

April 9, 2014

Stanislaus National forest

Attn: Rim HT

19777 Greenley Road

Sonora, CA 95370

**RE: Rim HT Environmental Assessment (43032)**

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on the above project.

This project is to remove hazard trees and trees felled during fire suppression or rehabilitation to provide a safe environment for administration and public use within and adjacent to high use roads and developed facilities. It is the first of multiple recovery and restoration projects that will be proposed over the next several years.

The Central Sierra Audubon Society supports the Preferred Alternative 1 for this project and the request for an Emergency Situation Determination due to hazards which may threaten human health and safety and mitigation of threats to natural resources on National Forest Service or adjacent lands. This alternative provides for repair of culverts which we believe are necessary to avoid isolating stream sections. An analysis should identify which culverts should be modified to avoid these isolation points.

We request that the Environmental Assessment address the following two issues:

1. **The impact of removing damaged but green trees.** Green trees are important for timely forest rehabilitation and wildlife habitat. We believe that they should be left unless there is a substantial number of other green trees in the immediate vicinity or if it is an imminent hazard that justifies not leaving it to give it a chance to recover, persist and seed the area with viable seeds.
2. **The impact of drafting huge amounts of water from streams that would accompany the described dust abatement program.** These streams are already severely stressed due to the drought and further pumping would not allow for sustainability of the remaining aquatic species.

If you have any questions concerning our comments please submit them to the attention of our contact, Walt Kruse. He is our representative on the Yosemite Stanislaus Solutions Collaborative.

Sincerely,

**ORIGINAL SIGNED BY**

David Harden, President

Central Sierra Audubon Society