

NEPA Categorical Exclusion Checklist
Case File or Decision Memo Required

Purpose of Checklist: The purposes of this document are to determine a) whether the proposed action fits into one of the categories defined in 36 CFR 220.6(e)(1-25) or Categories and Exceptions Established by Statute where a case file or decision memo is required and b) to determine whether there are extraordinary circumstances related to the proposed action that warrant further analysis and documentation in an environmental assessment (EA) or environmental impact statement (EIS).

Name of proposed project: Mt. Shasta Nordic Center New Development PALS#: 61169

Project Leader: Jennifer Womack Assigned Planner: Myrnie Mayville

Location Description: Mt. Shasta Nordic Center near the intersection of 41N31 and 40N88 (Ski Park Highway)

Legal Description: Township 40 N, Range 3, Sec 17 (Mt. Diablo Meridian)

Gross acres (project area): 0.5 Net Acres (actual ground disturbance): <0.5

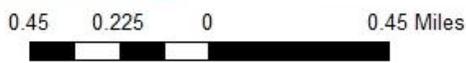
Description of Proposed Project¹:

Siskiyou Outdoor Recreation Alliance (SORA) has requested that their Ski Area Permit be amended to include the following new improvements to the base area:

- **One (1) 10 ft. x 60 ft. lodge** comprised of two 10 ft. x 30 ft. portable trailers joined together and will be placed on top of a compacted road base.
 - The lodge will house rental gear, guest lounge, an entry station and small retail area, and a private office for the staff.
 - The staff will have access to a RV style water system designed for hand washing and light duty cleaning. Fresh water and effluent gray water will be stored within the trailer in built-in tanks that are pumped and filled accordingly.
 - Because the Nordic Center is a seasonal operation, the trailers would be portable so they can be moved to a secure storage space in Mt. Shasta at the end of each ski season.
 - Construction will be both durable and architecturally significant with a modern aesthetic. The lodge will be inviting, dry and warm for both employees and patrons and will be built to last.
- **Six (6) solar panels** affixed to a portable trailer or placed on the ground near the lodge. The panels will be moved throughout the season to maximize solar capture. The solar panels will be used to power the lights, outlets and circulators for the gas fired radiant heating system.
- **One (1) new portable facilities trailer** to house trail signs, equipment, a small workshop for onsite repairs.
- **One (1) double vault toilet** adjacent to the new lodge and parking lot.
 - The vault toilet will be a Forest Service facility maintained by the Mt. Shasta Nordic Center and part of the Nordic Center Trailhead which was approved under the Gateway Phase II NEPA. The vault toilet location approved under this project is shown as Option 2 in the graphics below, and the location shown as Option 1 (approved under Gateway Phase II project) will not be constructed.
- A **concrete walking path** to connect the lodge, vault toilet and the parking lot to allow for better snow removal around the buildings to prevent slip and fall incidents.
- **One (1) 200 gallon propane tank** placed on concrete pavers or pier blocks over a compacted road base surface. The tank will be delivered and removed by the propane vendor every season.
- **Two (2) interpretive panels** to be located near the current kiosk.

About 5 trees will need to be removed where the proposed lodge will be placed.

¹ Describe Proposed Project in sufficient detail to demonstrate consistency with applicable CE category selected & such that readers understand proposed activities, e.g. Maintain 3.5 miles of road XXNYY starting at MP@ 2.5, consisting of grading, cleaning of ditches & pipes; activities are limited to existing road prism. Activities would occur between [month/date/year] and [month/date/year].



Legend

— Mt. Shasta Nordic Center Trails



Figure 1: Detailed Aerial Overview of Nordic Center New Proposed Infrastructure

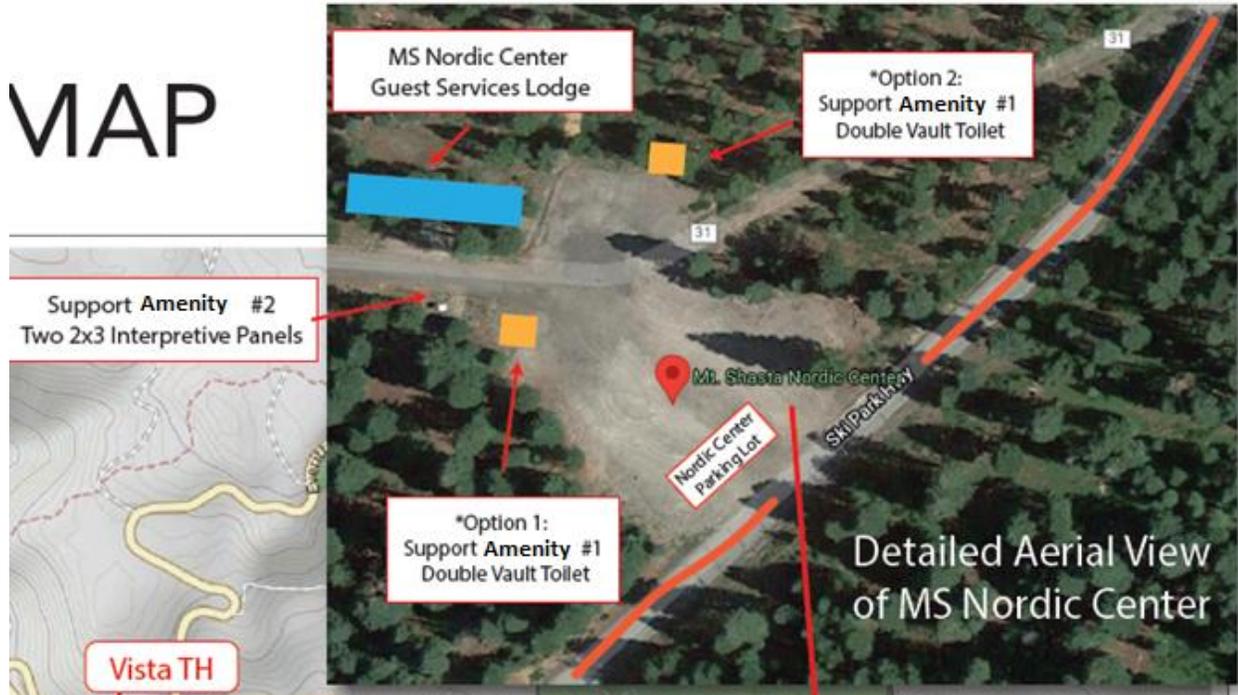


Figure 1: Detailed Aerial Overview of Nordic Center New Proposed Infrastructure. Double vault toilet will be in option 2 location instead of the Option 1 location that was planned under Gateway Phase II project.



Figure 2: Location of Proposed Vault Toilet



Figure 3: View of lodge location, vault toilet (shown here as Option 2), and interpretive panels



Figure 4: View of new interpretive panels and vault toilet location approved under Gateway Phase II. New location will be east of the lodge proposed in this project is not portrayed in this figure.

