



UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
CENTRAL COAST FIELD OFFICE



**CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION ANALYSIS AND DECISION RECORD  
DOI-BLM-CA-C090-2016-22-CX**

**Date: May 17, 2016**

**PART I: Proposed Activity and Justification/Need:**

The Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) proposes to continue the National Resources Inventory (NRI) on lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). Under the proposed action, the NRCS would dig soil pits approximately 20 inches deep and 12 inches across at one location in the Central Coast Field Office: [Panoche Hills South Wilderness Study Area CA-040-301B](#) (no grazing Allotment).

The National Resources Inventory (NRI) is a vital component of the continuous inventory process. Since 2003, rangeland data are being collected onsite in 20 states, including California, using rangeland protocols established and researched by the NRCS, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Agricultural Research Service, and the United States Department of the Interior (USDI) BLM. The NRI provides a comprehensive, nationally consistent source of data for researchers in many fields. Informed and valid decisions are best made when based upon scientifically derived data and the NRI has been developed to supply this type of information.

The NRI program serves as the Federal Government's principle source of information on natural resources in the United States. The NRI provides a nationally consistent database that allows for resources assessment. Analyses of the NRI database are useful for public policy considerations because the database:

- has a high degree of reliability,
- looks at the natural resources over a period of time, and
- permits analyses at National, regional, and local levels.

**Proponent of Activity:** Cheryl R. Feit, Soil Conservationist; USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service, Madera, CA 93637 (559-674-4628 x117).

**PART II: PLAN CONFORMANCE REVIEW**

The proposed action has been reviewed for applicability and is in conformance with the following land use plan(s): Hollister Resource Management Plan Record of Decision for the Southern Diablo Mountain Range and Central Coast of California, 2007

**PART III: NEPA REVIEW**

***Categorical Exclusion Authority***

This proposed action qualifies as a categorical exclusion under 516 DM 6, Appendix 5, Section 5.4; J. Other (6) A single trip in a one month period for data collection or observation sites.

#### **PART IV: Checklist and Screening for Extraordinary Circumstances**

This proposal has been reviewed to determine whether any of the extraordinary circumstances in 516 DM 2, Appendix 2 apply.

<b>12 Extraordinary Circumstances</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Date</b>
Have significant impacts on public health or safety.		x	4/29/16
Have significant effects on such natural resources and unique geographic characteristics as historic or cultural resources; park, recreation or refuge lands; wilderness areas; wild or scenic rivers; national natural landmarks; sole or principal drinking water aquifers; prime farmlands; wetlands (Executive Order 11900); floodplains (Executive Order 11988); national monuments; migratory birds; and other ecologically significant or critical areas.		x	4/29/16
Have highly controversial environmental impacts or involve unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources [NEPA Section 102(2)(E)].		x	4/29/16
Have highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risks.		x	4/29/16
Establish a precedent for future actions or represent a decision in principle about future actions with potentially significant environmental effects.		x	4/29/16
Have a direct relationship to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant environmental effects.		x	4/29/16
Have significant impacts on properties listed, or eligible for listing, on the National Register of Historic Places as determined by either the Bureau or the Field Office.		x	4/29/16
Have significant impacts on species listed, or proposed to be listed, on the List of Endangered or Threatened Species, or have significant impacts on designated Critical Habitat for these species.		x	4/29/16
Violate a Federal law, or a State, local, or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment.		x	4/29/16
Have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on low income or minority populations (Executive Order 12898).		x	4/29/16
Limit access to and ceremonial use of Indian sacred sites on Federal lands by Indian religious practitioners or significantly adversely affect the physical integrity of such sacred sites (Executive Order 13007).		x	4/29/16
Contribute to the introduction, continued existence, or spread of noxious weeds or non-native invasive species known to occur in the species or actions that may promote the introduction, growth, or expansion of the range of such species (Federal Noxious Weed Control Act and Executive Order 13112).		x	4/29/16

#### **PART IV: REVIEW**

Environmental Coordinator: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

#### **PART V: DECISION**

I have determined that the proposed action is categorically excluded from further analysis under the National Environmental Policy Act. I also find that the proposed action is in conformance with the Hollister RMP Record of Decision for the Southern Diablo Mountain Range and Central Coast of California, 2007. Therefore, it is my decision to approve and implement the proposed activity.

Authorized Officer: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_