862 Spooner Reservoir Watershed Restoration Project

Submitted By:

Lassen County Fire Safe Council, Inc.
P.O. Box 816
Susanville, California 96130
Authorized Representative: Thomas W. Esgate, Managing Director

Submitted To:

Sierra Nevada Conservancy
11521 Blocker Dr., Suite 205
Auburn, CA 95603

March 1, 2016

Appendix B - Full Application Checklist

SNC Reference#: 862

Project Name: Spooner Reservoir Watershed Restoration Project

Applicant: Lassen County Fire Safe Council, Inc.

Please mark each box if item is included in the application. Please consult with SNC staff prior to submission if you have any questions about the applicability to your project of any items on the checklist. All applications must include a CD including an electronic file of each checklist item, if applicable. The naming convention for each electronic file is listed after each item on the checklist. (Electronic File Name = EFN: "naming convention". file extension choices)

Submission requirements for all Category One and Category Two Grant Applications

1. ■ Completed Application Checklist *(EFN: Checklist.doc,.docx,.or .pdf)*
2. ■ Table of Contents *(EFN: TOC.doc,.docx, or .pdf)*
3. ■ Full Application Project Information Form *(EFN: SIform.doc, .docx, or .pdf)*
4. ■ CCC/Local Conservation Corps Document *(EFN: CCC.pdf)*
5. ■ Authorization to Apply or Resolution *(EFN: authorization.doc, .docx, or .pdf)*
6. ■ Narrative Descriptions *(EFN: Narrative.doc or .docx)*
   a. ■ Detailed Project Description (5,000 character maximum for section 6a only)
      Project Description including Goals/Results, Scope of Work, Location, Purpose, etc.
   b. ■ Workplan and Schedule
   c. ■ Restrictions, Technical/Environmental Documents and Agreements
      - ■ Restrictions / Agreements *(EFN: RestAgree.pdf)*
      - ■ Regulatory Requirements / Permits *(EFN: RegPermit.pdf)*
   d. ■ Organizational Capacity
   e. ■ Cooperation and Community Support
      - ■ Letters of Support *(EFN: LOS.pdf)*
   f. ■ Tribal Consultation Narrative *(EFN: tribal.doc, docx)*
   g. ■ Long Term Management and Sustainability
      - ■ Long-Term Management Plan *(EFN: LTMP.pdf)*
   h. ■ Performance Measures
7. Budget documents
   a. ■ Detailed Budget Form (EFN: Budget.xls, .xlsx)
8. Supplementary Documents
   a. Environmental Documentation
      - ■ California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) documentation *(EFN: CEQA.pdf)*
      - ■ National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) documentation *(EFN: NEPA.pdf)*
   b. Maps and Photos
      - ■ Project Location Map *(EFN: LocMap.pdf)*
      - ■ Parcel Map showing County Assessor's Parcel Number(s) *(EFN: ParcelMap.pdf)*

- ■ Topographic Map *(EFN: Topo.pdf)*
- ■ Photos of the Project Site *(10 maximum) (EFN: Photo.jpg, .gif)*

c. Additional submission requirements <u>for Fee Title Acquisition applications only</u>
- ☐ Acquisition Schedule *(EFN: acqSched.doc,.docx or .pdf)*
- ☐ Willing Seller Letter *(EFN: WillSell.pdf)*
- ☐ Real Estate Appraisal *(EFN: Appraisal.pdf)*

d. Additional submission requirements <u>for Site Improvement / Restoration Project applications only</u>
- ☐ Land Tenure Documents *(EFN: Tenure.pdf)*
- ☐ Site Plan *(EFN: SitePlan.pdf)*
- ☐ Leases or Agreements *(EFN: LeaseAgmnt.pdf)*

I certify that the information contained in the Application, including required attachments, is accurate, and that I have been authorized to apply for this grant.

2/29/2016

Signed *(Authorized Representative)* Date

Thomas W. Esgate, Managing Director

Name and Title *(print or type)*

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SIERRA NEVADA CONSERVANCY
PROPOSITION 1 – Watershed Improvement Program Project Information Form

SNC REFERENCE # 862

PROJECT NAME Spooner Reservoir Watershed Restoration Project

APPLICANT NAME *(Legal name, address, and zip code)*
Lassen County Fire Safe Council, Inc., PO Box 816, Susanville, CA 96130

AMOUNT OF GRANT REQUEST $75,000.00

TOTAL PROJECT COST $110,000

PROJECT LOCATION *(County with approx. lat/long, center of project area)*
Lassen County, California 24 miles southeast of Adin. N41.0163, W120.6248

SENATE DISTRICT NUMBER	**ASSEMBLY DISTRICT NUMBER**
1	1

PERSON WITH MANAGEMENT RESPONSIBILITY FOR GRANT CONTRACT

Name and title	*Phone*	*Email Address*
■ Mr. Thomas W. Esgate, Managir	530-310-0146	twesgate@sbcglobal.net
☐ Ms.		

TRIBAL CONSULTATION CONTACT(S) INFORMATION

Name: Mikey Gemmill, Pit River Tribal Chair
Phone Number: 530-945-0769
Email address: resistance@outlook.com

COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR OR PLANNING DIRECTOR CONTACT INFORMATION

Name: Tony Shaw
Phone Number: (530) 251-2736
Email address: TShaw@co.lassen.ca.us

NEAREST PUBLIC WATER AGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

Name: Central Valley Water Quality Control BD.
Phone Number: (530) 224-4129
Email address: bletton@waterboards.ca.gov

Please identify the appropriate project category below and provide the associated details *(Choose One)*

☐ Category One Site Improvement
☐ Category One Acquisition
☒ Category Two Pre-Project Activities

Site Improvement/ Acquisition Project Area

Project Area: 4243

Total Acres: 4243

SNC Portion (if different):

Acquisition Projects Only For Acquisitions Only

☐ Appraisal Included

Select one primary Pre-Project deliverable

☐ Permit
☒ CEQA/NEPA Compliance
☐ Appraisal
☐ Condition Assessment
☐ Biological Survey
☐ Environmental Site Assessment
☐ Plan

4. CCC/Local Conservation Corp Document *(862: CCC.pdf)*

NA Pre-Project Activity/Not subject to CCC consultation since there will be not treatment activities per SNC Staff.

5. Authorization to Apply or Resolution *(862: authorization.pdf)*

Lassen County Fire Safe Council, Inc.

Board of Directors Resolution No. 2016-2

In the matter of: A RESOLUTION APPROVING THE APPLICATION FOR GRANT FUNDS FOR THE SIERRA NEVADA CONSERVANCY GRANT PROGRAM UNDER THE LAIRD-LESLIE Sierra Nevada Conservancy ACT OF _____

Resolution No: 2016-2

Date: January 4, 2016

The following RESOLUTION was duly passed by the Board of Directors of the Lassen County Fire Safe Council, Inc. at a regular meeting held January 4, 2016, by the following vote:

Ayes: 8
Noes: 0
Abstentions: 0
Absent: 0

Signed and approved by

Chair, Board of Directors

WHEREAS, the Legislature and Governor of the State of California have provided Funds for the program shown above; and

WHEREAS, the Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC) has been delegated the responsibility for the administration of a portion of these funds through a local assistance grants program, establishing necessary procedures; and

WHEREAS, said procedures established by the Sierra Nevada Conservancy require a resolution certifying the approval of application(s) by the Applicant's governing board before submission of said application(s) to the SNC; and

WHEREAS, the Applicant, if selected, will enter into an agreement with the SNC to carry out the project; and

WHEREAS, the Lassen County Fire Safe Council, Inc. has identified the Spooner Reservoir Watershed Restoration Project as valuable toward meeting its mission and goals.

BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED by the Board of Directors of the Lassen County Fire Safe Council, Inc. that the Board:

- Approves the submittal of an application for the Spooner Reservoir Watershed Restoration Project; and

- Certifies that Applicant understands the assurances and certification requirements of the application; and

- Certifies that Applicant or title holder will have sufficient funds to operate and maintain the resources(s) consistent with the long-term benefits described in support of the application; or will secure the resources to do so; and

- Certifies that Applicant will comply with all legal requirements as determined during the application process; and

- Appoints Thomas W. Esgate, Managing Director, and Lloyd Keefer, Chairman, as agents and either may conduct all negotiations, execute and submit all documents, including but not limited to: applications, agreements, payment requests, and so on, which may be necessary for the completion of the aforementioned project.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Lassen County Fire Safe Council, Inc. on the 4th day of January 2016.

5. Organizational Information

We have verified with SNC staff that all our required organizational information is on file

862 Spooner Reservoir Watershed Restoration Project

6. Narrative Description *(862: Narrative.docx)*

a. Detailed Project Description

Lassen County Fire Safe Council, Inc.(LCFSC), through its Cooperative Sagebrush Steppe Restoration Initiative partnership (CSSRI), is requesting Category 2 grant funding to complete surveys, project design, and assessments necessary to complete CEQA clearance for the overall project area and to support a decision (NEPA) by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to implement the public portion of the Spooner Reservoir Watershed Restoration Project (SRWRP).

The purpose of the implementation project is to restore watershed functions (capture, storage of water in soil, and beneficial release) in the watershed surrounding Spooner Reservoir at the headwaters of Ash Creek, a tributary to the Pit River, in Lassen County, California. This will be accomplished through the landscape-scale removal of invasive western juniper on 4,243 acres of wet meadow and sagebrush steppe habitat. The proposed project will occur on approximately 3,716 acres of BLM-managed land and 527 acres of private land, approximately 24 miles southeast of Adin, CA, in Lassen County. Additional partnerships are being developed in order to facilitate the acquisition of funds to conduct treatments after environmental clearances have been received.

The proposed treatment area is a popular recreation site for hunting and bird watching because of its importance to myriad wildlife and bird species. Juniper encroachment in the area has not only replaced native plant communities but has degraded the hydrologic cycle. Juniper canopies intercept greater quantities of precipitation than native grass and shrub communities leaving less water to infiltrate the soil. Juniper also transpires huge quantities of water daily. It is evergreen, and thus also has the capacity to further deplete soil moisture by transpiring when native grasses and deciduous shrubs are dormant. This has resulted in less precipitation available to plants and animals and for storage as surface and ground water.

The implementation phase of the project will restore ecosystem functions to the project area. Its goals are described below and their relation to California's Proposition 1, A.B. 685, the California Water Action Plan, the Sierra Nevada Forest and Community Initiative (SNFCI), and the SNC Watershed Improvement Program are summarized in section 6e.

1. Restore watershed health around Spooner Reservoir. Removing juniper will reduce water lost by interception, transpiration, and storage by an invasive species. This will make more water available for native plant communities in support of wildlife and agriculture. In addition, greater quantities of water will reach below the root zone and contribute to the recharge of the Ash Valley Groundwater Basin. Therefore, the project will contribute to maintaining a

sustainable water supply and increase reliability of the Ash Valley water supply during water shortages.

2. Restore historic drought-resilient plant communities to the landscape. Healthy vegetation appropriate to the Ecological Site is indicative of a healthy watershed and contributes to achieving the next 5 goals.
3. Improve wildlife habitat. Juniper stands surrounding Spooner Reservoir are dense and as a result have little understory vegetation and many areas of bare ground. Wildlife species relying on shrubs and grasses for browse and forage will benefit from removal of the juniper overstory.
4. Improve water quality. Over time increased ground cover following juniper removal will reduce overland flow, soil erosion, and sedimentation from the treated area and improve surface water quality.
5. Increase water abundance in support of agriculture and wildlife. Spooner Reservoir and Ash Creek are important water sources for irrigation, livestock, antelope, mule deer, elk, and waterfowl.
6. Improve quality of public-utilized recreation resources. The area is popular for hunting and bird watching. Improving habitat will enhance recreational opportunities.
7. Restore sage grouse brood-rearing habitat. Much of the project area is brood-rearing habitat, wet meadow and riparian areas where insects are abundant. Removing juniper will reduce roost sites for sage-grouse predators. Regenerating shrubs and grasses will provide sage grouse with food, cover, and nesting substrate necessary to rear young.
8. Reduce wildfire hazard on a valuable landscape. Overly dense juniper have increased hazardous fuel loads and therefore increased the risk for high-intensity wildfire in the project area.
9. Protect air quality and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Reducing wildfire risk will reduce the risk of degraded air quality and excessive greenhouse gas emissions from wildfire. Furthermore, cut juniper will be chipped and hauled to Honey Lake Power (HL Power) to be used as a renewable energy source.

Scope of Work

Completing surveys and compile information needed to complete NEPA for implementing treatments on federal land and to obtain CEQA clearance for the entire project area so that project can be funded and implemented.

6. b. Work Plan and Schedule

Project is to assist the Bureau of Land Management, Applegate Field Office (BLMAFO) with completing surveys and compiling information needed to reach a decision (NEPA) for implementing treatments on federal land. The project work will also be used to obtain CEQA clearance on both the BLM managed land and a small portion of private land (12% of the overall project area), which will allow our partnership to acquire state funds to assist with the project's implementation. Our CSSRI Partner, the Pit Resource Conservation District (the project is within the District's boundaries) will be the lead agency for the CEQA clearance.

Field surveys and data gathering specific to the Spooner Reservoir project area have been ongoing in relation to the current BLM grazing permit. More work will need to be accomplished in order to address resource concerns with regard to the proposed restoration treatments. LCFSC will provide an Inter-disciplinary Team leader (IDT) to assist BLM in collating the required environmental documentation and will write a draft Environmental Assessment for the agency. LCFSC will also hire some survey specialists, including an archaeologist, who are acceptable to BLM, in order to cover areas that the field office is unable to survey due to heavy workloads and reduced staffing. The provided work plan addresses these needs within a time frame that would allow for NEPA and CEQA clearances to be achieved for project implementation by 2017.

As stated previously, some portions of the necessary surveys have already been conducted in conjunction with an EA that was previously completed for a grazing permit renewal. A pre-project activity will include the conducting of botanical surveys by BLM staff between April and June in 2016 in advance of SNC project award. It is being funded within the agency's budget.

Assuming that our request for funding is approved in June of 2016, and a grant agreement executed by early July of 2016, our project schedule is as follows:

DETAILED PROJECT DELIVERABLES	**TIMELINE**
INCLUDE SPECIFIC DELIVERABLES IDENTIFIED IN SCOPE AND ALL PROGRESS REPORTS, ETC.	ASSUME START DATE 60 DAYS AFTER SNC BOARD AUTHORIZATION (Assumes June 2016 Award)
Complete Surveys	July – December 2016
Complete Project Description	September – December 2016
First 6 Month Reporting	12/31/16
Complete DRAFT of environmental document (Environmental Assessment) necessary to support decision	December 2016– June 2017
Submit Final Report	6/31/17

Once environmental clearances have been obtained the implementation work anticipates that the majority of the watershed restoration treatments will be implemented through the cutting and chipping of the young growth juniper and the biomass utilization of the removed material that would be taken to HL Power, located near Susanville, California, and used as fuel in the production of clean renewable energy. This would be the highest and best use of the removed material. For the past decade HL Power has had a contract to sell its power to PG&E renewed annually and we expect that will continue. However, in the unlikely event that their contract is not renewed, the watershed restoration work can still be implemented through mastication treatments, and provide the same benefits, as is being done in the majority of the western states, at approximately the same cost.

6. c. Restrictions, Technical/Environmental Documents and Agreements

i. Restrictions/Agreements *(862: RestAgree.pdf)*

There are no restrictions that would impede the successful implementation of our project.

There are no additional agreements necessary to implement and/or monitor our project.

6. c. ii. Regulatory Requirements *(862: RegPermit.pdf)*

N/A Category 2 / Pre-Project Activity.

6. d. Organizational Capacity

LCFSC has no paid staff per se; all our work is accomplished by independent contractors and volunteers. We have a contracted Managing Director/Project Manager, Tom Esgate (who is also a NRCS Certified Conservation Planner); contracted Registered Professional Forester, Don Hansen; contracted PhD Ecologist, Eileen Carey, who conducts monitoring and will be the IDT Leader for this project, and a Secretary/Treasurer and Bookkeeper, Cathy Dirden. We also contract for Biological, Botanical and Cultural Resource/Archaeological services. All of our contracted staff work closely together to successfully implement our projects.

Together we have produced numerous planning and NEPA/CEQA Clearance documents that have covered both private and federal lands.

We have treated and restored over 24,000 acres in Lassen, Modoc and Shasta counties over the last 10 years. In the last 3 years we have completed the following landscape scale community projects: South Knob/Ash Valley Fuel Treatments (4,000 acres and ongoing), Clear Creek (830 acres), Milford (600 acres), Little Valley (1,400 acres to be completed March 2016), and a SNC Water Monitoring project. We have completed all our projects on time, within budget and treated significantly more acres at lower costs than initial estimates.

In summary, LCFSC has the expertise and capacity to complete any and all projects that SNC may award us in the current grant round.

6. e. Cooperation & Community Support

This project is a priority project of the following supporting agencies/endorsers of the Sierra Nevada Conservancy's Watershed Improvement Program: US Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, Pit Resource Conservation District, US Fish and Wildlife Service (see Letters of Support) and Lassen County Fire Safe Council, Inc. It is also a priority project in the Upper Pit River Integrated Regional Management Plan. The proposed planning project is collaborative in nature with funding and expertise contributed by a variety of sources including the owner of affected private land. This type of landscape-level land management partnership is needed to effectively restore watersheds as outlined in the SNC WIP Regional Strategy. The associated implementation project also complements SNC and statewide initiatives summarized in the table below.

Our project is being implemented through our CSSRI partnership. The principle partners are: Pit Resource Conservation District, Lassen County Fire Safe Council, Inc. and Susanville Indian Rancheria. CSSRI also gets important technical assistance from NRCS staff throughout the state and from the University of California Cooperative Extension who assist us with field data collection and monitoring to help us assess the restoration of desirable plant communities and aid in the continued development of better treatment prescriptions.

In addition to our principle partners we are a participant in an Inter-Agency Memo of Understanding (MOU) that focuses on and supports landscape scale/cross boundary juniper treatment/watershed restoration projects. Other participants in this MOU include the USDOI Bureau of Land Management, USDA United States Forest Service, Modoc and Lassen Counties, Nor-Cal Neva Resource Conservation District and Development Council, and CalFire. CSSRI has been designated the lead role in the MOU for coordinating public/private partnership treatments. All the participants have shown the capacity to work cooperatively toward shared goals and objectives.

Other past and present partners include:

Lassen & Modoc County Agricultural Commissioners

Sierra Nevada Conservancy	California Biomass Energy Alliance
Pit River Watershed Alliance	California Department of Fish & Wildlife
US Fish & Wildlife Service	Big Valley and Susanville Chambers of Commerce
Greenleaf Power	Central Valley Water Quality Control Board

California Department Water Resources

Lassen Modoc County Resource Advisory Committees

Letters of Support for our project are attached below in section 6.e.i.

Proposed project goals[1] as they relate to select California initiatives that address ecosystem health and watershed restoration[2].

Initiative	Initiative goals, objectives, or outcomes	Proposed project goals that meet initiative goals, objectives or outcomes
Proposition 1	Implement fuel treatment projects to reduce wildfire risks, protect watersheds tributary to water storage facilities, and promote watershed health.	1,4,5, 8
	Protect and restore rural and urban watershed health to improve watershed storage capacity, forest health, protection of life and property, and greenhouse gas reduction.	1, 2, 5, 8, 9
	Implement watershed adaptation projects in order to reduce the impacts of climate changes on California's communities and ecosystems.	1, 2
	State conservancies from San Diego to Lake Tahoe to the coast will develop new Proposition 1 grant programs to assist with the restoration of watersheds critical to California's water supply systems.	Project would fall under one of these programs
California Water Action Plan	Action 4: Protect and Restore Important Ecosystems. Restore Key Mountain Meadow Habitat to increase groundwater storage and provide habitat for native species. Manage Headwaters for Multiple Benefits. Specifically the plan emphasizes "the need to restore forest health and degraded stream and meadow ecosystems through ecologically sound forest management" as a means to improve wildlife habitat, water quality, natural system function, to increase water yield, and to reduce wildfire risk".	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8
Sierra Nevada Forest and	Improve the long-term environmental, economic and social well-being of the Sierra Nevada Region. The	1, 8, 9

1. [1] Restore watershed health around Spooner Reservoir.
2. Restore historic drought-resilient plant communities to the landscape.
3. Improve wildlife habitat.
4. Improve water quality.
5. Increase water abundance in support of agriculture and wildlife.
6. Improve quality of public-utilized recreation resources.
7. Restore sage grouse brood-rearing habitat.
8. Reduce wildfire hazard on a valuable landscape
9. Protect air quality and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

[2] Please see section 6a: Detailed project description for full description of goals.

Community Initiative (SNFCI)	SNC is fostering collaboration locally and regionally in an effort to support a cohesive, economically viable, and sustainable approach to reducing fire risk, creating jobs, and protecting this priceless resource.	
Sierra Nevada Watershed Improvement Program	Restore Sierra forests and watersheds to a healthier state	1, 2
	Improve the quantity and quality of water throughout the year	3, 4
	Reduce greenhouse gas emissions and stabilize carbon storage	2, 8, 9
	Improve local socio-economic conditions and public safety	8, 9
	Improve habitat for wildlife, fish, and plant species	2, 3, 7
	Reduce the risk of large, damaging wildfires	8
	Preserve working landscapes	2, 5
	Protect air quality	9
A.B. 685, Human Right to Water	Aid in providing safe, clean, affordable, and accessible water adequate for human consumption, cooking and sanitary purposes.	4, 5

6. e. i. Letters of Support *(862: LOS.pdf)*

PIT RIVER TRIBE

ELEVEN AUTONOMOUS BANDS
36970 Park Ave. Burney CA. 96013 Phone (530) 335-5421 Fax: (530) 335-5069

February 26, 2016

Sierra Nevada Conservancy
Jim Branham – Executive Officer
11521 Blocker Drive, Suite 205
Auburn, CA 95603

Dear Mr. Branham:

The Pit River Tribe is submitting a letter in support of the Lassen County Fire Safe Council, Inc. Spooner Reservoir Watershed Restoration Project application for the Sierra Nevada Conservancy's (SNC) Watershed Improvement Program in northern California. The funding will allow for completion of environmental clearances, CEQA and NEPA so that treatments can be implemented to restore watershed functions in the watershed surrounding Spooner Reservoir which lies at the headwaters of Ash Creek, a tributary to the Pit River.

Eventual project restoration treatment will be accomplished through the landscape-scale removal of invasive western juniper on 4,243 acres of wet meadow and sagebrush steppe habitat. The proposed project will occur on approximately 3,716 acres of BLM Managed land on 527 acres of private land, approximately 24 miles southeast of Adin, California.

Lassen County Fire Safe Council has worked through their Cooperative Sagebrush Steppe Restoration Initiative partnership over the last 12 years by implementing over 14,000 acres of treatments. Ongoing monitoring of the completed projects demonstrate that removing juniper can reduce water lost by interception, transpiration, and storage by an invasive species. Through treatment, more water is becomes available for native plants supporting wildlife and agriculture. In addition, greater quantities of water are reaching below the root zone, contributing to the recharge of aquifers. The proposed project will help contribute to maintaining a sustainable water supply and increase reliability of the Ash Valley water supply during water shortages.

As the drought has taken a toll, this is a very important project to Pit River Tribe in northern Lassen County. Thank you for your careful consideration

Sincerely,

Morning Star Gali, Tribal Historic Preservation Officer
Pit River Tribe

Madesi

ATWAMSINI ASTARIWI ATSUGEWI APORIGE AJUMAWI

HEWISEDAWI ILLMAWI ITSATAWI KOSEALEKTE HAMMAWI

United States Department of the Interior
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
Applegate Field Office
708 West 12th Street
Alturas, California 96101

February 5, 2016

Sierra Nevada Conservancy
Jim Branham – Executive Officer
11521 Blocker Drive, Suite 205
Auburn, CA 95603

Dear Mr. Branham:

The Bureau of Land Management supports the Lassen County Fire Safe Council, Inc. (LCFSC) Spooner Reservoir Watershed Restoration Project application for the Sierra Nevada Conservancy's (SNC) Watershed Improvement Program.

LCFSC, through their Cooperative Sagebrush Steppe Restoration Initiative partnership, has implemented over 14,000 acres of treatments over the last 12 years. Ongoing monitoring of the completed work demonstrates that removing juniper can reduce water lost by interception, transpiration, and storage by an invasive species. Through these treatments, more water is becoming available for native plant communities in support of wildlife and agriculture. Greater quantities of water are reaching below the root zone, contributing to the recharge of aquifers. The proposed project will help contribute to maintaining a sustainable water supply and help increase reliability of the Ash Valley water supply during water shortages.

The goal of this particular project is to complete the environmental clearances, both CEQA and NEPA, so that treatments can be implemented to restore watershed functions in the watershed surrounding Spooner Reservoir. The Reservoir lies at the headwaters of Ash Creek, a tributary to the Pit River, in Lassen County, California. Restoration will be accomplished through the landscape-scale removal of invasive western juniper (*Juniperus occidentalis*) on 4,243 acres of wet meadow and sagebrush steppe habitat. The proposed project will occur on approximately 3,716 acres of BLM Managed land on 527 acres of private land, approximately 24 miles southeast of Adin, CA, in Lassen County.

Please accept this letter of support as one of highest regard for the LCFSC/SNC Spooner Reservoir Watershed Restoration Project.

Sincerely,

Dennis Sylvia, PhD.
Applegate Field Manager

Ash Valley Ranch
P.O. Box 225
Adin, California 96006

February 15, 2016

Sierra Nevada Conservancy
Jim Branham – Executive Officer
11521 Blocker Drive, Suite 205
Auburn, CA 95603

Dear Mr. Branham:

Ash Valley Ranch, a user of irrigation water that is sometimes impounded in Spooner Reservoir, is in strong support of the Lassen County Fire Safe Council, Inc. Spooner Reservoir Watershed Restoration Project, Sierra Nevada Conservancy application. We have completed over 8,000 acres of watershed restoration projects to date in partnership with the Bureau of Land Management, and some with the aid of SNC. We can vouch for the positive effects these projects have on the hydrology of the land. Prior to treatment some of the ponds and springs had been dry for a decade. Then, the year after treatments were completed, in drought years no less, many springs began to run again and the ponds began to fill. In our recent and current projects hydrological monitoring instruments have been installed pre-treatment and they too are confirming the affect that the treatments are having on hydrology.

Ash Valley is committing to carry out the tasks set forth in the Long Term Management Plan. We will also be contributing $15,000 to help fund the tasks set forth in the NEPA/CEQA Clearance project budget in the SNC application that is being filed.

Please accept this letter of support as one of highest regard for the LCFSC/SNC Spooner Reservoir Watershed Restoration Project.

Sincerely,

Gary Johns,
Ash Valley Ranch

STATE CAPITOL
P.O. BOX 942849
SACRAMENTO, CA 94249-0001
(916) 319-2001
FAX (916) 319-2101

DISTRICT OFFICE
280 HEMSTED DRIVE, SUITE 110
REDDING, CA 96002
(530) 223-6300
FAX (530) 223-6737

E-MAIL
Assemblymember.Dahle@assembly.ca.gov

Assembly
California Legislature

BRIAN DAHLE
ASSEMBLYMAN, FIRST DISTRICT

COMMITTEES
VICE CHAIR: ENVIRONMENTAL SAFETY AND TOXIC MATERIALS
VICE CHAIR: NATURAL RESOURCES
PRIVACY AND CONSUMER PROTECTION
UTILITIES AND COMMERCE
WATER, PARKS AND WILDLIFE

February 5, 2016

Sierra Nevada Conservancy
Jim Branham – Executive Officer
11521 Blocker Drive, Suite 205
Auburn, CA 95603

Re: Spooner Reservoir Watershed Restoration Project grant application

Dear Jim,

I write to add my voice of support to the Watershed Improvement Program application from Lassen County Fire Safe Council, Inc. for the Spooner Reservoir Watershed Restoration Project.

The funding will allow for completion of environmental clearances, CEQA and NEPA. The treatments will restore watershed functions around Spooner Reservoir at the headwaters of Ash Creek, a tributary to the Pit River. The project involves landscape-scale removal of invasive western juniper on 4,243 acres of wet meadow and sagebrush steppe habitat. The land includes 3,716 acres managed by the U.S. Bureau of Land management and 527 acres of private land, approximately 24 miles southeast of Adin.

Over the last 12 years, the Lassen County Fire Safe Council has worked through the Cooperative Sagebrush Steppe Restoration Initiative partnership to treat over 14,000 acres. Ongoing monitoring of the completed work demonstrates that removing juniper can reduce water losses, making more water available for native plants, wildlife and agriculture. In addition, greater quantities of water are reaching below the root zone, helping recharge aquifers. The proposed project will help increase the reliability of the Ash Valley water supplies during droughts.

This is a very important project to my constituents in northern Lassen County. Thank you for your careful consideration. If I can be of any further assistance, please contact my District Director, Bruce Ross, at (530) 223-6300.

Sincerely,

Brian Dahle

BRIAN DAHLE
Assembleyman, 1st District

REDDING DISTRICT OFFICE
1900 CHURN CREEK ROAD
SUITE 204
REDDING, CA 96002
TEL (530) 224-7001
FAX (530) 224-7005

California State Senate

SENATOR
TED GAINES
FIRST SENATE DISTRICT

COMMITTEES
ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY
VICE CHAIR
INSURANCE
VICE CHAIR
GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION
LEGISLATIVE ETHICS
TRANSPORTATION AND HOUSING

February 5, 2016

Sierra Nevada Conservancy
Jim Branham, Executive Officer
11521 Blocker Drive, Suite 205
Auburn, CA 95603

Dear Mr. Branham:

I support the Lassen County Fire Safe Council, Inc. (LCFSC) Spooner Reservoir Watershed Restoration Project application for the Sierra Nevada Conservancy's (SNC) Watershed Improvement Program.

Lassen County Fire Safe Council participates in the Cooperative Sagebrush Steppe Restoration Initiative partnership which has implemented over 14,000 acres of treatments over the last 12 years. This ongoing monitoring of the completed work has demonstrated that removing juniper can reduce water lost by interception, transpiration, and storage by an invasive species. This leaves more water for native plant communities in support of wildlife and agriculture. In result of greater quantities of water, the water can now reach below the root zone, which contributes to recharging aquifers.

The funding will facilitate the completion of CEQA and NEPA environmental clearances prior to implementation of treatments; moreover, this will restore watershed functions surrounding the Spooner Reservoir. The Reservoir is located in northern Lassen County, California at the headwaters of Ash Creek, a tributary to the Pit River.

The proposed treatment project will occur on approximately 3,716 acres of BLM Managed land on 527 acres of private land, approximately 24 miles southeast of Adin, CA, in Lassen County. Restoration treatment includes landscape-scale removal of invasive western juniper on 4,243 acres of wet meadow and sagebrush steppe habitat. The proposed project will help contribute to maintaining a sustainable water supply and help increase reliability of the Ash Valley water supply during water shortages. I am pleased to support the Spooner Reservoir Watershed Restoration Project.

Sincerely,

TED GAINES
Senator, First District

County of Lassen
ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES

ROBERT F. PYLE
District 1
JIM CHAPMAN
District 2
JEFF HEMPHILL
District 3
AARON ALBAUGH
District 4
TOM HAMMOND
District 5

Richard Egan
County Administrative Officer
email: coadmin@co.lassen.ca.us

Julie Morgan
Assistant to the CAO
email: jmorgan@co.lassen.ca.us

Regina Schaap
Executive Assistant to the CAO
email: rschaap@co.lassen.ca.us

County Administration Office
221 S. Roop Street, Suite 4
Susanville, CA 96130
Phone: 530-251-8333
Fax: 530-251-2663

February 2, 2016

Sierra Nevada Conservancy
Jim Branham – Executive Officer
11521 Blocker Drive, Suite 205
Auburn, CA 95603

Dear Mr. Branham:

The Lassen County Board of Supervisors supports the Lassen County Fire Safe Council, Inc. (LCFSC) Spooner Reservoir Watershed Restoration Project application for the Sierra Nevada Conservancy's (SNC) Watershed Improvement Program. The goal of this project is complete environmental clearances, CEQA & NEPA, so that treatments can be implemented to restore watershed functions (capture, storage of water in soil, and beneficial release) in the watershed surrounding Spooner Reservoir at the headwaters of Ash Creek, a tributary to the Pit River, in Lassen County, California. Restoration will be accomplished through the landscape-scale removal of invasive western juniper (*Juniperus occidentalis*) on 4,243 acres of wet meadow and sagebrush steppe habitat. The proposed project will occur on approximately 3,716 acres of BLM Managed land on 527 acres of private land, approximately 24 miles southeast of Adin, CA, in Lassen County.

LCFSC, through their Cooperative Sagebrush Steppe Restoration Initiative partnership, has implemented over 14,000 acres of treatments over the last 12 years. Ongoing monitoring of the completed work is demonstrating that removing juniper can reduce water lost by interception, transpiration, and storage by an invasive species. More water is becoming available for native plant communities in support of wildlife and agriculture. In addition, greater quantities of water are reaching below the root zone, which can contribute to the recharge of aquifers. Therefore, the proposed project will help contribute to maintaining a sustainable water supply and help increase reliability of the Ash Valley water supply during water shortages.

Please accept this letter of support as one of highest regard for the LCFSC/SNC Spooner Reservoir Watershed Restoration Project.

Sincerely,

JIM CHAPMAN, Chairman
Lassen County Board of Supervisors

DEPARTMENT OF FORESTRY AND FIRE PROTECTION
LASSEN MODOC PLUMAS UNIT
697-345 Hwy 36
Susanville, CA 96130
(530) 257-4171
(530) 257-8599 (FAX)

February 5, 2016

Sierra Nevada Conservancy
Jim Branham, Executive Officer
11521 Blocker Drive, Suite 205
Auburn, CA 95603

Dear Mr. Branham:

CAL FIRE, Lassen Modoc Plumas Unit supports the Lassen County Fire Safe Council, Inc. (LCFSC) Spooner Reservoir Watershed Restoration Project application for the Sierra Nevada Conservancy's (SNC) Watershed Improvement Program.

Lassen County Fire Safe Council participates in the Cooperative Sagebrush Steppe Restoration Initiative partnership which has implemented over 14,000 acres of treatments over the last 12 years. Ongoing monitoring of the completed work is demonstrating that removing juniper can reduce water lost by interception, transpiration, and storage by an invasive species. More water is becoming available for native plant communities in support of wildlife and agriculture. In addition, greater quantities of water are reaching below the root zone, which can contribute to the recharge of aquifers.

The funding will facilitate the completion of CEQA and NEPA environmental clearances prior to implementation of treatments to restore watershed functions in the watershed surrounding Spooner Reservoir. The Reservoir is located in northern Lassen County, California at the headwaters of Ash Creek, a tributary to the Pit River.

The proposed treatment project will occur on approximately 3,716 acres of BLM Managed land on 527 acres of private land, approximately 24 miles southeast of Adin, CA, in Lassen County. Restoration treatment includes landscape-scale removal of invasive western juniper (*Juniperus occidentalis*) on 4,243 acres of wet meadow and sagebrush steppe habitat. The proposed project will help contribute to maintaining a sustainable water supply and help increase reliability of the Ash Valley water supply during water shortages.

Please accept our letter of support as one of highest regard for the LCFSC/SNC Spooner Reservoir Watershed Restoration Project.

Sincerely,

David Junette
CAL FIRE LMU Unit Chief

United States Department of the Interior
Fish and Wildlife Service

Modoc National Wildlife Refuge
P.O. box 1610
5364 Co. Rd. 115
Alturas, CA 96101
(530)233-3572

2/19/2016

Sierra Nevada Conservancy
Jim Branham – Executive Officer
11521 Blocker Drive, Suite 205
Auburn, CA 95603

Subject: Lassen County Fire Safe Council, Inc - Spooner Reservoir Wetland Restoration Project, Application for Sierra Nevada Conservancy's Watershed Improvement Program.

Dear Mr. Branham:
On behalf of the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program, I am writing to express our support for the Lassen County Fire Safe Council Inc. (LCFSC), Spooner Reservoir Watershed Restoration Project application for the Sierra Nevada Conservancy's (SNC) Watershed Improvement Program. This grant application looks to fund a planning project to complete the environmental compliance requirements, CEQA and NEPA, in preparation for the restoration of watershed functions around Spooner Reservoir, which is at the head waters of Ash Creek and a tributary to the Pit River, in Lassen County, CA. This landscape scale restoration project will remove invasive Western Juniper (Juniperus occidentalis) on wet meadow and sagebrush steppe habitat encompassing approximately 3,716 acres of BLM managed land and 527 acres of private land.

Management of water resources both surface and sub-surface has become a priority throughout most of the Great Basin, as changes in habitat vegetation, runoff, and precipitation has created drought conditions through most of this area. Through their restoration efforts and ongoing monitoring of projects the LCFSC has been able to show the benefits of juniper removal on water availability within the Ash Valley watershed. Over the past 12 years the LCFSC has implemented over 14,000 acres of juniper treatment, resulting in increased water availability for native vegetation and infiltration past the root line, contributing to the recharge of local aquifers.

Funding of this proposed project will contribute to the development of a sustainable water supply within Ash Valley, and the protection of valuable sage steppe habitat within

the Great Basin Eco-region. Please accept this letter of support for the LCFSC/ SNC Spooner Reservoir Watershed Restoration Project.

If there are any questions or concerns please call me at (530) 233-3572.

Sincerely,

Cassie Roeder
Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program/ Wildlife Biologist
Modoc National Wildlife Refuge
cassandra_roeder@fws.gov

USDA Forest Service
Modoc National Forest,
Big Valley Ranger District

P.O. Box 159
508 South Main Street
Adin, CA 96006
(530) 299-3215

File Code: 1950 **Date:** February 5, 2016

Subject: Letter of project support

Sierra Nevada Conservancy
Jim Branham – Executive Officer
11521 Blocker Drive, Suite 205
Auburn, CA 95603

Dear Mr. Branham:

The Modoc National Forest, Big Valley Ranger District supports the Lassen County Fire Safe Council, Inc. (LCFSC) Spooner Reservoir Watershed Restoration Project application for the Sierra Nevada Conservancy's (SNC) Watershed Improvement Program. The goal of this project is to complete environmental clearances, so that treatments can be implemented to restore watershed functions in the watershed surrounding Spooner Reservoir at the headwaters of Ash Creek, a tributary to the Pit River, in Lassen County, California. Restoration will be accomplished through the landscape-scale removal of western juniper (*Juniperus occidentalis*) on 4,243 acres of wet meadow and sagebrush steppe habitat. The proposed project will occur on approximately 3,716 acres of BLM Managed land on 527 acres of private land, approximately 24 miles southeast of Adin, CA, in Lassen County.

LCFSC, through their Cooperative Sagebrush Steppe Restoration Initiative partnership, has implemented over 14,000 acres of treatments over the last 12 years. Ongoing monitoring suggests that the removal of juniper results in an increase in water availability. The proposed project will help contribute to maintaining a sustainable water supply and help increase reliability of the Ash Valley water supply during water shortages.

A significant portion of the Ash Creek Watershed is within the boundaries of the Modoc National Forest, Big Valley Ranger District and it supports a variety of public resources including important wildlife habitat, frequented recreation sites and fisheries. Please accept this letter of support for the LCFSC/SNC Spooner Reservoir Watershed Restoration Project.

Sincerely,

Chris Christofferson

CHRIS L. CHRISTOFFERSON
District Ranger
Big Valley and Double Head Ranger Districts
530 299 8410

United States Department of Agriculture

NRCS

Natural Resources Conservation Service
44327 Hwy 299 E
P.O. 553
McArthur, CA 96056
(530) 336-5604

February 8, 2016

Sierra Nevada Conservancy
Jim Branham – Executive Officer
11521 Blocker Drive, Suite 205
Auburn, CA 95603

RE: Letter of Support for Lassen County Fire Safe Council, Inc. (LCFSC) Spooner Reservoir Watershed Restoration Project

Dear Mr. Branham:

The Natural Resource Conservation Service, McArthur Local Partnership office is in support of the Lassen County Fire Safe Council, Inc. (LCFSC) Spooner Reservoir Watershed Restoration Project application for the Sierra Nevada Conservancy's (SNC) Watershed Improvement Program.

Funding will allow LCFSC to complete the CEQA and NEPA environmental clearances so treatments can be implemented to restore watershed functions in the watershed surrounding Spooner Reservoir. Spooner Reservoir lies at the headwaters of Ash Creek which is a tributary to the Pit River in northern Lassen County. The restoration of the watershed will be accomplished through the landscape-scale removal of invasive western juniper trees on 4,243 acres of wet meadow and sagebrush steppe habitat consisting of approximately 3,716 acres of BLM Managed land and 527 acres of private land located in Lassen County approximately 24 miles southeast of Adin, CA.

LCFSC, through their Cooperative Sagebrush Steppe Restoration Initiative partnership, has implemented over 14,000 acres of treatments over the last 12 years. Ongoing monitoring of the completed work areas demonstrates that removing juniper can reduce water lost by interception, transpiration, and storage by an invasive species. Through these treatments, more water becomes available for native plant communities supporting wildlife and agriculture. Greater quantities of water are reaching below the root zone, contributing to the recharge of aquifers. The proposed treatment project will help contribute by maintaining a sustainable water supply and helping to increase reliability of the Ash Valley water supply during water shortages.

Please accept this letter of support as one of highest regard for the LCFSC/SNC Spooner Reservoir Watershed Restoration Project.

Sincerely,

Dale Kroschel Jr.
Rangeland Management Specialist
USDA:NRCS
McArthur Local Partnership Office

Pit Resource Conservation District

P.O. Box 301
Bieber, CA 96009
Phone (530) 299-3405 ~ Fax (530) 299-9410
E-mail: pitrcd@frontiernet.net

February 11, 2016

Sierra Nevada Conservancy
Jim Branham, Executive Officer
11521 Blocker Drive, Suite 205
Auburn, CA 95603

Dear Mr. Branham:

The Pit Resource Conservation District (Pit RCD) supports the Lassen County Fire Safe Council, Inc. (LCFSC) Spooner Reservoir Watershed Restoration Project application for the Sierra Nevada Conservancy's (SNC) Watershed Improvement Program. The goal of this project is complete environmental clearances, CEQA & NEPA, so that treatments can be implemented to restore watershed functions (capture, storage of water in soil, and beneficial release) in the watershed surrounding Spooner Reservoir at the headwaters of Ash Creek, a tributary to the Pit River, in Lassen County, California. Restoration will be accomplished through the landscape-scale removal of invasive western juniper (*Juniperus occidentalis*) on 4,243 acres of wet meadow and sagebrush steppe habitat. The proposed project will occur on approximately 3,716 acres of BLM Managed land on 527 acres of private land, approximately 24 miles southeast of Adin, CA, in Lassen County.

LCFSC, through their Cooperative Sagebrush Steppe Restoration Initiative partnership, has implemented over 14,000 acres of treatments over the last 12 years. Ongoing monitoring of the completed work is demonstrating that removing juniper can reduce water lost by interception, transpiration, and storage by an invasive species. More water is becoming available for native plant communities in support of wildlife and agriculture. In addition, greater quantities of water are reaching below the root zone, which can contribute to the recharge of aquifers. Therefore, the proposed project will help contribute to maintaining a sustainable water supply and help increase reliability of the Ash Valley water supply during water shortages.

Please accept this letter of support as one of highest regard for the LCFSC/SNC Spooner Reservoir Watershed Restoration Project.

Sincerely,

Andy Albaugh, Chairman

HL POWER COMPANY, LP, an affiliate of

Greenleaf POWER

732-025 Wendel Road, Wendel, CA 96136 Phone: (530) 254-6161

February 2, 2016

Sierra Nevada Conservancy
Jim Branham, Executive Officer
11521 Blocker Drive, Suite 205
Auburn, CA 95603

Dear Mr. Branham:

H.L. Power Company, LP, an affiliate of Greenleaf Power, supports the Lassen County Fire Safe Council's (LCFSC) Spooner Reservoir Watershed Restoration Project application for the Sierra Nevada Conservancy's (SNC) Watershed Improvement Program.

As a Biomass Electricity Generation facility located in Lassen County, H.L. Power Company has been intimately involved with local forest and watershed restoration efforts for more than 25 years through environmentally clean utilization of forest fuels for the production of green power. Currently, the Lassen County Fire Safe Council, Inc. is continuing in these efforts with this project around Spooner Reservoir, located in the headwaters of Ash Creek in Lassen County. This project proposes to restore at least 4,243 acres of wet meadow and sagebrush steppe habitat through the biomass removal of invasive western juniper.

The goal of this project is to complete environmental clearances, CEQA and NEPA, so that treatments can be implemented to restore watershed functions (capture, storage of water in soil, and beneficial release) in the watershed surrounding Spooner Reservoir. The Reservoir is located at the headwaters of Ash Creek, a tributary to the Pit River, in Lassen County, California. Restoration will be accomplished through the landscape-scale removal of invasive western juniper (*Juniperus occidentalis*) on 4,243 acres of wet meadow and sagebrush steppe habitat. The proposed project will occur on approximately 3,716 acres of BLM Managed land on 527 acres of private land, approximately 24 miles southeast of Adin, CA, in Lassen County.

LCFSC, through their Cooperative Sagebrush Steppe Restoration Initiative partnership, has implemented over 14,000 acres of treatments over the last 12 years. Ongoing monitoring of the completed work is demonstrating that removing juniper can reduce water lost by interception, transpiration, and storage by an invasive species. More water is becoming available for native plant communities in support of wildlife and agriculture. In addition, greater quantities of water are reaching below the root zone, which can contribute to the recharge of aquifers. Therefore, the proposed project will help contribute to maintaining a sustainable water supply and help increase reliability of the Ash Valley water supply during water shortages.

Please accept our letter of support as one of highest regard for the LCFSC/SNC Spooner Reservoir Watershed Restoration Project.

Sincerely,

Mark A. Shaffer
Fuel Supply Manager
California Registered Professional Forester # 2485

6. f. Tribal Consultation Narrative *(862: tribal.pdf)*

The Pit River Tribe was given a copy of out Pre-application, including maps and shapefiles. A Tribal Consultation was conducted by the Applegate BLM Field Office for the entire project area on February 4, 2016. We have attached a Memorandum of the consultation. LCFSC followed up on the consultation, submitted the Tribe additional information and the Pit River Tribe has issued a letter of support, which has been attached to our Tribal Consultation Narrative, and also included in our Letters of Support document.

United States Department of the Interior

Bureau of Land Management
Applegate Field Office
708 West 12th Street
Alturas, CA 96101
www.ca.blm.gov/alturas

IN REPLY REFER TO
1500 (N) AJ P
LLCAN02000

February 10, 2016

Memorandum

To: File

From: David J. 'Jack' Scott

Subject: Consultation with the Pit River Tribe concerning the Spooner Reservoir Watershed Restoration Project (SRWRP)

The Spooner Reservoir Watershed Restoration Project (SRWRP) was discussed with the Pit River Tribe during the Applegate, Eagle Lake, Redding Field Offices' government to government quarterly consultation with the tribe on February 4, 2016. A brief presentation of the proposed project was presented. The Pit River Tribe voiced no objections to the project at this time. One of the tribal council members asked for a copy of the proposed project. That has been provided.

Tribal members present at the consultation were the Tribal Chairman, Mickey Gemmill, Tribal Historic Preservation Officer, Morning Star Gali, and other council member and cultural representatives.

David J. 'Jack' Scott
Archaeologist, Applegate Field Office

PIT RIVER TRIBE

ELEVEN AUTONOMOUS BANDS

36970 Park Ave. Burney CA. 96013 Phone (530) 335-5421 Fax: (530) 335-5069

February 26, 2016

Sierra Nevada Conservancy
Jim Branham – Executive Officer
11521 Blocker Drive, Suite 205
Auburn, CA 95603

Dear Mr. Branham:

The Pit River Tribe is submitting a letter in support of the Lassen County Fire Safe Council, Inc. Spooner Reservoir Watershed Restoration Project application for the Sierra Nevada Conservancy's (SNC) Watershed Improvement Program in northern California. The funding will allow for completion of environmental clearances, CEQA and NEPA so that treatments can be implemented to restore watershed functions in the watershed surrounding Spooner Reservoir which lies at the headwaters of Ash Creek, a tributary to the Pit River.

Eventual project restoration treatment will be accomplished through the landscape-scale removal of invasive western juniper on 4,243 acres of wet meadow and sagebrush steppe habitat. The proposed project will occur on approximately 3,716 acres of BLM Managed land on 527 acres of private land, approximately 24 miles southeast of Adin, California.

Lassen County Fire Safe Council has worked through their Cooperative Sagebrush Steppe Restoration Initiative partnership over the last 12 years by implementing over 14,000 acres of treatments. Ongoing monitoring of the completed projects demonstrate that removing juniper can reduce water lost by interception, transpiration, and storage by an invasive species. Through treatment, more water is becomes available for native plants supporting wildlife and agriculture. In addition, greater quantities of water are reaching below the root zone, contributing to the recharge of aquifers. The proposed project will help contribute to maintaining a sustainable water supply and increase reliability of the Ash Valley water supply during water shortages.

As the drought has taken a toll, this is a very important project to Pit River Tribe in northern Lassen County. Thank you for your careful consideration

Sincerely,

Morning Star Gali, Tribal Historic Preservation Officer
Pit River Tribe

Madesi

ATWAMSINI ASTARIWI ATSUGEWI APORIGE AJUMAWI HEWISEDAWI ILLMAWI ITSATAWI KOSEALEKTE HAMMAWI

6. g. Long Term Management Sustainability

The BLMAFO has two specific plans that will guide the long-term management of the project area. SNC and the BLMAFO have mutual goals for long-term management of the affected watershed and these plans provide the management direction to reach those goals. The two referenced plans are:

The *Sage Steppe Ecosystem Environmental Impact Statement*, found at the following link:

http://www.blm.gov/style/medialib/blm/ca/pdf/alturas/Sage_Steppe_Ecosystem_Resortation_Strategy.Par.1525.File.dat/SageSteppeStratey%20FEIS.pdf

The *NV CA Greater Sage Grouse Land Use Plan Amendment,* found at the following link:

https://eplanning.blm.gov/epl-front-office/eplanning/planAndProjectSite.do?methodName=renderDefaultPlanOrProjectSite&projectId=21152&dctmId=0b0003e8801f44ed

In addition, the grazing permittee and the owner of the small portion of private land within the project area will be an active participant in the long term management of the project's benefits as outlined in the attached Long Term Management Plan.

6. g. i. Long-Term Management Plan *(862: LTMP.pdf)*

The proposed project allows for the long-term sustainability of the land we are restoring. In their current condition native grasslands within the project area are not sustainable and would continue to be degraded if western juniper is not removed from the area.

The long-term objective of the project is to return native grasslands in the Spooner Reservoir watershed to pre-settlement conditions characterized by productive wet meadows, sagebrush steppe communities, and functioning watersheds. Restoration of full ecological function will occur over many years; however, native grasslands begin to recover quickly following juniper removal. For example, our CSSRI partnership has been implementing treatment prescriptions using conventional and modified forestry equipment and post treatment adaptive management on producer operations over the past nine years. The monitored results are showing a dramatic resurgence in perennial grasses and shrubs. In addition, recent studies by conducted by CSSRI on our SNC funded Ash Valley Watershed Restoration Project (#725), and the University of Oregon Cooperative Extension have also shown that juniper removal treatments improve hydrologic function after one year by increasing soil moisture throughout the growing season, increasing spring flow, and increasing the duration of ground water availability. As plant communities continue on a trajectory toward restoration they become more resilient and need minimal management to continue to recover potential native vegetation. Our juniper treatment restoration projects are sustainable with no maintenance for at least 10-15 years. The restoration treatments can be maintained in perpetuity if followed by minor hand treatments or prescribed or natural fire within a 25-30 year cycle.

Post-project maintenance and monitoring will be conducted for two years following project implementation by independent contractors hired by the grazing permittee with CSSRI/LCFSC assistance. These maintenance and monitoring efforts are described below.

Over the longer term, a 10-year long term management agreement will be executed with the grazing permittee, Ash Valley Ranch. Long-term management commitments by Ash Valley Ranch are also described below.

LCFSC Maintenance and Monitoring

Ash Valley Ranch will hire independent contractors to conduct monitoring of treatment efficacy for two years following project implementation. CSSRI has developed a monitoring protocol for evaluating the effects of western juniper (*Juniperus occidentalis*) treatment to restore montane meadow and sagebrush steppe ecological sites. This includes evaluating changes in the richness, density, and percent cover of herbaceous and woody perennial plant species as well as changes in tree species density and canopy cover pre- and post-treatment.

Random 100 meter transects will be selected throughout each project site in order to monitor vegetation changes on the majority of soil types, slopes, aspect and different treatment techniques represented within the treatment area. Stakes will be flagged and placed to delineate the transects at 0m, 50m, and 100m. The GPS location and compass bearing of each transect's beginning and end will be recorded to ensure the same transects can be revisited for future data collection and analysis. Color photographs of each transect at the 0m and 100m mark will be taken pre- and post-treatment and used as photo points.

To monitor changes in herbaceous plant species richness, density and cover and to monitor changes in the percent cover of woody perennial species, data will be collected from 1 meter squared ($1m^2$) quadrats placed along the 100 meter transects. The data recorded from each quadrat will include a complete list of species to determine the richness of each site (species/m^2), plant count for determination of density (native species/m^2) and an ocular estimation of cover to determine the percent cover for each species rooted within the square-meter quadrat, as well as percent cover estimates for bare ground, rocks, vegetative litter, and animal disturbance. Richness, density, and percent cover data will be collected in 20-quadrats along each 100 meter transect. Based on previous data collected within northeastern California montane meadow and sagebrush ecological sites, CSSRI has determined that 20 quadrats collected along the 100 meter transect results in a greater than 80% confidence level and 80% precision using a two-tail t-test.

To monitor changes in the density of trees and woody perennial plant species, a 9x100m belt transect will be established along the same transect used for the quadrats. Each individual having >50% of its rooted base within the belt transect will be counted. Data will be recorded by species and age class. Age class of each individual will be identified as either dead, immature-seedling, resprout, or mature-adult. A densiometer reading will be taken at the beginning of each quadrat along the 100 m transect in order to determine relative canopy cover of western juniper.

Data will be collected along each line transect prior to treatment, post treatment, and annually for three years following treatment in order to monitor and evaluate treatment success in restoring drought adapted native plant communities.
Data will be analyzed for transects within the treatment areas and compared to NRCS Ecological Site Descriptions (ESD) for the project area and the control transects to evaluate results. Annual Reports will be developed describing areas treated, methods of treatment and monitoring, results, and evaluation of results.

With the help of the University of California, Cooperative Extension in Lassen County and UC Davis and funding from SNC, CSSRI has already begun collecting data to assess soil moisture, ground water availability, and vegetative response following western juniper removal on an adjacent project watershed. Two new monitoring sites will be established in proposed control and treatment plots within the project area in conjunction with future treatments. Each site will consist of: a

rain gauge ((temperature data are collected from the three closest weather stations at Hayden Hill (10 mi W), Grasshopper Valley (5 mi S), and Ash Valley (5 mi N)) and six soil-moisture sensors (Decagon Devices 5TM) connected to two data loggers (Decagon Devices (Em50). The soil moisture sensors measure volumetric water content of the soil and are located along transects from low moisture (upland) to high moisture (riparian). Two of the soil moisture sensors are in the wet riparian area, two in the adjacent upland, and two in the transition zone between wet and upland. Piezometers have been set up at each soil moisture location (wet, transition, and dry) to monitor groundwater. Three livestock and wildlife exclosure cages will be set up at each soil moisture location to monitor vegetative productivity and three line transects have been established at each site to monitor changes in vegetation. Quantification will be possible by comparing the difference in pre-treatment and post-treatment soil moisture and days of ground water availability between control and treatment monitoring sites. We expect that the differences in pre- and post-treatment soil moisture and days of available ground water will be greater in the treated sites following juniper removal.

Ash Valley Ranch Maintenance and Monitoring

The property is a working cattle ranch with a keen emphasis on wildlife. Adaptive range management will continue to be implemented to ensure our restoration treatments are sustained In addition, Ash Valley Ranch is committed to rangeland restoration and the Ash Valley Ranch Management Plan shares many objectives with the proposed project. Ash Valley Ranch is also committed to carrying out the following activities to meet the long-term goals and objectives of the project and of the Ash Valley Ranch Management Plan:

- Annual road maintenance to reduce the potential for erosion to effect water quality;
- Annual inspections for noxious weeds; potential infestations will be treated immediately. (The Lassen County Agricultural Commissioner will assist with noxious weed monitoring and treatment);
- Adaptive management/prescribed grazing practices will be implemented to ensure that forage quality is maintained or improved;
- Adaptive management/prescribed grazing practices will be implemented that will result in meeting sage grouse and other sagebrush obligate needs
- The Ash Valley Ranch Management Plan will be reviewed every five years to review goals and objectives and determine whether protection and maintenance measures are working to meet the outlined goals and objectives.

Ongoing management will be funded through the private landowner's year in and year out cow calf cattle operation. The private landowner is an active participant in numerous conservation programs and receives high marks for being a progressive and conservation minded producer.

List of resources and references used to help develop management plan:

Bedell, T. E., L. E. Eddleman, T. Deboodt, and C. Jacks. 1993. Western juniper, its impact and management on Oregon rangelands. Oregon State University Extension Service, EC 1417.

Bureau of Land Management. 1996. Sampling Vegetation Attributes: Interagency Technical Reference. BLM National Applied Resource Sciences Center, BLM/RS/ST-96/002+1730. 163 p.
http://www.blm.gov/nstc/library/pdf/samplveg.pd.

DeBoodt, T.L, M.P. Fischer, J.C. Buckhouse, and John Swanson. 2009. Monitoring Hydrological Changes Related to Western Juniper Removal: A Paired Watershed Approach. The Third Interagency Conference on Research in the Watersheds. Estes Park, CO.

Eddleman L. 2002. Establishment and development of broadcast seeded grasses under western juniper slash. *In* Range Field Day Progress Report, Department of Rangeland Resources, Oregon State University and EOARC. Range Sciences Report #5. Prineville, OR.

Esgate, Thomas W., Ilano, Eileen. 2014 Ash Valley Ranch Native Grassland Restoration Vegetation Monitoring Report. Sierra Nevada Conservancy Grant #725.

Gorenzel, Paul W., Sonke A. Mastrup, and E. Lee Fitzhugh. 1995. Characteristics of brush piles used by birds in northern California. The Southwestern Naturalist 40(1):86-93.

Kuhn, Timothy J., Kenneth W.Tate, David Cao, and Melvin R. George. 2007. California Agriculture, 61(4):166-171.

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Wilson, R., D. Lile, D. Drake, S. Orloff, D. Lancaster, H. George, R. Delmas and A. Bower. 2005. Dryland Pastures: Establishment and Management in the Intermountain Region ofNorthern California. University of California, ANR publication 8163.

6. h. Performance Measures

We will report quantities and/or values of the following performance measures:

SNC Reporting/All Projects:

Number and Type of Jobs Created
Future project will preserve and create forest products sector jobs

Number and Value of New, Improved, or Preserved Economic Activities
Future project will help preserve employment in the forest products sector and renewable energy production activities, both of which are currently under stress.

Number of People Reached
The LCFSC will provide updates on our website, http://lassenfiresafecouncil.org regarding project implementation and successes. Our project is also regularly reported on in local papers and radio broadcasts.

Resources Leveraged for the Sierra Nevada
The LCFSC has a successful track record leveraging funds and we will leverage additional resources beyond those included in our budget.

Selected SNC Performance Measures:

Percent of Pre-project and Planning Efforts Resulting in Project Implementation
Our project planning efforts will result in the future project implementation

Number of Collaboratively Developed Plans and Assessments
Project will be implemented in conjunction with our collaborative Diamond Mountain Initiative.

7. Budget Documents

Budget Narrative:

This SNC request covers a portion of our project budget, $75,000. That will fund:

1. The Inter-Disciplinary Team Leader (IDT);

2. The Archaeological Survey (an estimated cost, which we will not know precisely until bids are received), and;

3. Portions of some yet to be determined surveys that the BLM staff will not be able to complete based on their work loads and budget cuts. These out-sourced surveys that will be needed to meet our completion time frame will be determined shortly after our grant agreement is signed.

The BLM Applegate Field Office will be providing at least an additional $20,000 in the form of in-kind resource specialists/survey work and other staff contributions needed to complete the NEPA work.

The owner of the small portion of private land within the project area is providing a $15,000 cash contribution which will fund the overall project management.

Project Director will be responsible for the overall project management including the preparation of bid documents and contracts for project contractors, contractor management, review of invoices, presentation of invoices to the LCFSC Board of Directors for payment approval, progress reporting, invoicing SNC for reimbursements and advances, performance reporting and final reporting/performance reporting and project closeout. Project Director also serves as the lead for the CSSRI partnership and he will interact with its participants to gain additional input and support for the project.

LCFSC will contract with a qualified individual to serve as the IDT for the project. The IDT role will be to draft an Environmental Assessment (EA) document. Some of the surveys needed to complete a draft EA were completed for a 2012 EA issued for a grazing permit that covered the project area and they will need to be refreshed. The IDT will work with the BLMAFO staff to identify which surveys can be completed within the project time line and what surveys may need to be contracted out in order to complete our project within the planned time frame. We already know that the Archaeological/Cultural Resource survey will need to be contracted out. The IDT will also be working with BLMAFO staff as the draft EA document is developed and completed. The final EA document will also be used to obtain CEQA Clearance.

LCFSC Secretary/Treasurer will manage project accounts, receive funds on behalf of LCFSC and issue checks upon LCFSC Board of Directors approval of invoices.

The project administrative request will cover cost allocated portions of expenses such as insurance, bookkeeping, audits, etc. per the LCFSC Cost Allocation Plan.

SIERRA NEVADA CONSERVANCY
SNC Watershed Improvement Program - DETAILED BUDGET FORM

Project Name: Spooner Reservoir Watershed Restoration Project

Applicant: Lassen County Fire Safe Council, Inc.

SECTION ONE **DIRECT COSTS**	**Year One**	**Year Two**	**Year Three**	**Year Four**	**Year Five**	**Total**
IDT Leader	$16,000.00					$16,000.00
Archaeological Survey	$40,000.00					$40,000.00
Other Surveys	$7,375.00					$7,375.00
						$0.00
						$0.00
						$0.00
						$0.00
DIRECT COSTS SUBTOTAL:	$63,375.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$63,375.00

SECTION TWO **PARTIAL INDIRECT COSTS**	**Year One**	**Year Two**	**Year Three**	**Year Four**	**Year Five**	**Total**
Reportng/Perfomace Measures	$2,000.00	$2,000.00				$4,000.00
Invoice Billings	$1,000.00	$1,000.00				$2,000.00
						$0.00
						$0.00
INDIRECT COSTS SUBTOTAL:	$3,000.00	$3,000.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$6,000.00
PROJECT TOTAL:	$66,375.00	$3,000.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$69,375.00

SECTION THREE **Administrative Costs (Costs may n*ot exceed 15% of the above listed Project costs*) :**						**Total**
Administrative Costs	$5,625.00					$5,625.00
						$0.00
						$0.00
						$0.00
						$0.00
ADMINISTRATIVE TOTAL:	$5,625.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$5,625.00
SNC TOTAL GRANT REQUEST:	$72,000.00	$3,000.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$75,000.00

SECTION FOUR **OTHER PROJECT CONTRIBUTIONS**	**Year One**	**Year Two**	**Year Three**	**Year Four**	**Year Five**	**Total**
List other funding or in-kind contibutors to project (i.e. Sierra Business Council, Department of Water Resources, etc.)						
BLM (Surveys)	$20,000.00					$20,000.00
Ash Valley Ranch (Project Mgt.)	$15,000.00					$15,000.00
						$0.00
						$0.00
						$0.00
						$0.00
Total Other Contributions:	$35,000.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$35,000.00

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.

Added to file 3/22/16 (PE)

Appendix F - CEQA/NEPA Compliance Form

(California Environmental Quality Act & National Environmental Policy Act)

Instructions: All applicants must complete the CEQA compliance section. Check the box that describes the CEQA status of the proposed project. You must also complete the documentation component and submit any surveys, and/or reports that support the checked CEQA status.

If NEPA is applicable to your project, you must complete the NEPA section in addition to the CEQA section. Check the box that describes the NEPA status of the proposed project. Submit any surveys, and/or reports that support the NEPA status. For both CEQA and NEPA, submittal of permits is only necessary if they contain conditions providing information regarding potential environmental impacts.

NOTE: Effective July 1, 2015, AB52 compliance is required.

CEQA STATUS

(All applicants must complete this section)

Check the box that corresponds with the CEQA compliance for your project. The proposed action is either Categorically Exempt from CEQA, requires a Negative Declaration, Mitigated Negative Declaration, or an Environmental Impact Report per CEQA.

☐ **Categorical Exemption or Statutory Exemption**

If a project is exempt from CEQA, all applicants, including public agencies that provide a filed Notice of Exemption, are required to provide a clear and comprehensive description of the physical attributes of the project site, including potential and known special-status species and habitat, in order for the SNC to make a determination that the project is exempt. A particular project that ordinarily would fall under a specific category of exemption may require further CEQA review due to individual circumstances, i.e., it is within a sensitive location, has a cumulative impact, has a significant effect on the environment , is within a scenic highway, impacts an historical resource, or is on a hazardous waste site. Potential cultural/archaeological resources must be noted, but do not need to be specifically listed or mapped at the time of application submittal. Backup data informing the exemption decision, such as biological surveys, Cultural Information Center requests, research papers, etc. should accompany the full application. Applicants anticipating the SNC to file an exemption should conduct the appropriate surveys and submit an information request to an office of the California Historical Resources Information System (CHRIS).

1. Describe how your project complies with the requirements for claiming a Categorical or Statutory Exemption per CEQA:

   NA Planning Project; there will be no earth disturbance associated with collections, testing or monitoring.

2. If your organization is a state or local governmental agency, submit a signed, approved Notice of Exemption (NOE) documenting the use of the Categorical Exemption or Statutory Exemption, along with any permits, surveys, and/or reports that have been completed to support this CEQA status. The Notice of Exemption must bear a date stamp to show that it has been filed with the State Clearinghouse and/or County Clerk, as required by CEQA.
3. If your organization is a nonprofit, there is no other California public agency having discretionary authority over your project, and you would like the SNC to prepare a NOE for your project, let us know that and list any permits, surveys, and/or reports that have been completed to support the CEQA status. All supplementary documentation must be provided to the SNC before the NOE can be prepared.

☐ **Negative Declaration OR**
☐ **Mitigated Negative Declaration**

If a project requires a Negative Declaration or Mitigated Negative Declaration, then applicants must work with a qualified public agency, i.e., one that has discretionary authority over project approval or permitting, to complete the CEQA process.

1. Describe how your project complies with the requirements for the use of a Negative Declaration or a Mitigated Negative Declaration per CEQA:

   NA Planning Project; there will be no earth disturbance associated with collections, testing or monitoring.

2. Submit the approved Initial Study and Negative Declaration/Mitigated Negative Declaration along with any Mitigation Monitoring or Reporting Plans, permits, surveys, and/or reports that have been completed to support this CEQA status. The IS/ND/MND must be accompanied by a signed, approved Notice of Determination, which must bear a date stamp to show that it has been filed with the State Clearinghouse and/or County Clerk, as required by CEQA.

☐ **Environmental Impact Report**

If a project requires an Environmental Impact Report, then applicants must work with a qualified public agency, i.e., one that has discretionary authority over project approval or permitting, to complete the CEQA process.

1. Describe how your project complies with the requirements for the use of an Environmental Impact Report per CEQA:

   NA Planning Project; there will be no earth disturbance associated with collections, testing or monitoring.

2. Submit the Draft and Final Environmental Impact Report along with any Mitigation Monitoring or Reporting Plans, permits, surveys, and/or reports that have been completed to support this CEQA status. The EIR documentation must be accompanied by a signed, approved Notice of Determination, which must bear a date stamp to show that it has been filed with the State Clearinghouse and/or County Clerk, as required by CEQA.

NEPA STATUS

Check the box that corresponds with the NEPA compliance for your project.

☐ **Categorical Exclusion**
Submit the signed, approved Decision Memo and Categorical Exclusion, as well as documentation to support the Categorical Exclusion, including any permits, surveys, and/or reports that have been completed to support this NEPA status.

☐ **Environmental Assessment & Finding of No Significant Impact**
Submit the signed, approved Environmental Assessment and Finding of No Significant Impact along with any permits, surveys, and/or reports that have been completed to support this NEPA status.

☐ **Environmental Impact Statement**
Submit the Draft and approved, Final Environmental Impact Statement, along with the Record of Decision and any permits, surveys, and/or reports that have been completed to support this NEPA status.

NA Planning Project; there will be no earth disturbance associated with collections, testing or monitoring.

8. Supplementary Documents

a. Environmental Documentation

i. California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) documentation
(862: CEQA.pdf)

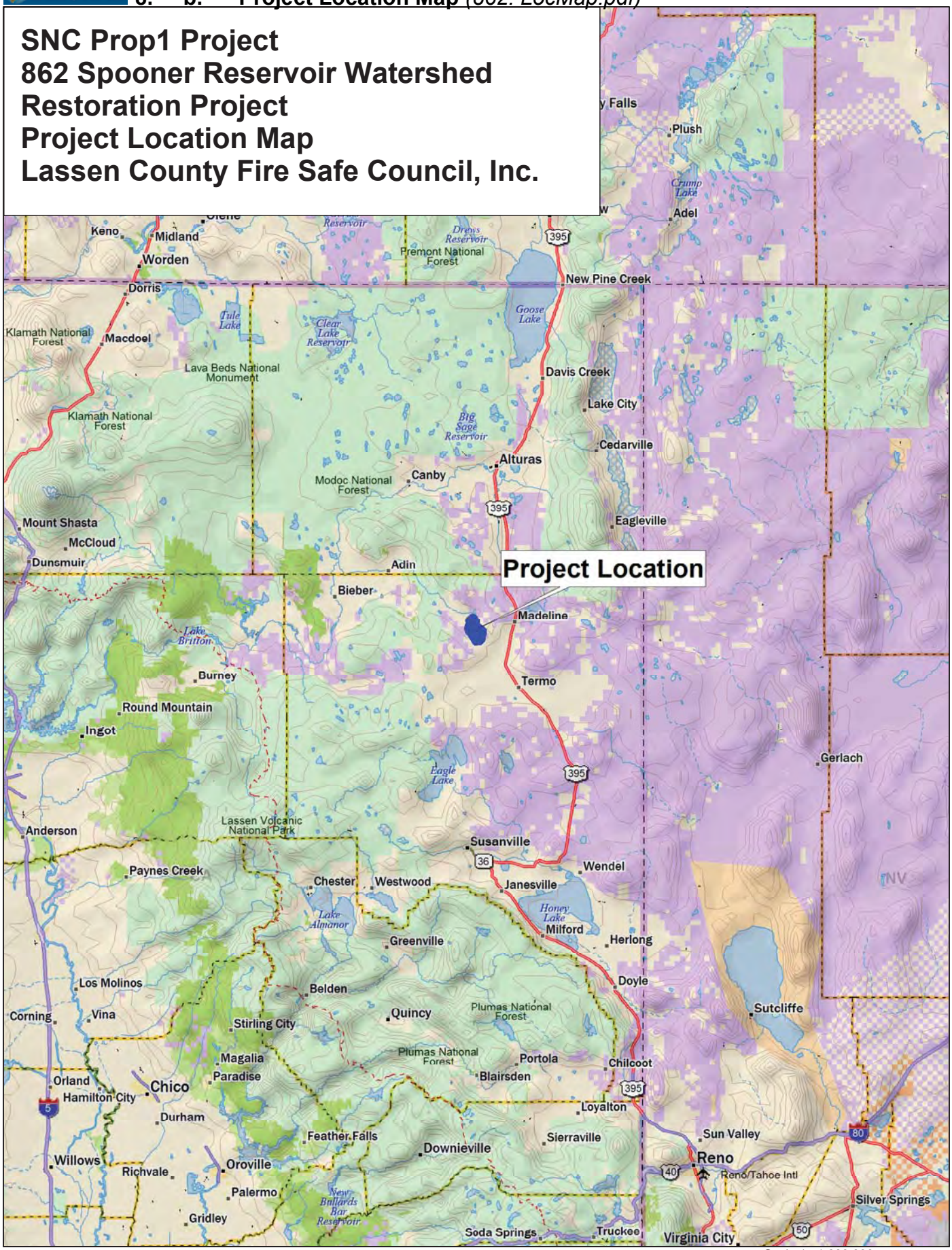
N/A Pre project activity; there will be no earth disturbance associated with collections, testing or monitoring.

8. a. ii. National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) documentation
(862: NEPA.pdf)

N/A Pre project activity; there will be no earth disturbance associated with collections, testing or monitoring.

8. b. Maps and Photos

SNC Prop1 Project
862 Spooner Reservoir Watershed Restoration Project
Project Location Map
Lassen County Fire Safe Council, Inc.



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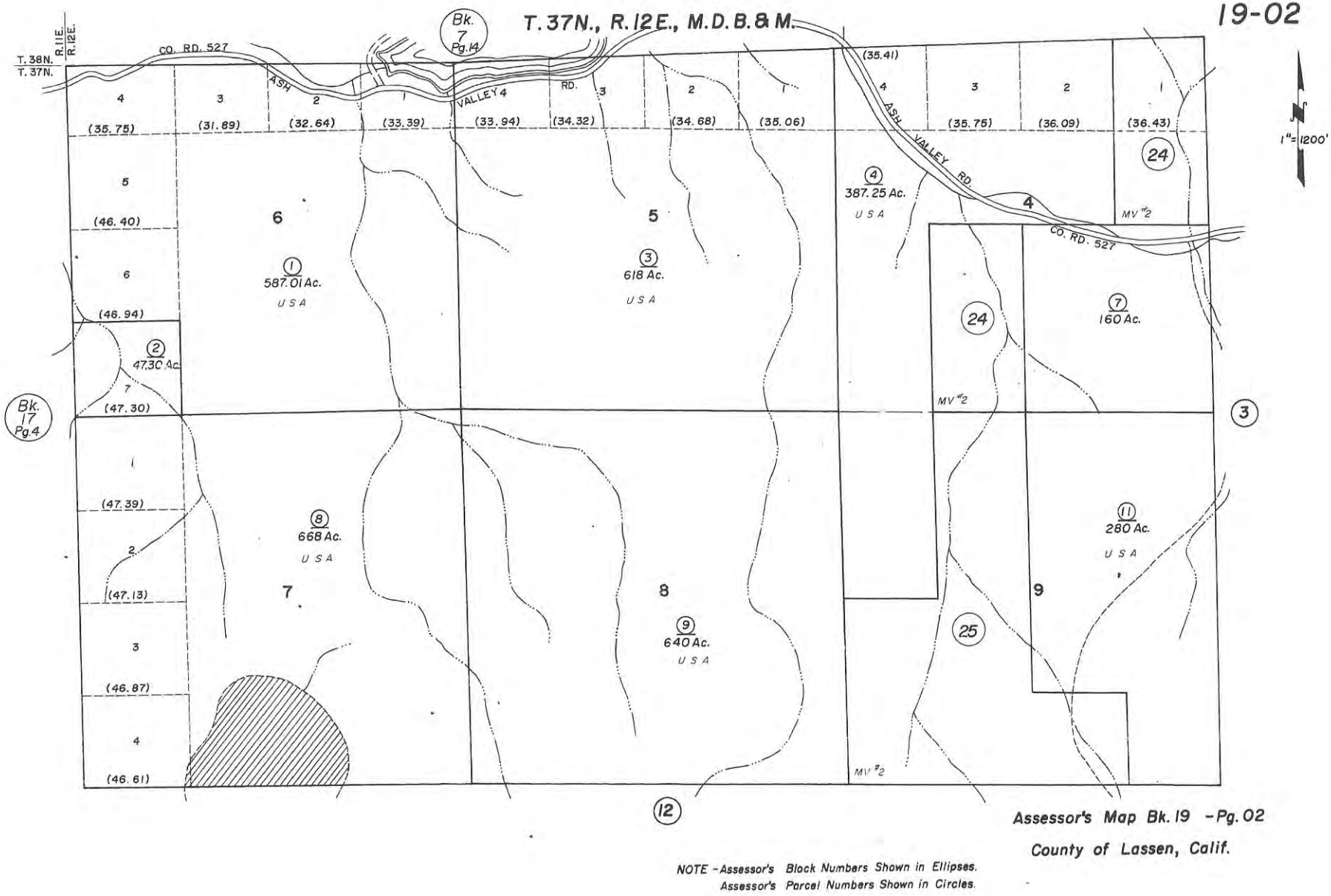
1" = 25.25 mi
Data Zoom 7-0



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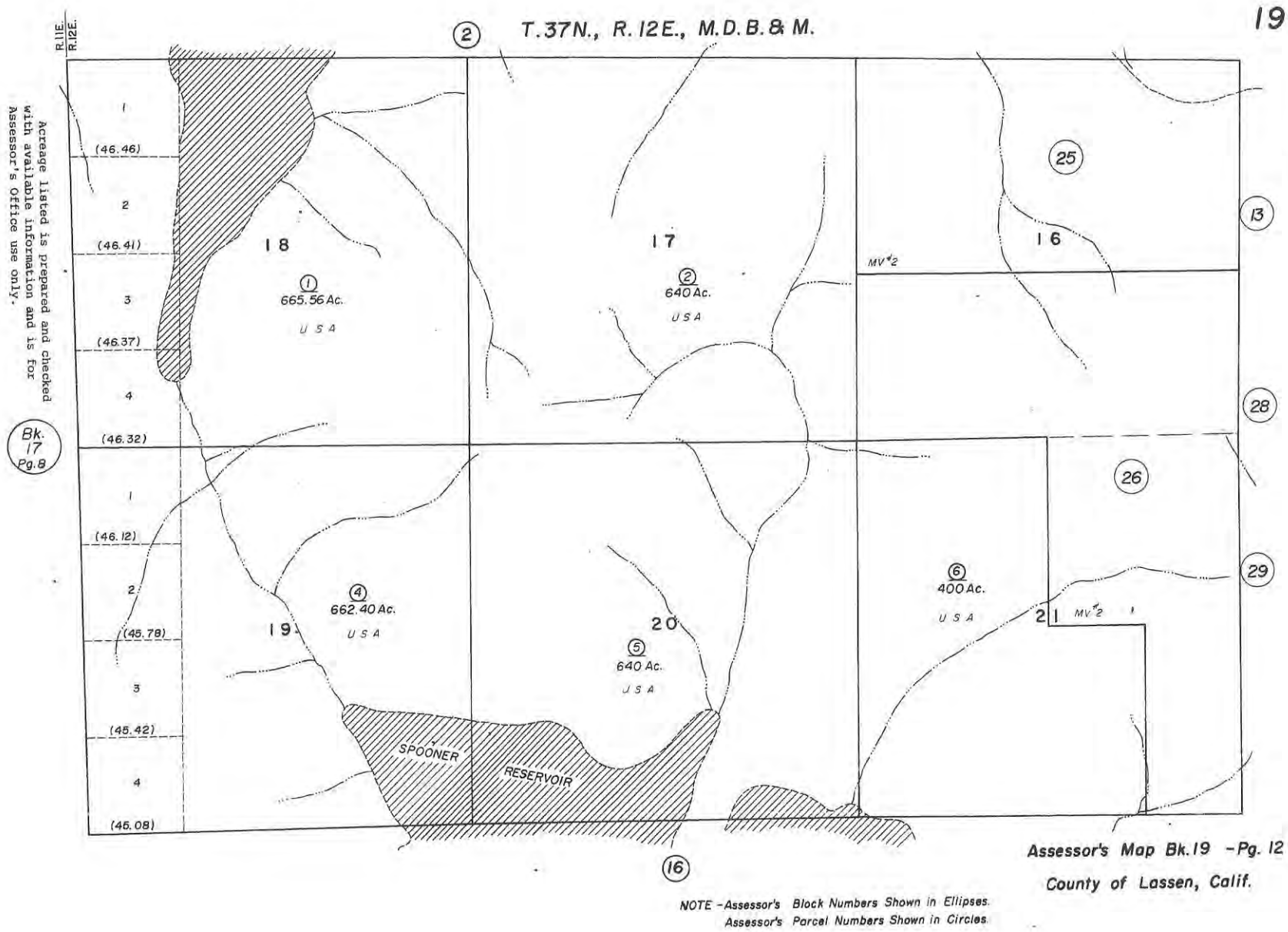
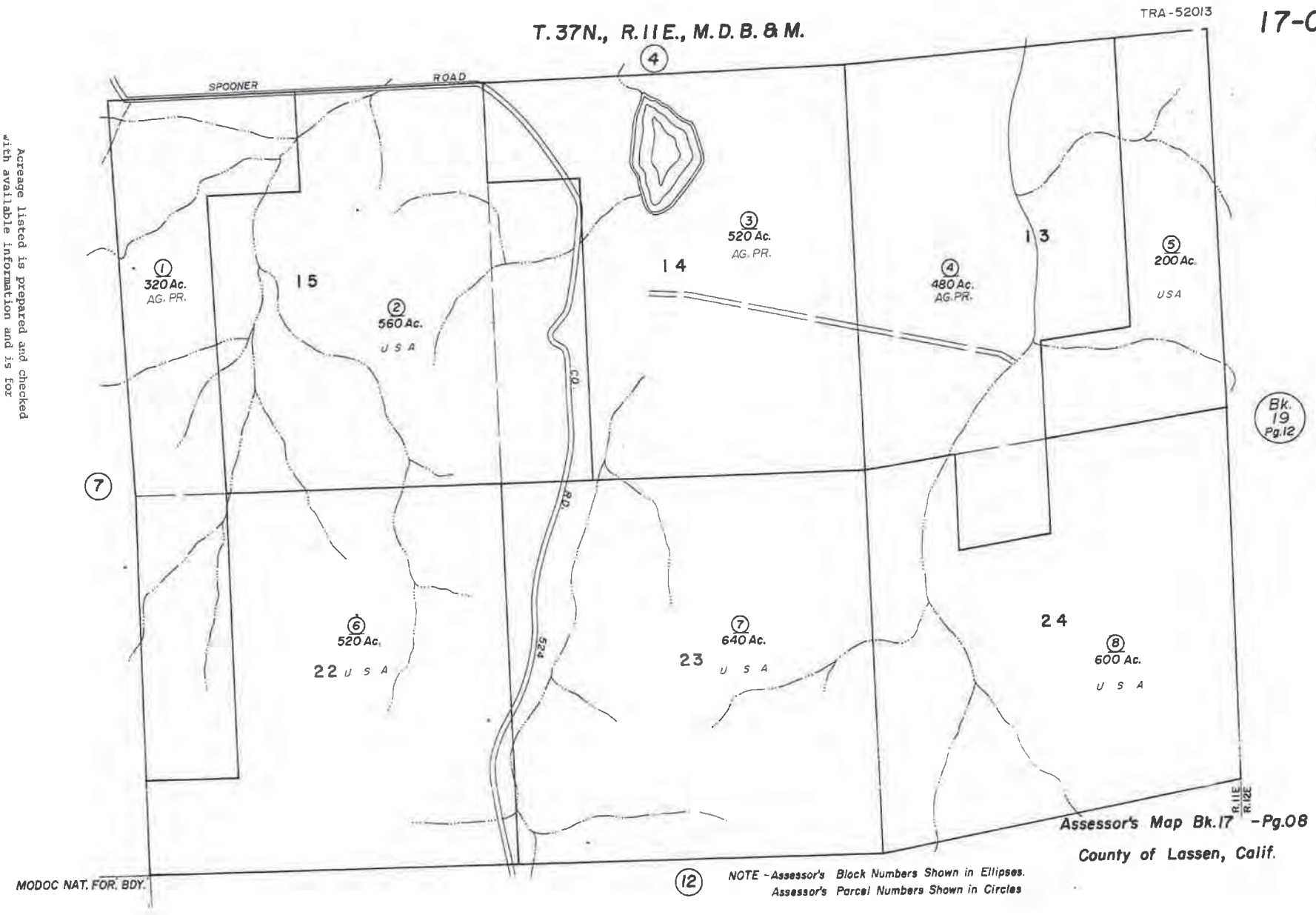

19-12
T.37N., R.12E., M.D.B.& M.
R.11E.
R.12E.
1"=1200'
Acreage listed is prepared and checked with available information and is for Assessor's office use only.
Bk. 17 Pg.8
(46.46)
(46.41)
(46.37)
(46.32)
(46.12)
(46.78)
(46.42)
(46.08)
18
① 665.56 Ac. USA
17
② 640 Ac. USA
16
MV"2
25
13
28
26
29
19
④ 662.40 Ac. USA
20
⑤ 640 Ac. USA
⑥ 400 Ac. USA
21
MV"2
SPOONER RESERVOIR
2
16
Assessor's Map Bk.19 -Pg. 12
County of Lassen, Calif.
NOTE -Assessor's Block Numbers Shown in Ellipses.
Assessor's Parcel Numbers Shown in Circles.



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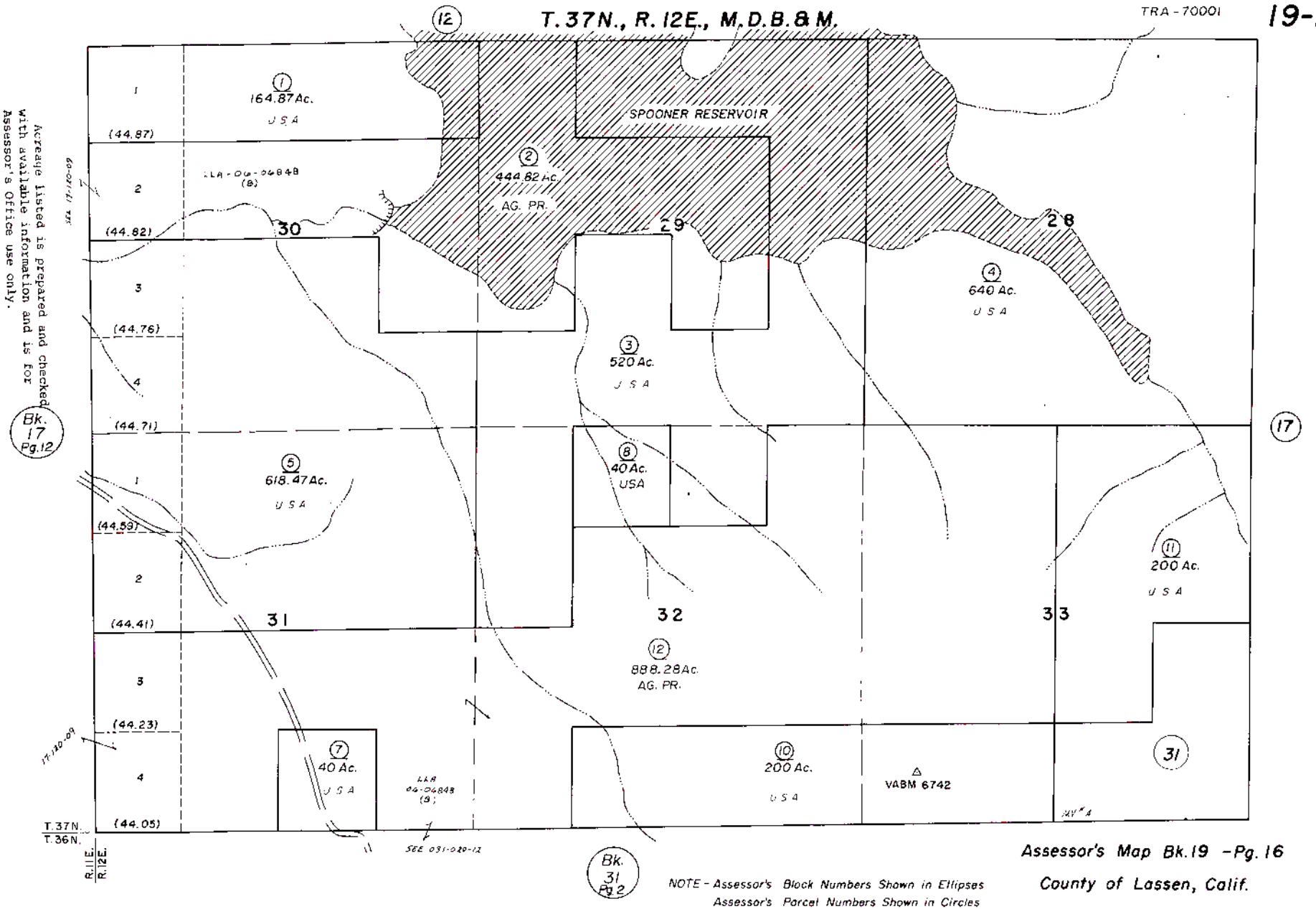
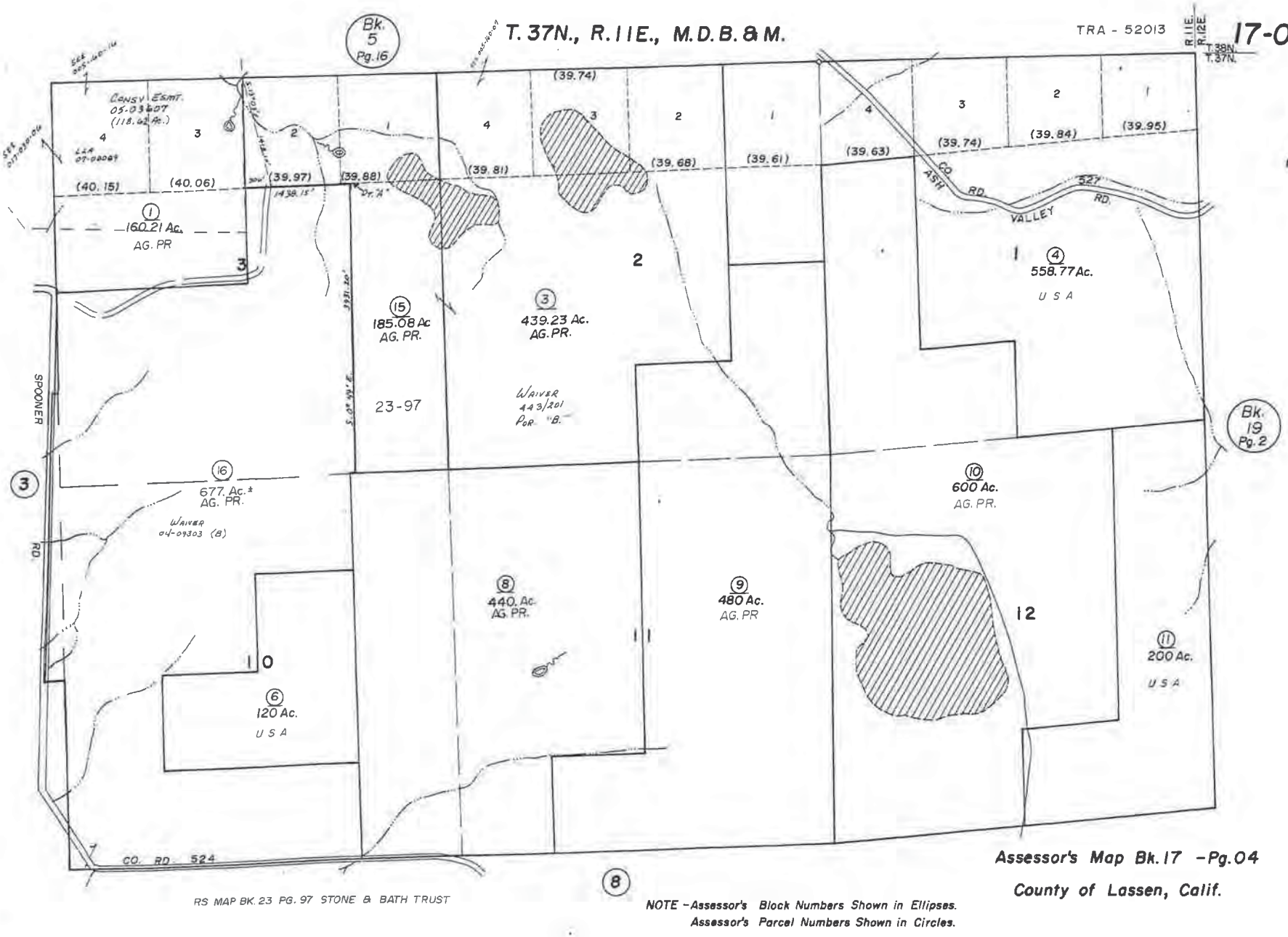
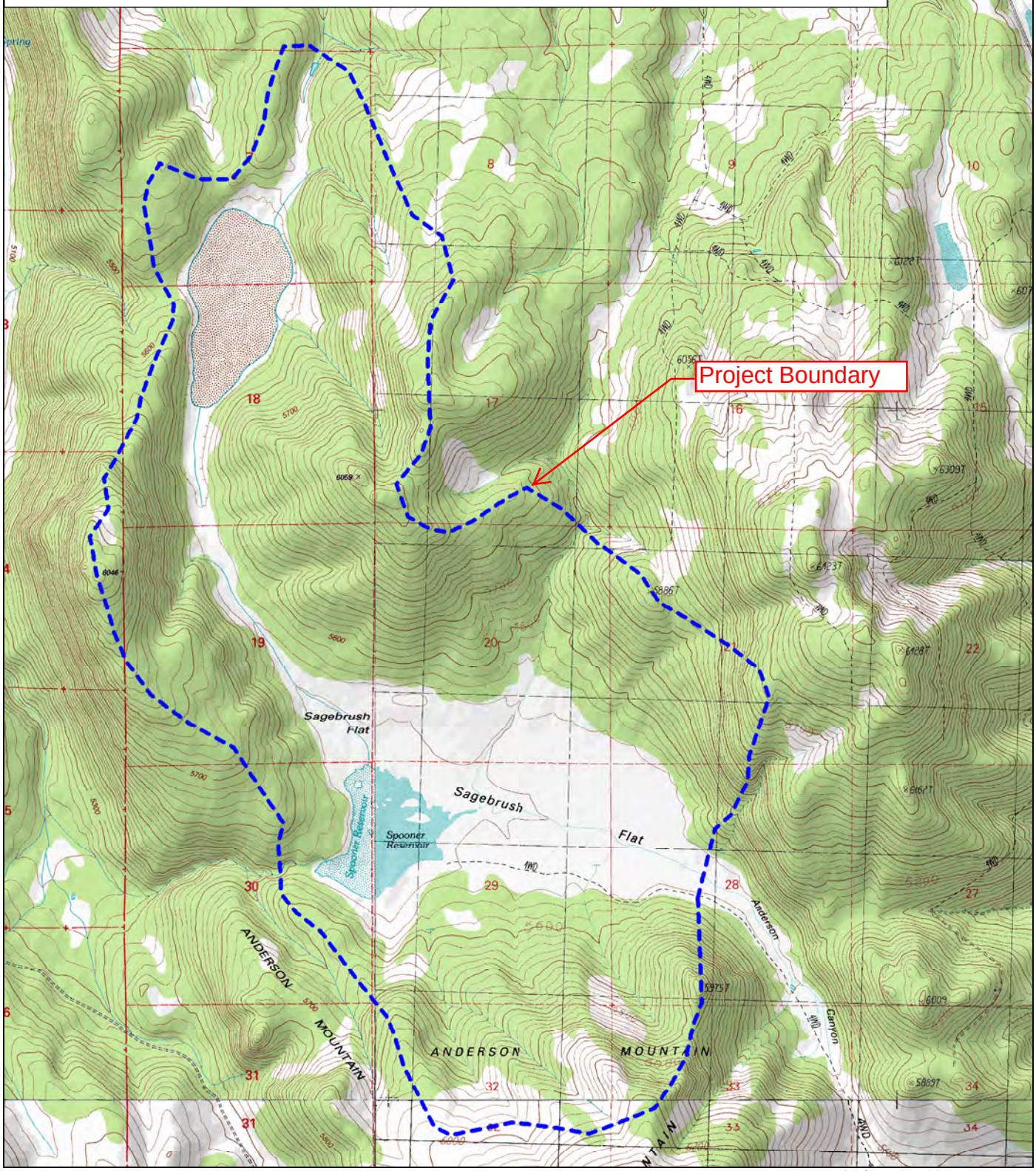

T. 37N., R. 12E., M.D.B.&M.
TRA - 70001
19-16
SPOONER RESERVOIR
1" = 1200'
1 164.87 Ac. U S A
2 444.82 Ac. AG. PR.
3 520 Ac. U S A
4 640 Ac. U S A
5 618.47 Ac. U S A
7 40 Ac. U S A
8 40 Ac. USA
10 200 Ac. U S A
11 200 Ac. U S A
12 888.28 Ac. AG. PR.
VABM 6742
LLA - 04-04848 (B)
SEE 031-020-12
Acreage listed is prepared and checked with available information and is for Assessor's Office use only.
Bk. 17 Pg. 12
Bk. 31 Pg. 2
T. 37N. T. 36N.
R. 11E. R. 12E.
NOTE - Assessor's Block Numbers Shown in Ellipses
Assessor's Parcel Numbers Shown in Circles
Assessor's Map Bk. 19 - Pg. 16
County of Lassen, Calif.



SNC Prop1 Project
862 Spooner Reservoir Watershed Restoration Project
Topo Map
Lassen County Fire Safe Council, Inc.



TN
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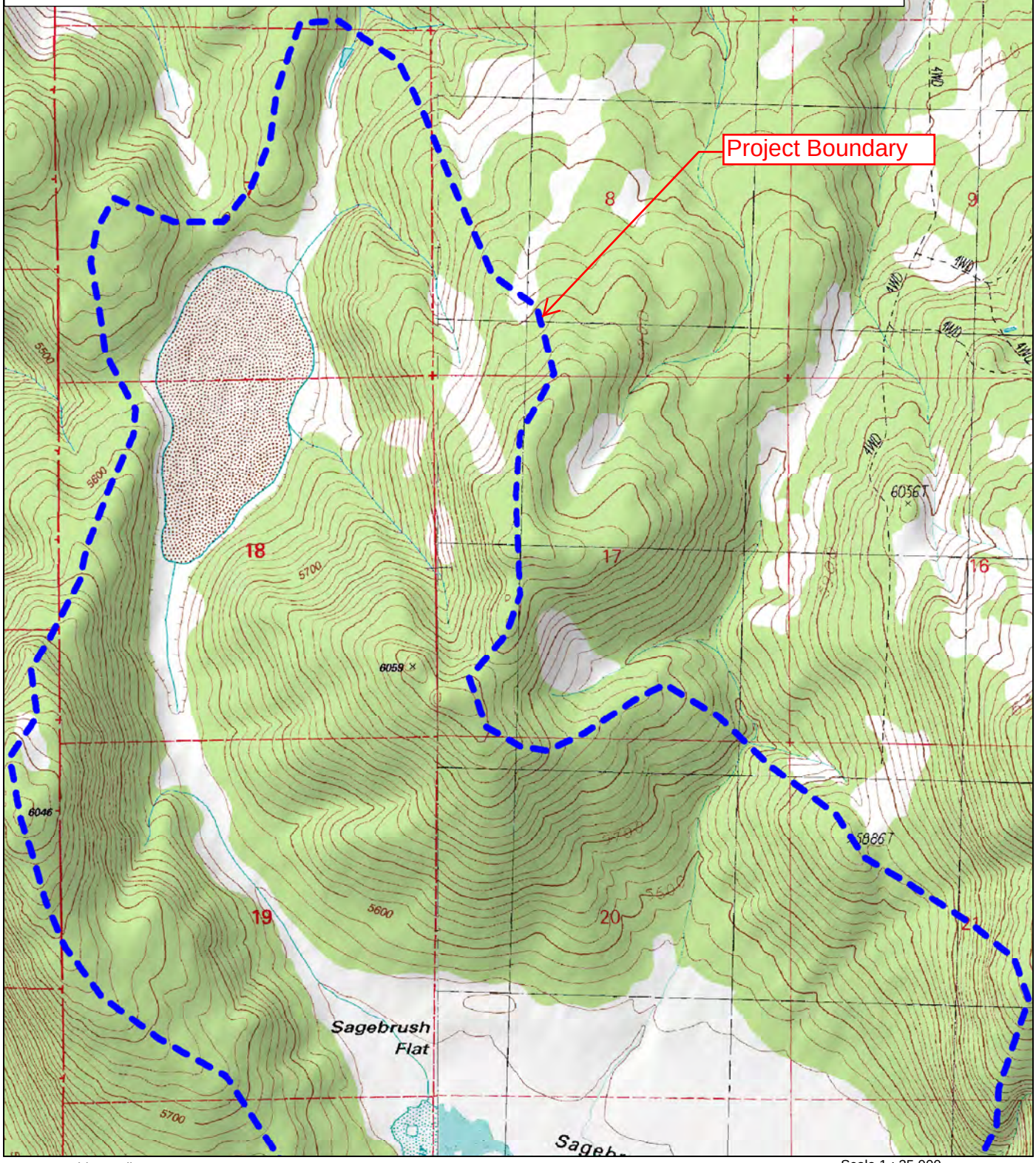
SNC Prop1 Project
862 Spooner Reservoir Watershed Restoration Project
Topo Map North
Lassen County Fire Safe Council, Inc.



TN
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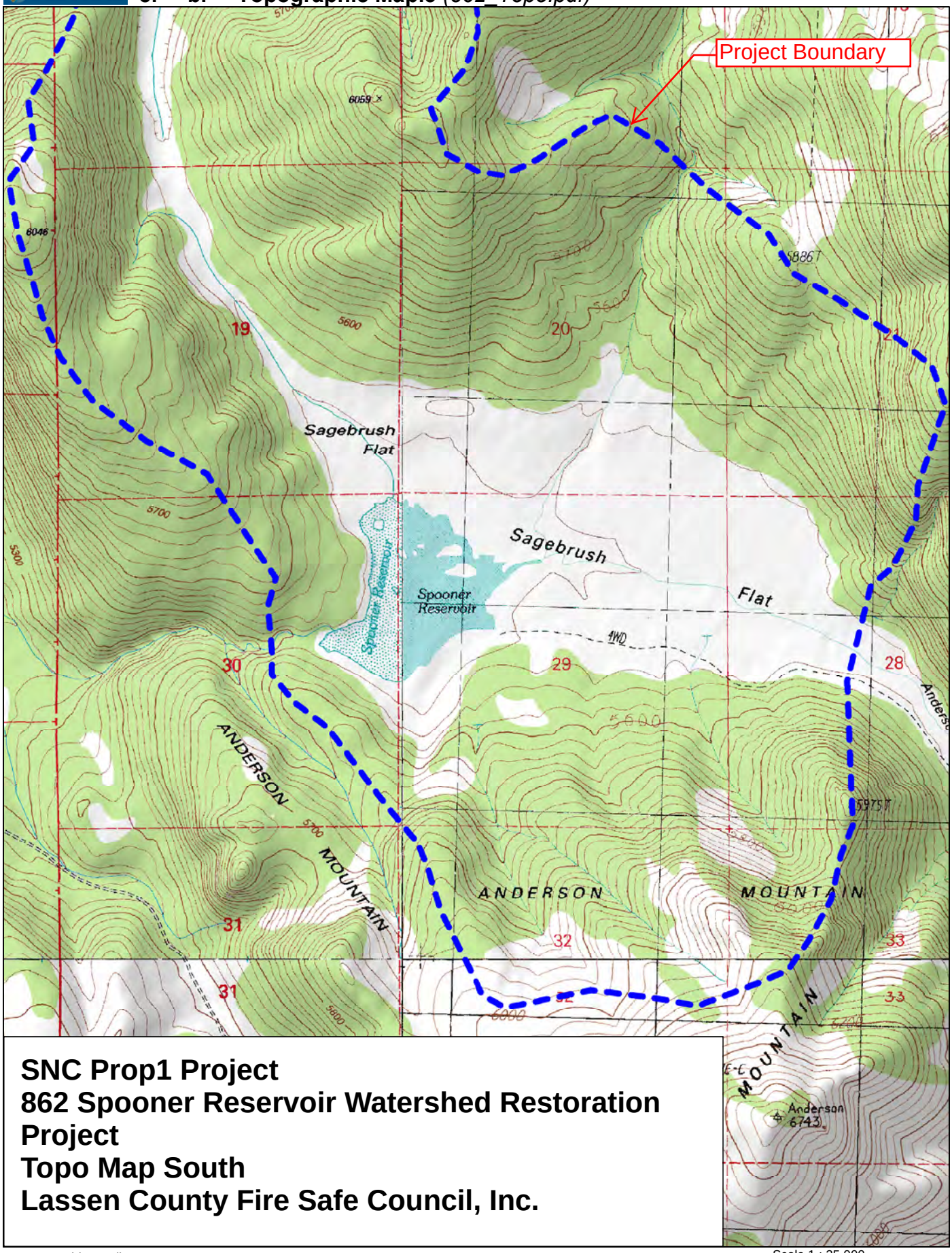

SNC Prop1 Project
862 Spooner Reservoir Watershed Restoration Project
Topo Map South
Lassen County Fire Safe Council, Inc.

TN
MN (14.1°E)

Scale 1 : 25,000
1" = 2,083.3 ft Data Zoom 13-0

Spooner Reservoir 2006

Spooner Reservoir 2014