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NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

State of California
The Natural Resources Agency
California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

PROJECT TITLE	FY 20 Sage-steppe Restoration Projects		
PROJECT LOCATION	Portions along Stony Breaker Road four miles east of Bieber	**COUNTY**	Lassen
LEAD AGENCY	California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE)		
CONTACT	Glen Schall, Cal Fire Lassen-Modoc Unit Forester	**PHONE**	(530) 310-2208
ADDRESS	697-345 Highway 36, Susanville, CA 96130		

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The project will utilize vegetation treatments and pile burning to promote healthy, resilient sage-steppe communities, improve greater sage-grouse habitat, and reduce the risk of catastrophic fire. The need for the project is driven from juniper encroachment into sage-steppe habitats critical to greater sage-grouse (GRSG), associated in part with the exclusion of natural fire regimes through fire suppression. Elevated fuel loading can also contribute to increased wildfire frequency and severity. Project activities by CAL FIRE will only occur on the Stony Breaker project area, which consists of 724 acres. The project area is located approximately 4 miles East of Bieber, and is directly adjacent to the CAL FIRE Ditch Camp Fuel Reduction Project. Project activities include manual and mechanical treatments and pile burning. Manual treatments may use chainsaws, loppers and clippers, while mechanical treatments will utilize heavy equipment. Methods for applying fire would include ground ignition using a drip torch or similar method, aerial ignition using unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) or helicopters, or a combination of both. All proposed project activities are outlined and supported by the NEPA document, FY 20 Sage-steppe Restoration Projects, DOI-BLM-CA-N020-2020-0012-DNA. Initial project work will entail the burning of piles created under this NEPA document. Fire will only be used under specific weather and fuel conditions, and in accordance with regulations and notification outlined in the Environmental Assessment. The project is designed to avoid impacts to air quality, sensitive species, riparian areas, and tribal cultural resources, in consultation with responsible agencies.

EXEMPTION STATUS

- ☐ Categorical Exemption Type and Section: Class
- ☒ Statutory Exemption (state code section): PRC §4799.05(d)(1) – Projects on federal lands reviewed under NEPA
- ☐ Ministerial (§21080(b)(1); 15268)
- ☐ Declared Emergency (§21080(b)(3); 15269(a))
- ☐ Emergency Project (§21080(b)(4); 15269(b)(c))

REASONS PROJECT IS EXEMPT

This project meets the requirements of PRC §4799.05(d)(4). It is a CAL FIRE project on 700 acres of federal lands that have been analyzed under National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The California Environmental Quality Act 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. Project design features relevant to the proposed action as listed in the Environmental Assessment FY 20 Sage-steppe Restoration Projects DOI-BLM-CA-N020-2020-0012-DNA, signed August 2020, will be implemented.

DATE RECEIVED FOR FILING

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George Huang
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10/28/2026 | 16:48 PDT

George Huang, Assistant Region Chief, Northern Region Date
California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection