



**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
**SPECIAL Board Meeting of the:**  
**Honey Lake Valley Resource Conservation District**  
**1516 Main Street**  
**Susanville, CA 96130**  
**(530)260-0067**

Attachments available 04/08/25 at [www.honeylakevalleyrzd.us](http://www.honeylakevalleyrzd.us)

**Date: Friday, April 11th, 2025**

**Location: 1516 Main Street, Susanville CA 96130**

**Time: 4:00 PM**

**AGENDA**

NOTE: THE HONEY LAKE VALLEY RESOURCE CONSERVATION DISTRICT MAY ADVISE ACTION ON ANY OF THE AGENDA ITEMS SHOWN BELOW.

NOTE: IF YOU NEED A DISABILITY-RELATED MODIFICATION OR ACCOMMODATION, INCLUDING AUXILIARY AIDS OR SERVICES, TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS MEETING, PLEASE CONTACT THE DISTRICT OFFICE AT THE TELEPHONE NUMBER AND ADDRESS LISTED ABOVE AT LEAST A DAY BEFORE THE MEETING.

**I. CALL TO ORDER, ROLL CALL**

**II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA -**

*Tie to the Strategic Plan: Strategic Issue 1 – Build HLVRCD leadership & organizational capacity.*

**III. PUBLIC COMMENT**

Per RCD Board Policy No. 5030.4.1, during this portion of the meeting, any member of the public is permitted to make a brief statement, express his/her viewpoint, or ask a question regarding matters related to the District. Five (5) minutes may be allotted to each speaker and a maximum of twenty (20) minutes to each subject matter.

**IV. ITEMS FOR BOARD ACTION AND/OR DISCUSSION - RCD**

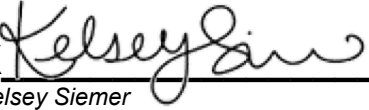
- A. Consideration and approval of final McKenzie Meadows Restoration Project CEQA Statutory Exemption for Restoration projects (SERP) concurrence request (attachment)

*Tie to the Strategic Plan: Strategic Issue 1 – Build HLVRCD leadership & organizational capacity.*

**V. ADJOURNMENT**

The next Honey Lake Valley RCD meeting will be **April 24th, 2025, at 5:30 PM.** The location is 1516 Main Street, Susanville, CA.

*I certify that on Tuesday, April 11th, 2025 agendas were posted as required by Government Code Section 54956 and any other applicable law.*

**X**   
\_\_\_\_\_  
Kelsey Siemer  
District Manager



**CEQA STATUTORY EXEMPTION FOR RESTORATION PROJECTS (SERP) CONCURRENCE REQUEST**

**Completion and submission of this form is voluntary. This form may be submitted to request concurrence from the Director of Fish and Wildlife pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21080.56.**

The Lead Agency may submit this signed form (pdf) and all attachments via the Department’s [Environmental Permit Information Management System \(EPIMS\) Document Repository](#) or via email at [restorationpermitting@wildlife.ca.gov](mailto:restorationpermitting@wildlife.ca.gov).

**1. LEAD AGENCY**

Lead Agency Name:	Honey Lake Valley RCD
Contact Person’s Name:	Kelsey Marks
Street Address:	1516 Main Street
City, State, Zip:	Susanville, CA 96130
Contact Person’s Telephone:	530-260-0067
Contact Person’s E-mail:	kmarks@honeylakevalleyrkd.us

**2. PROJECT PROPONENT**

**Check Box and Skip to Number 3 if Same as Lead Agency**

Business/Agency/Organization:	Plumas Corporation
Contact Person’s Name:	Terri Rust
Street Address:	418 N. Mill Creek Rd
City, State, Zip:	Quincy, CA 95971
Contact Person’s Telephone:	530-283-3739
Contact Person’s E-mail:	terri@plumascorp.org

**3. PROJECT INFORMATION**

A. Project Name:	McKenzie Meadows Restoration Project Phase 1
B. County or Counties:	Lassen
C. Lat./Long. Coordinates:	40.347719 120.910114
D. Estimated Project Start/End Dates:	August 1, 2025 – December 31, 2028

E. Provide a brief description of the future discretionary Project approval the Lead Agency is considering (see CEQA Guidelines sections 15352 and 15378) and an approximate date range for when the Lead Agency may make that approval if the Lead Agency obtains a SERP concurrence from CDFW.

The Honey Lake Valley Resource Conservation District (HLVRCD) is a special district of the state of California and is implementing the Project.



F. Provide a brief description of the Project location, size, and funding sources. Please cite and attach any supporting documents.