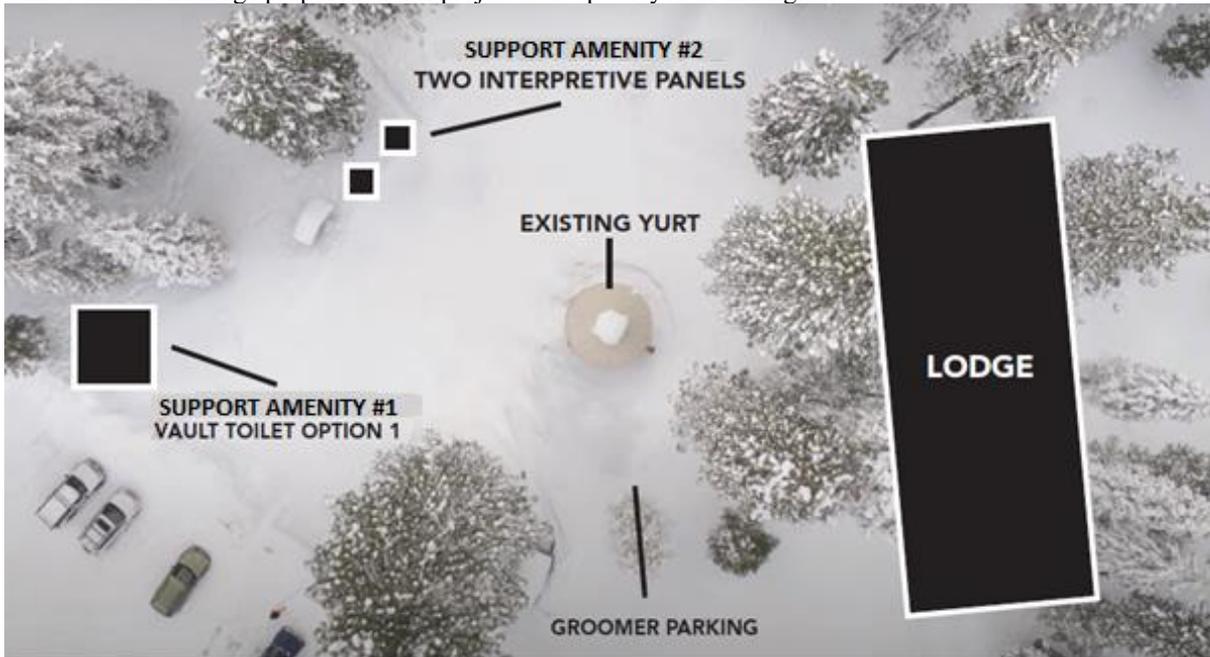


Figure 5: Overview of infrastructure in winter conditions (note vault toilet option 1 location was approved under Gateway Phase II. New location will be east of the lodge proposed in this project is not portrayed in this figure.

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Check the Categorical Exclusion category that applies to the project:

Categories for which a case file and Decision Memo are required. For full description of each category and examples refer to eCFR: 36 CFR Part 220 -- National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Compliance (federalregister.gov)			
32.2 Categories for Which a Project Case File & Decision Memo is Required & SOPA posting			
	36 CFR 220.6(e)(1)	36 CFR 220.6(e)(11)	36 CFR 220.6(e)(19)
	36 CFR 220.6(e)(2)	36 CFR 220.6(e)(12)	36 CFR 220.6(e)(20)
x	36 CFR 220.6(e)(3)*	36 CFR 220.6(e)(13)	36 CFR 220.6(e)(21)
	36 CFR 220.6(e)(5)	36 CFR 220.6(e)(14)	36 CFR 220.6(e)(22)
	36 CFR 220.6(e)(6)	36 CFR 220.6(e)(15)	36 CFR 220.6(e)(23)
	36 CFR 220.6(e)(7)	36 CFR 220.6(e)(16)	36 CFR 220.6(e)(24)*
	36 CFR 220.6(e)(8)	36 CFR 220.6(e)(17)	36 CFR 220.6(e)(25)*
	36 CFR 220.6(e)(9)	36 CFR 220.6(e)(18)	
31.3 Categories and Exceptions Established by Statute			
	16 USC 6236 – Organization Camp Special Use Authorization		
	16 USC 6554(d)– HFRA – Silvicultural Assessments		
	42 USC 15942 – Energy Act 2005--Oil and Gas Leases		
	Section 603 of HFRA (16 USC 6591b) Insect and Disease Infestation		
	402(h)(1) of FLPMA (43 U.S.C. 1752) Grazing Permits and Leases		
	Pub. L. 114-322, Sec. 3603 Trailing and Crossing of Livestock		
	Wildfire Resilience Section 605 of HFRA (16 USC 6591d)		
	Section 606 of HFRA (16 U.S.C. 6591e) Greater Sage-Grouse and Mule Deer Habitat		
	*For CE (e)(3) for special uses < 20 acres, CE (e)(24) for road construction, use of CE (e)(25) engage with Regional/Washington Office NEPA staff during initial proposal development prior to scoping.		

