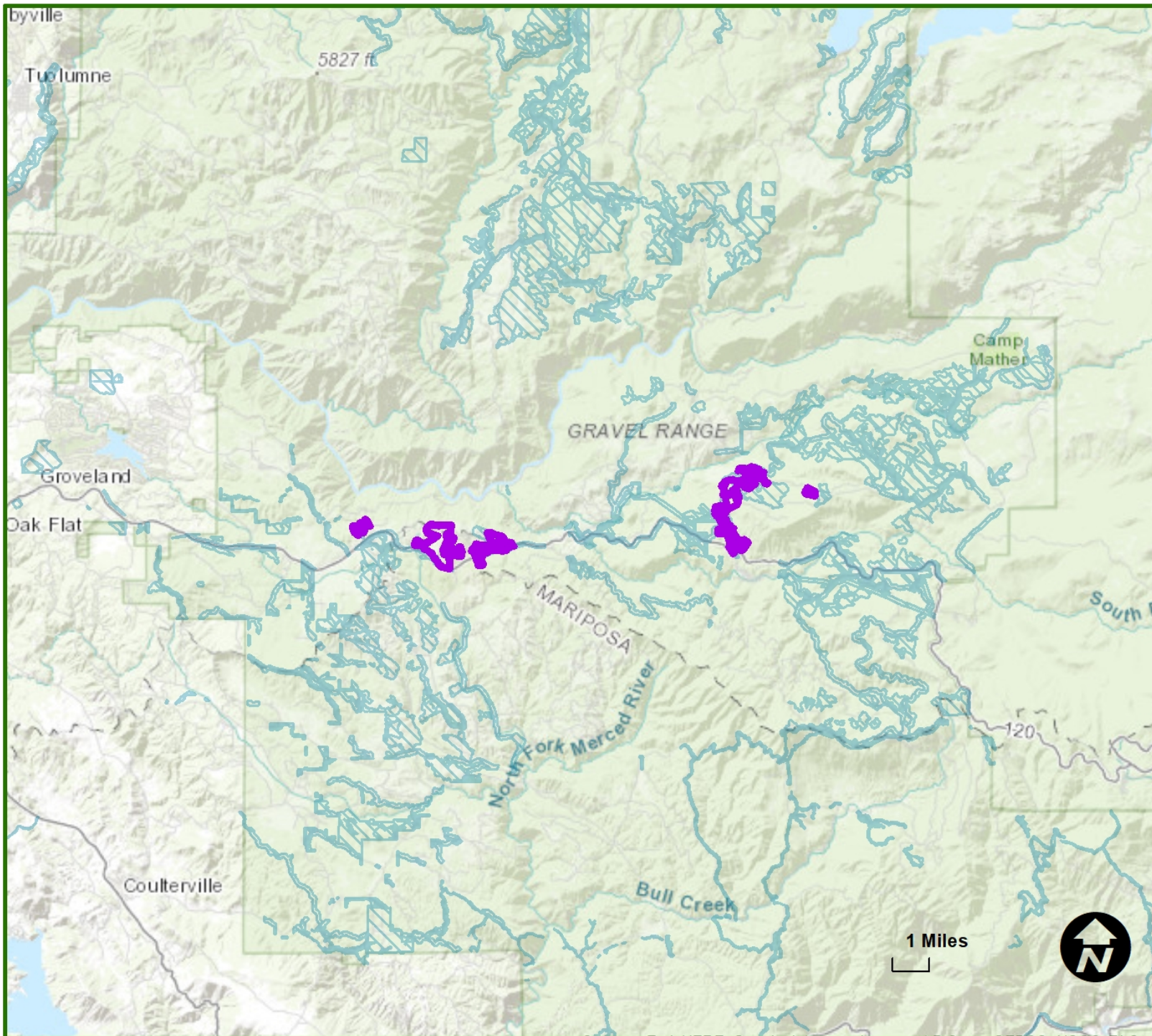
- None received

## 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



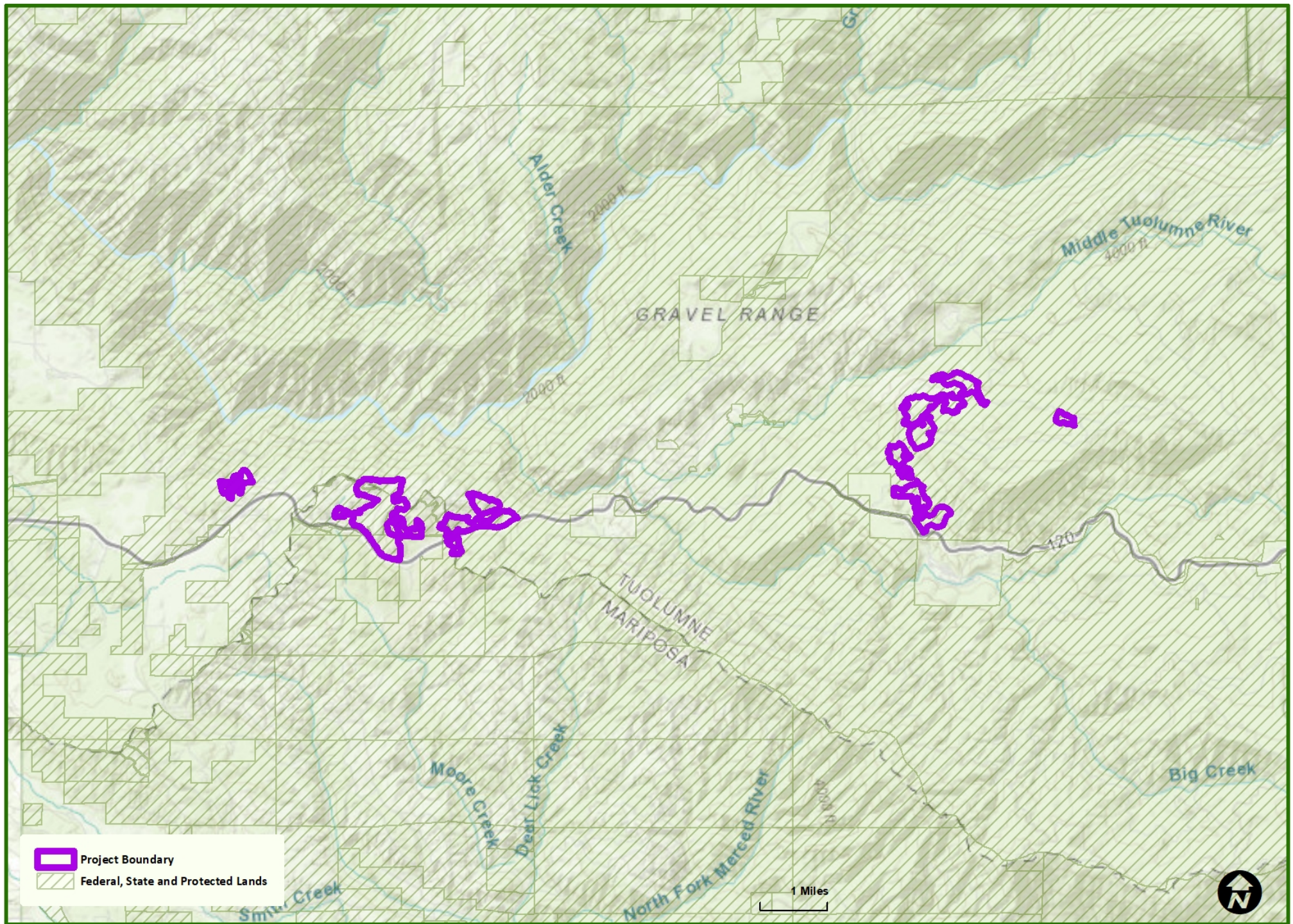


- Project Boundary (Primary Map)
- Other Projects (Primary Map)
- Project Location (Regional Map)
- 1 North Subregion
- 2 North Central Subregion
- 3 Central Subregion
- 4 East Subregion
- 5 South Central Subregion
- 6 South Subregion

## 1338 Rim Fire Plantation Thin/Biomass Treatment

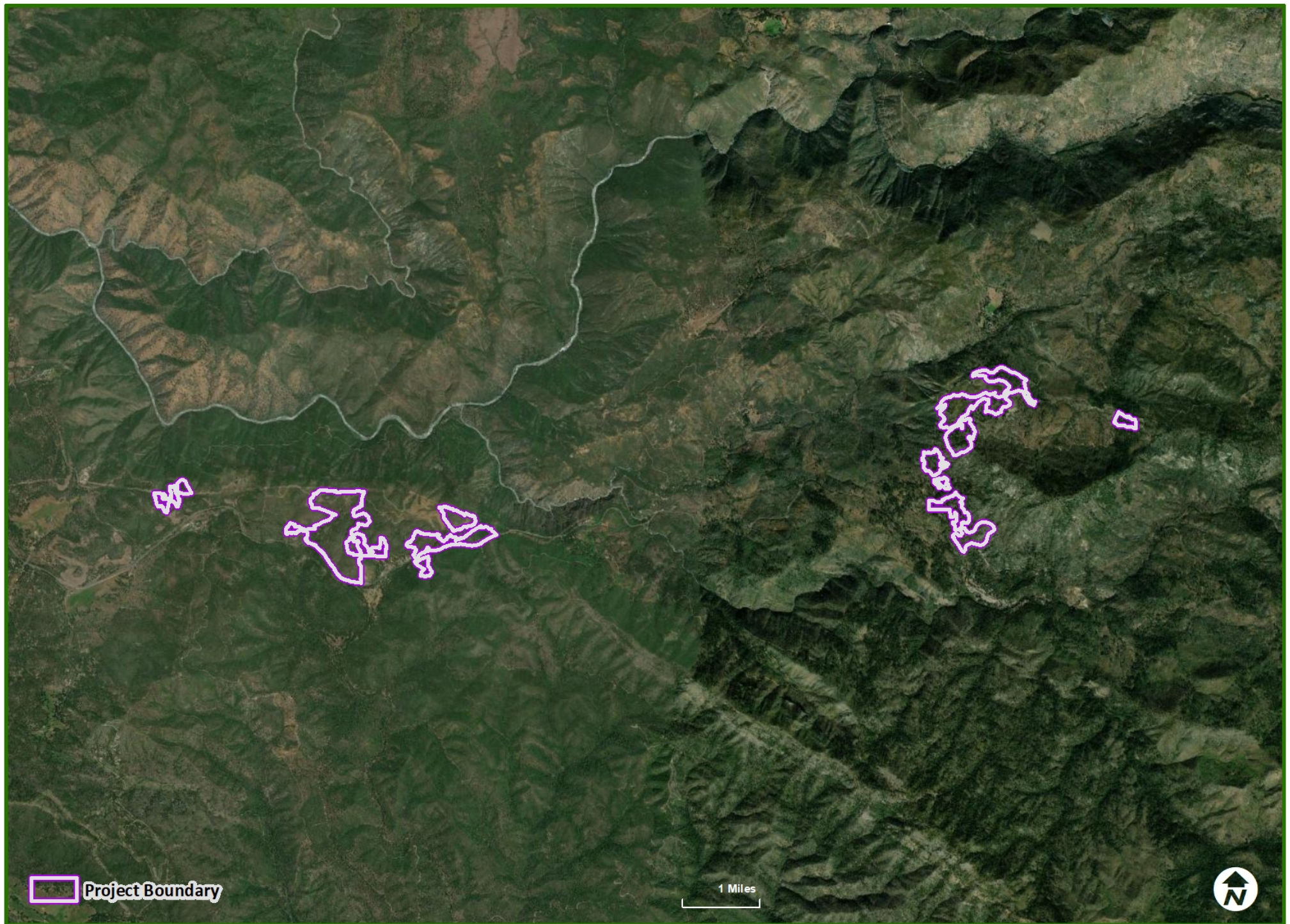
### Stanislaus National Forest





**1338 Rim Fire Plantation Thin/Biomass Treatment**  
**Stanislaus National Forest**





**1338 Rim Fire Plantation Thin/Biomass Treatment**  
Stanislaus National Forest

# Notice of Exemption

## Appendix E

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

From: Sierra Nevada Conservancy  
11521 Blocker Drive, Suite 205  
Auburn, CA 95603

County Clerk  
County of: Tuolumne  
2 South Green St.,  
Sonora, CA 95370

Project Title: Rim Fire Plantation Thin/Biomass Treatment project – SNC 1338

Project Location – Specific: Multiple locations along the Tuolumne River Watershed including sites located: 0.5 miles north of the Groveland Ranger Station, in and around Buck Meadows north of State Route 120, and west of Sawmill Quarry and Sawmill Mountain north of State Route 120.

Project Location - City: east of Groveland, California

Project Location - County: Tuolumne

Description of Nature, Purpose and Beneficiaries of Project:

The Rim Fire Plantation Thin/Biomass Treatment project is part of the Federal Phase II Restoration Plan for the Rim Fire within the Tuolumne River watershed. The Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC) would provide funding for fuel reduction activities and thinning of at least 684 acres of forested land within the Stanislaus National Forest, in multiple separate locations along the Tuolumne River watershed adjacent near the State Route 120 corridor and private property. The project purpose is to reduce the threat of high intensity wildfires in the project area through forest fuels reduction and thinning activities.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: Sierra Nevada Conservancy

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: U.S. Forest Service

Exempt Status:

Statutory Exemption. Public Resources Code Section 4799.05(d)(1)  
Statutory Exemption. Executive Order (EO) B-23-13

Reasons why project is exempt:

CEQA 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 SNC would provide funding for fuel reduction and thinning activities on at least 684 acres of land within the Stanislaus National Forest. The proposed activities and the project area were reviewed in their entirety pursuant to NEPA in the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) that was prepared by the U.S. Forest Service for the Phase II Restoration Plan for the Rim Fire. For these reasons, the Rim Fire Plantation Thin/Biomass Treatment project is not subject to CEQA consistent with PRC Section 4799.05(d)(1).

