

# FIELD CREW POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

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**FOR COVID-19  
RISK REDUCTION  
AND STAFF  
SAFETY**

TAYLORSVILLE, CA  
MAY 2020



**Sierra Institute**

for Community and Environment



# Sierra Institute

for Community and Environment

The policies and procedures set forth in this document are intended to reduce the risk of COVID-19 and other communicable disease infection among employees of the Sierra Institute for Community and Environment (Sierra Institute), associated partners, and public.

Specifically, this document outlines field protocols in light of COVID-19 risks. It reflects current (May 2020) federal, state, and local protocol for all workers known at this time. This document will be amended on an as needed basis to represent current best risk reduction practices supported by the best available science and direction from local health care and health officials.



**NOTICE AND DISCLAIMER:** Although the following policies and procedures contained herein may be applicable to a variety of field operations, this document was developed by and for the Sierra Institute for Community and Environment. We share this document with others as a resource but the Sierra Institute takes no responsibility legal or otherwise for its use by others. We strongly advise any agency, organization, or other entity utilizing any portion of this resource do so with careful consideration of their agency and project obligations and assure practices meet the unique needs of their staff and field circumstances. Should you find inaccuracies or inconsistencies please do share them with the Sierra Institute. Thank you

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## Introduction

This document was developed by staff at the Sierra Institute for Community and Environment (Sierra Institute) in response to the severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) hereinafter referred to as “COVID-19.” The work is based on extensive internal communication, communication with external partners, and with reference to the Northwest Youth *Corps* “Crew/Intern Operations Protocol for a COVID-19 Environment,” and the Center for Disease Control and the World Health Organization.

The policies and procedures set forth in this document are intended to reduce the risk of COVID-19 infection and transmission among employees of the Sierra Institute, associated partners, and public. This document describes the Sierra Institute’s: (1) approach to assessing conditions to ascertain if we can safely and successfully carry out field-based operations; (2) protocols for screening staff and applicants prior to their participation in and throughout the duration of operations to reduce and mitigate the introduction and transmission of COVID-19; (3) standard operating procedures and guidelines for field-based crews while COVID-19 remains a public health threat, including practices to help ensure that all staff are healthy when they return home; and (4) detailed emergency response procedures in the event staff develop signs or symptoms similar to COVID-19 or a known outbreak among Sierra Institute staff and/or close partners.

Specifically, this document will serve to guide the Sierra Institute’s field crews including but not limited to two sessions and four crews of Plumas Conservation Restoration and Education in Watersheds (P-CREW) youth crews, a six-person wilderness fuels module crew, an eight-person swamper crew, along with field staff involved in landscape studies and related activities. These crews are scheduled to conduct a variety of forest/watershed restoration and assessment projects including critical hazardous fuels reduction work on public lands managed by the National Park Service (NPS) and United States Forest Service (USFS), and private land.

Due to the volatility and unpredictability of the COVID-19 outbreak this document will be amended on an as needed basis in order to accurately represent COVID-19 understanding and current federal, state, and local requirements and risk reduction practices as supported by the best available science.

## **I. Decision Making Matrix for Field Crew Programs**

Sierra Institute for Community and Environment (hereafter Sierra Institute) in order to create opportunities for field crews establishes the following conditions to safely administer field-based vegetation restoration and essential fire threat reduction programs. Field work programs will only be offered if our analysis indicates that staff involved in such programs will not appreciably and unacceptably increase their risk of contracting or spreading COVID-19 due to their participation. Key assessments include:

### **A. Organizational COVID-19 Protocols**

Sierra Institute may proceed with field programs when this protocol is in place, is understood by all relevant staff and stakeholders, and the resources are available to carry out protocols set forth in this document.

### **B. Civil Authority Restrictions**

Sierra Institute may proceed with field programs when they are compliant with national and/or state Executive Orders and local health department directives. Specifically, program operations that require travel and group work will not take place unless and until travel restrictions are lifted and the number of staff required to gather to carry out program work does not exceed mandated gathering numbers of individuals.