Resource Protection Measures include:

- The boles of the trees will be cut to firewood length and left available to the public under the fuelwood permit and the limbs will be chipped and scattered.
- All equipment to be used off-road would be cleaned using a method approved by a Forest botanist or designee before moving into the project area to ensure equipment is free of soil, plant propagules, or other debris that may contain invasive plant seeds.
- Any materials (gravel etc.) placed within the project area must be documented as state certified weed free. Materials where State inspection protocols do not exist will be inspected by a Forest botanist or designee prior to use.

Forest Plan Prescriptions: III. Roded Recreation Forest Plan Management Areas: 3.Mt. Shasta

Determination of Extraordinary Circumstances for the Proposal (36 CFR 220.6(a)): The following resource conditions were considered in determining whether extraordinary circumstances related to the proposed action warrant further analysis and documentation in an EA or an EIS^{2,3}

Resource Conditions	Present? Y/N	If Present, the following Findings are made:	Rationale supporting finding of no extraordinary circumstance:
Proposed, Threatened, or Endangered <u>Terrestrial Wildlife Species</u> or Their Designated or Proposed Critical habitat, or FS sensitive wildlife species	N	No P, T, E or S wildlife species or critical habitats will be <u>adversely</u> affected by this proposal. No extraordinary circumstances exist for this resource condition.	No PTES Species or their critical or suitable habitat will be modified or removed by project activities.
Proposed, Threatened, or Endangered <u>Aquatic Species</u> or Their Designated or Proposed Critical habitat, or FS sensitive aquatic species.	N	No P, T, E or S Fish, Amphibians or Macroinvertebrates or critical habitats will be <u>adversely</u> affected by this proposal. No extraordinary circumstances exist for this resource condition.	No aquatic habitat or critical habitat for any aquatic PTES species present.
Proposed, Threatened, or Endangered <u>Plant Species</u> or Their Designated or Proposed Critical habitat, or FS sensitive plant species	N	No P, T, E or S plant species will be <u>adversely</u> affected by this action. No extraordinary circumstances exist for this resource condition.	No P,T,E or S plant species are known to occur within the footprint of the Nordic Center Permit area.

² 36 CFR 220.6 (b) (1).

³ The mere presence of one or more of these resource conditions does not preclude use of a categorical exclusion (CE). It is the existence of a cause-effect relationship between a proposed action and the potential effect on these resource conditions, and if such a relationship exists, the degree of the potential effect of a proposed action on these resource conditions that determines whether extraordinary circumstances exist (36 CFR 220.6 (b) (2)).

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Attach list of individuals, groups, and agencies that were contacted.

Staff/Environmental review:

Environmental Review by: Myrnie Mayville DATE: 4/18/2022

Staff Recommendation by: Stacy Smith DATE: 4/18/2022

Decision Memo
Mt. Shasta Nordic Center New Development 2021
USDA Forest Service
Shasta-Trinity National Forest
Shasta McCloud Management Unit
Siskiyou County, California

Line Officer review:

I have decided to amend the Mt. Shasta Nordic Center permit to add the new improvements which include a lodge facility, vault toilet and interpretive signs. Decisions may be categorically excluded from documentation in an environmental impact statement or an environmental assessment when they are within one of the categories found at 36 C.F.R. § 220.6(d) and (e), and there are no extraordinary circumstances related to the decision that may result in a significant individual or cumulative environmental effect. Decisions pursuant 36 C.F.R. § 220.6(e) are categories of actions for which a project or case file and decision memo are required. The categorical exclusion being used for the proposed action is 36 C.F.R. § 220.6(e)(3):

“Approval, modification, or continuation of special uses that require less than 20 acres of NFS lands.”

