

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

Project Title: Kennedy Meadows Area Planning Grant (SNC #1581-RT)

Project Location – Specific: Kennedy Meadows Campground on the Inyo National Forest in Tulare County, 26 miles northeast of the town of Pearsonville on Nine Mile Canyon Road near the community of Kennedy Meadows. Center at approximately - 118.130, 36.053 degrees.

Project Location - City: US Forest Service lands near Kennedy Meadows.

Project Location - County: Tulare

Description of Nature, Purpose, and Beneficiaries of Project:

The Sierra Nevada Conservancy would provide funding for the Friends of the Inyo to partner with the Inyo National Forest (INF) to complete environmental compliance required to rehabilitate the Kennedy Meadows Campground and establish it as a non-fee site that is open for public use. This project would complete NEPA analyses, including scoping and field data collection, to study and analyze decommissioning the Kennedy Meadows Campground as it is currently designed, conduct environmental restoration along the South Fork Kern River, and redesign the former campground so it can remain open for public use as a sustainable dispersed camping site within the former campground footprint. The proposed final site design will incorporate public outreach for input, including from nearby communities, recreationists, wilderness visitors, and Pacific Crest Trail users.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: Sierra Nevada Conservancy

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: Friends of the Inyo

Exempt Status:

Statutory Exemption: Pub. Resources Code, Section 21150; and CEQA Guidelines, Section 15262 Feasibility and Planning Studies

Categorical Exemption: CEQA Guidelines, Section 15306 Information Collection

Reasons why project is exempt:

The project is Statutorily Exempt under Pub. Resources Code, Section 21150 and CEQA Guidelines, Section 15262 Feasibility and Planning Studies, as the project only involves planning studies for possible future actions, which the Sierra Nevada Conservancy Board has not approved, adopted, or funded; there is no legally binding effect on later activities. The project is also Categorical Exempt under Section 15306 Information Collection because it consists of basic data collection and resource evaluation activities, which do not result in a disturbance to environmental resources.

The proposed activities are for information gathering purposes and are part of a study leading to an action, which a public agency has not yet approved, adopted, or funded. This project does not fall within any exceptions to the categorical exemption. Friends of the Inyo, in partnership with the INF, will collect data and complete environmental analyses.

Lead Agency

Contact Person: Mary Akens

Area Code/Telephone/Extension: 530-450-5177

If filed by applicant: N/A

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: 6/1/2023 Title: Chief Deputy Executive Officer

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.