### **C. Medical Resource Availability**

Sierra Institute may proceed with field programs when adequate medical resources including field evacuation capacity are available for support. It is understood that COVID-19 related demands on our medical infrastructure are an important consideration for three reasons. Additional demands

1. on medical facilities/medical personnel may distract from our collective ability to meet the demands associated with COVID-19 and therefore may be irresponsible;
2. may strip the physical/personnel resources away from the communities in which Sierra Institute field crews operate (e.g., medical personnel may lack access to proper PPE) that might make medical care less available or pose a hazard to existing medical personnel; and
3. may increase the risk of exposure to patients and others if care is sought.

Sierra Institute will consult COVID-19 models and/or other available data to determine whether the demand on the medical facilities in the areas in which we operate programs will not be overwhelmed during the times in which our programs are operating. The following link is one resource that may be used: <http://covid19.healthdata.org/united-states-of-america/california>.

### **D. Partner Preparedness**

Sierra Institute may proceed with field programs when our partners are secure and confident enough in their own operations/availability to provide reasonable assurance that

plans, schedules, camping opportunities, etc., won't remain in flux – thereby increasing our opportunity costs, financial risks, and risks to our staff.

#### **E. Organizational Preparedness**

Sierra Institute may proceed with field programs when the organization is secure and confident enough in its operations/availability to provide reasonable assurance that plans, schedules, and current COVID-19 risks are manageable. Further, Sierra Institute may proceed with these programs when the following conditions have been met:

1. Adequate time is available to recruit and train staff;
2. Adequate time is available to inform and coordinate with project/recreational/camping partners; and
3. The physical equipment and supplies necessary to safely implement planned activity are available.

#### **F. Social Responsibility**

Sierra Institute may proceed with field programming when the organization believes it is socially responsible to be operating. We believe that paid workforce development programs will be a key part of our national recovery effort and we want to begin offering those opportunities as soon as these activities can safely implemented, including gaining assurances from experts, our board of directors and our larger stakeholder groups, and others that they are comfortable with the organization proceeding with field programs.

## **II. Pre-Employment**

### **A. Quarantine-Phase I and COVID-19 Testing Round 1**

Prior to beginning employment at the Sierra Institute, all field staff will conduct a two-week self-quarantine. During this time employee(s) will stay at home and avoid contact with others for 14-days.

All field staff are responsible for obtaining COVID-19 testing from a licensed medical professional and testing center within the county of their self-quarantine three to five days prior to crew pick up by Sierra Institute staff for P-CREW members or arrival at the Sierra Institute offices for all other new field employees. Sierra Institute requires a test that determines if one is COVID-19 negative or positive. Locations of certified testing facilities are published on the California California COVID Response webpage which may be accessed by the following link: <https://covid19.ca.gov/testing-and-treatment/>. Results must be sent electronically prior to pick up or arrival to the Sierra Institute's Human Resources Manager as soon as they are available. Failure to complete pre-arrival testing and sending the results to the Sierra Institute prior to arrival will result in revocation of preliminary offer of employment. No pre-arrival testing and sending of the results to the Sierra Institute prior to arrival will result in no employment and the individual sent home.

Field staff are responsible for making all arrangements for pre-arrival Covid testing. If a free testing resource is not available, field staff should notify the Project Manager prior to obtaining the test. Sierra Institute will work with the field crew member to secure testing reimbursement. Ability to pay for testing should not preclude summer work. Field crew members are advised to identify a reliable test center and schedule a COVID-19 test within the required testing window. Anyone who tests positive for COVID-19 will be deemed ineligible to participate as a field crew member for the summer 2020 season.

### **B. Health Monitoring**

One week prior to beginning employment at the Sierra Institute, all individuals will monitor and document their health using the template provided in **Appendix A**. The individual will record their temperature three times a day (morning, afternoon, night), noting the time along with descriptions of signs and symptoms or lack thereof. Temperatures should be taken at roughly the same time each day. This will serve to 1) assure that an individual arrives for work in good health, 2) provide a baseline temperature data specific to each individual that shall be used throughout the term of employment for health monitoring (see **Section III**), and 3) reduce the risk of transmitting disease among other staff, project partners and community members. An electronic copy of the time and temperature form must be sent to the Project Manager prior to arrival at the Sierra Institute office in Taylorsville. Should an individual develop a fever or other signs and symptoms similar to those of COVID-19 at any time within two-weeks prior to arrival at the Sierra Institute office they will notify the Project Manager immediately.

## **III. Onboarding**

### **A. Health Certification and Monitoring**

Prior to pick up at the designated site or arriving in Taylorsville, field staff will be required to complete and submit electronically to the Sierra Institute the Health Certification form included in **Appendix B**. This document will serve to verify that 1) the individual has completed a two week self-quarantine prior to arrival, 2) the individual has completed their pre-arrival COVID-19 test, 3) to the best of their knowledge, has not been exposed to someone presumed or known to have COVID-19, 4) the individual, to the best of their knowledge, does not currently have COVID-19, and 5) if the individual has previously tested positive for COVID-19, they have documentation from a licensed medical professional clearing them to work. Due to the remote and labor-intensive nature of field work, hiring of individuals previously diagnosed with COVID-19 will be assessed on a case-by-case basis by the Project Manager with consultation from a medical professional.

In addition, new staff will continue the health monitoring procedures detailed in **Section II.B.** unless otherwise directed by the Project Manager as a result in a change of COVID-19 guidance from federal/state/local authorities, and will notify the Project Manager immediately should they develop a fever or other signs and symptoms suggestive of COVID-19.

### **B. For P-CREW and Other Joint Crew Transport to Taylorsville**

Sierra Institute provides transport for P-CREW staff. No P-CREW staff will be allowed

to ride in vehicles unless **Appendix B** and other mandatory testing documentation and paperwork have been received. Temperatures will be taken by Project Manager or Field Crew Leaders at designated pick up sites prior to departure. No one with an above normal temperature will be allowed to travel to Taylorsville. All staff transported will wear surgical masks, wear freshly laundered clothes, and conduct safe travel practices.

**C. COVID-19 Testing Round 2**

Upon arrival to the Sierra Institute in Taylorsville, staff will be tested for COVID-19 by medical personnel from Plumas District or another approved facility. Medical and/or laboratory staff will test Sierra Institute field staff in Taylorsville. Results will be available that day. (Sierra Institute believes Pre-arrival and Day 1 testing negates the need for Phase II quarantine delineated in **Section IIC** and allows avoidance of risks associated with in-county quarantining.) Field staff are not responsible for paying for Day 1 testing. Refusal to submit to Round 1 or Round 2 COVID-19 testing—or subsequent testing deemed necessary—will result in immediate termination of employment. Anyone who tests positive for COVID-19 in Round 2 will be immediately isolated from the group and required to return home. If field staff lack their own transportation on the day of Round 2 testing, a family member or friend must be available to pick them up the same day and take them home.

**D. Quarantine-Phase II [in response to agency call for in-county quarantine]**

Prior to beginning work in the field, the Sierra Institute and/or project partners (United States Forest Service [USFS] or National Park Service [NPS]) may require an additional two-week quarantine period in county. New staff (Project Managers, Field Crew Leaders, Field Crew Members, support staff, etc.) will conduct this quarantine at [LOCATION] or other location as deemed appropriate by the Project Manager. During this time staff will complete the employee paperwork and training as required for the project as well as continue health monitoring procedures detailed in **Section II.B** above. Throughout the duration of this quarantine period the Project Manager, with assistance from the Field Crew Leader, will monitor crew health on a daily basis by reviewing the Health Monitoring form (**Appendix A**) and conducting verbal check ins with crew members.

Specific training will be provided to thoroughly outline the policies and procedures set forth in this document to identify and prevent exposure/transmission of COVID-19, including but not limited to: identifying signs/symptoms, field observation/monitoring, thresholds for communication, and standards on seeking organizational assistance. During this time, new staff may also conduct project related activities such as field preparation, equipment maintenance, and training, if such activities can be conducted without risking personal and community health and well-being.

During this Phase II quarantine period, field crew members will be paid at the full position rate when working on project-related tasks. For the remainder of the time, excluding weekends, staff will be provided with a camping per diem rate of \$15/night.

#### **IV. Daily Health and Hygiene throughout Employment**

Communicable diseases such as COVID-19 are transmitted among people in a variety of ways, including but not limited to contact with contaminated surfaces or bodily fluids, or through the air. Field staff will at minimum comply with the following health and hygiene practices on a daily basis to reduce the risk of infection and transmission:

##### **A. Hand Washing**

Crew members will regularly and thoroughly wash hands using soap and water for 20 seconds and alcohol-based hand sanitizer when soap washing is infeasible. Specifically, crew members will wash hands before and after activities involving hand contact with food, equipment, or bodily fluids such as: meals, driving a vehicle, using field equipment, restroom breaks, coughing, sneezing, etc. Each crew member will be provided a personal refillable hand sanitizer and each crew will maintain a backup supply in the field at all times to refill personal dispensers. Hand washing stations will be set up at camp and the work sites when and when feasible.

##### **B. Reduce Face Contact**

Crew will avoid touching their face unless absolutely necessary. Hands touch many surfaces and once contaminated can easily transfer a virus to eyes, nose, or mouth thus increasing risk of infection.

##### **C. Respiratory Hygiene**

Crew members will practice good respiratory hygiene by covering their mouth and nose with a tissue or bent elbow when coughing or sneezing. Tissues are not to be reused and used tissues will be stored in a clearly marked disposal receptacle until they can be safely disposed upon exiting the field.

##### **D. Health Monitoring**

Field crews will continue health monitoring procedures in **Section II.B.** throughout the duration of their employment including off days.

Project Managers will stay informed of the best practices for reducing COVID-19 exposure and transmission as supported by the best available science and will ensure practices in and out of the field reflect this understanding through frequent communication with field staff. Communication procedures are described in **Section XIII** below.

#### **V. Camp and Food Preparation**

All adult field crews will be responsible for implementing best practices for safe/sanitary grocery shopping, food preparation, and camping. It is highly recommended that each field crew member prepares his/her own meals separately from coworkers.

The following camp and food preparation procedures ***will*** be followed by youth crews (P-CREW):

**A. Grocery Shopping**

For P-CREW, grocery shopping will be limited to P-CREW Program Manager (Project Manager), P-CREW Coordinator and designated persons as appropriate. Food will be delivered to crews in the field so crew members do not have to enter grocery stores.

**B. Food Handling**

Once food is delivered to camp, several field crew members, under the guidance of the Field Crew Lead, will be assigned the task of sanitizing all food before it is stored in proper bins. Participants will be wearing gloves and masks as they use a disinfectant to wipe off the outside of packages. Fresh produce will be rinsed thoroughly, and washed when it is appropriate and can be done safely.

**C. Cooking**

All field crew members will wear gloves and masks when handling or preparing food. Those not involved in cooking will not enter kitchen area. Prior to and immediately after preparing food, all cooking surfaces and utensils will be thoroughly sanitized with CDC-recommended solution of 1/3 cup bleach to one gallon of water.

**D. Tents**

P-CREW will have individual tents for participants when possible. Participants may also sleep outside of tents (in general, most crew members opt to do so after the first week) and only use shared tents for storage.

**VI. Equipment**

Crew members will thoroughly disinfect all tools and field equipment before, during (if tools are being shared among crew members during work), and after conducting project work.

**VII. Vehicles**

All crew members will regularly disinfect vehicle surfaces in frequent contact with hands (i.e., steering wheel, seatbelts, dashboard, etc.). When refueling, crew members will use a disposable towel or gloves to handle the gas pump and will wash hands subsequent to use. In addition, crew members will avoid any non-essential trips into gas station facilities. If entering gas station facilities is necessary, crew members will practice appropriate social distancing and hygiene measures. Following use of public bathroom facilities while traveling and regardless of whether crew members washed their hands after using the bathroom, they will sanitize their hands before grabbing a door handle and entering a vehicle.

**A. Personal Vehicles**

In addition to the protocols listed above, the following additional protocols apply to crew members using their own vehicles for work related transport. Ride sharing between members of the same crew is allowable in personal vehicles if the

following conditions are met; 1) vehicle is disinfected prior to the accompanying crew member entering the vehicle; 2) no more than two crew members in a vehicle; 3) crew members maximize distance between driver and passenger (i.e., passenger sits in back seat opposite of driver); or if crew members are staying in the same shared housing.