This category of action is applicable because the project area will occupy less than half an acre of land and is inside the Mt. Shasta Nordic Center Ski Area permit boundary. The action is to amend the current Mt. Shasta Nordic Center permit (MTS615) to add the new improvements.

In accordance with 36 C.F.R. § 220.6(a)(2b), resource conditions were considered in determining whether extraordinary circumstances related to the proposed action warrant further analysis and documentation in an EA or EIS. Review indicated there are no extraordinary circumstances related to the proposed action that warrant further analysis and documentation in an EA or EIS. It is my determination that this activity is of limited size, duration and degree, and the anticipated environmental effects of the project are minimal.

The project was listed on the on the Shasta-Trinity Schedule of Proposed Actions (SOPA) on November 22, 2021. Interested and affected agencies, organizations, and persons were sent a scoping letter for the project, including the Central Valley Water Quality Control Board, Siskiyou County, adjacent landowners and the Mount Shasta Trail Association. Scoping resulted in one supportive email from the Mount Shasta Ski and Board Park. I find that the actions to be implemented by this decision are consistent with the Shasta Trinity National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan as well as other applicable laws, regulations, and policies. It is my determination that the project activities may proceed and that no further documentation is required. Decisions that are categorically excluded from documentation in an environmental assessment or environmental impact statement are not subject to an administrative review process (Agriculture Act of 2014 [Pub. L. No. 113-79], Subtitle A, Sec. 8006).

For additional information concerning this decision or the Forest Service administrative review process, contact: Jennifer Womack, Special Uses Administrator, Mt. Shasta Ranger Station, 204 West Alma Street, Mt. Shasta, CA 96067, jennifer.womack@usda.gov or 530-925-9306.

12 MAY 2022

Date

KARI K. OTTO
Deputy Forest Supervisor

Shasta-Trinity National Forest/Shasta McCloud Management Unit

INTERDISCIPLINARY REVIEW (including supporting rationale) *Optional, Not Required*

Wildlife: Beth D. Wood

No PTES Species, their critical, or suitable habitat will be modified or removed by project activities; therefore no Technical Assistance or discussion with US Fish & Wildlife about this the Proposed Action. No suitable (reproductive/foraging) or dispersal habitat modification or major ground-disturbing activities are proposed. There will be no significant effects to any other wildlife species of concern (survey and manage species or habitats, management indicator assemblages or representative species, migratory birds) as there is either no suitable habitat in the proposed activity area, or no habitat would be measurably or meaningfully affected.

Initials: BDW Date: 01/11/2022

Botany: Brenna Montagne

No threatened, endangered, proposed, candidate, Forest Service sensitive, survey and manage or endemic plants, lichen and/or fungi species will be affected by this project as none are known to occur within the project area. Surveys have been completed as part of previous projects in the area and were most recently accomplished during the summer of 2021. There are no known invasive plant populations at the location of this project.

Initials: BTM Date: 02/08/2022

Archaeology: Leslie Schmidt, Sarah Thibideau

Intensive pedestrian survey was conducted by Brianna Murphy on November 8th, 2021. No cultural materials were observed during survey, and there are no previously known cultural resources within the APE or within the greater extent of the Nordic Center permit area. Based on the findings that there are no cultural resources present within the project APE, and pursuant to Stipulation 7.8(a) of the Region 5 Programmatic Agreement, the Shasta Trinity National Forest has determined this undertaking will result in No Effect to historic properties. CRR #2022051400013 prepared by Brianna Murphy, Archaeologist (11/24/2021) and approved by Matthew Padilla, Heritage Program Manager (01/10/2022).

Initials: LS Date: 01/11/2022

Soils / Geology: Tyanna Blaschak

Project activities would occur in a previously disturbed area currently utilized by the Nordic Center and would have no effects to soils or geologic resources.