The Rim Fire Plantation/Biomass Treatment project is also exempt from CEQA under Executive Order B-23-13, enacted by Governor Jerry Brown on September 5, 2013. The order states: "Pursuant to Executive Order B-23-13 a California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), (Public Resources Code 21000 et seq) does not apply to implementation of the Federal Phase II Restoration Plan for the Rim Fire."

Lead Agency

Contact Person: Shannon Ciotti

Area Code/Telephone/Extension: (530) 906-7345

**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: Yes

Signed by Applicant: No

Authority cited: Sections 21083 and 21110, Public Resources Code.

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

Reference: Sections 21108, 21152, and 21152.1, Public Resources Code.



## Exhibit A

### Sierra Nevada Conservancy Forest Health Grant Program SNC Project Number 1341

**SNC ID Number:** 1341

**Applicant:** Butte County Fire Safe Council

**Project Title:** Big Chico Creek Forest Resilience Project

**SNC Subregion:** North Central

**County:** Butte

**Funding Amount Requested:** \$1,000,000

**Funding Amount Recommended:** \$1,000,000

**Total Project Cost:** \$1,248,950

**Funding Authority:** State of California Budget Act of 2020

#### **Project Scope / Description**

The Big Chico Creek Forest Resilience Project (Project) is located in northern Butte County adjacent to the community of Forest Ranch on Highway 32, close to the City of Chico and the community of Cohasset. The applicant, Butte County Fire Safe Council (BCFSC), will reduce fuel loading and improve forest structure on 451 acres. Landownership includes the Big Chico Creek Ecological Reserve (BCCER), owned and managed by California State University, Chico (CSU Chico), and five private landowners.

Building off of a Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC)-funded planning grant (#1126) and guided by the Project's Forest Management Plan and supported by the local Community Wildfire Protection Plan, the Project will reduce surface and ladder fuels and remove invasive species such as Spanish and French Broom. Trees under 10 inches in diameter will be removed until an objective of 70 percent canopy cover is obtained. Treatments will include a combination of hand-thinning, chipping, and pile and broadcast burning. These treatments will reduce wildfire spread and intensity, while retaining excellent habitat and water resource values. The Project also protects the BCCER, an important educational resource for CSU Chico and the region.

The BCFSC has developed a large and effective management plan for this region. The initial planning for this project and for the adjacent Big Chico Creek Forest Health Project (250 acres) was funded by SNC (#1236). California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) also has two large Vegetation Management Plans nearby totaling 2,700 acres within and near the BCCER. Other projects in the area include a

large-scale roadside fuel reduction program and a Fuels Management Plan for the City of Chico.

The Butte County Fire Safe Council is a local nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization with a mission “to provide safety in Butte County through wildfire hazard education, mitigation, and wildfire recovery.” The BCFSC has been an active partner with SNC and has successfully managed numerous state-funded grants and projects. The Big Chico Creek Ecological Reserve is a public education preserve dedicated to supporting the educational mission of CSU Chico by providing a site with natural resources to support research and teaching. All private landowners have provided letters of support and have been active members throughout the planning phases of the Project.

Major partners that will have an active role implementing this Project include CAL FIRE, BCCER, and the Grossman Family Trust, which has pledged \$246,000 in match funding. The Project will also acquire approximately \$2,950 of in-kind support from various partners. Collaboration with these partners will continue through and beyond this Project’s grant period.

The Project supports multiple goals of the SNC Strategic Plan and the State of California Budget Act of 2020. By reducing fuel loading and creating a more heterogenous forest structure, the Project will reduce the likelihood of catastrophic wildfire in a portion of California that suffered one of the most devastating and destructive wildfires in the state’s history, the Camp Fire. The Project will protect the public educational and recreational resources of the BCCER and will help to maintain a clean water supply to the City of Chico and millions of Californians who rely on the Sacramento River for municipal and agricultural water supplies.



## Project Schedule

Project Tasks and Deliverables	Timeline
Six-month progress report	February, August 2022 February, August 2023 February, August 2024
Site preparation and contractor bidding	August – December 2021
Hand thinning/ chipping/ burning	September 2021 – December 2024
<b>Estimated Project Completion Date</b>	<b>January 1, 2025</b>

## Project Costs

Project Costs	SNC Funding
Project management and travel	\$187,857
Hand thinning, chipping, burning	\$702,000
Supplies	\$3,000
Administrative costs	\$107,143
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,000,000</b>

## Project Letters of Support or Opposition

### *Support:*

- American Forest Foundation
- California Water Service
- Big Chico Creek Ecological Reserve
- Forest Ranch Fire Safe Council
- Forest Ranch Community Association
- California State University, Chico
- Butte County Resource Conservation District
- USDA Forest Service
- Butte County Office of Emergency Management
- Butte County Air Quality Management District
- Butte County Department of Development Services
- USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service

### *Opposition:*

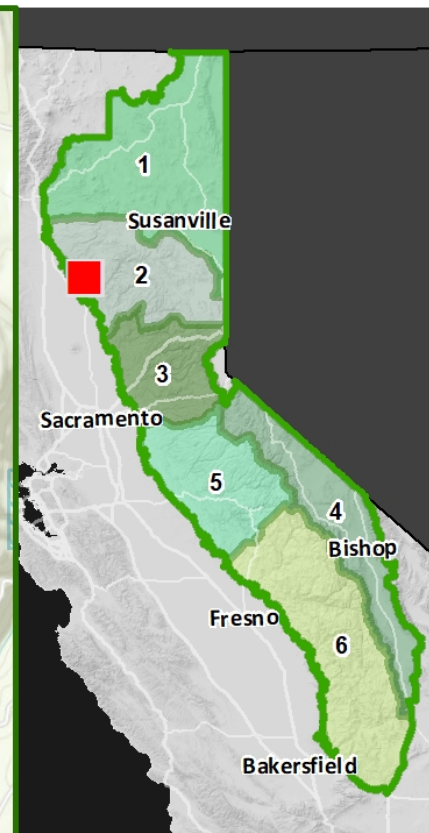
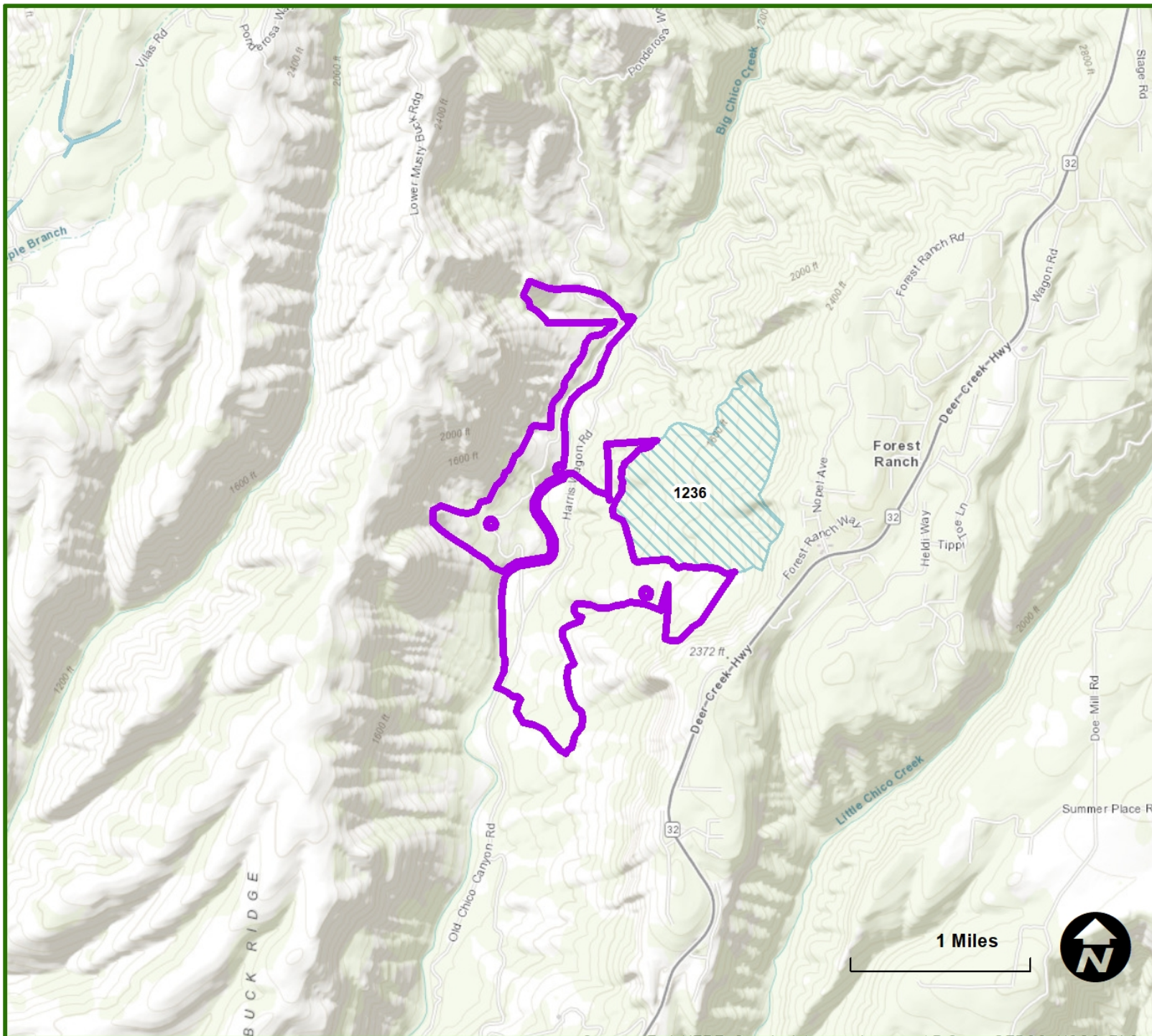
- None received

## **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



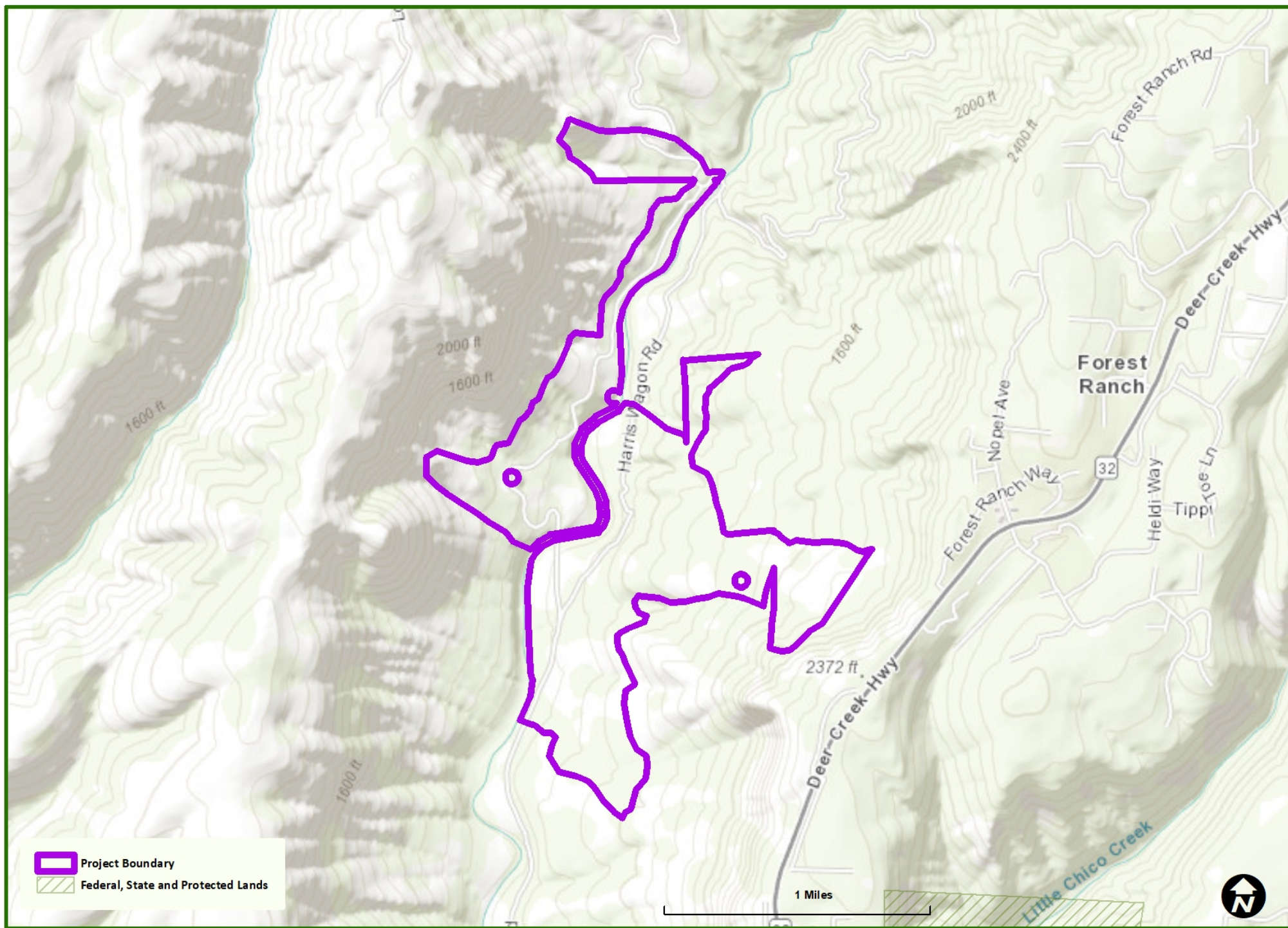


- Project Boundary (Primary Map)
- Other Projects (Primary Map)
- Project Location (Regional Map)
- 1 North Subregion
- 2 North Central Subregion
- 3 Central Subregion
- 4 East Subregion
- 5 South Central Subregion
- 6 South Subregion

