

# Staff Report



**TO:** Board of Directors

**FROM:** Neysa King, Environmental Resources Administrator  
Greg Jones, Assistant General Manager

**DATE:** October 12, 2022

**SUBJECT:** Grant Application- USFS Collaboration for Upper Middle Yuba Watershed NEPA (Planning Grant Request)

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## **ADMINISTRATION**

### **RECOMMENDATION:**

Adopt Resolution No. 2022-53 (Authorizing the Application for Grant Funds for the 2022 Wildfire Recovery and Forest Resilience Directed Grant Program of the Sierra Nevada Conservancy for the Upper Middle Yuba Watershed Forest Restoration Project: National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Planning in the amount of \$560,000.

### **BACKGROUND:**

On July 27, 2022, NID submitted a pre-proposal to the Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC) for the Wildfire Recovery & Forest Resilience Directed Grants Program: the "Upper Middle Yuba Watershed Forest Restoration Project: NEPA Planning." This is one of two pre-proposals NID staff developed for this funding opportunity. In September and after SNC's review of all pre-proposal submissions, NID was invited to submit for a complete funding application. The final application is due October 28, 2022 and requires the attached Board Resolution to apply for and receive grant funding should NID be selected for an award.

The Middle Yuba River headwaters above and around Jackson Meadows Reservoir are a critical component of NID's source watershed. NID's interest in the health of the upper-division watersheds seeks to mitigate the potential for catastrophic wildfire on all lands regardless of ownership. This planning project helps to initiate fire fuels reduction work on United States Forest Service (USFS) lands.

The attached map identifies the Middle Yuba River watershed of approximately 18,770 acres. This area is largely comprised of a checkerboard system of ownership with alternating public and private lands between the USFS (Tahoe National Forest), Sierra Pacific Industries, NID and other private land ownership.

In collaboration with the Sierra Nevada Conservancy, NID will be partnering with the Tahoe National Forest to complete this NEPA planning project. Due to unique surface conditions, slope aspect, etc., this project intends to produce an environmental NEPA document with a project scope that is intended to treat up to 3,000 acres of USFS lands under future implementation actions.

This is a unique partnership in that it is focused on the restoration of USFS lands in and around one of NID's important water storage facilities in a remote area of the Tahoe National Forest. Additional project partners include the locally affiliated Tribes, Nevada County, Sierra County, and other user groups or private landowners/stakeholders within the region. This project is part of the Tahoe National Forest's ten-year forest restoration strategy.

The Tahoe National Forest will be contributing natural resource specialist staff time to create the proposed action and direct and review all documents and reports that are prepared by the contractor(s).

By taking the lead to apply for this grant, NID will become the fiscal entity to administer the grant, including contracting with consultants to support the NEPA document on 3,000 acres within this headwaters region.

The grant allows for funding for administrative costs that may be incurred by NID, including financial tracking and reporting. NID staff will also participate in the NEPA public review process. Tahoe National Forest, Sierraville Ranger District staff will take a technical lead in developing future treatment locations, contractor scopes of work, and will provide information to and work directly with contractor(s) to ensure products meet the needs of the USFS survey and NEPA process. Further, the USFS will utilize an interdisciplinary team of specialists (biologists, silviculturists, hydrologists, etc.) to review and revise all reports and documents. The Tahoe National Forest will be lead NEPA agency.

**BUDGETARY IMPACT:**

There will be no fiscal budgetary impact in FY 2022. If awarded, expenditures and revenues will be part of a FY 2023 Budget Amendment as needed.

**Funding amount requested:** \$560,000 for NEPA consultants and NID administrative costs.

**Total Project Cost including in-kind:** \$733,000 (USFS staff time est. \$150,000; NID staff time est. \$23,000)

**Schedule:** If selected for a grant award, grant agreement execution should be complete by May 2023. Summer 2023-2024 will provide time for natural resource surveys and follow-up. NEPA decision memo is anticipated December 2024.