The McKenzie Meadows Restoration Project is a 698-acre multi-phase meadow restoration project located on private industrial timberlands in southwestern Lassen County near the Plumas County line, approximately 5.5 miles northeast of Westwood, CA. See the Vicinity Map provided in Attachment 1.

Preliminary design work was funded by the Bella Vista Foundation (2018) and the Wildlife Conservation Board's 2020 Forest Conservation Program. While planning (topographic surveys, resource surveys and conceptual designs) was completed on 698 acres, proposed restoration work has been divided into several phases. Funding for restoration of the 212-acre McKenzie Meadows Restoration Project Phase 1 ('Project') was approved (March 2025) from the Sierra Meadows Partnership Grant Program, which received funding from the Wildlife Conservation Board via a block grant. A contract will be awarded once environmental compliance is completed.

G. Provide a brief Project description, including any post-restoration work, operation and maintenance, or other related activities. Summarize the Project's expected environmental benefits (e.g., acres or stream-miles restored/enhanced, species benefitted, etc.). Please cite and attach any supporting documents.

The primary goal of the Project is to restore 212 acres of meadow floodplain function by eliminating gullied (incised) channels and re-establishing the channel-floodplain connection. The Project includes a variety of treatment techniques to eliminate channel incision, including partial fill in the two primary gullies (and several fingering tributaries migrating up meadow from the primary gullies), and riffle augmentation with rock and sod riffles in less-incised reaches of channel, plus placement of downed wood in several locations in the smaller Chaparral tributaries. A valley grade structure (VGS) at the bottom of the Project will tie the restored floodplain elevation to the incised gully elevation downstream. On-site fill will be generated primarily from in-gully borrow areas, creating ponds as the groundwater table recovers. Additional fill will be generated from removal of several sections of old railroad grade and several off gully borrow sites.

Filling the incised gullies would require excavation and placement, using heavy equipment, of approximately 64,000 cubic yards of soil in the 64 proposed partial channel fill plugs and the core of the valley grade structure to eliminate the existing gullied channel and raise/restore the base elevation of surface water flow in the meadow. An additional estimated 800 cubic yards of fill would be placed in the upland, eroded segments of channel outside of mapped wetland areas, for a total of approximately 64,800 cubic yards of fill. At several key locations, fills will redirect stream flows into remnant channels or swales on the meadow surface, distributing flow across the floodplain. Additionally, an estimated 1,400 cubic yards of locally sourced rock will be used to construct the valley grade structure and rock riffles. Revegetation of approximately 5 acres of disturbed soils (plug surfaces, railroad grade removal, and temporary access roads) would include transplanting of willows and sedge sod removed from the bottom of the gullies, post-construction seeding with a native wet meadow seed mix (combination of locally collected and purchased from Comstock Seed), planting an estimated 2,000 willow cuttings and 100 cottonwood saplings in the Chaparral tributary area. About 5,000 feet of cross fencing is proposed to protect the newly constructed restoration features from grazing livestock and facilitate improved grazing management as the project matures. See Appendix A, 90% Design Report, for a complete description of design features.

Erratic climate behavior such as experienced in recent years can have an impact on project stability, particularly the first couple of years following restoration. Project restoration features will be monitored annually (early spring) for the first five years post-restoration and evaluated for performance and desired conditions. Those evaluations will determine whether adaptive maintenance is required and provide guidance for the necessary actions to be implemented as soon as possible. Livestock grazing is to be deferred for up to 3 years



post-restoration to allow vegetation recovery; subsequent livestock grazing will be guided by the Grazing Management Plan developed through the Conservation Easement.

The Project is expected to provide the following benefits:

- **Benefit water supply and quality:** The project will enhance groundwater retention, resulting in greater summer base flows and outflow extended later in the season. Water quality will be enhanced by eliminating bank erosion, while more vigorous meadow vegetation will filter floodplain flows.
- **Improve plant communities and habitat:** It is expected that intermittent channel lengths would increase after construction, relative to the existing condition by reducing existing channel length eliminated through gully fill and reactivating channels and shallow swales on the floodplain. Overall, intermittent channels are projected to increase in length from 13,588 feet to 16,981 feet post-project. Channel acreage is expected to decrease from 9.73 acres to 6.85 acres, because existing channels are oversized due to long-term incision and lateral bank erosion, which has widened the gullies, while the reactivated channels are not incised. This reflects a return to reference conditions. Palustrine acreage would increase from 84.18 acres to 111.10 acres post-project. Borrow areas and unfilled channel segments in the upper reach of Fredonyer Creek would result in 9.28 acres of lacustrine features as the groundwater table recovers. Further details on the Project design and methods of construction can be found in the attachments to this report (e.g., representative cross-sections). The subsurface hydrology to sustain wet meadow plant species will expand, increasing wet meadow acreage from 94 acres to an estimated 127 acres, or an increase of 33 acres.

Revegetation efforts will include seeding with native meadow graminoids and forbs and planting willows and cottonwoods, expanding food sources and cover for meadow birds. A small patch of aspen is expected to expand and thrive once the large incision adjacent to it is filled, creating an additional habitat niche for wildlife species. Increased wet meadow acreage and a greater diversity of forage species will accelerate improvements in avian species diversity, particularly for meadow focal species. Special-status species known to use the meadow include greater sandhill crane and gray wolf. Improvements in habitat quality will increase foraging opportunities for both species. See Appendix B, Wildlife Biological Assessment and Evaluation, for a complete description of potential effects and benefits to wildlife.

H. CDFW recommends direct coordination with all interested California Native American tribes. Please provide a summary of the Lead Agency's engagement with tribes. Be careful not to include any sensitive or confidential information. Please cite and attach any supporting documents.

The Sacred Lands File record search for the project was negative, and the Cultural Resources Inventory and Evaluation Report for the Project determined that no NRHP/CRHR eligible sites were present in the project area. Efforts to engage local tribes and record local knowledge of cultural sites occurred during 2021, 2022 and 2024, and included emails, phone calls, and/or certified letters to contacts provided by the Native American Heritage Commission. The Native American Heritage Commission, a nine-member body appointed by the Governor of California, documents the 109 federally recognized tribes and the 55 non-federally recognized tribes in the State of California. Through their work, they maintain updated contact information for tribes. The NAHC provides a form that agency partners complete requesting the contact information for and lists of California Native American tribes that may be traditionally and culturally affiliated to project areas. The Commission provides a list and contact information for the agency to initiate consultation on avoiding and mitigating impacts to tribal cultural resources. HLVRCD requested the Local Government Tribal Consultation List in 2022 and again in 2024. In both years, certified letters were sent to the identified tribes and corresponding contacts, providing an opportunity for the tribes to engage in the project. The NAHC Tribal Consultation list for this project included: Greenville Rancheria of Maidu Indians (Kyle Self, Chairperson), Honey Lake Maidu (Paul Garcia, Ron Morales Chairpersons), Mooretown Rancheria of Maidu Indians (Benjamin Clark, Chairperson), Susanville Rancheria (Arian Hart, Chairperson), Tsi Akim Maidu (Grayson Coney, Don Ryberg, Chairpersons), Berry Creek Rancheria of Maidu Indians (Francis Steele, Chairperson), Estom Yumeka Maidu Tribe of the



Enterprise Rancheria (Nelson Smith, Tribal Historic Preservation Officer & Glenda Nelson, Chairperson), Pakan'yani Maidu of Strawberry Valley Rancheria (Tina Goodwin, Chairperson), and the Wadatjuta Band of the Northern Paiute of the Honey Lake Valley (Harold Dixon, Chairperson). A letter was received from the Concow-Maidu of Mooretown Rancheria in July 2022 indicating the Tribe's interest in the Project.

I. CDFW recommends public outreach and coordination with interested parties and public agencies. Please provide a summary of the Lead Agency's engagement with interested parties and public agencies. Please cite and attach any supporting documents.

The Project is located on private industrial timberlands and was advanced at the request of the landowner as part of a commitment to improve meadow habitat and forage, and meadow resiliency to wildfire. The Project is part of a broader landscape-scale restoration effort in the Mountain Meadows Basin. The Project proponent received three years of funding from the Intermountain West Joint Venture (2010-2012) to foster stakeholder relationships of the Mountain Meadows Conservancy and advance a suite of restoration projects, including the proposed Project. The Project area falls within the boundaries of the 101 Ranch Conservation Easement boundaries (deed held by Feather River Land Trust) funded by California Department of Fish & Wildlife and the California Wildlife Conservation Board. The Project proponent has been an active partner with Trust for Public Lands, Point Blue Conservation, and the Feather River Land Trust in developing the conservation easement plans and baseline monitoring for the 101 Ranch and the adjacent Home Ranch. The Project proponent has provided periodic updates to local watershed collaboratives including the July 2019 State of the Lake Forum (Lake Almanor Basin) and meetings of the South Lassen Watershed Group. Additionally, a field tour of the Project site was conducted in April 2022 that included agency representatives from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife's Cutting the Green Tape Program and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program.