## 1341 Big Chico Creek Forest Resilience Project

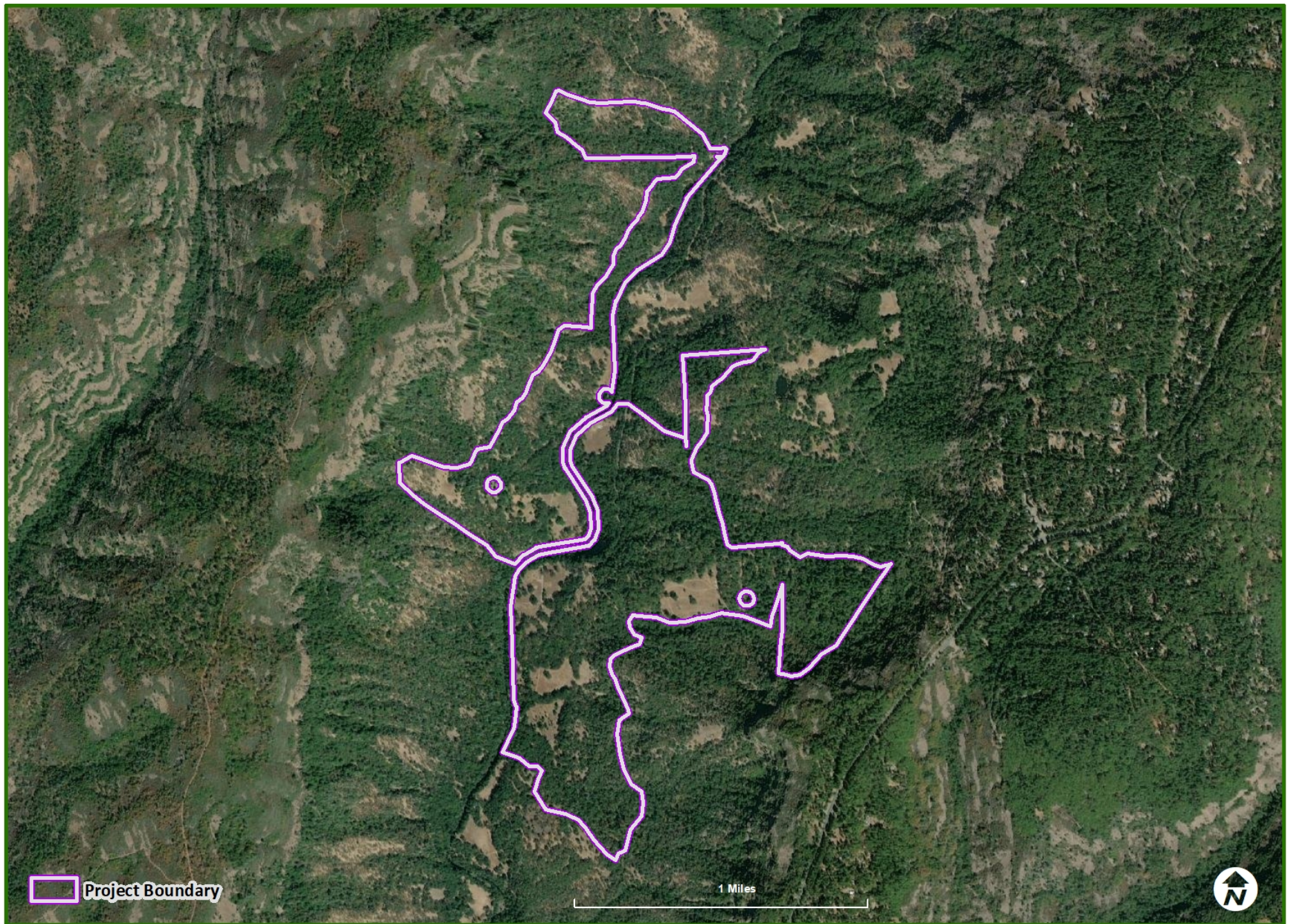
### Butte County Fire Safe Council





**1341 Big Chico Creek Forest Resilience Project**  
Butte County Fire Safe Council





**1341 Big Chico Creek Forest Resilience Project**  
Butte County Fire Safe Council



# Notice of Determination

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**To:**

☐ Office of Planning and Research

U.S. Mail:

P.O. Box 3044

Sacramento, CA 95812-3044

Street Address

1400 Tenth St., Rm 113

Sacramento, CA 95814

☒ County Clerk

County of: Butte County

Address: 155 Nelson Avenue

Oroville, CA 95965

**From:**

Public Agency: Sierra Nevada Conservancy

Address: 11521 Blocker Drive, Suite 205

Auburn, CA 95603

Contact: Shannon Ciotti

Phone: (530) 906-7345

Lead Agency (if different from above):

Butte County Resource Conservation District

Address: 150 Chuck Yeager Way, Suite A

Oroville, CA 96130

Contact: David Lee

Phone: (530) 693-3173

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

**State Clearinghouse Number (if submitted to State Clearinghouse):** 2020040195

**Project Title:** Big Chico Creek Forest Health Project - SNC 1341

**Project Applicant:** Butte County Fire Safe Council

**Project Location (include county):** Butte County, west of Forest Ranch, east of Cohasset, and north of Chico

**Project Description:** The Sierra Nevada Conservancy would provide funding to the Butte County Fire Safe Council to treat a minimum of 451 acres of private land to reduce the risk of catastrophic wildlife and protect the nearby communities of Forest Ranch, Cohasset, and City of Chico. Treatment activities include mechanical and hand thinning, pile burn preparation, and lop and scatter. Additionally, the project would include a training program for current students and recent graduates. The Butte County Resource Conservation District prepared and adopted an Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration for the project.

**This is to advise that the** Sierra Nevada Conservancy **has approved the above**

(☐ Lead Agency or ☒ Responsible Agency)

Described project on \_\_\_\_\_ and has made the following determinations regarding the above described project.  
(date)

1. The project [☐ will ☒ will not] have a significant effect on the environment.
2. ☐ An Environmental Impact Report was prepared for this project pursuant to the provisions of CEQA.  
☒ A Negative Declaration was prepared for this project to the provisions of CEQA.
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 EIR with comments and responses and record of project approval, or the negative Declaration, is available to the General Public at:

Sierra Nevada Conservancy, 11521 Blocker Drive, Suite 205, Auburn, CA 95603

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

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



## Exhibit A

### Sierra Nevada Conservancy Forest Health Grant Program SNC Project Number 1343

**SNC ID Number:** 1343

**Applicant:** Butte County Fire Safe Council

**Project Title:** Forbestown Forest Resilience Project

**SNC Subregion:** North Central

**County:** Butte

**Funding Amount Requested:** \$500,000

**Funding Amount Recommended:** \$500,000

**Total Project Cost:** \$717,740

**Funding Authority:** State of California Budget Act of 2020

#### **Project Scope / Description**

The Forbestown Forest Resilience Project (Project), located in eastern Butte County, spans a ridgetop that divides the South Fork Feather River and Yuba River watersheds. The Forbestown Ridge Planning Area includes the communities of Forbestown, Clipper Mills, Hurleton, Oroville East, and Woodleaf. Specifically, this Project will treat a minimum of 219 acres of private lands in Clipper Mills adjacent to the Merry Mountain Village subdivision. Submitted by the Butte County Fire Safe Council (BCFSC), the Project's primary purpose is to prevent catastrophic wildfire by removing ladder fuels and thinning overstocked forests.

The Project will prune low hanging branches to remove ladder fuels and thin overstocked stands with the goal of achieving 70 percent canopy cover by removing underbrush, down and dead fuels, and trees less than 10 inches diameter at breast height. The Project will use mastication and biomass chipping on approximately 207 acres and hand cutting and chipping on approximately 12 acres. The cost-per-acre reflects long hauling distances to biomass processing facilities. Outcomes include better resilience to wildfire, increased water availability, habitat protection, and improved forest health partnerships with local landowners. Located within a California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone and targeting five properties, the Project is a priority due to its proximity to Grizzly Creek and Merry Mountain Village subdivisions. It is one of three remaining ridges in Butte County that has not been burned by high-intensity wildfire in recent years. The Project is part of the CAL FIRE Butte Unit Community Wildfire Protection Plan for the Forbestown Ridge area and is included in the Butte County Local Hazard Mitigation Plan.

The Project adds to a legacy of forest health projects in the Forbestown Planning Area which began in 2005 with the United States Forest Service (USFS) Slap Jack Defensible Fuel Profile Zones and the implementation of a two-mile-long ridgetop shaded fuel break. Phases of that project were funded by the Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC) (#471 Forbestown Road Community Fuel Break). After the North Complex/Bear Fire of 2020, Butte County and the BCFSC formed a task force to collaborate on landscape-scale wildfire safety projects. Recently, the BCFSC received a USFS Western States Collaborative Landscape Scale Restoration Grant to develop a formal forest collaborative to increase landscape and community resiliency. The Project also builds on efforts of the American Forest Foundation's My Sierra Woods project, including the Merry Mountain Village Shaded Fuel Break.

Originating in March 1998, BCFSC has managed multiple SNC grants over the past 10 years including: Feather Falls (#G0721003), Chipper (#G0721002), Forbestown (#741), Little Butte Creek (#474), Chipper (#480), Magalia Forest Health (#835), and Little Butte Creek Phase II (#846). Active grants with SNC include Butte Creek Forest Health (#1024), Big Chico Creek Forest Management Plan (#1126), Cohasset Forest Health Planning (#1125), and Big Chico Creek Forest Health (#1236). The Project will be implemented on multiple private parcels owned by five landowners in the community of Clipper Mills, where years of planning and collaboration have taken place.

The Project was developed in consultation with multiple partners including CAL FIRE, USFS, Forbestown Ridge Fire Safe Council/Firewise USA, Mooretown Rancheria, American Forest Foundation, and Merry Mountain Village USA Firewise community. In-kind financial support of \$217,740 will be provided. Sources include secured grants from the USFS Stevens Fund for \$200,000, CAL FIRE California Climate Investments for \$10,000, and a Western States Landscape Scale Restoration award for \$5,000. Additional funds will be provided by the USFS Feather River Ranger District, American Forest Foundation, Natural Resource Conservation Service, Butte County Office of Emergency Management, and Forbestown Ridge Fire Safe Council.

The Project directly supports the SNC Strategic Plan, the Sierra Nevada Watershed Improvement Program, and California Wildfire and Forest Resilience Action Plan by increasing the pace and scale of restoration in the Sierra Nevada, protecting wildfire-prone homes and neighborhoods, and improving the region's forest resilience.



## Project Schedule

Project Tasks and Deliverables	Timeline
Progress reports	Every 6 months
Contract agreements	September 2021
Pre-project photo monitoring	September 2021
Project implementation of minimum of 219 acres	September 2021 – December 2024
Firewise USA public tour, online newsletter, web site postings	September 2021 – September 2024
Post-project photo monitoring	September 2024
<b>Estimated Project Completion Date</b>	<b>January 1, 2025</b>

## Project Costs

Project Costs	SNC Funding
Project and fiscal management	\$90,000
Contractual – mastication, biomass utilization, hand thinning and chipping, Forester	\$351,000
Travel	\$3,928
Supplies	\$1,500
Administrative costs	\$53,572
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$500,000</b>

## Project Letters of Support or Opposition

### *Support:*

- American Forest Foundation
- Butte County Air Quality Management District
- Bureau of Land Management – Redding Field Office
- California State University, Chico – Regional Recovery and Partnerships
- Forbestown Ridge Fire Safe Council / Forbestown Firewise Community
- Butte County Resource Conservation District
- Oroville Foothills and Lake Wyandotte Fire Safe Council
- South Feather Water and Power Agency
- Plumas National Forest – Feather River Ranger District