NK & GJ

*Attachments (2)*

- Resolution 2022-53 (Authorizing the Application for Grant Funds for the 2022 Wildfire Recovery and Forest Resilience Directed Grant Program of the Sierra Nevada Conservancy for the Upper Middle Yuba Watershed Forest Restoration Project: NEPA Planning)
- Grant proposal map



**RESOLUTION NO. 2022-53**  
OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE NEVADA IRRIGATION DISTRICT

**AUTHORIZING THE APPLICATION FOR GRANT FUNDS FOR  
THE 2022 WILDFIRE RECOVERY AND FOREST RESILIENCE DIRECTED GRANT  
PROGRAM OF THE SIERRA NEVADA CONSERVANCY FOR THE UPPER MIDDLE  
YUBA WATERSHED FOREST RESTORATION PROJECT: NEPA PLANNING**

**WHEREAS**, the Legislature and Governor of the State of California have provided funds for the Sierra Nevada Conservancy to support the 2022 Wildfire Recovery and Forest Resilience Grant Program; and

**WHEREAS**, the Sierra Nevada Conservancy (the "SNC") has been delegated the responsibility for the administration of a portion of these funds through a Directed Grant Program, establishing necessary procedures; and

**WHEREAS**, said procedures established by the SNC require a resolution certifying the approval of application(s) by the governing board of each applicant before submission of said application(s) to the SNC; and

**WHEREAS**, the Nevada Irrigation District (the "District") has identified the *Upper Middle Yuba Watershed Forest Restoration Project: USFS NEPA Planning (SNC Grant # 1556)* (the "Project") as valuable toward meeting its mission and goals; and

**WHEREAS**, The Middle Yuba River headwaters above and around Jackson Meadows Reservoir are a critical component of NID's source watershed. NID's interest in the health of the upper-division watersheds seeks to mitigate the potential for catastrophic wildfire on all lands regardless of ownership; and

**WHEREAS**, In collaboration with the Sierra Nevada Conservancy, NID will be partnering with the Tahoe National Forest (TNF or USFS) to complete this NEPA planning project; and

**WHEREAS**, This is a unique partnership in that it is focused on the restoration of USFS lands in and around one of NID's important water storage facilities in a remote area of the Tahoe National Forest; and

**WHEREAS**, By taking the lead to apply for this grant, NID will become the fiscal entity to administer the grant, including contracting with consultants to support the NEPA document on 3,000 acres within this headwaters region; and

**Resolution No. 2022-53**

*Authorizing the Application for Grant Funds for the 2022 Wildfire Recovery and Forest Resilience Directed Grant Program of the Sierra Nevada Conservancy for the Upper Middle Yuba Watershed Forest Restoration Project: NEPA Planning*

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**WHEREAS**, Total project cost is estimated at \$733,000 inclusive of USFS in-kind staff time is estimated at \$150,000 and NID in-kind staff time is estimated at \$23,000; and

**WHEREAS**, the District intends to submit an application to SNC for the Project; and

**WHEREAS**, the District, if selected, will enter into an agreement with the SNC to carry out the Project; and

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, the above recitals are true and correct and are incorporated as findings of the Board of Directors; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, the Board of Directors approves the submittal of an application for the Project; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, the Board of Directors certifies that the District understands the assurances and certification requirements in the application; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, the Board of Directors certifies that the District will have sufficient funds to operate and maintain the resource(s) consistent with the long-term benefits described in support of the application; or will secure the resources to do so; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, the Board of Directors certifies that the District will comply with all legal requirements as determined during the application process; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, the Board of Directors appoints its General Manager, or designee, as agent to 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(s).

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**PASSED AND ADOPTED** by the Board of Directors of the Nevada Irrigation District at a regular meeting held on the 12<sup>th</sup> day of October 2022 by the following vote:

<b>AYES:</b>	Directors:
<b>NOES:</b>	Directors:
<b>ABSENT:</b>	Directors:
<b>ABSTAINS:</b>	Directors:

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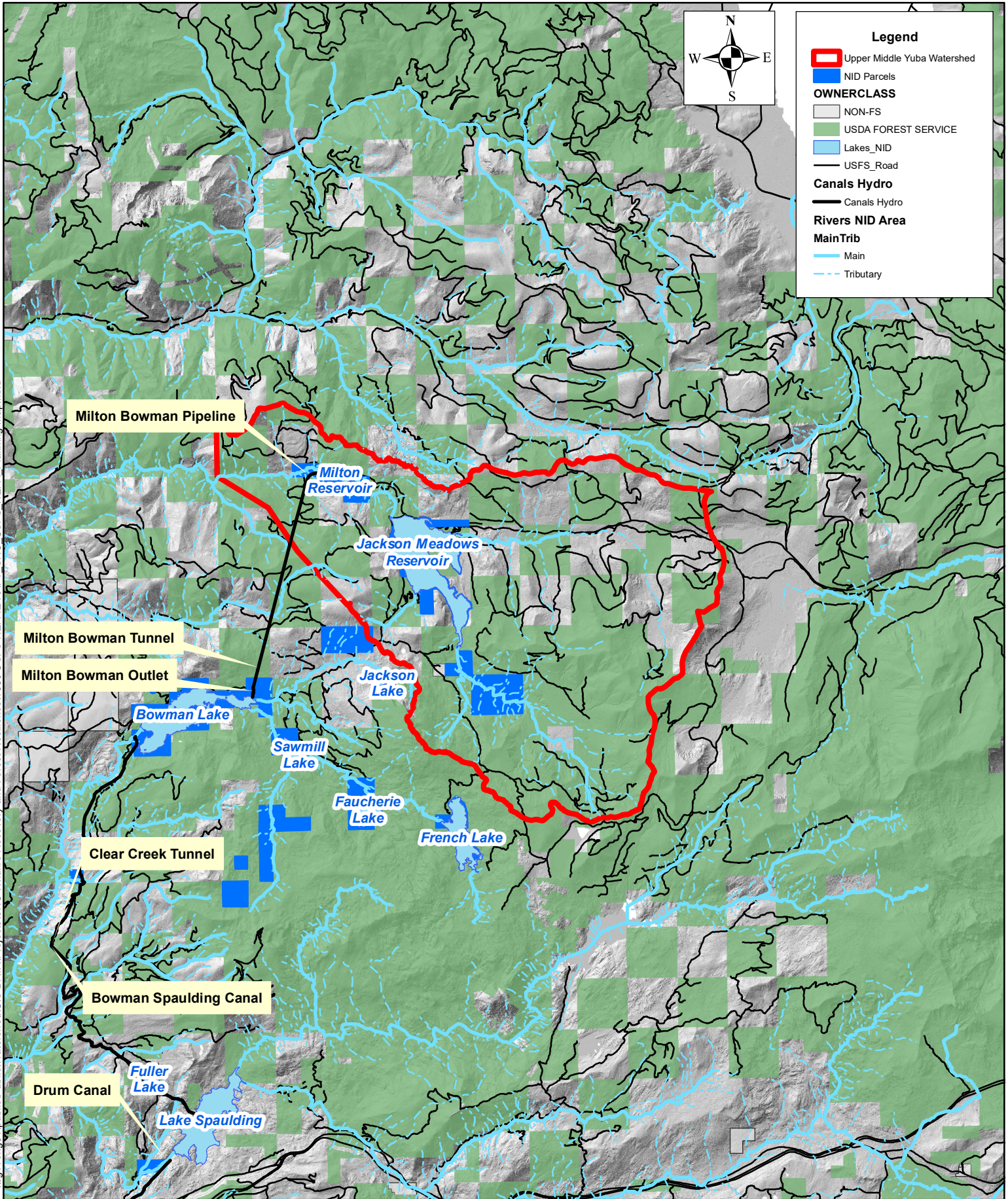
President of the Board of Directors

**Attest:**

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Secretary to the Board of Directors

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## Upper Middle Yuba Watershed Forest Restoration: NEPA Planning



Date: 10/5/2022  
 Drawn By: C. Townsend

**NEVADA IRRIGATION DISTRICT**  
 NEVADA COUNTY -- PLACER COUNTY  
 GRASS VALLEY, CALIFORNIA

Scale: 1: 158,400  
 Sheet: 1 of 1