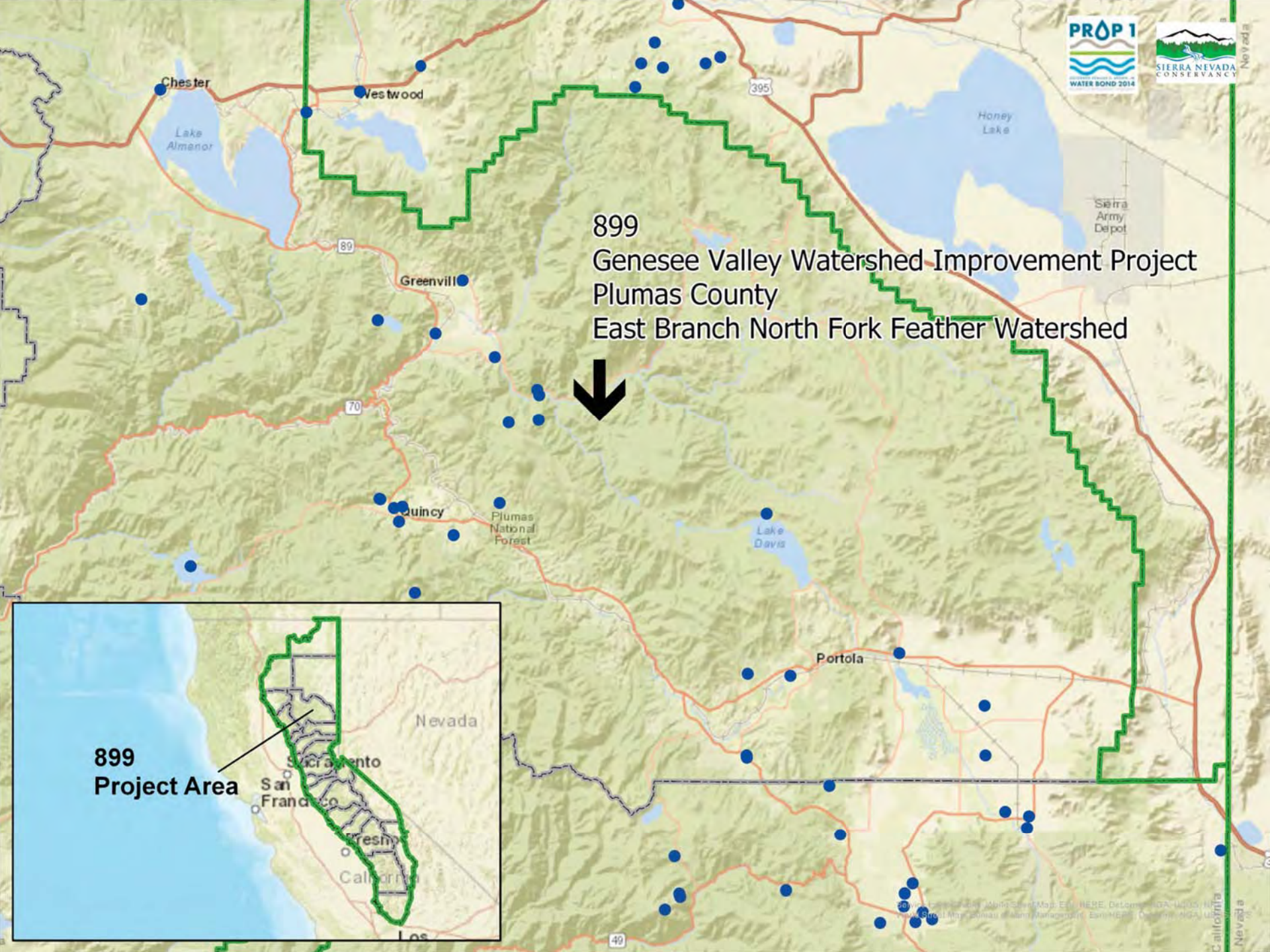
