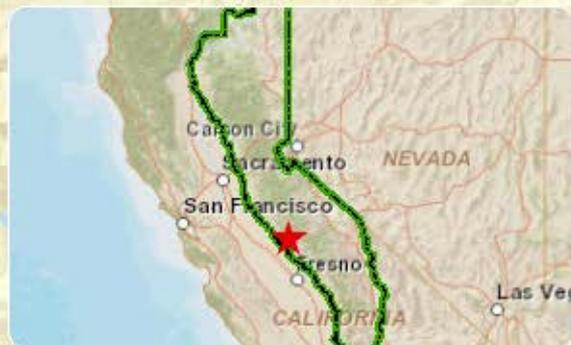


**811-Stockton Creek
Preserve Vegetation
Management Project
Mariposa County**



**STATE OF CALIFORNIA
SIERRA NEVADA CONSERVANCY**

**Sierra Nevada Conservancy Grant Program
Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control,
River and Coastal Protection Bond Act of 2006 (Proposition 84)**

Applicant: Sierra Foothill Conservancy

Project Title: Stockton Creek Preserve Vegetation Management

Subregion: South Central

County: Mariposa

SNC Funding: \$139,000

Total Project Cost: \$149,000

Application Number: 811

Final Score: 94

PROJECT SCOPE

The Stockton Creek Preserve surrounds and protects Stockton Creek Reservoir, which is the sole storage source of the community of Mariposa's drinking water. The Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC) funded the acquisition of the Stockton Creek Preserve (the Preserve) in 2010. This property is owned and managed by the Mariposa Public Utility District (MPUD), who work closely with the Sierra Foothill Conservancy (SFC) with the goal of protecting the water quality and quantity in the watershed. The 410-acre Preserve is directly adjacent to the town of Mariposa and also provides recreational opportunities on trails around the reservoir for the community.

Since the property was purchased in 2011, SFC and MPUD have leveraged more than \$400,000 in grant funding and in-kind services for fuels management, trail building, trail easement donation, and public access improvements.

The Stockton Creek Preserve Vegetation Management Project will work towards reducing the possibility of catastrophic wildfire effects on Mariposa's water supply through fuels reduction and restoring the native plant community on portions of the property, previously burned. With the funds from SNC, SFC & MPUD will:

- Implement Phase II of the treatment treating an additional 100-acres of the Preserve. The Preserve is adjacent to important infrastructure including Mariposa County High School and the MPUD water treatment facility. Proper vegetation management will create a fire break but also a mosaic of habitat types to increase biodiversity in the area. Mastication, trimming, hand removal, and other techniques will be utilized to reduce the fuel load and fire danger.

- Allow for re-vegetation of a portion of the Preserve, specifically an area that was impacted by a 2005 fire. SFC and MPUD will plant ponderosa pines and blue oaks in order to restore the arboreal vegetation that was destroyed in the fire. MPUD will manage and maintain these plantings into the future.
- Measure the effects of the fuels management work on water supply in order to build support for vegetation management in the community and throughout the region. SFC and MPUD will monitor the reservoir, as well as surrounding ground water percolation in the impacted area for two years and compare this to baseline data which currently exists and will be supplemented through this project. Sediment run-off, soil moisture, reservoir turbidity, and other factors will be analyzed. This will give SFC a pre and post-treatment view of the impacts of the fuel reduction project. The information collected will be compiled and analyzed in a report that will be used by MPUD to inform future management decisions.

Sierra Foothill Conservancy and Mariposa Public Utilities District are both contributing in-kind services in the amount of \$10,000 to support this project. The Stockton Creek Preserve is a high profile property in the Mariposa community, thus this project will showcase the public benefits of SNC, SFC, and MPUD's collaborative work.

PROJECT SCHEDULE

DETAILED PROJECT DELIVERABLES	TIMELINE
Begin water supply study for baseline info	December 2014
Install sign explaining project and funding	December 2014
Fuels reduction work	December 2014 - February 2015
Collaborate with FFA to collect and grow acorns	December 2014
Six month progress report	June 30, 2015
Continued planting, monitoring, and FFA collaboration, monthly water quality data collection, and preserve management	Throughout Grant Period
Six month progress report	December 31, 2015
Six month progress report	June 30, 2016
Acquire Ponderosa Pine seedlings and plants from RCD	October 2016
Final design of plantings	November 2016
Plant seedlings in determined areas after rain	December 2016
Six month progress report	December 31, 2016
Presentation and report on impact study results	December 2016
FINAL PAYMENT/FINAL PAYMENT REQUEST	February 28, 2017

PROJECT COSTS

PROJECT BUDGET CATEGORIES	TOTAL SNC FUNDING
Direct*	
Fuels reduction (Contractor)	\$80,000
Fuels reduction project management	\$4,000
Re-vegetation implementation, staff time, and management	\$10,500
Water supply impact study, materials, management, and report development	\$25,000
Indirect**	
Fuels reduction monitoring	\$1,000
Water supply impact report printing and materials	\$500
Signage and installation	\$500
Administrative***	
Grant administration	\$11,500
Overhead costs	\$6,000
GRAND TOTAL	\$139,000

* Direct: Direct costs are expenses necessary to acquire, construct, or to adapt property to a new or different use, or to improve property including land, buildings and equipment. The property/expense must have a useful life longer than one year.

** Indirect: Expenses involve ongoing operations, repair or maintenance costs, regardless of whether the repair or maintenance may last more than one year.

*** Administrative: Expenses associated with the administration of a project and may not exceed 15 percent of the total SNC grant request for direct and indirect costs.

PROJECT LETTERS SUPPORT/OPPOSITION

Support

- Mariposa Public Utility District
- Mariposa County Board of Supervisors
- Sierra Business Council
- Yosemite Area Audubon Society
- Mariposa County Chamber of Commerce
- Central Sierra partnership
- Ethos Youth Center

PROJECT PERFORMANCE MEASURES

There are four Performance Measures common to all grants. In addition, grantees are required to include between one and three project-specific measures. Performance Measures listed here represent those proposed by applicants and may be modified through further discussion with SNC staff.

- Acres of Land Restored
- Acre Feet per Annum of Water Supply Conserved or Enhanced
- Number of Jobs Created
- Number and Diversity of People Reached

NOTICE OF DETERMINATION

To: Office of Planning and Research
State Clearinghouse
P.O. Box 3044, 1400 Tenth Street, Room 212
Sacramento, CA 95812-3044

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

Subject: **FILING OF NOTICE OF DETERMINATION IN COMPLIANCE WITH SECTION 21108 OR 21152 OF THE PUBLIC RESOURCES CODE**

Project Title: Stockton Creek Preserve Vegetation Management Project (SNC 811)

State Clearinghouse No.: SCH # 2014081024

Project Location: The project is located on a total of 100 acres, within the 410-acre Stockton Creek Preserve, surrounding Stockton Creek Reservoir and owned by the Mariposa Public Utility District. The project is adjacent and east of State Route 140, near Trabucco Street and Slaughter House Road, approximately 0.5 miles northeast of the Town of Mariposa, in Mariposa County, California. Approximate Latitude/Longitude: 37.499325 / -119.961230.