### *Opposition:*

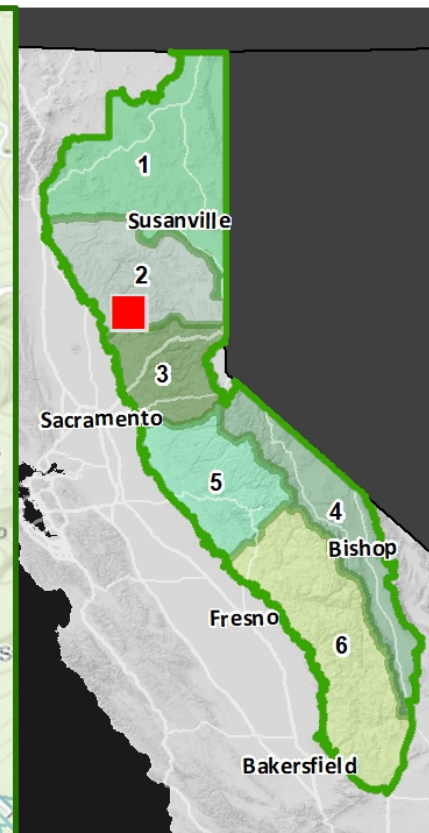
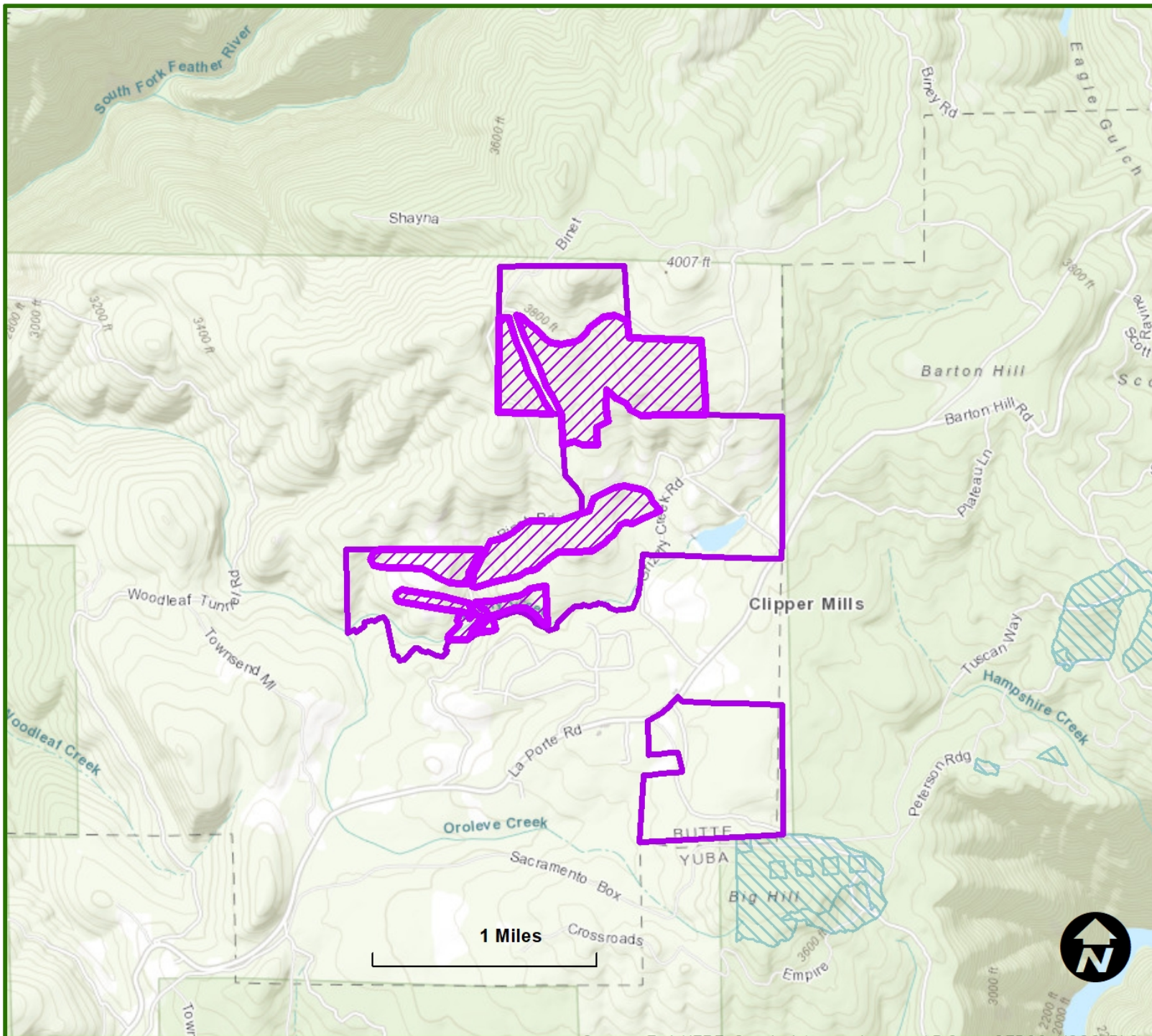
- None received











## **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

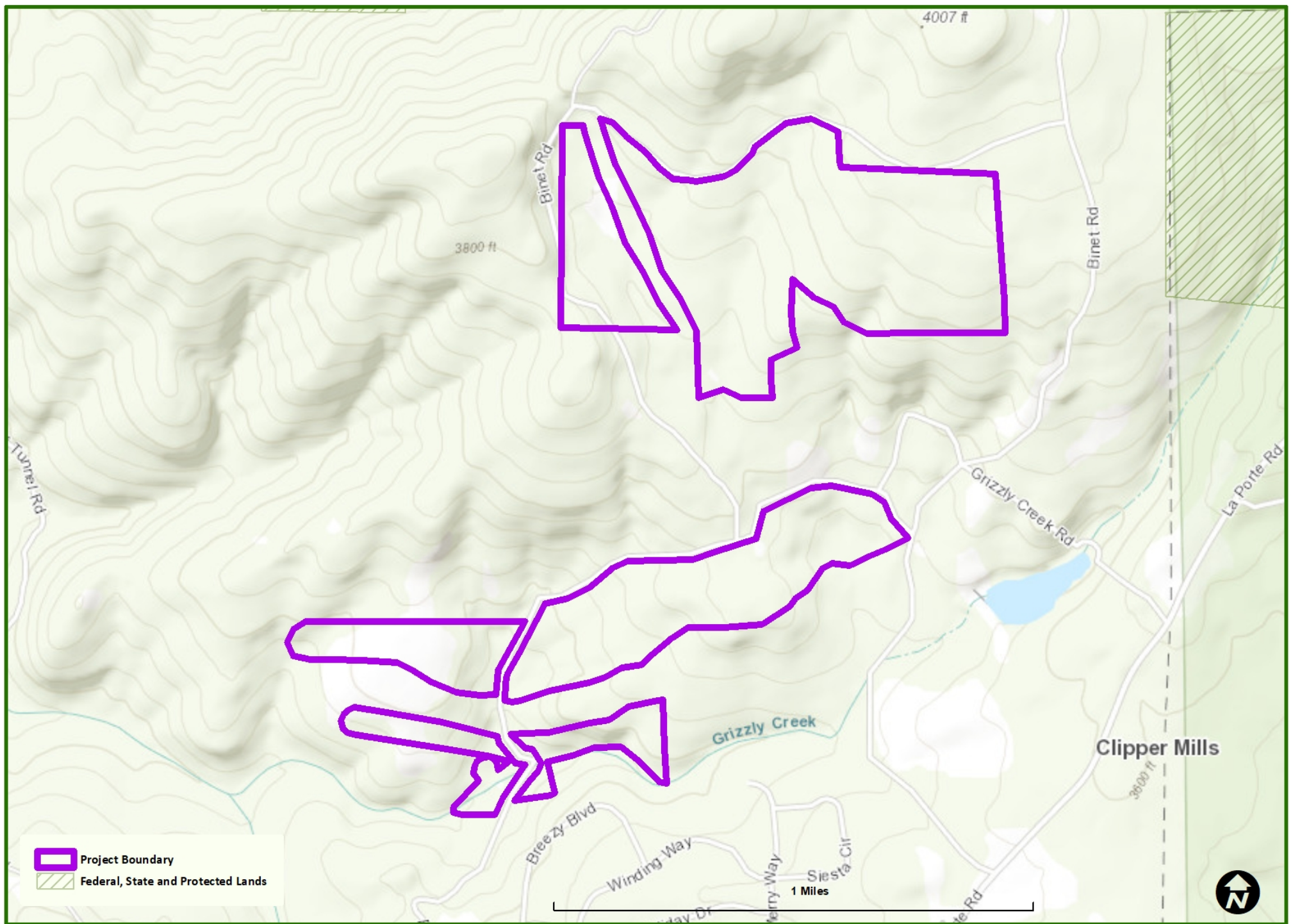




-  Project Boundary (Minimum)
-  Potential Project Boundary
-  Other Projects (Primary Map)
-  Project Location (Regional Map)
-  1 North Subregion
-  2 North Central Subregion
-  3 Central Subregion
-  4 East Subregion
-  5 South Central Subregion
-  6 South Subregion