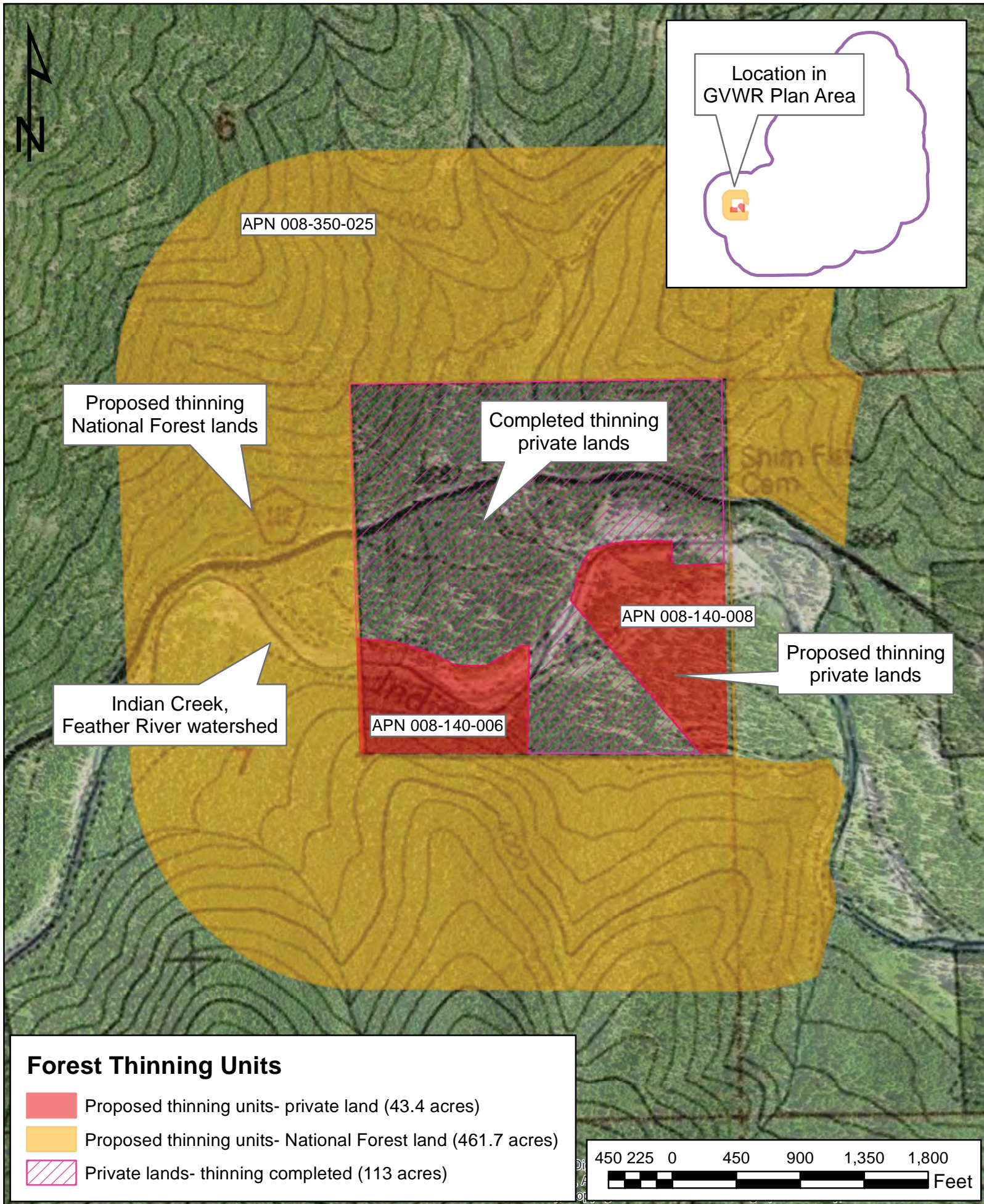




899  
Genesee Valley Watershed Improvement Project  
Plumas County  
East Branch North Fork Feather Watershed



# Genesee Woods Proposed Thinning Units



## STATE OF CALIFORNIA SIERRA NEVADA CONSERVANCY

*Sierra Nevada Conservancy Watershed Improvement Grant Program  
Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Act of 2014 (Proposition 1)*

**SNC ID Number:** 899

**Applicant:** Plumas Audubon Society

**Project Title:** Genesee Valley Watershed Improvement  
Project – CEQA/NEPA Compliance

**SNC Subregion:** North Central

**County:** Plumas

**Funding Amount Requested:** \$74,576.25

**Funding Amount Recommended:** \$74,576.00

**Total Project Cost:** \$84,771.00

**Final Score:** 93.75

### **PROJECT SCOPE / DESCRIPTION**

The Genesee Valley Watershed Improvement Project (GVWMP) is a Category 2 planning project of Plumas Audubon Society, a nonprofit corporation located in Quincy, CA. The project location is within Genesee Valley, east of the town of Crescent Mills, on Indian Creek, a significant tributary to the north fork of the Feather River. The landscape of the valley is comprised of a mix of public/private ownerships including Plumas National Forest (PNF), the Feather River Land Trust, individual homeowners, and a Homeowners Association/subdivision. The entire 33,000-acre valley is included in the collaboratively developed Genesee Valley Wildfire Restoration Plan (GVWRP).

In collaboration with PNF and private landholders, Plumas Audubon will conduct all due diligence work necessary to inform PNF's NEPA analysis and complete CEQA in partnership with the Feather River Resource Conservation District (FRRCD) as the lead agency. GVWRP prescriptions totaling 839 acres total, (505 acres of forest thinning and 334 acres of underburning) on 221 acres of private land and 618 acres of National Forest will be analyzed for potential environmental impacts under this grant.

The Plumas Audubon Society is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation with a history of completing successful conservation and forest and watershed health improvement projects over the past 30 years. They have a good relationship with Plumas National Forest and the landowners in Genesee Valley, with whom they collaboratively worked to

develop the Genesee Valley Wildfire Restoration Plan. PNF will incorporate the GVWMP into long-term management of the Genesee Valley area. Homeowners in the valley actively support the GVWRP and plan to volunteer assistance during implementation phases.

Partner contributions to the proposed project include US Forest Service (USFS), PNF Mt. Hough Ranger District, the Genesee Woods Recreation Commission (homeowners organization), and volunteers through Plumas Audubon. In-kind contribution totals are anticipated to total approximately \$10,000.00. PNF will complete a categorical exclusion for NEPA, and the FRRCD will do all necessary work to complete a CEQA mitigated negative declaration if required.

Forest and watershed restoration efforts in the Feather River watershed, the largest watershed in the Sierra Nevada, are critical to improving water quantity and quality in California. The proposed project will contribute to forest and watershed management strategies outlined in Proposition 1 and will improve the health of riparian vegetation along Indian Creek. The proposed project also meets the objectives of the Sierra Nevada Watershed Improvement Program by mitigating the impacts of ongoing drought, fire exclusion, and widespread tree mortality.

**PROJECT SCHEDULE**

<b>PROJECT TASKS / DELIVERABLES</b>	<b>TIMELINE</b>
Coordination, planning with FS resource personnel and other contractors for survey work/Survey Plan	March – May 2017
Complete resource surveys/Surveys	May – August 2017
PNF and FRRCD complete review of draft survey reports/Draft Survey Reports	Sep. – Dec. 2017
Draft Environmental Assessment (NEPA), CEQA checklist, Mitigated Negative Declaration (CEQA)/ Drafts	December 2017
Draft EA and MND review by USFS and FRRCD	Jan. – Feb. 2018
Six-month progress reports	Every six months from execution of grant agreement
<b>Estimated Project Completion Date – Final Report</b>	<b>August 1, 2018</b>

**PROJECT COSTS**

<b>BUDGET CATEGORIES</b>	<b>SNC FUNDING</b>
<b>Project Costs:</b>	
Project Management	\$4,500
Survey Contracts:	\$48,350
Coordination: PNF	\$3,525
CEQA/NEPA document preparation	\$13,600
Printing and public relations	\$425
Invoicing, Performance Measures	\$625
<b>Administrative:</b>	
Administrative Costs	\$3,551
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>\$74,576</b>

**PROJECT LETTERS OF SUPPORT / OPPOSITION**

**SUPPORT:**

- Jonathan Kusel, Director - Sierra Institute for the Community and Environment
- Gordon R Kellor - Geotechnical Engineer, Genesee landowner
- Greenville Rancheria - Michael Savala, tribal partner
- Norma Burchard - President of Genesee Woods Recreation Association
- Paul Hardy - ED of the Feather River Land Trust, landholder and former SNC grantee for Genesee fuel reduction projects
- Nils Lunder - President of the Feather River Resource Management District (CEQA lead agency)
- Micki D. Smith - District Ranger of the Mt. Hough Ranger District, Plumas National Forest (NEPA lead agency)

**OPPOSITION:**

- None

**PROJECT PERFORMANCE MEASURES**

*There are four Performance Measures common to all grants. In addition, grantees are required to identify one to three project-specific Performance Measures in their application. Please note, Performance Measures listed here represent those proposed by applicants and may be modified before the grant agreement is executed.*

- Percent of Pre-project and Planning Efforts Resulting in Project Implementation

Notice of Exemption

Form D

To: Office of Planning and Research
P.O. Box 3044, Room 212
Sacramento, CA 95812-3044

From: (Public Agency) Sierra Nevada Conservancy
11521 Blocker Drive, Suite 205
Auburn, CA 95603

County Clerk
County of Plumas
520 Main Street Room 102
Quincy, CA 95971

(Address)

Project Title: Genesee Valley Watershed Improvement Project - CEQA/NEPA Compliance

Project Location - Specific:

The project is located in Plumas County; centered at approximately 40.04867, -120.78507

Project Location - City: Genesee Project Location - County: Plumas

Description of Nature, Purpose and Beneficiaries of Project:

The Sierra Nevada Conservancy would provide funding in the amount of \$74,576 to the Plumas Audubon Society to conduct the necessary NEPA and CEQA analyses to assess proposed forest and watershed management activities on 839 acres (221 private; 618 in Plumas National Forest) in Genesee Valley to address the impacts of ongoing drought, fire suppression, and widespread tree mortality, and to incorporate design criteria, water quality measures, and best management practices to protect water quality and natural resources in the area.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: Sierra Nevada Conservancy

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: Plumas Audubon Society

Exempt Status: (check one)

- Ministerial (Sec. 21080(b)(1); 15268);
Declared Emergency (Sec. 21080(b)(3); 15269(a));
Emergency Project (Sec. 21080(b)(4); 15269(b)(c));
[X] Categorical Exemption. State type and section number: Section 15262, "Feasibility and Planning Studies"
Statutory Exemptions. State code number:

Reasons why project is exempt:

This is a planning project involving the preparation of environmental analysis and CEQA and NEPA review for forest management strategies for 839 acres in Genesee Valley. The planning project does not involve physical alterations to the environment. The proposed Genesee Valley Watershed Improvement Project - CEQA/NEPA Compliance is categorically exempt from the CEQA pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15262, which applies to feasibility and planning studies for future actions that have not yet been approved. The project would involve preparation of an Environmental Assessment and Finding of No Significant Impact for adoption by the Mt. Hough Ranger District of the Plumas National Forest and a Mitigated Negative Declaration for adoption by the Feather River Resource Conservation District to be followed by implementation actions by these agencies.

Lead Agency Contact Person: Patrick Eidman Area Code/Telephone/Extension: (530) 823-4689

If filed by applicant:

- 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: Title:

- Signed by Lead Agency Date received for filing at OPR:
Signed by Applicant

Revised 2005