County: Mariposa County

Project Description: The Sierra Foothill Conservancy is requesting \$139,000 in funding from the Sierra Nevada Conservancy's Proposition 84 Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Grant Program to reduce fuel loads, revegetate treated areas, monitor the reservoir, and to report the effects of fuel management on the water supply and quality on approximately 100 acres of the Stockton Creek Preserve, owned by the Mariposa Public Utility District (MPUD) in Mariposa County, California. The proposed project includes fuel reduction treatment activities such as shredding, mulching, and chipping brush and slash; thinning existing stands of ponderosa pine and blue oak; removing hazard trees; thinning and leaving small areas of chaparral; removing fuel ladders; and providing erosion control measures. After the fuel reduction treatments, revegetation activities would include re-planting ponderosa pines and blue oaks in areas that were previously burned or mismanaged. A three-year fuel reduction impact study would then be completed by monitoring each treated site every month to account for weather and precipitation changes in order to quantify local water cycle factors such as soil absorption, evaporation, and impacts to the Stockton Creek Reservoir. Water quality monitoring would include routine analysis for turbidity, pH, and temperature, which would be reviewed by MPUD to determine the effectiveness of erosion control measures and would be used to guide future management decisions.

As Lead Agency a Responsible Agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the Sierra Nevada Conservancy has approved the above described project on September 4, 2013, and has made the following determinations regarding the above described project:

1. The project will will not have a significant effect on the environment.
2. A Negative Declaration Mitigated Negative Declaration Environmental Impact Report (EIR) accompanied by an Initial Study (CEQA Guidelines Section 15177) was prepared for this project pursuant to the provisions of CEQA.
3. Mitigation measures were were not made a condition of project approval.
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 Mitigated Negative Declaration, with attached Initial Study, Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Plan, and record of project approval are available to the General Public at the following location:

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

Jim Branham

Executive Officer

(530) 823-4670
Phone #

TO BE COMPLETED BY OPR ONLY

Date Received For Filing and Posting at OPR:

**RESPONSIBLE AGENCY
ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION**

PROJECT INFORMATION

1. Project Title:
Stockton Creek Preserve Vegetation Management Project (SNC 811)
2. Responsible Agency Name and Address:
Sierra Nevada Conservancy
11521 Blocker Drive, Suite 205
Auburn, CA 95603
3. Contact Person and Phone Number:
Matthew Daley, Program Coordinator (530) 823-4698
4. Project Location:
The project is located on a total of 100 acres, within the 410-acre Stockton Creek Preserve, surrounding Stockton Creek Reservoir and owned by the Mariposa Public Utility District. The project is adjacent and east of State Route 140, near Trabucco Street and Slaughter House Road, approximately 0.5 miles northeast of the Town of Mariposa, in Mariposa County, California. Approximate Latitude/Longitude: 37.499325 / -119.961230.
5. Project Sponsor's Name and Address:
Sierra Foothill Conservancy
P.O. Box 529
Prather, CA 93651
6. General Plan Designation:
Residential and Agricultural Working Landscape, Public: Stockton Creek Reservoir
7. Zoning:
Agriculture Exclusive, Scenic Highway Overlay, and Open Watershed Overlay
8. Description of Project:
The Sierra Foothill Conservancy is requesting \$139,000 in funding from the Sierra Nevada Conservancy's Proposition 84 Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Grant Program to reduce fuel loads, revegetate treated areas, monitor the reservoir, and to report the effects of fuel management on the water supply and quality on approximately 100 acres of the Stockton Creek Preserve, owned by the Mariposa Public Utility District (MPUD) in Mariposa County, California. The proposed project includes: shredding, mulching, and chipping brush and slash; thinning existing stands of ponderosa pine and blue oak; removing hazard trees; thinning and leaving small areas of chaparral; removing fuel ladders; providing erosion control measures; re-planting ponderosa pines and blue oaks in areas that were previously burned or mismanaged; and monitoring the effects of fuel removal on water quality.

Fuel reduction treatment activities would include fine mastication at ground level, coarse mastication leaving broken vegetation and stubble, hand removal of vegetation,

and mechanical removal. Following the fuel treatments, ponderosa pine and blue oak seedlings would be planted in appropriate areas to encourage large trees rather than dense shrubs. Only areas that are 0 to 45 percent slope would be treated. Ultimately, the fuel reduction treatments would create a fire break and provide a mosaic of habitat types within the Stockton Creek Preserve.

After the fuel reduction treatments and revegetation, a three-year fuel reduction impact study would be completed. Each treated site would be monitored every month to account for weather and precipitation changes in order to quantify local water cycle factors such as soil absorption, evaporation, and impacts to the Stockton Creek Reservoir. Water quality monitoring would include routine analysis for turbidity, pH, and temperature, which would be reviewed by MPUD to determine the effectiveness of erosion control measures and would be used to guide future management decisions.

Healthy, mature, and/or scenic trees would be retained during proposed project activities. In addition, streambeds, riparian corridors, and/or steep slopes (i.e., more than 45 percent) would also be avoided within the project area. Best management practices would be implemented for these plantings as determined by the National Resource Conservation Service and the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) Forester, as well as other agencies with jurisdiction over the project site. There are no special-status species within or adjacent to the project area. Work would be done in late fall to avoid nesting season for birds. Cultural resources known to occur in the area are mainly within stream and riparian corridors that would be avoided. Even so, these sites would be flagged and avoided, with daily inspections to ensure the areas are avoided.

The proposed project would maintain the property in its natural state while reducing the potential for catastrophic wild land fire. The proposed project would reduce the risk of wildfires, encourage diverse habitat for species, conserve the natural value of the property, protect the public water source from impacts due to wildfire, and improve water quality for the public water system.

9. Surrounding Land Uses and Setting:

The project area is adjacent to the Mariposa Town Planning Study Area, which identifies Agriculture and Working Landscape Land Use, SR-20 (Scenic Resource 20 AC Min Lots), and SFR ½ (Single Family Res. ½ Acre Min Lots) immediately west of the project site. The remaining land is surrounded by Residential Land Uses per the Mariposa County General Plan. Stockton Creek flows through the project site in a north-south orientation, with Stockton Creek Reservoir within the project site.

10. Other public agencies whose approval is required:

California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE)

California Air Resources Board (CARB)

National Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)

Mariposa Public Utility District (MPUD)*

Mariposa County Air Pollution Control District (MCAPCD)

*Approved the Mitigated Negative Declaration (CEQA) and the project

PROJECT BACKGROUND

The Stockton Creek Preserve surrounds Stockton Creek Reservoir, which is the sole storage site for drinking water for the Town of Mariposa. The Mariposa Public Utility District (MPUD) provides public water, wastewater, and fire protection services to the Town of Mariposa. The District currently has 722 water and sewer service connections and serves a population of approximately 2,000. The primary water source for the public water supply is the Stockton Creek Reservoir. The Stockton Creek Preserve, acquired in 2010 by the MPUD, protects the watershed, the reservoir, and the natural resources on the property.