Initials: TSB Date: 02/08/2022

Hydrology: Tyanna Blaschak

There are no hydrologic features (streams, waterbodies, or wetlands) within the project area; therefore, hydrologic resources (water quality, quantity, flow) would not be affected by project activities.

Initials: TSB Date: 02/08/2022

Fire / Fuels: Steve Clark, Anna Wright

Fire/Fuels has no issues or concerns for the proposed site.

In regards to the 5 trees that may be removed where the proposed lodge will be placed, I recommend the boles of the trees be cut to firewood length and left available to the public under the fuelwood permit and the limbs be chipped and scattered.

Initials: SLC Date: 01/11/2021

Engineering: Em Barnum

Access for project activities will be from existing National Forest System Maintenance Level 3 road 41N31 (McKenzie Butte) and Maintenance Level 4 road 40N88 (Everitt Hill/Ski Park Highway). Both roads receive considerable use and vehicle traffic. The Ski Park Highway receives a lot of local and visitor traffic, both destination-oriented (the ski park, the Nordic center) and driving for pleasure (sightseeing). The McKenzie Butte Road receives a lot of recreational use, including use by all-terrain vehicles, dirt bikes, mountain bikes, and people walking/running, in addition access to/use of the Nordic center and Gateway Phase 2 trails (under construction). Routine safety precautions would be taken such as notifications, caution signing (e.g. equipment ahead) and the like to address public safety. No new roads will be created. The proposal is not expected to adversely affect National Forest System roads or infrastructure.

Initials: EB Date: 2/15/2022

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Recreation: Becky Cooper

The amendments to the Mt. Shasta Nordic Center (ski permit) do not have negative affects to recreation resources and instead the proposed improvements will enhance recreation opportunities and continue to protect other resources within this area. Within the next 5 years the Nordic Center Trailhead will become a year-round trailhead with non-motorized trail use during the spring-fall season and then Nordic skiing in the winter.

Proposed locations for infrastructure placements have been approved by recreation specialist. No resource protection measures are needed.

Initials: BC Date: 2/15/22

Fisheries: Beth D. Wood

No aquatic habitat or critical habitat for any aquatic PTES species present. None of the permitted activities will occur in or near aquatic habitats, or near critical habitats, which support federally listed or Forest Service sensitive fish species. No activities will occur in or near habitats for listed fish (Chinook salmon, steelhead, Delta smelt, green sturgeon, or suckers) or McCloud Redband populations. Proposed activities do not occur in or near aquatic habitats that support Forest Service sensitive fish, amphibian, or mollusk species; aquatic survey and manage species; or Management Indicator fish species.

Initials: BDW Date: 01/11/2022

Visual Quality: Becky Cooper

The Mt. Shasta Nordic Center location has the visual quality objective of Retention. The proposal will have an affect to scenery by changing what the current landscape; however, other management actions have also altered the visuals of this area (i.e., thinning from the Mtn. Thin timber sale and existing developed recreation infrastructures (i.e., yurt) and so improvements will not adversely affect the existing footprint. Suggested ways to reduce the visual impacts is to ensure buildings/signs follow FS standards in which “blend in” with the surrounding environment. Buildings should be painted forest greens/browns. Solar panels should be placed where they are hidden from public view within the parking lot.

Initials: BC Date: 2/15/22

Timber/Silviculture: Ed Domanski, Craig Sewell

Timber and Silviculture support this project with no additional mitigations necessary. The relatively small trees (ranging approximately 8-16” DBH) that will be removed for the placement of the portable lodge structure, are of such a small size and number that it is not a concern. Also, with the stumps being cut flush to the ground there is little to no chance for the introduction of Heterobasidion annosum, which would otherwise require a treatment of the stumps with a borate compound.

Initials: CS Date: 1/19/22

Special Uses: Stacy Smith, Jennifer Womack

Project proponent.

Initials: Date:

Other (e.g., range):

N/A

Initials: Date: