Authority to Use
Grant Funds

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
Office of Community Planning and Development

To: (name & address of Grant Recipient & name & title of Chief Executive Officer)

Moira Monahan, Operations Chief
State of California
Department of Housing and Community Development
2020 West El Camino Avenue, Suite 400
Sacramento, CA 95833

Copy To: (name & address of SubRecipient or Secondary Contact)

We received your Request for Release of Funds and Certification, form HUD-7015.15 on 10/06/2017
Your Request was for HUD/State Identification Number B-13-DS-06-0001

All objections, if received, have been considered. And the minimum waiting period has transpired.
You are hereby authorized to use funds provided to you under the above HUD/State Identification Number.
File this form for proper record keeping, audit, and inspection purposes.

Program Title: HCD's Forest and Watershed Health Program (FWHP)
This AUGF provides environmental clearance for the Rim Fire Recovery and Reforestation activities.

Project/Activity:
Rim Fire Recovery activities - Fuel reduction in the Rim Fire disaster area in Tuolumne County removing dead trees and fuels, where tree mortality exceeds the needs for snag retention and log recruitment, is the first step to meet desired fuel conditions. The goal is to leave no more than 20 tons per acre and 10 tons per acre in Strategically Placed Landscape Area Treatments (SPLATs) and Strategic Fire Management Features (SFMF) while working with other resources to ensure soil and hydrologic stability. Recovery Fuel Reduction Treatment Unit List Attached.

Rim Fire Reforestation activities - authorizes USFS to use CDBG-NDR funds to conduct the proposed reforestation, deer habitat enhancement, and natural regeneration activities on approximately 15,217 acres and noxious weed treatment activities on approximately 5,714 acres (treatment areas overlap and are not additive). Reforestation Treatment Unit List Attached.

Estimated National Disaster Resilience funding for proposed activities: $24,000,000

Enclosures:
Objections were received: Cover letter regarding HUD's Response to Objections attached.
Detailed listing of the Recovery and Reforestation treatment units proposed for funding.

Typed Name of Authorizing Officer: Kimberly Y. Nash
Title of Authorizing Officer: Director of CPD
Signature of Authorizing Officer
Release Date: 02/12/2018

Previous editions are obsolete.
Appendix A. Treatment Unit List

HCD’s decision authorizes funding for up to 14,897 acres of fuel reduction treatments in the Rim Fire burn area. Of the total units authorized by USFS in the 2014 Record of Decision (ROD), implementation on up to 136 units will be funded by HCD’s CDBG-NDR Forest and Watershed Health Program. For more detailed information on the treatments, see Chapter 2.01 of the adopted FEIS.

Table A.1 Fuel Reduction Treatments Authorized for Funding by HCD.

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Appendix B. Treatment Maps
Appendix A. Treatment Unit List

HCD’s decision authorizes funding for up to 15,217 acres of reforestation, deer habitat enhancement and natural regeneration activities, and up to 5,714 acres of noxious weeds treatments in the Rim Fire burn area (treatment areas overlap and are not additive). Of the total units authorized by USFS in the 2016 Record of Decision (ROD), implementation on up to 255 reforestation units will be funded by HCD’s CDBG-NDR Forest and Watershed Health Program. For more detailed information on the treatments, see Chapter 2.01 of the adopted FEIS.

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Appendix B. Treatment Maps
February 9, 2018

Moira Monahan, Operations Chief
State of California
Department of Housing and Community Development
2020 West El Camino Avenue, Suite 400
Sacramento, CA 95833

RE: State of California Rim Fire Recovery and Reforestation Projects Authority to Use Grant Funds (HUD form 7015.16)

Dear Moira Monahan:

HUD received one objection letter regarding the subject proposal. The attached letter addressed to the objectors addresses the resolution of the objections raised in response to the subject Request for Release of Funds.

We have the following additional comments regarding statements contained in the State’s letter, dated January 11, 2018. The letter included as one of the bases for not supplementing the EIS a statement that the project is still within the contemplated 5-year timeframe for action. Both Part 58 and NEPA require project proponents to re-evaluate the environmental review record, analysis and determinations, if there is a change in the scope of the project or environmental conditions. (40 CFR 1501.7(4)(c), 1502.9; 24 CFR 58.47, 58.52, 58.53, 58.60).

Additionally, the letter noted that the proposed funding is only for fuel reduction activities covered in the Recovery FEIS; this is confirmed by the State’s Recovery ROD. However, the State’s Reforestation ROD proposes to provide funding for deer habitat enhancement and natural regeneration activities on approximately 15,217 acres, as well as noxious weed treatment activities on approximately 5,714 acres. According to the aggregation principles defined at §58.32, activities that are related geographically, logically, or functionally must be aggregated and evaluated in one environmental review. The Recovery FEIS highlights the connectedness of Recovery and Reforestation activities in stating, “the agency is contemplating future projects to address reforestation, ecosystem restoration, fuels treatments, and other forest restoration activities. Such future actions will help contribute to the recovery and restoration of the area burned by the Rim Fire.” (pg. 8) The proposed Recovery and Reforestation activities take place within the same project area and appear functionally and logically related. Therefore, the State correctly adopted both FEISs.
Having reviewed the State’s response to the objections and the Recovery and Reforestation FEISs and RODs, HUD concurs that the State did not omit one or more of the procedural steps set forth in 24 CFR 58 Subparts E, F, or G and accepts the State’s environmental certification, the Authority to Use Grant Funds is attached. If you have questions regarding this matter, please contact Environmental Protection Specialist Kathleen McNulty at 415-489-6644 or kathleen.a.mcnulty@hud.gov.

Sincerely,

Kimberly Y. Nash
Director, Office of Community Planning and Development

Enclosures:
Authority to Use Grant Funds

cc:
Moira Monahan, Operations Chief
Patrick Talbott, Contract Manager