#### 4. REQUIRED DETERMINATIONS

Using substantial evidence and best available science, provide a determination and explanation for each SERP criteria listed below:

A. The Project is exclusively one or both of the following: (1) a project to conserve, restore, protect, or enhance, and assist in the recovery of California native fish and wildlife, and the habitat upon which they depend, or (2) a project to restore or provide habitat for California native fish and wildlife.

The Honey Lake Valley Resource Conservation District (HLVRCD) has determined that the Project is exclusively a project to restore and enhance habitat for California native fish and wildlife.

Please provide an explanation supporting the above determination. Please cite and attach any supporting documents.

The Project intends to restore and enhance mesic meadow habitat by restoring floodplain function at McKenzie Meadows. The Project will eliminate channel incision and reactivate historic flowpaths on the meadow surface, and includes planting native plant species in the riparian corridor, and implementing grazing management changes to enhance habitat quality for meadow species. The restored hydrology and improved floodplain function will promote more vigorous growth of mesic and wet meadow plant species, enhance summer flow conditions, and improve water quality by eliminating eroding banks and filtering flood flows on the meadow floodplain surface. Specifically the Project will result in:

- Eliminating incised channels and restoring floodplain function will raise the groundwater table, resulting in increased coverage of mesic/wet meadow plant communities
- Revegetating disturbed areas with native plant species will facilitate habitat recovery





- Additional fencing will allow for improved grazing management
- Restored hydrology and vegetation will improve water quality by eliminating bank erosion and filtering flood flows on the floodplain
- Create or enhance habitat (foraging, nesting) that will promote avian species abundance and diversity, such as sandhill cranes, yellow warbler and willow flycatcher
- Pondered water and abundant willow will create suitable habitat for beaver to expand into (beaver are present one mile downstream of project area in Goodrich Creek)

B. An eligible project may have incidental public benefits, such as public access and recreation.

The HLVRCD has determined that the Project does not have incidental public benefits such as public access and recreation.

Please provide an explanation supporting the above determination. Please cite and attach any supporting documents.

Appendix A (the 90% Design Report) describes all Project features, which are solely dedicated to the restoration of hydrologic function and improvement of the meadow. There would be no change in public access or recreation opportunities and no recreation facilities are proposed. The current lessee will continue to graze livestock following the grazing management plan that is annually evaluated and modified to adapt to meadow conditions; this would not be considered a public benefit because only one person is benefitting.

C. The Project does both of the following: (1) Results in long-term net benefits to climate resiliency, biodiversity, and sensitive species recovery; and (2) Includes procedures and ongoing management for the protection of the environment.

The Honey Lake Valley RCD has determined that the Project does both of the following: (1) Results in long-term net benefits to climate resiliency, biodiversity, and sensitive species recovery; and (2) Includes procedures and ongoing management for the protection of the environment.

For each criterion below, please provide an explanation supporting the above determination. Please cite and attach any supporting documents.

Long-Term Net Benefits to Climate Resiliency:

One of the most significant climate impacts to Sierra Nevada ecosystems is the increased frequency of more rain than snow precipitation events (Viers et al. 2013). Restoring the McKenzie Meadows meadow floodplain directly addresses this impact in several ways. Reconnecting the incised channels and swales with the meadow floodplain will allow flows to spread out, attenuating peak velocities and reducing opportunities for flood events downstream (Ohara et al. 2013). As flows disperse across the floodplain, water is absorbed into meadow soils, providing increased water retention and replenishment of the shallow groundwater aquifer. The increased groundwater retention in turn compensates for the reduced snowpack and projected declines in spring runoff (Freeman 2010) by slowly filtering and releasing water into stream channels later into the summer months (Hunt et al. 2018). Extending the availability of clean surface water in the meadow and downstream provides resiliency to drought climate impacts on habitats for a multitude of both terrestrial and aquatic wildlife species. It has also been observed that meadows with restored hydrologic/floodplain connectivity are naturally able to retain more water in their soils over multi-year droughts and able to withstand catastrophic wildfire, providing valuable refugia during post-fire recovery of surrounding ecosystems (pers. observations post-Dixie Fire, Plumas Corp staff).

The Project will also promote climate resiliency through a two-fold effect on carbon storage: (1) restoring the meadow will prevent continued loss of carbon via oxidation from drying meadow soils; and (2) the restored



meadow will act as a net carbon sink as the meadow soils begin to re-sequester carbon through increased aboveground and belowground biomass (Reed and Sullivan 2019). Thus, the restoration will mitigate climate impacts by reducing greenhouse gas emissions and increasing carbon sequestration.

**Long-Term Net Benefits to Biodiversity:**

Long term effects are expected to be mostly beneficial with longer periods of moist conditions in portions of the meadow. Wetland habitat is estimated to increase by 33.23 acres. The project would also result in ponded-water habitat in the project area in between the large plug/fill structures. In other similar projects, such habitat has been beneficial for waterfowl and other riparian dependent species. It is also anticipated that more, and deeper, pooled water will provide cover, and encourage beaver colonization further up into the meadow.

It is anticipated that other non-native annual grasses and forbs that are moving into the meadow would diminish in numbers, and that native sedges and perennial grasses would expand. It is also possible that the disturbance could cause the opportunity for weeds to become established on the newly disturbed fill areas. Disturbed areas would be seeded with native seed following construction to revegetate the site and deter the establishment of non-native weed species. The project area will be monitored for weeds post-project and if found, eradicated.

The Project would expand the contiguous restoration footprint in the basin, providing resilience to fragmentation. The hydrologic improvements at McKenzie Meadows are expected to make the meadow self-sustaining, ensuring this habitat is available for species that have reduced habitat under drier conditions. Modeling studies have shown that meadow networks will become reduced and fragmented under future climate scenarios (Maher et al. 2017). In conjunction with neighboring projects (Greenville, East Creek and Mountain Meadows Creek restoration projects, at 711 acres total), this project will increase the overall patch size of meadow habitat, countering the effects of fragmentation in a critically important migratory bird corridor and in the home range of the Lassen Pack gray wolf. Expansion of meadow habitat would also improve habitat quality for willow flycatcher, greater sandhill crane, pallid bat, Townsend’s big-eared bat, western red bat, and the herd of Rocky Mountain elk that is expanding in northern California.

**Long-Term Net Benefits to Sensitive Species Recovery:**

The improved ecological condition of meadow and riparian habitat will enhance and expand vegetation used by meadow birds. Third party monitoring of restored meadows in the Sierra Nevada documents an increase in avian diversity, particularly meadow focal species, following meadow restoration projects (Burnett and Fogg 2011; Loffland et al. 2013; Campos et al. 2014; Campos et al. 2020). Point Blue Conservation Science has conducted three annual (2021, 2022 and 2024) bird and vegetation surveys at McKenzie Meadows during the peak breeding season (May-June) for meadow focal species as part of the 101 Ranch Conservation Easement monitoring. Pre-restoration avian monitoring data is included in the 2021 & 2022 Annual Monitoring reports provided to WCB during the planning phase of the Project (Appendices D, E). The analysis of survey data uses meadow focal species richness, a meadow restoration target for Sierra meadows (Campos et al. 2014). The target for healthy meadows is 1.03 species per acre (Ibid). Post-restoration avian monitoring will be repeated post-implementation to evaluate the effectiveness of the project in meeting wildlife habitat objectives. Without revegetation, it is expected that project benefits for meadow birds would not be fully realized for 10- 20 years after project implementation (Ibid). Revegetation efforts to restore the riparian shrub habitat have been incorporated into the Project; these efforts may increase the pace of bird response, and effective restoration has the potential to support breeding of three special status meadow bird species: willow flycatcher, yellow warbler, and the already present greater sandhill crane (Ibid). Specifically, anticipated long-term net benefits for sensitive species recovery are:

**Amphibians:** Long-term vegetation changes due to restoration of meadow floodplain function will increase the amount of wet meadow habitat within treated areas and reduce sediment input due to erosion. High winter and spring flows will spread across the restored, vegetated meadow floodplain, naturally filtering sediment,





saturating meadow soils, and raising groundwater levels, which in turn will provide increased and/or extended duration of base-flow later in the season within the treated meadow stream systems. Increased vegetation and habitat near breeding ponds and increased number of temporary pools of water provide breeding sites, benefitting amphibian species, such as yellow-legged frog and long-toed salamanders.

American goshawk and bald eagles are expected to benefit from restoration due to the expansion of pooled water habitat and increased prey diversity and abundance in and around the project area.

Sandhill cranes, and other migratory birds, are expected to benefit due to the expected improvement and expansion of ponded water and wet meadow habitat for resting, foraging and potential nesting cranes.

Monarch butterfly and Suckley's cuckoo bumble bee are expected to benefit due to improved meadow hydrology that will increase the abundance and diversity of flowering herbaceous plant.

Gray wolf: Improved wet meadow conditions could have a beneficial effect on some small prey species, and the expected increase in vegetation and improved water access from proposed restoration actions would result in improved forage for large ungulate prey in the long term.