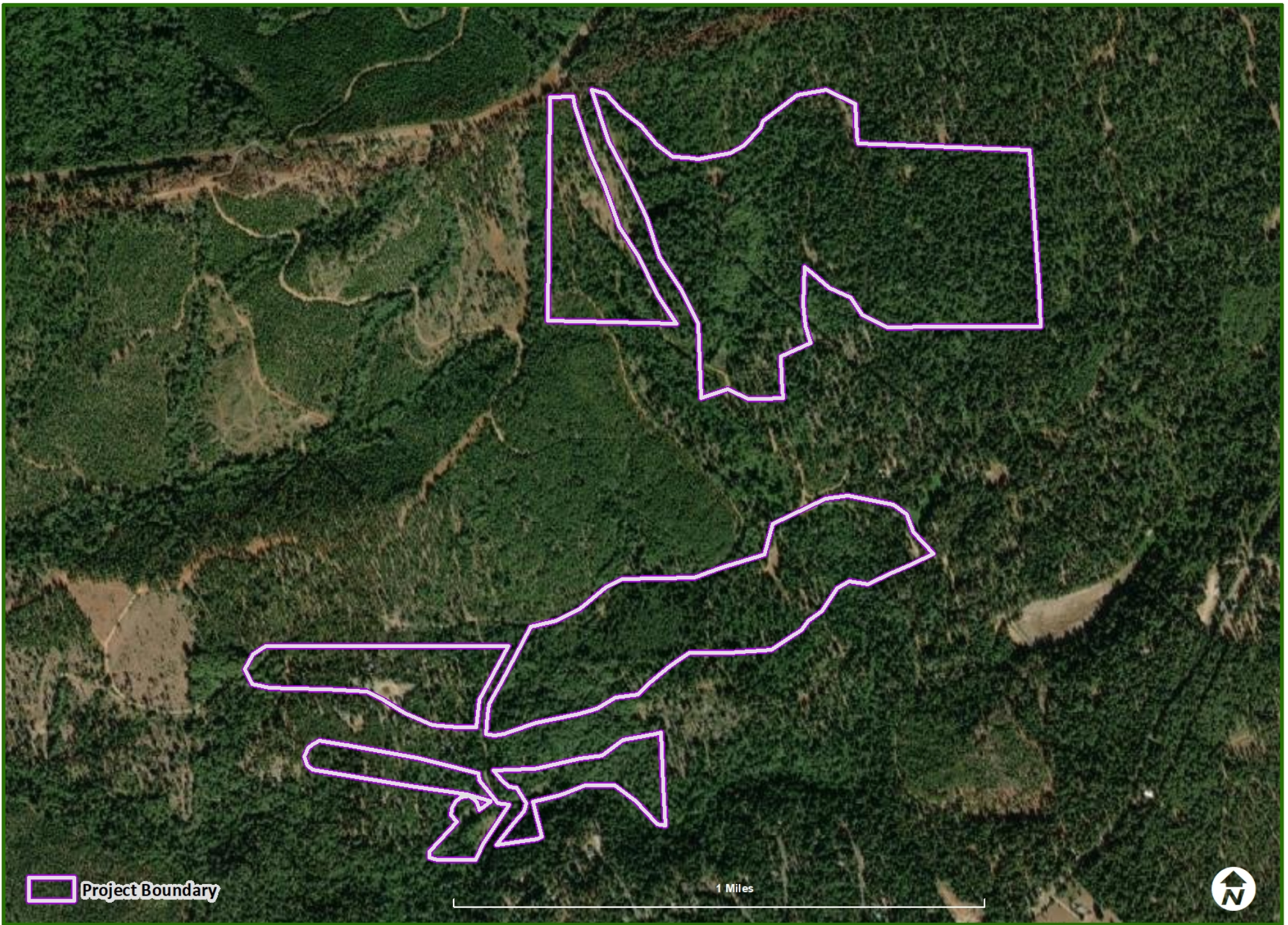
**1343 Forbestown Forest Resilience Project**  
**Butte County Fire Safe Council**





**1343 Forbestown Forest Resilience Project**  
**Butte County Fire Safe Council**





**1343 Forbestown Forest Resilience Project**  
Butte County Fire Safe Council



# Notice of Exemption

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

From: Sierra Nevada Conservancy  
11521 Blocker Drive, Suite 205  
Auburn, CA 95603

County Clerk  
County of: Butte  
155 Nelson Avenue  
Oroville, CA 95965-3411

Project Title: Forbestown Forest Resilience Project - SNC 1343

Project Location – Specific: Private lands along Forbestown Ridge within the Forbestown Ridge Planning Area

Project Location - City: Clipper Mills, CA

Project Location - County: Butte

Description of Nature, Purpose and Beneficiaries of Project:

The Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC) would provide funding to the Butte County Fire Safe Council to create forest resilience on a minimum of 219 acres within the wildland-urban interface (WUI) of the greater Forbestown Ridge Planning Area in the community of Clipper Mills. The project aims to prevent catastrophic wildfire by restoring forest ecosystems from overstocked conditions through forest thinning on multiple private properties. Thinning treatments would include manual and mechanical treatment activities and biomass chipping. The project is a priority as the Forbestown Ridge is one of the three remaining ridges in Butte County that have not endured catastrophic wildfire and because of its proximity to the Merry Mountain Village Homeowners Association in the WUI.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: Sierra Nevada Conservancy

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: Butte County Fire Safe Council

Exempt Status:

Categorical Exemption. CEQA Guidelines Section 15304

Reasons why project is exempt:

The Forbestown Forest Resilience Project is categorically exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15304, Class 4, which consists of minor public or private alterations in the condition of land, water, and/or vegetation which do not involve removal of mature, scenic trees except for forestry and agricultural purposes. The minor land alterations proposed by the project consist of forestry treatments to improve forest health and resilience. The project was reviewed and would not result in significant adverse effects on the environment or any exceptions to the exemption.

Lead Agency

Contact Person: Shannon Ciotti

Area Code/Telephone/Extension: (530) 906-7345

**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: Yes

Signed by Applicant: No

Authority cited: Sections 21083 and 21110, Public Resources Code.

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

Reference: Sections 21108, 21152, and 21152.1, Public Resources Code.