

5) Narrative Descriptions

a) NFL NEPA Assessment for West Calaveras Plantation Thinning Project Narrative

This SNC Category 2 pre-project activity is for NEPA compliance needed to prepare a treatment plan that would result in a specific project (West Calaveras Plantation Thinning) on National Forest Land for thinning approximately 550 acres of plantations in western Calaveras Ranger District. The applicant also intends to implement this project so as to comply with CEQA as part of its involvement with the Amador Calaveras Consensus Group (ACCG) collaborative. As Feasible these SNC funded activities are to be done consistent with principles of the ACCG collaborative partnership's All-Lands, Triple Bottom Line strategy addressing environmental, social and economic dimensions.

This project would move plantations and watershed conditions in the project area towards desired resource conditions. Plantations in the project area are approximately 20 to 50 years old, and are overstocked. Roads in the project area are hydrologically connected with drainage, runoff, and erosion contributing to sediment loading. The high stocking levels in the plantations in the project area are contributing to increased tree stress due to inter tree competition for moisture and nutrients, resulting in conditions that increase the susceptibility of bark beetle infestations and other pathogens. There has been sporadic insect activity or disease occurrence in the plantations proposed for thinning, including evidence of western pine beetle (*Dendroctonus brevicomis*). In addition, there are known western pine beetle activity centers in the vicinity of the project area which indicates a heightened level of susceptibility for beetle infestation in the plantations.

In addition, the West Calaveras Plantation Thinning project area is within the area considered in the ACCG Cornerstone Project. Management goals identified in the ACCG Cornerstone Project for ecosystem restoration that apply to the West Calaveras Plantation Thinning project include:

- A) Reduce the risk of uncharacteristic fire and threat of wildland fire;
- B) Restore hydrologic processes in watersheds, meadows and streams to proper functioning condition; and
- C) Restore forest structure, ecological processes, and function by creating more-resilient vegetation conditions.

The objectives for the West Calaveras Plantation Thinning project are as follows:

- 1) Enhance the general health of plantations by reducing susceptibility to insect, diseases, and drought-related mortality by improving and promoting stand and individual tree growth and vigor.
- 2) Reduce future fire intensity and severity by reducing surface fuels, increasing the height to canopy, decreasing crown density, and retaining large, fire-resistant tree species.
- 3) Improve watershed conditions, water quality and riparian and hardwood habitats by reducing the amount of sediment from the road system delivered into streams and special aquatic features.
- 4) Maintain or restore the hydrologic, geomorphic, and biological characteristics of special aquatic features (e.g. springs, seeps, and meadows).

The US Forest Service initiated field review and surveys on the West Calaveras Plantation Thinning project during the summer of 2011. This project requires roughly 1.5 additional years to complete NEPA analyses and comply with CEQA. Field surveys (Aquatic and Terrestrial Wildlife, Botany, Watershed, Cultural Resources, and Roads) would be conducted during the spring and summer of 2012 and 2013.

b) Workplan and Schedule Narrative

Field surveys for botany, wildlife, cultural resources, timber, fuels, hydrology, roads, and soils would begin in August 2012 (assuming grant authorization in June 2012). Due to survey protocols timing limitations, some surveys would be completed in the 2013. Project planning would begin in October 2012, with a proposed action available for public comment in June 2013. Public review and comment on the Environmental Assessment would occur in September 2013, with a signed Decision Notice by January 2014. A final report outlining project work, deliverables, and performance measures would be submitted in February 2014.

Project Deliverables	Timeline
Resource Field Surveys	Aug 2012
IDT meetings to develop proposed action	Oct-Nov 2012
Progress Report	Feb 2013
Resource Field Surveys	May 2013
Public Scoping	June 2013
Progress Report (including performance measures)	Aug 2013
Environmental Assessment Public Comment	Sept 2013
Decision Notice/FONSI	Jan 2014
Final Report (including performance measures)	Feb 2014

c) Restrictions, Technical/Environmental Documents and Agreements Narrative

There are no restrictions for this project. Field surveys would be consistent applicable Federal and State survey protocols. The project planning will not violate any Federal, State, or local laws or requirements imposed for the protection of the environment (i.e. Endangered Species Act, National Historic Preservation Act, Federal Clean Water Act, Executive Order 11988 for Floodplain Management, or the Clean Air Act).

d) West Calaveras Thin Project Organizational Capacity Narrative

The West Calaveras Thin NEPA / CEQA project is to be done by the USFS with involvement of ACCG members. The ACCG brings local knowledge and expertise to address triple bottom line issues. Project survey and planning is under the direction of the Stanislaus National Forest, Calaveras Ranger District. The mission of the Forest Service is to sustain the health, diversity and productivity of the Nation’s forests and grasslands to meet the needs of present and future generations. The Forest Service goal for Region 5 is to retain and reestablish ecological resilience of these lands to achieve sustainable management on our wildlands and forests and provide a broad range of ecosystem services. Ecologically healthy and resilient landscapes would have greater capacity to survive natural disturbances and large scale threats to

sustainability, especially under changing and uncertain future environmental conditions, such as those driven by climate change and increasing human use.

e) Cooperative and Community Support Narrative

The ACCG is a local collaborative that works to create healthy forests and watersheds, fire-safe communities, and sustainable local economies. It fosters partnerships among private, nonprofit, state, and federal entities with a common interest in the health and well-being of the landscape and communities in the Mokelumne and Calaveras watersheds. The group is advancing an All-Lands strategy to create a heightened degree of environmental stewardship, local jobs, greater local economic stability, healthy forests and communities. ACCG principles reflect the group's emphasis on its triple bottom line for balancing environmental, social and economic goals. In 2010, the ACCG received the Regional Forester's Honor Award for All-Lands Ecological Restoration, and its Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration "Cornerstone" proposal has been selected as the top regional priority. The ACCG has reviewed this proposal and supports its funding and implementation (See attached support letter).

f) Long-Term Management and Sustainability Narrative

Stanislaus National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan (SNFLRMP) was completed on October 28, 1991. All amendments to the SNFLRMP were compiled into the Stanislaus National Forest "Forest Plan Direction" in 2010. The Forest Plan Direction includes goals and objectives and standards and guidelines for fuel management activities that would enhance natural ecosystem processes while minimizing fire threats to life, property, and resources. The Forest Plan Direction also addresses the management of forests at risk to pathogens, to provide for insect and disease resistant and resilient forest communities, and provides guidance on watershed maintenance and improvements that would enhance stewardship of water and soil resources. The Forest Plan Direction includes forest wide standards and guidelines and wildlife and long-term management direction. The West Calaveras Plantation Thinning project will be designed to be consistent with the Forest Plan Direction.

g) Performance Measures Narrative

The West Calaveras Thin NEPA / CEQA project performance result measures include:

- At least 75 people reached (e.g. with info, input and involvement etc.)
- One collaboratively developed assessments
- 4 results and 90+ percent of planned results accomplished
- \$28,449 of value leveraged for SNC investment

6) Supplemental and Supporting Documents

a) Detailed Budget

Project Name: NFL NEPA West Calaveras Thinning Project

Applicant: USFS Stanislaus National Forest - Calaveras Ranger District

Appendix B3

SIERRA NEVADA CONSERVANCY PROPOSITION 84 - DETAILED BUDGET FORM

Project Name: NFL NEPA West Calaveras Thining Project

Applicant: USFS Stanislaus National Forest - Calaveras Ranger District

SECTION ONE DIRECT COSTS	Year One	Year Two	Year Three	Year Four	Year Five	Total
<i>Managing Supervisor</i>	\$406.00	\$496.00	\$328.00			\$1,230.00
<i>NEPA Project Manager</i>	\$1,544.00	\$2,668.00	\$468.00			\$4,680.00
<i>Archaeologist</i>	\$1,056.00	\$1,824.00	\$320.00			\$3,200.00
Hydrologist	\$1,252.00	\$2,279.00	\$264.00			\$3,795.00
Wildlife Biologist	\$1,015.00	\$1,732.00	\$328.00			\$3,075.00
WB Field Technicians	\$2,777.00	\$5,638.00	\$0.00			\$8,415.00
Aquatic Biologist	\$1,386.00	\$2,534.00	\$280.00			\$4,200.00
Aq Field Technicians	\$1,795.00	\$3,645.00	\$0.00			\$5,440.00
Botanist	\$1,030.00	\$1,778.00	\$312.00			\$3,120.00
Bot. Field Technicians	\$792.00	\$1,608.00	\$0.00			\$2,400.00
Traffic/Road Engineer	\$1,267.00	\$2,317.00	\$256.00			\$3,840.00
Forester	\$5,861.00	\$11,603.00	\$296.00			\$17,760.00
Environmental Planner	\$1,366.00	\$2,198.00	\$576.00			\$4,140.00
Soil Scientist	\$1,188.00	\$2,172.00	\$240.00			\$3,600.00
DIRECT COSTS SUBTOTAL:	\$22,735.00	\$42,492.00	\$3,668.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$68,895.00

SECTION TWO INDIRECT COSTS	Year One	Year Two	Year Three	Year Four	Year Five	Total
<i>USFS Project Vehicle / Transportation</i>	\$1,584.00	\$3,000.00	\$216.00			\$4,800.00
						\$0.00
INDIRECT COSTS SUBTOTAL:	\$1,584.00	\$3,000.00	\$216.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$4,800.00
PROJECT TOTAL:	\$24,319.00	\$45,492.00	\$3,884.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$73,695.00

SECTION THREE Administrative Costs (Costs may not to exceed 15% of total Project Cost) :						Total
<i>USFS project admin.</i>	\$1,024.00	\$0.00	\$256.00			\$1,280.00
						\$0.00
						\$0.00
ADMINISTRATIVE TOTAL:	\$1,024.00	\$0.00	\$256.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,280.00
SNC TOTAL GRANT REQUEST:	\$25,343.00	\$45,492.00	\$4,140.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$74,975.00

SECTION FOUR OTHER PROJECT CONTRIBUTIONS	Year One	Year Two	Year Three	Year Four	Year Five	Total
USFS Managing Supervisor	\$410.00	\$0.00				\$410.00
Hydrologist	\$165.00	\$0.00				\$165.00
Wildlife Biologist	\$1,845.00	\$0.00				\$1,845.00
WB Field Technicians	\$7,905.00	\$0.00				\$7,905.00
Botanist	\$1,560.00	\$0.00				\$1,560.00
Bot. Field Technicians	\$7,200.00	\$0.00				\$7,200.00
Environmental Planner	\$1,620.00	\$0.00				\$1,620.00
GIS Specialist	\$480.00	\$0.00				\$480.00

Technical Editor	\$864.00	\$0.00				\$864.00
USFS Project Vehicle / Transportation	\$6,100.00	\$0.00				\$6,100.00
Misc. expenses & consummables	\$300.00	\$0.00				\$300.00
Total Other Contributions:	\$28,449.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$28,449.00

NOTE: The categories listed on this form are examples and may or may not be an expense related to the project. Rows may be added or deleted on the form as needed. Applicants should contact the SNC if questions arise.

* Operating Costs should be allocated to the percentage that is applicable to the grant based on your cost allocation methodology and cannot exceed 15% of your total project costs.