The MPUD and the Sierra Foothill Conservancy (SFC) targeted the Stockton Creek Preserve for conservation in order to provide for greater land management control of the watershed. The previous owner of the property implemented an herbicide treatment which resulted in the death of the majority of the live and blue oaks on the property. In 2004, a fire burned the dense chaparral and dead oak trees in the vicinity. This resulted in the re-growth of a homogenous chaparral environment with runoff producing more than double the amount of naturally occurring contaminants and sediment into the reservoir, and ultimately the town's water supply.

Phase I of the vegetation management in the Stockton Creek Preserve implemented fuel management on 150 acres adjacent to Stockton Creek Reservoir. Phase I was completed using funding through the Proposition 40 Grant monies available from CAL FIRE.

The proposed project, which is Phase II of the Stockton Creek Preserve Vegetation Management Project, would provide fuel reduction treatment to another 100 acres within the Stockton Creek Preserve, revegetation activities for re-planting ponderosa pines and blue oaks in areas that were previously burned or mismanaged, and monitoring and reporting the effects of fuel removal on water quality. Thus, the proposed project would reduce the risk of wildfires, encourage diverse habitat for species, conserve the natural value of the property, protect the public water source from impacts due to wildfire, and improve water quality for the public water system.

PREVIOUS ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTATION

Stockton Creek Preserve Vegetation Management Project Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration
Mariposa Public Utility District, *Stockton Creek Preserve Vegetation Management Project Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration*. SCH 2014081024. September 2014. (Attached hereto.)

Basic Features of the Project

The goal of the proposed project is to reduce fuels and provide revegetation in an area surrounding Mariposa's water supply, in order to reduce the risk of wildfires, encourage diverse habitat for species, conserve the natural value of the property, protect the public water source from impacts due to wildfire, and improve water quality for the public water system.

The Stockton Creek Preserve Vegetation Management Project Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) includes environmental impact analysis as related to the physical impacts of fuel reduction, revegetation, and monitoring activities. Fuel reduction treatment activities would include fine mastication at ground level, coarse mastication leaving broken vegetation and stubble, hand removal of vegetation, and mechanical removal. Following the fuel treatments, ponderosa pine and blue oak seedlings would be planted in appropriate areas to encourage large trees rather than dense shrubs. Only areas that are 0 to 45 percent slope would be treated.

Ultimately, the fuel reduction treatments would create a fire break and provide a mosaic of habitat types within the Stockton Creek Preserve.

After the fuel reduction treatments and revegetation, a three-year fuel reduction impact study would be completed. Each treated site would be monitored every month to account for weather and precipitation changes in order to quantify local water cycle factors such as soil absorption, evaporation, and impacts to the Stockton Creek Reservoir. Water quality monitoring would include routine analysis for turbidity, pH, and temperature, which would be reviewed by MPUD to determine the effectiveness of erosion control measures and would be used to guide future management decisions.

Permits that are anticipated for the proposed project include MCAPCD (Rule 202 [Visible Emissions], Rule 205 [Nuisance], Rule 207 [Particulate Matter]), and California Air Resources Board (Portable Equipment Registration), and Mariposa County Tree Removal Permit.

Impacts Identified Relevant to the Sierra Nevada Conservancy Grant Request

The action before the Sierra Nevada Conservancy is providing \$139,000 from the Sierra Nevada Conservancy's Proposition 84 Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Grant Program to fund activities that would reduce fuel loads, revegetate treated areas, monitor the reservoir, and to report the effects of fuel management on the water supply and quality on approximately 100 acres of the Stockton Creek Preserve, owned by the Mariposa Public Utility District (MPUD) in Mariposa County, California. The Stockton Creek Reservoir Vegetation Management Project IS/MND identifies potential resource impacts related to cultural resources, geology and soils, noise, and utilities and service systems. Specifically, the proposed project may result in a temporary increase in erosion due to equipment disturbance and minor soil compaction, temporary increases in noise levels during proposed project activities; temporary habitat disruption; and the potential to inadvertently disturb unknown cultural resources or human remains during ground-disturbing activities. Based on the IS/MND, the project would not cause any additional significant effects on the environment not previously examined in the Stockton Creek Preserve Vegetation Management Project IS/MND. The approved project includes adopted mitigation measures identified in the IS/MND, and described below, to lessen potential impacts cultural resources, geology and soils, noise, and utilities and service systems to less than significant levels.

ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED:

The environmental factors checked below would be potentially affected by this project, involving at least one impact that is a "Potentially Significant Impact.

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aesthetics | <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture Resources | <input type="checkbox"/> Air Quality |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Biological Resources | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cultural Resources | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Geology / Soils |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Greenhouse Gas Emissions | <input type="checkbox"/> Hazards / Hazardous Materials | <input type="checkbox"/> Hydrology / Water Quality |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Land Use / Planning | <input type="checkbox"/> Mineral Resources | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Noise |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Population / Housing | <input type="checkbox"/> Public Services | <input type="checkbox"/> Recreation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation / Traffic | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Utilities / Service Systems | <input type="checkbox"/> Mandatory Findings of Significance |

DETERMINATION (To be completed by the Responsible Agency)

On the basis of this evaluation:

The SNC Board determined that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, there will not be a significant effect in this case because mitigation revisions in the project have been adopted by Mariposa Public Utility District, and agreed to by the Sierra Foothill Conservancy. An **INITIAL STUDY/MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION** was prepared that adequately analyzed the action for which the Sierra Nevada Conservancy will provide grant funding, mitigation measures have been incorporated into the project, and the SNC Board has adopted findings pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Sections 15096(h) and 15091. The Mariposa Public Utility District, as the lead agency, also adopted a Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program that identifies the timing of mitigation measures and which parties will be responsible for implementing them; the SNC is not responsible for implementing any of these measures and is not proposing any additional mitigation measures.

Signature

Date

Jim Branham

Printed Name

Executive Officer

Printed Name

Title

Sierra Nevada Conservancy

Responsible Agency

**CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT
RESPONSIBLE AGENCY
STATEMENT OF FINDINGS**

Project Title: Stockton Creek Preserve Vegetation Management Project (SNC 811)

State Clearinghouse Number: SCH# 2014081024

Project Location: The project is located on a total of 100 acres, within the 410-acre Stockton Creek Preserve, surrounding Stockton Creek Reservoir and owned by the Mariposa Public Utility District. The project is adjacent and east of State Route 140, near Trabucco Street and Slaughter House Road, approximately 0.5 miles northeast of the Town of Mariposa, in Mariposa County, California. Approximate Latitude/Longitude: 37.499325 / -119.961230.

Description of Project: The Sierra Foothill Conservancy is requesting \$139,000 in funding from the Sierra Nevada Conservancy's Proposition 84 Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Grant Program to reduce fuel loads, revegetate treated areas, monitor the reservoir, and to report the effects of fuel management on the water supply and quality on approximately 100 acres of the Stockton Creek Preserve, owned by the Mariposa Public Utility District (MPUD) in Mariposa County, California. The proposed project includes fuel reduction treatment activities such as shredding, mulching, and chipping brush and slash; thinning existing stands of ponderosa pine and blue oak; removing hazard trees; thinning and leaving small areas of chaparral; removing fuel ladders; and providing erosion control measures. After the fuel reduction treatments, revegetation activities would include re-planting ponderosa pines and blue oaks in areas that were previously burned or mismanaged. A three-year fuel reduction impact study would then be completed by monitoring each treated site every month to account for weather and precipitation changes in order to quantify local water cycle factors such as soil absorption, evaporation, and impacts to the Stockton Creek Reservoir. Water quality monitoring would include routine analysis for turbidity, pH, and temperature, which would be reviewed by MPUD to determine the effectiveness of erosion control measures and would be used to guide future management decisions.

Findings: Pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21002.1(d) and CEQA Guidelines Section 15096(g) and (h), the Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC), as a Responsible Agency, has reviewed and considered the following documents prepared by the Lead Agency (CEQA):

Mariposa Public Utility District, *Stockton Creek Preserve Vegetation Management Project Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration*. SCH 2014081024. September 2014.

Using its independent judgment, the SNC makes the following finding:

The above listed document: a) adequately addresses the potential impacts of the project, and b) is adequate for use by the Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC) for assessing the potential impacts of funding the grant request now before the SNC for approval.

The Sierra Nevada Conservancy hereby makes the following findings regarding the significant effects of the proposed project, pursuant to Public Resources Code 21081 and Section 15091 of the State CEQA Guidelines.

1. CULTURAL RESOURCES

During the development of a previous project, the MPUD contracted with a cultural resources specialist for an investigation to determine the existence of potential and actual cultural resources sites. Known cultural resources sites were identified in the vicinity of the project site; however, all were within stream corridors. The proposed project activities would be outside the stream and riparian corridors.

Impacts are considered potentially significant. The IS/MND for the Stockton Creek Preserve Vegetation Management Project covers cultural resources impacts for the proposed project and provides mitigation measures.

Finding: Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that mitigate or avoid significant effects on the environment.

Facts in Support of the Finding: The Sierra Nevada Conservancy concurs with the lead agency that the following mitigation measures will reduce the project's environmental effects to a less-than-significant level.

Mitigation Measures:

MM-N.1 (Sierra Foothill Conservation and Mariposa Public Utility District responsible for this mitigation measure) – The Mariposa Public Utility District has access to all cultural resources reports and confidential appendices. Reports will be reviewed prior to start of construction to identify areas with potential to contain cultural resources. Avoidance activities for the project include, but are not limited to:

- Sites will be flagged prior to the start of project activities.
- Flagged sites will be inspected daily throughout the ground disturbing activities.
- Ground disturbing activities will avoid sensitive areas such as stream bed, riparian corridors, and seasonal stream beds and channels.

2. Geology and Soils

The proposed project would reduce fuel loads and revegetate treated areas, ultimately protecting the water quality of Stockton Creek and Stockton Creek Reservoir from erosion and runoff contaminants. The proposed project would revegetate the area with native plants (ponderosa pine and blue oak). Stockton Creek Reservoir, the primary Mariposa water supply source, is within the MPUD-owned parcel, immediately southwest of the project site and fuel reduction and management activities. The area is forest land and urban interface.

Proposed project activities would include fine mastication at ground level, coarse mastication leaving broken vegetation and stubble, hand removal of vegetation, and mechanical removal. These activities would involve shredding, mulching, and chipping brush and slash; thinning existing stands of ponderosa pine and blue oak; removing hazard trees; and thinning and leaving small areas of chaparral; removing fuel ladders. Ponderosa pine and blue oak seedlings would be planted in appropriate areas to encourage large trees rather than dense shrubs. Only areas that are 0 to 45 percent slope would be treated.

The proposed project activities, specifically the heavy brush mastication that requires heavier equipment, could result in minor soil compaction. In addition the proposed project could

temporarily increase erosion due to storm water runoff over newly treated areas with the Stockton Creek watershed; however, in the long term, re-vegetation will stabilize the soils and ultimately reduce soil erosion potential.

The proposed project would not result in fault rupture or seismic ground shaking or failure including liquefaction, landslides or mudflows, or change in topography or ground surface relief features. The Melones fault zone runs approximately one mile west of the project site. There has been no recent geologic movement along the Melones Fault Zone. The fault zone is rated as “low to moderate” seismicity. There are no known unique geologic or physical features on the site. The proposed project would not destroy, cover, or modify any unique geologic or physical features. The proposed project would not result in any substantial increase in wind or water erosion of soil, either on or off site.

Impacts are considered potentially significant. The IS/MND for the Stockton Creek Preserve Vegetation Management Project covers geology and soil impacts for the proposed project and provides mitigation measures. Those mitigation measures are listed below.

Finding: Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that mitigate or avoid significant effects on the environment.

Facts in Support of the Finding: The Sierra Nevada Conservancy concurs with the lead agency that the following mitigation measures will reduce the project’s environmental effects to a less-than-significant level.

Mitigation Measures:

- MM-C.1** (Sierra Foothill Conservation and Mariposa Public Utility District responsible for this mitigation measure) – Compacted areas will be evaluated and ripped to turn soil and distribute existing top soil if necessary.
- MM-C.2** (Sierra Foothill Conservation and Mariposa Public Utility District responsible for this mitigation measure) –Treated areas will be inspected. Erosion control measures including distribution of masticated vegetation, water bars, and installation of sediment traps will be implemented as necessary. Steep slopes (greater than 45 percent) and stream channels will be avoided.
- MM-C.3** (Sierra Foothill Conservation and Mariposa Public Utility District responsible for this mitigation measure) –Inspections will be completed immediately after completion of the fuel reduction activities and immediately after the first significant rain in the watershed to ensure erosion control measures are functioning properly.

3. Noise

The proposed project is located adjacent and east of SR-140, near Trabucco Street and Slaughter House Road, approximately 0.5 miles northeast of the Town of Mariposa. When heavy equipment is active on the project site, there is the potential to increase noise levels in an area adjacent to the project site. However, there are residential or commercial land uses adjacent to the Stockton Creek Preserve.

Impacts are considered potentially significant. The IS/MND for the Stockton Creek Preserve Vegetation Management Project covers noise impacts for the proposed project and provides mitigation measures. Those mitigation measures are listed below.

Finding: Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that mitigate or avoid significant effects on the environment.

Facts in Support of the Finding: The Sierra Nevada Conservancy concurs with the lead agency that the following mitigation measures will reduce the project's environmental effects to a less-than-significant level.

Mitigation Measures:

MM-J.1 (Sierra Foothill Conservation and Mariposa Public Utility District responsible for this mitigation measure) – The project plans and specifications will specify project activity time periods, which shall include, but are not limited to:

- Heavy equipment activities occurring outdoors will not commence prior to 6:30 AM, Monday through Friday, and 8:00 AM on Saturdays.
- All outdoor project activities shall cease by sunset Monday through Sunday.
- No use of heavy equipment shall be permitted on Sundays.

MM-J.2 (Sierra Foothill Conservation and Mariposa Public Utility District responsible for this mitigation measure) – Daily inspections shall occur when project activities are in progress.

4. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

The proposed project would reduce fuel loads and revegetate treated areas, ultimately protecting the water quality of Stockton Creek and Stockton Creek Reservoir from erosion and runoff contaminants. The proposed project would revegetate the area with native plants (ponderosa pine and blue oak). Stockton Creek Reservoir, the primary Mariposa water supply source, is within the MPUD-owned parcel, immediately southwest of the project site and fuel reduction and management activities. There are underground communication utilities (wires and fiber optic lines) adjacent and within Slaughterhouse Road and adjacent to State Route (SR) -140.

Proposed project activities would include fine mastication at ground level, coarse mastication leaving broken vegetation and stubble, hand removal of vegetation, and mechanical removal. These activities would involve shredding, mulching, and chipping brush and slash; thinning existing stands of ponderosa pine and blue oak; removing hazard trees; and thinning and leaving small areas of chaparral; removing fuel ladders. Ponderosa pine and blue oak seedlings would be planted in appropriate areas to encourage large trees rather than dense shrubs. Only areas that are 0 to 45 percent slope would be treated.

To ensure that ground disturbing activities do not disrupt underground utilities, the project proponent would notify the Underground Service Alert prior to commencement of vegetation management activities. In addition the proposed project could temporarily increase erosion due to storm water runoff over newly treated areas with the Stockton Creek watershed; however, in the long term, re-vegetation will stabilize the soils and ultimately reduce soil erosion potential.

Impacts are considered potentially significant. The IS/MND for the Stockton Creek Preserve Vegetation Management Project covers utilities and service systems impacts for the proposed project and provides mitigation measures. Those mitigation measures are listed below.

Finding: Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that mitigate or avoid significant effects on the environment.

Facts in Support of the Finding: The Sierra Nevada Conservancy concurs with the lead agency that the following mitigation measures will reduce the project's environmental effects to a less-than-significant level.

Mitigation Measures:

Implement Mitigation Measure MM-C.1 through MM-C.3

MM-L.1 (Sierra Foothill Conservation and Mariposa Public Utility District responsible for this mitigation measure) – The Mariposa Public Utility District, or project contractor, will notify Underground Service Alter prior to starting work to mark utility lines in the area.

MM-L.2 (Sierra Foothill Conservation and Mariposa Public Utility District responsible for this mitigation measure) – The Mariposa Public Utility District, or project contractor, will conduct daily inspections during project activities to ensure no disturbance of underground utilities has occurred and that all erosion control measures are being implemented.

Certification:

I hereby certify that the statements furnished above present the data and information used to support the findings made herein pursuant to California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Section 15091 or 15096(h), and the facts, statements, and information presented herein, are true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Signature _____

Date _____

Name Jim Branham

Title Executive Officer

INITIAL STUDY

1. **Project Title:**
Stockton Creek Preserve Vegetation Management
2. **Lead Agency (Name and Address)**
Mariposa Public Utility District
P.O. Box 494
Mariposa, California 95338
3. **Other Agencies Whose Approval is Required (e.g. permits):**
Mariposa County Air Pollution Control District
California Dept. of Forest and Fire Protection (Cal Fire)
4. **Initial Study Prepared by (Name, Title, and Phone Number):**
Mark L. Rowney
General Manager
(209) 966-2515
5. **Project Sponsor (Name, Address, and Phone Number):**
Mariposa Public Utility District
P.O. Box 494
Mariposa, CA 95338
(209) 966-2515
6. **Project Location:**
Land area adjacent and to the North and East of the existing Stockton Creek Reservoir. Crossroads are State Route 140 and Slaughter House Road. Longitude: 119.96121°W and Latitude 37.507060°N
APN#s 012-011-001, 012-150-054, 012-150-002, 012-150-034
7. **General Plan Designation:**
Residential and Agricultural Working Landscape, Public: Stockton Creek Reservoir
8. **Zoning:**
Agriculture Exclusive, Scenic Highway Overlay, and Open Watershed Overlay
9. **Description of Project:**
The MPUD was established in 1942 under the “Public Utilities Act of 1921” as contained in sections 15501 through 18055 of the California Public Utilities Code. The Mariposa Public Utility District (MPUD) provides public water, wastewater and fire protection services to the town of Mariposa. The District currently has 722 water and sewer service connections and serves a population of approximately 2,000. The primary water source for the public waters supply is the Stockton Creek Reservoir. The Stockton Creek Preserve, acquired in 2010 using funds provided by the Sierra Nevada Conservancy, protects the watershed, the reservoir, and the natural resources of the area.

The proposed project is intended to improve the Preserve, decrease fire risk, encourage diverse habitat for species, and conserve the inherent conservation values of the property. MPUD will work with Sierra Foothill Conservancy, a regional 501(c)3, and Sierra Nevada Conservancy, a state agency, to implement the project. The project includes; clearing around and protecting existing stands of

Ponderosa Pines and Blue Oaks, removing hazard trees, thinning chaparral areas, masticating, reducing ladder fuels and risk of potential crown fires, creating a mosaic habitat to encourage wildlife, and reduce potential water pollution from erosion. Healthy, mature, and/or scenic trees will remain unaffected.

MPUD will utilize the following methods of vegetation removal: fine mastication at ground level, coarse mastication leaving broken vegetation and stubble, hand removal of vegetation, and mechanical removal. We will remove fuels from approximately 100 acres of the Preserve, though vehicles and machinery may nominally impact an additional 50 acres. Total affected area is approximately 150 acres of land adjacent to the Stockton Creek Reservoir.

The intent of this project is to maintain the property in its natural state while reducing the potential for catastrophic wild land fire. Erosion and sediment control and public water supply protection measures will be consistent with “Erosion & Sediment Control Guidelines for Developing of the Sierras” and “The Stockton Creek Watershed Sanitary Survey 2010”. Work will be restricted to not encroach in streambeds, riparian corridors, or steep slopes within the project areas.

After the vegetation management, we will plant seedling ponderosa pines and blue oaks in appropriate areas to encourage large trees rather than dense shrubs. We will use the best management practices for these plantings as determined by the National Resource Conservation Service. We also will monitor water quality and quantity in the affected area using noninvasive study methods. The data collection will likely be conducted by volunteers.

Other benefits include:

- Improved water quality for the Mariposa community public water system
- Provide access for watershed management
- Remove fuel ladders to reduce the risk of crown fires
- Public education of fuel load reduction alternatives for private land owners and community members.
- Better understanding of fuel reduction projects on water quality and quantity.
- Improved habitat diversity

10. Description of Environmental Setting:

The Stockton Creek Preserve contains moderate to steep hills with heavy natural vegetation including chaparral, toyon, manzanita, foothill pine, live oak, ponderosa pine, and blue oak.

11. Evaluation of Environmental Impacts:

A. Land Use and Planning: Would the proposal...

	Potentially Significant Impact	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
1. Conflict with general plan designation or zoning?				X
2. Conflict with applicable environmental plans or policies adopted By agencies with jurisdiction over the project?				X
3. Be incompatible or substantially alter the existing and planned land uses in the vicinity?				X
4. Affect agricultural resources or operations (e.g. impacts to soils or farmlands, or impacts from incompatible land uses)?				X
5. Disrupt or divide the physical arrangement of an established community?				X

Discussion:

1), 2), and 3) No impact. The project is located within Mariposa County. Land use is designated in the Mariposa County General Plan. The land use designation for the project site is Agricultural Exclusive, and is also within a designated Open Watershed Overlay with additional restrictions. The proposed project activities are consistent with current land use designations.

The project will not be incompatible with or substantially alter the existing and planned land uses in the vicinity. The project does not result in a change in the existing land use on-site. The project will not change land uses in the vicinity or divide the physical arrangement of an established community.

4., and 5. No impact. The project will have no effect on agricultural resources or operations. We believe the project will result in improved water quality in Stockton Creek and the Stockton Creek Reservoir.

Mitigation Measures: N/A

Mitigation Monitoring: N/A

B. Population and Housing: would the proposal...

	Potentially Significant Impact	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
1. Induce substantial growth in an area either directly or indirectly (e.g. through projects in an undeveloped area or extension of major infrastructure)?				X
2. Displace existing housing, especially affordable housing?				X
3. Alter the location, distribution, density, or growth rate of the human population of an area?				X

Discussion:

No Impact. The project will not induce any growth in the watershed area. The project will not displace existing housing, including affordable, nor alter the location, distribution, density, or growth rate of human population areas. The project will enhance the viewshed of nearby developed areas.

Mitigation Measures: N/A

Mitigation Monitoring: N/A

C. Earth/Geologic: Would the proposal result in or expose people to potential impacts involving:

	Potentially Significant Impact	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
1. Fault or seismic ground shaking or failure including liquefaction?				X
2. Landslides or mud flows?				X
3. Change in topography or ground surface relief features?				X
4. Disruptions, displacements, compaction, or over covering of the soil?		X		
5. The destruction, covering or modification of any unique geologic or physical features?				X

6. A substantial increase in wind or water erosion of soils, either on or off the site?		X	
7. Unstable earth conditions, subsidence of land, or changes in geologic substructures?			X
8. Changes in deposition or erosion of soil, or changes in siltation, deposition, or erosion which may modify the channel of a river or stream?		X	

Discussion:

1), 2), 3), 5), 7) No Impact. The project will not result in fault rupture or seismic ground shaking or failure including liquefaction, landslides or mudflows, or change in topography or ground surface relief features. The Melones fault zone runs approximately one mile west of the project site. There has been no recent geologic movement along the Melones Fault Zone. The fault zone is rate as “low to moderate” seismicity. There are no known unique geologic or physical features on the site. The project will not destroy, cover, or modify any unique geologic or physical features. The project will not result in any substantial increase in wind or water erosion of soil, either on or off site.

4) Potentially significant impact. The project may include the use of heavy brush mastication and excavation type equipment. This type of equipment use ay result in some minor compaction of areas treated.

6), 8) Potentially significant impact. This project has the potential to increase erosion due to storm water runoff over newly treated areas within the Stockton Creek Watershed in the short term. However, in the long term, our plantings will better stabilize the soil and will reduce soil erosion.

Mitigation Measures: 4) Compacted areas will be evaluated and ripped to turn soil and distribute existing top soil if necessary.

6), 8) Treated areas will be inspected. Erosion control measures including distribution of masticated vegetation, water bars, and installation of sediment traps will be implemented as necessary. It is expected, however, that the areas where the mastication process is implemented ill not require follow-up erosion control measures. In addition, especially steep slopes that are subject to more soil erosion will be avoided. Stream channels will also be avoided.

Mitigation Monitoring: Inspection immediately after fuel reduction completion and after first significant rain in the watershed.

D. **Water:** Would the proposal result in...

	Potentially Significant Impact	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
1. Changes in absorption rates, drainage patterns, or the rate and amount of surface runoff?			X	
2. Alterations to the course or flow of flood waters?				X
3. Exposure of people or property to water related hazards such as flooding?				X
4. Discharge into surface waters or other alteration of surface water quality (e.g. temperature, dissolved oxygen turbidity)?			X	
5. Changes in the amount of surface water in any water body?				X
6. Changes in the quantity of ground waters, either through direct additions or withdrawals, or through interception of an aquifer by cuts or excavations or through substantial loss of ground				X

water recharge capability?					
7. Alteration of the direction or rate of flow of ground waters?					X
8. Impacts to groundwater quality?					X
9. Substantial reduction in the amount of ground water otherwise available for public water supplies?					X

Discussion:

1), 4) Less than Significant Impact. The vegetation management project may result in changes to absorption rates and amount of surface water runoff in treated areas. It is expected the project will result in a more acceptable rate of absorption and runoff than current conditions.

Inspections of the treated area will take place before and after first storm events. The Stockton Creek Reservoir adjacent to the proposed treatment area is the primary water supply for the town of Mariposa. Routine water quality analysis including turbidity, pH, and temperature are part of the source water monitoring. These tests, along with other site-specific field inspection, will indicate if additional erosion control measures are necessary.

2), 3), 5), 6), 7), 8), 9) No impact. The project will not alter the course or flow of flood waters, expose people or property to water related hazards, discharge to surface water or alter surface water quality, change quality, quantity, rate of flow, or recharge capability of ground water, reduce the amount of ground water otherwise available for public water supplies.

Mitigation Measures: NA

Mitigation Monitoring: NA

E. **Air Quality:** Would the proposal result in...

	Potentially Significant Impact	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
1. Substantial air emissions or deterioration of ambient air quality?			X	
2. Alteration of air movement, moisture, or temperature, or any change in climate, either locally or regionally?				X
3. The creation of objectionable odors?				X

Discussion:

1) Less than Significant Impact. Some of the methods used to dispose of vegetation removed may include on-site burning that could potentially impact air quality. The potential impacts to air quality are only short term. The motor exhaust of excavation-type equipment used on the project may emit particles and burned fuel byproducts. Burning will be restricted to burn days identified by the Mariposa County Dept. of Health. Burning permits from CalFire will be required for any open burning.

2) , 3) No Impact. The project will not alter the air movement, moisture or temperature in climate locally or regionally. Brush piles to be burned will be allowed to dry to minimize smoke and impacts to air quality and odor.

Mitigation Measures: NA

Mitigation Monitoring: NA

F. **Transportation/Circulation:** Would the proposal result in...

	Potentially Significant Impact	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
1. Generation of substantial additional vehicular movement?				X
2. Traffic hazards to motor vehicles, bicyclists, or pedestrians?				X
3. Inadequate emergency access or access to nearby uses?				X
4. Insufficient parking capacity on-side or off-site?				X
5. Alterations to present patterns of circulation or movement of people and/or good?				X
6. Alterations of air traffic?				X

Discussion:

1)-6). No Impact. The project does not include any work on roadways. There will be some project activities near newly opened hiking and biking trails. These trails are owned and administered by MPUD. Portion of trails that may be affected will be closed for a short term if project activities are determined to present a hazard to the public. The project will not generate additional vehicular movement, traffic hazards to vehicles, bicyclists, or pedestrians. The project will not result in inadequate emergency access or insufficient parking. The project will not alter present patters of circulation or movement of people or alter air traffic.

Mitigation Measures: NA

Mitigation Monitoring: NA

G. **Biological Resources:** Would the proposal result in impacts to...

	Potentially Significant Impact	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
1. Endangered, threatened, or rare species or their habitats (including but not limited to plants, fish insects, animals, and birds)?				X
2. Locally designated species (e.g. heritage trees) or natural communities (e.g. oak forest, coastal habitat, etc.)?				X
3. Wetland habitat (e.g. marsh, riparian, and vernal pool)?				X
4. Wildlife dispersal or migration corridors?				X

Discussion: 1)-4). No Impact. Project activities are not planned within stream beds or riparian corridors. Fuel modification is limited to the removal of known plants no listed on the CA DFW Natural Diversity Database and areas of special biological importance map. There are no unique, rare, or endangered species in or around the project site. Work will be done in late fall to avoid nesting season for birds. The project site and adjacent areas do not contain wetlands.

Mitigation Measures: NA

Mitigation Monitoring: NA

H. **Energy and Mineral Resources:** Would the proposal...

1. Conflict with adopted energy conservation plans?
2. Use non-renewable resources in a wasteful and inefficient manner?
3. Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of future value to the region residents of the State?

Potentially Significant Impact	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
			X
			X
			X

Discussion: 1)-3) No Impact. The project will have no impact on energy and mineral resources.

Mitigation Measures: NA

Mitigation Monitoring: NA

I. **Hazards:** Would the proposal involve...

1. A risk of accidental explosion ore release of hazardous substances (including, but not limited to: oil, pesticides, chemicals or radiation)?
2. Possible interference with an emergency response plan ore emergency evacuation plan?
3. The creation of any health hazard or potential health hazards?
4. Increased fire hazard in areas with flammable brush, grass, or trees?

Potentially Significant Impact	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
			X
			X
			X
			X

Discussion: 1)-3) No Impact. The project will not present risk of accidental explosion or release of hazardous substances nor interfere with emergency response or evacuation plans, nor create any health hazards.

4) The project will result in; reduced potential for catastrophic wild land fire, fuel breaks contiguous with State Highway 140 and Slaughterhouse Road, AND future access for maintenance of fuel breaks.

Mitigation Measures: NA

Mitigation Monitoring: NA

J. **Noise:** Would the proposal result in ...

1. Increases in existing noise levels?
2. Exposure of people to severe noise levels?

Potentially Significant Impact	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
		X	
		X	

Discussion: 1), 2) Less than significant impact in the short term. When heavy equipment is active on the project, there may be an increase in the noise levels in area adjacent to the project site. However, there are no residential or commercial areas adjacent to project site.

Mitigation Measures: The description of project activities will specify time periods when work will be permitted. Heavy equipment activities occurring outdoors shall not commence prior to the hours of 6:30 AM, Monday through Friday, and 8:00AM on Saturdays. All project activities outdoors shall cease by sunset Monday through Saturday. NO out heavy equipment use shall be permitted on Sundays.

Mitigation Monitoring: Daily inspections when work is in progress.

K. Public Services: Would the proposal have an effect upon, or result in a need for new or altered government services in any of the following areas...

	Potentially Significant Impact	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
1. Fire protection?				X
2. Police protection?				X
3. Schools?				X
4. Maintenance of public facilities, including roads?				X
5. Other governmental services?				X

Discussion:

No Impact. This project will result in; Reduced potential for catastrophic wild land fire, provide fuel breaks contiguous with State Highway and Slaughterhouse Road, Provide future access for maintenance of fuel breaks. It will not increase the need for police protection, education, maintenance, or other governmental services

Mitigation Measures: NA

Mitigation Monitoring: NA

L. Utilities and Service Systems: Would the proposal result in a need for new systems or supplies, or substantial alterations to the following utilities...

	Potentially Significant Impact	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
1. Power or natural gas?				X
2. Communications systems?		X		
3. Local or regional water treatment or distribution facilities?		X		
4. Sewer or septic tanks?				X
5. Storm water drainage?				X
6. Solid waste disposal?				X
7. Local or regional water supplies?				X

Discussion: 1), 4), 5), 6), 7) No Impact.

2) Potentially significant impact. There are underground communication wires and fiber optic lines adjacent and within Slaughterhouse Road and adjacent to State Highway 140 which could be impacted by heavy equipment. We will notify Underground Service Alert before

starting work to mark utility line in the area.

3) Potentially significant impact. Stockton Creek Reservoir is located within the project area and is the primary water supply for the town of Mariposa. Soil disturbance and the removal of heavy fuels may significantly affect water urn off quality in the short term. However, run off water quality is expected to improve in the long term with these fuel management project.

Mitigation Measures: 1) 4)-7) NA

2) Either Mariposa PUD or project contractors will notify Underground Service Alert before starting work to mark utility lines in the area.

3) With the erosion control measures described in checklist section “C”, the impacts of soil disturbance is expected to be mitigated to less than significant.

Mitigation Monitoring: 2) and 3) - Daily inspections while work is in progress.

M. **Aesthetics:** Would the proposal...

1. Affect a scenic vista or scenic highway?
2. Have a demonstrable negative aesthetic effect?
3. Create light or glare?

Potentially Significant Impact	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
			X
			X
			X

Discussion: This project will not impact California State Highway 140, which is a Scenic highway. In the short term, brush removal activities may be visible from the highway. In the long term, the project will increase and enhance the view from the highway.

Mitigation Measures: NA

Mitigation Monitoring: NA

N. **Cultural Resources:** Would the proposal ...

1. Disturb paleontological or archaeological resources?
2. Affect historical resources?
3. Have the potential to cause a physical change which would affect unique ethnic cultural values?
4. Restrict existing religious or sacred uses within the potential impact area?

Potentially Significant Impact	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
	X		
			X
			X
			X

Discussion: Potential significant impact. During the development of a previous project, MPUD contracted for an investigation of a nearby area to determine the existence of potential and actual cultural resources sites. The sites investigated are documented in the “Cultural Resources Investigations of the Saxon Creek Water Project” and associated appendices. All of the documented sites are in stream corridors. Additionally, in 2000-2001, CalFire mechanically removed fire fuel from the same area as the proposed project.

2), 3), 4) No Impact.

Mitigation Measures: 1) Mariposa PUD has access to the above mentioned investigation report as well as the confidential appendix. All sites will be flagged and inspected.

Additionally, the work will avoid sensitive areas, especially seasonal stream beds and channels (as outlined in Section G).

2), 3), 4) NA

Mitigation Monitoring: 1) Daily inspection during days when work takes place. Continued inspection of identified sites and sensitive areas.

2), 3), 4) NA

O. Recreation: Would the proposal ...

1. Increase the demand for neighborhood or regional parks or other recreational facilities?
2. Affect existing recreational opportunities?

Potentially Significant Impact	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
			X
			X

Discussion: The project is not located near any other regional or state parks. Sections of the trails on the Stockton Creek Preserve may be temporarily closed while work is in progress.

Mitigation Measures: NA

Mitigation Monitoring: NA

P. Greenhouse gas emissions: Would the project...

1. Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?
2. Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?

Potentially Significant Impact	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
		X	
			X

Discussion:

This estimate includes the assumption that one or two pieces of equipment may be used on the project. Transportation of the equipment to the site is not included because the District will not know the transport distance until a contractor is selected. It is estimated that one excavator is capable of treating 2.7 acres per day.

Total contract = 100 acres

Production rate and contract time

5.4 acres per day, 2 pieces of heavy equipment working concurrently = 18 work days.

2.7 acres per day, 1 piece of heavy equipment working = 37 work days.

Greenhouse Gas Emission Estimates for Diesel Fuel

	acres/day	Days required	5 gals/hr. at 8 hrs/day	Greenhouse Gas emissions *per day (metric tons)	Total CO ₂ from project (metric tons)
1 piece of heavy equipment	2.7	37	40 gal/day	.4	14.8
2 pieces of heavy equipment	5.4	18	80 gal/day	.8	14.8

*CO₂ in metric tons = gallons of fuel x 10 kg CO₂/gal ÷ 453.6 grams/lb ÷ 2204.6 lbs/metric ton

The estimated total greenhouse gas emissions for the project are 14.8 metric tons CO₂. The District is unaware of any established threshold for GHG emissions in the area of the Stockton Creek watershed. Mariposa County has not yet established project baselines for GHG in the area. However in other Cal Fire projects, it is suggested a GHG significant threshold of 900 metric tons as a single event for a small scale project would be appropriate. Therefore the level of GHG emission for the Stockton Creek Watershed project is a less than significant environmental impact.

Additionally, one of the goals of the project is to reduce the potential for catastrophic wild land fire. A fire in this area would create significant greenhouse gas emissions. Therefore, the work will reduce the potential for large GHG emissions.

Mitigation Measures: N/A

Mitigation Monitoring: N/A

Q. Hazards and hazardous materials: Would the project...

	Potentially Significant Impact	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
1. Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use or disposal of hazardous materials?				X
2. Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?				X
3. Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?				X
4. Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?				X
5. For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?				X
6. For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing working in the project area?				X
7. Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?				X
8. Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wild land fires, including where wild lands are adjacent to urbanized areas or where residences are intermixed with wild lands.				X

Discussion: No Impact. The project proposed does not include the use of hazardous materials. The project is not located within one-quarter mile of a school or in the vicinity of an airport. The result of the project is anticipated to reduce the potential for catastrophic fire and improve water quality.

Mitigation Measures: N/A

Mitigation Monitoring: N/A

12. **Mandatory Findings of Significance:**

	Potentially Significant Impact	Potentially Significant Unless Mitigated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
A. Potential to Degrade: Does the project have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?				X
B. Short-term: Does the project have the potential to achieve short-term, to the disadvantage of long-term, environmental goals? (A short-term impact on the environment is one which occurs in a relatively brief, definitive period of time. Long-term impacts will endure well into the future.)				X
C. Cumulative: Does the project have impacts which are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? (A project may impact on two or more separate resources where the impact on each resource is relatively small, but where the effect on the total of those impacts on the environment is significant.)				X
D. Substantial Adverse: Does the project have environmental effects which will cause adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?				X

13. **Determination:** On the basis of this initial study:

It is found that the proposed project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment, and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION has been prepared and adopted.

It is found that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, there will not be a significant effect in this case because the mitigation measures described in this initial study have been added to the project. A DRAFT NEGATIVE DECLARATION has been prepared and proposed for adoption by the Mariposa Public Utility District Board of Directors.

It is found that the proposed project MAY have a significant effect on the environment, and an ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required.

Notice of Determination

Appendix D

To:
[] Office of Planning and Research
U.S. Mail: Street Address:
P.O. Box 3044 1400 Tenth St., Rm 113
Sacramento, CA 95812-3044 Sacramento, CA 95814

[] County Clerk
County of: Mariposa
Address: P.O. Box 247
Mariposa, CA 95338

From:
Public Agency: Mariposa Public Utility District
Address: P.O. Box 494
Mariposa, CA 95338
Contact: Mark L. Rowney
Phone: 209-966-2515

Lead Agency (if different from above):

Address:

Contact:

Phone:

FILED

SEP 26 2014

KEITH M. WILLIAMS
MARIPOSA COUNTY CLERK

[Signature]

KAREN M. HERMAN

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

State Clearinghouse Number (if submitted to State Clearinghouse): 2014081024

Project Title: Stockton Creek Vegetation Management Project (2014)

Project Applicant: Mariposa Public Utility District

Project Location (include county): Slaughterhouse Road, Mariposa County

Project Description:

The Mariposa Public Utility District is proposing a vegetation management project in portions of the Stockton Creek Watershed. The proposed project includes; clear and protect existing stands of Ponderosa Pine and Blue Oak, remove hazard trees, thin and leave small areas of Toyon and Manzanita, plant Ponderosa Pine and Blue Oak, remove fuel ladders and risk of potential crown fires, provide erosion control measures and improve water quality in Stockton Creek.

This is to advise that the Mariposa Public Utility District has approved the above ([] Lead Agency or [] Responsible Agency)

described project on September 2, 2014 and has made the following determinations regarding the above (date) described project.

- 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 pursuant 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:

4992 Seventh Street

Signature (Public Agency): [Signature] Title: Chairman Board of Directors

Date: September 12, 2014 Date Received for filing at OPR: August 11, 2014

**MARIPOSA PUBLIC UTILITY DISTRICT
RESOLUTION # 2014-1799**

**MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION
STOCKTON CREEK PRESERVE MANAGEMENT PROJECT
State Clearing House # 2014081024**

(Pursuant to California Administrative Code, Section 15070)

WHEREAS, the Mariposa Public Utility District (MPUD) is proposing a vegetation management project in portions of the Stockton Creek Watershed. The proposed project includes; clear and protect existing stands of Ponderosa Pine and Blue Oak, remove hazard trees, thin and leave small areas of Toyon and Manzanita, plant ponderosa pine and Blue oak, remove fuel ladders and risk of potential crown fires, provide erosion control measures and improve water quality in Stockton Creek. Healthy, mature, scenic trees will remain unaffected. A more complete description of the project is available in the Initial Study and Negative Declaration.

WHEREAS, the proposed project will:

- Improved water quality for the Mariposa community public water system
- Provide access for watershed management
- Remove fuel ladders to reduce the risk of crown fires
- Public education of fuel load reduction alternatives for private land owners and community members.
- Better understanding of fuel reduction projects on water quality and quantity.
- Improved habitat diversity

WHEREAS, a Negative Declaration is required pursuant to the provisions of CEQA.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Mariposa Public Utility District Board of Directors hereby approves the Project and adopts the Negative Declaration as submitted at the September 2, 2014 Board of Directors meeting.

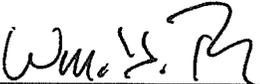
PASSED AND ADOPTED, this 2nd day of September 2014 by the following vote:

AYES: Directors Finney, McKnight, Bondshu, and Radanovich

NOES:

ABSENT: Director Enrico

ABSTAIN:



Chairman, Board of Directors

ATTEST:

Clerk, ex-officio, Secy.

SEAL