Sierra Nevada mountain beaver will benefit through retaining moisture longer in meadow soils that supports herbaceous and willow vegetation in the meadow and provides deep ponds for protection that are lacking in existing gullies.

**Procedures for the Protection of the Environment:**

The Project includes the following procedures for the protection of the environment:

- (1) Project implementation will be conducted during the dry season when flows are minimal or absent (typically August 1 through October 30).
- (2) Existing vegetation (meadow sod and riparian shrubs) in disturbance areas will be salvaged and replanted in appropriate locations throughout the Project area.
- (3) All work will be conducted in accordance with the Construction General Permit and a site-specific Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP). Fugitive dust will be controlled with the continuous operation of water trucks throughout the work area.
- (4) A spill kit will be kept in proximity to active work areas.
- (5) Surveys for greater sandhill crane and northern goshawk will be conducted if work is planned to begin prior to the limited operating periods (LOPs) of August 1 and August 15, respectively.
- (6) Protocol surveys will be conducted by qualified Plumas Corp staff for Sierra Nevada yellow-legged frog (SNYLF) and Southern long-toed salamander (SLTS) prior to construction in 2025. If any SNYLF or SLTS are detected, the Lead Agency and Project proponent will ensure the permitting agencies are notified so that State and Federal consultation can proceed prior to Project implementation.
- (7) The Project proponent will coordinate with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife on gray wolf activity in the Project vicinity. A site-specific LOP may be required if wolf activity is detected within 2 miles of the Project; specific LOP requirements will be dependent on the nature of wolf activities in the project vicinity (e.g., rendezvous site vs. den), presence of mitigating natural geographic barriers, and habitat conditions during time of construction.
- (8) All staging areas shall be surveyed for noxious weeds and treated prior to work. Infestations will be flagged for avoidance and vegetation will be removed (hand pulled or dug with heavy equipment) and buried deep in the channel fill.
- (9) Vehicles and other equipment operating in the project area shall be cleaned before entering the project according to standard vehicle washing guidelines.
- (10) Known invasive plant infestations of Canada thistle (*Cirsium arvense*) or newly identified infestations would be located, flagged where possible, and mapped for this project. Locations will



be displayed on contract maps. Canada thistle sites within or adjacent to the project area containing isolated patches with small plant numbers would be treated (hand pulled or dug and buried deep under channel fill) prior to Project implementation. Canada thistle sites outside of the zone of equipment travel will also be treated with a black plastic overlay which reduces resprouting from rhizomes.

See Appendix B ( Wildlife Biological Assessment and Biological Evaluation for McKenzie Meadows Restoration Project) and Appendix C ( Biological Evaluation/Biological Assessment for Plant Species for McKenzie Meadows Restoration Project) for analyses leading to the development of mitigation/environmental protection measures.

**Ongoing Management for the Protection of the Environment:**

Engineering review via hydrologic modeling indicates that the project will perform as designed, with flow velocities and depths below thresholds of concern for re-incision. See Engineer’s Review Letter (Appendix F) and HEC-RAS Modeling Graphics (Appendix G), which include the results of modeled depths and velocities under 10-year and 100-year flow return intervals both pre- and post-project, and provides an analysis of shear stresses under post-project conditions. The Project has been designed to be self-sustaining by re-establishing the natural floodplain hydrologic function, which mitigates the erosive potential of peak flows. The valley grade structure to be constructed at the bottom of the Project in the primary channel will provide grade control to prevent downstream incisions from outside the Project area from propagating upstream.

Project performance monitoring site visits will be conducted annually during peak runoff in late winter/early spring 2025 and 2026 (exact date dependent upon access and timing of peak runoff) to identify the potential or actual need for post-project maintenance intervention, and provide information to the partners in developing short- and long-term adaptive management decisions. This monitoring will focus on ensuring the structural integrity of the project continues to meet desired conditions (connected floodplain and improved water quality and habitat conditions). If it is determined that any occurring erosion is affecting the project’s structural integrity, maintenance and/or management actions may be taken. Annual photo point documentation would supplement performance site visits in identifying potential maintenance and/or adaptive management needs. Established photo points will be used to create a visual comparison of changes in meadow condition over time. Photos have been taken pre-implementation and will be repeated annually for five years following project construction.

The landowner is committed to protecting and enhancing the lands for wildlife while maintaining a working landscape. The Project proponent has discussed the need for adaptive management with grazing practices to improve habitat quality and maximize long-term productivity with the land manager. This Project proponent will continue to participate in annual grazing management plan evaluations with the landowner, livestock grazer, and Feather River Land Trust to ensure that grazing does not adversely affect the restoration or the desired conservation values. As part of the long-term management plan, the Project will include the installation of cross-fences to control distribution of cattle during restoration recovery and periods of soil saturation.

D. The Project does not include any construction activities, except for construction activities solely related to habitat restoration.

The Honey Lake Valley RCD has determined that the Project does not include any construction activities, except for construction activities solely related to habitat restoration.

Please provide an explanation supporting the above determination. Please cite and attach any supporting documents.



See 90% Design Report (Appendix A) for a discussion of Project design features. All proposed design features are part of the restoration; Project implementation will proceed as follows:

- **Construction clearances:** Pre-construction surveys/flagging for wildlife, botany, and noxious weeds will be conducted beginning in spring 2025 by Plumas Corporation staff. At this time, Plumas Corporation will also coordinate with the California Department of Wildlife on wolf activity and potential for LOP development.
- **Mobilization and Site Preparation:** Stockpile and staging areas will be identified prior to equipment mobilization. All access routes will be on existing roads. As much as possible, equipment will use existing disturbed areas in the meadow while maintaining the shortest possible distance between staging areas and construction zones. For the partial fill segments of channel, temporary staging areas for borrow material are located immediately adjacent to fill locations. Spill kit(s) will be placed in proximity to work area(s). As construction will be occurring after all stream flow has ceased, there will be no need to pump water out of the active work areas. However, should the need arise, Plumas Corp has pumps and hoses available for use. Equipment will be mobilized to the site following weed decontamination protocols.
- **Project Construction:** The following activities will be conducted in sequence as the Project proceeds from upstream to downstream:
  - Partial channel fill:
    - Vegetation salvage: remove any existing topsoil, sod, or other usable riparian vegetation from area where borrow material will be excavated or where channel bottoms will be inundated. Vegetation will be placed adjacent to work areas and kept watered until transplanted.
    - Excavate borrow material: After vegetation removal, the existing gully is widened to generate material for partial channel fill.
    - Placement of fill: Fill is placed in-channel in a series of plugs, eliminating the incised channel. At two locations, plugs will be used to redirect stream flow into the network of historic remnant channels and swales. Plugs are constructed to subgrade and brought to grade with the floodplain surface using stockpiled topsoil and sod. Larger vegetation is planted at key locations to provide roughness and/or habitat features.
  - Railroad grade removal: Several sections of railroad grade that are impacting surface water movement in the meadow will be graded to meadow elevation and the material used as fill for the valley grade structure and several plugs in the lower reach of the Chaparral gully. Early stage conifers growing from the top of portions of the railroad grades will be chipped and used to spread on bare plugs in the Chaparral gully plugs.
  - Riffle construction: Seven riffles will be constructed in a small tributary in the southwestern area of the project upstream of the valley grade structure. Ten to twelve sod riffles will be strategically placed in the upper reach of the Fredonyer channel where incisions are less than 3 feet deep and in several small ditches within the meadow.
  - Valley grade structure: A valley grade structure will be constructed of an earthen core armored with 3 feet of rock (24"-minus) sourced from a nearby quarry. The structure is designed with a series of riffle-pool sequences to dissipate stream flow energy as it leaves the project area. Existing vegetation in the channel bottom (primarily sedges and willows) will be transplanted onto the floodplain surface of the valley grade structure.
  - Demobilization: Restore in-project travel routes and staging areas and remove construction equipment from the site.
- **Revegetation, Fencing & Grazing Management:** The project will receive a 3-year rest from grazing. Seeding disturbed areas will occur post-construction (2025). Willow stake planting will occur in 2025 and cottonwood container planting in 2026. Cross-fence construction for grazing management will occur by summer 2026.



**Post-project Monitoring:** The Project provides for continued monitoring including monthly and continuous groundwater elevation data, soil carbon analysis, CRAM Wetland Assessment, water temperature monitoring, avian surveys, and project performance monitoring to evaluate the need for maintenance and inform long-term adaptive management needs.

**5. CERTIFICATION**

*I certify that I have the authority to determine whether a project is exempt pursuant to CEQA Guidelines section 15025(a)(1), and this Project meets all the requirements described in Public Resources Code section 21080.56, and that I have submitted all the determinations required therein necessary to obtain the concurrence of the Director of Fish and Wildlife.*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Lead Agency Signature

Printed Name and Title: Click or tap here to enter text.

Date: Click or tap here to enter text.



