

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

TO: Office of Planning & Research
1400 Tenth Street, Room 121
Sacramento, CA 95814

FROM: Plumas County Planning and Building Services
555 Main Street
Quincy, CA 95971
(530) 283-7011

County Clerk
County of Plumas

Project Title: Mount Hough Trail Maintenance (Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation Grants and Cooperative Agreements Program) Grant Application Ground Operations Mount Hough

Project Location: The project is located within the Mt. Hough Ranger District, Plumas National Forest, in Plumas County, California. The motorized trail network proposed in the Mt. Hough area is located between Spanish Creek east to Grizzly Ridge, north to Indian Falls Ridge, and south to Highway 70. Mt. Hough encompasses all or portions of: T24N, R10E, sections 1, 4-6, and 9; T25N, R9E, sections 1, 2, 11-13, and 23-25; T25N, R10E, sections 6-9, 14-24, and 28-33; T25N, R11E, sections 30-33; and T24N, R11E, sections 4, 9, 10, and 15, MDBM.

Description of Project: The Mount Hough Project consists of maintenance activities on OHV Trails located in Plumas Forest. Plumas County is partnering with Plumas Forest (land manager) and Sierra Buttes Trail Stewardship (501c3 non-profit), to continue maintenance on the Mt. Hough Trail System (MHTS). Maintenance will be performed by SBTS under contract. Project coordination will be done by Plumas County. Project monitoring will be carried-out by Plumas Forest and Plumas County. In order to manage, control and measure the project's success, project coordinators will plan work assignments, equipment use and manage costs. Plumas Forest has developed strict standards to protect resources within the Mount Hough area and resource specialists are involved in OHV management. Routine soil monitoring surveys will be performed in accordance with the 2008 Soil Standards. Trails provide opportunities for varied levels of riding difficulty. Maintenance has been approved through an Environmental Analysis (Mt. Hough - South Park EA). Project scope includes maintenance of 21 miles of trails (12 miles of single-track, 9 miles of quad trails). Trails are heavily used by the public and require on-going maintenance in order to protect the watershed and soil, and to ensure the trails are sustainable and safe. Forest Service EM-7720-103 specifications adapted to local conditions will guide trail maintenance. Trail maintenance follows minimum design parameter guidelines for motorized trails identified in Forest Service Handbook (FSH) 2309.18. Trail maintenance activities include:

1. Brushing- Removal of excess vegetation from within the trail corridor. This will be accomplished using hand crews with chain saws and pruning shears, and Pulaskis for removing root wads. The area has seen extensive logging and has experienced both wildfires and controlled burns, stimulating rapid growth of Manzanita and brush. This expeditious growth requires on-going brushing and root wad removal to ensure the trails are safe with open sight lines.
2. Grooming- Filling small ruts developed in the trail tread and removing slough material. Grooming is accomplished using hand crews with scraping tools, and in more severe cases, a mini excavator is used. While the Mount Hough Trail System is a newly designated OHV area, it has become extremely popular with the recreating public and receives heavy use from both motorized and non-motorized users.
3. Tread Armoring- Tread armoring is performed to protect from soil loss in areas where the grade is either too steep to sustain wheeled traffic or in low spots that develop puddles. Native rock is used in all tread armoring and requires the following tools and equipment: hand digging tools, mini excavator,

Griphoist, Magnum Buster with charges, Pionjar rock drill and motorized wheelbarrow for rock transport. Proper tread armoring takes a considerable amount of time for a hand crew to perform; requiring large rocks (sometimes weighing in excess of 300 pounds) to be gathered, transported and perfectly placed.

4. Volunteer Opportunities- Volunteer workdays will be offered throughout the season and provide opportunities for the public to learn about and participate in the project and to learn Tread Lightly techniques and proper trail etiquette. Volunteers help maintain the tread and perform brushing. Volunteer workdays have drawn as many as 78 volunteers to a single outing and have averaged 34 volunteers per event. Workdays allow all user groups to work together and also get to know one another's recreational needs and concerns. SBTS is a multi-use organization and has a long history of leading volunteer work crews safely and effectively on a wide range of trail projects on private, county, state and federal lands.

5. Vehicle barriers- Repair and installation of signs and barriers to prevent OHV use off the trail system. Large rocks and logs will be used to keep users on the trail. Signs (recycled materials) will be replaced as needed. Several previously installed trail signs have been shot at, run over and otherwise destroyed by the public, leaving key trail intersections unmarked.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: Plumas County (Plumas County will administer the grant funds)

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: Plumas County Public Facilities Department

Exempt Status (Check one)

- No possible significant environmental effect (Sec. 21082.2; 15061(b)(3));
- Ministerial (Sec. 21080(b)(1); 15268);
- Categorical Exemption. Section Number: 15301 (c) (Class 1)
- Statutory Exemptions. State Code Number: CEQA 15264
- Emergency Project (Section 15269)

Reason why project is exempt: This project consists of the maintenance of existing recreational trails.

5-15-15
Date Randy Wilson, Zoning Administrator

5/15/15
Date Filed Kathleen Williams, County Clerk/Deputy

Certificate of Posting

I hereby certify that from 5/15/15 to 6/14/15 (30 days), I posted a copy of this Notice of Exemption in the Office of the Plumas County Clerk.

By Kathleen Williams, County Clerk/Deputy Date: 5/15/15