**Form DFW 21080.56 – List of Attachments and Appendices**  
**CEQA Statutory Exemption for Restoration Projects (SERP) Concurrence Request**

**McKenzie Meadows Restoration Project**

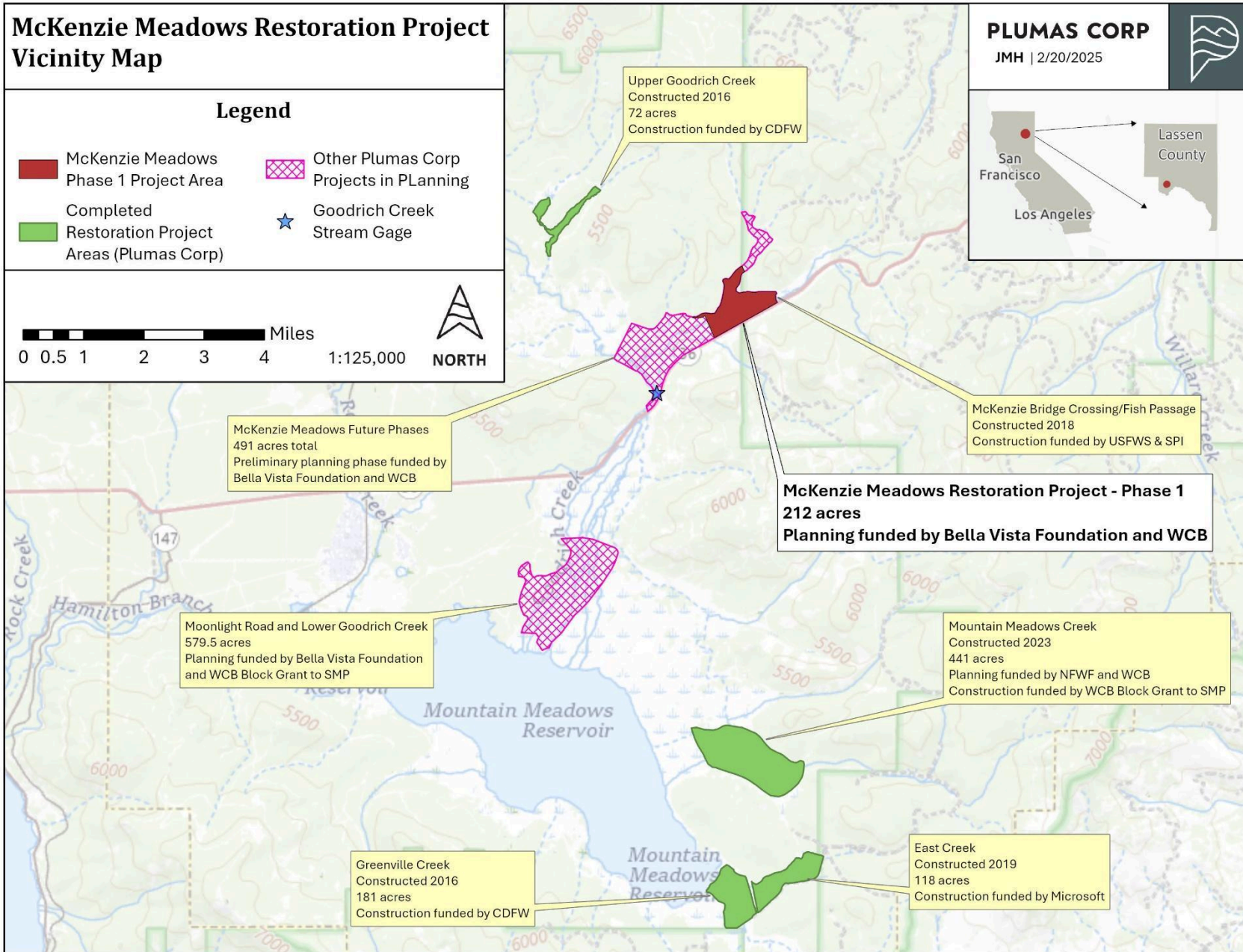
**Attachments**

- Attachment 1: Vicinity Map
- Attachment 2: References

**Appendices (Provided Digitally)**

- Appendix A: McKenzie Meadows Restoration Project 90% Design Report
- Appendix B: Wildlife Biological Assessment and Biological Evaluation for McKenzie Meadows Restoration Project
- Appendix C: Biological Evaluation/Biological Assessment for Plant Species for McKenzie Meadows Restoration Project
- Appendix D: 2021 Annual Monitoring Report (avian, vegetation, hydrology)
- Appendix E: 2022 Annual Monitoring Report (avian, vegetation, hydrology)
- Appendix F: Engineer’s Review Letter
- Appendix G: HEC-RAS Modelling Graphics









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