#### **B. Work Vehicles**

Crew members relying on Sierra Institute vehicles for travel will practice the cleaning and fueling protocols outlined above. At times, it may be infeasible to limit each vehicle to two crew members; in such instances all crew members will wear masks during transport. Upon consultation with the Project Manager, the driver may be exempt from wearing a mask if it impedes the driver's ability to safely operate the vehicle. On work trips exceeding one hour, stops will be hourly to provide crew members the opportunity to exit the vehicle to hydrate and eat.

### **VIII. Social Distancing**

Proper social distancing will be maintained between crew members and other Sierra Institute and partner employees as well as the general public. Due to the remote character of forest and watershed restoration work, contact with the general public while in the field is expected to be minimal. Sierra Institute recognizes that being in the field with proper hygienic practices makes it one of the safest places to be but only if continued social distancing and related COVID-19 safety protocols are adhered to. Crew members must adhere to all safety guidelines to ensure their own safety, as well as the safety of their crew and those with whom they may come in contact. The Field Crew Lead will keep a log of potential community contacts throughout the duration of the project (refer to **Section X**).

### **IX. Travel**

Due to the extreme uncertainty regarding travel restrictions associated with COVID-19 all field crews will adhere to current guidance provided by federal, state, and local authorities.

If crew members travel out of county during off days, they must notify their Project Manager beforehand. Upon returning, and prior to beginning work, crew members must report their temperature and complete the questionnaire in **Appendix C**. These will be provided to the Project Manager or Field Crew Leader. The Project Manager or Field Crew Leader will immediately review the documentation to assess whether the crew member may be cleared for work or if the crew members travel and current conditions pose an unreasonable risk to the rest of the crew.

P-CREW will be in the field for the duration of their five-week program, with limited exposure to others. Other crews, however, will have time off. Program leaders must impart to all staff that they must realize and act with the understanding that their behavior during work days as well as on off days affects not only them but their entire crew and its collective ability to complete needed restoration work. The Sierra Institute cannot prohibit travel during days off, but it does strongly discourage out-of-area travel. Staff should restrict movement to hikes and other safe outdoor recreation activities to areas with light use. Crews should be treated as family and protected as

such. If field crew members, leaders and managers cannot abide by this and exhibit recklessly careless behavior with respect to COVID-19 safety protocols on work days as well as off days they may be asked to leave the crew or self-quarantine for two weeks (for which s/he will not be paid). The Sierra Institute and partners are working hard to implement projects and create a safe working environment. COVID-19 issues extend safety concerns to the non-work environment and employee off days.

If the Project Manager or Field Crew Leader concludes that a crew member who has been traveling or for other reasons poses an unreasonable risk to the rest of the crew, the crew member of concern will be asked to return home and practice self-quarantine measures until s/he and the Project Manager are able to discuss next steps, including whether it is safe to return.

#### **X. Crew Visitation**

Field crew exposure to visitors while in the field is expected to be minimal; however, there remains a vital need for crews to be visited by other Sierra Institute staff and potentially agency partners, and such visits should be scheduled. To the fullest extent possible, interactions will be limited to one support staff and one project partner (if necessary). Face-mask use during this visit will be required for temporary (< 2 hours) visitors. This is not just to stop transmission of contagion, but as a visual and physical reminder not to touch one's face.

Unscheduled visits by members of the public, agency staff, and other Sierra Institute staff may also occur. In such instances, the Field Crew Leader or Project Manager should courteously approach all visitors, maintaining a safe social distance, to request that social distancing be maintained with all crew members.

Any field crew members interacting with the general public will wear gloves and a facemask during these encounters.

The Field Crew Lead will keep a daily record of all contacts, scheduled and unscheduled, while in the field using the form provided in **Appendix D**. These records shall be kept on site and sent electronically to the Project Manager on a weekly basis.

In the event of a suspected or known COVID-19 outbreak among the field crew members or associated Sierra Institute/Partner staff, these records will be provided to the Contact Tracer identified by the Office Emergency Director (refer to **Section XI A**).

#### **XI. General Injury or Illness**

In the event a crew member requires advanced medical attention as a result of an injury or non-COVID-19 related illness, the Field Crew Leader will notify the Project Manager immediately. Should the injured/ill crew member (patient) require third-party medical treatment, they will likely be treated at a facility where the likelihood of exposure to COVID-19 is least likely. Worker Compensation protocols will be implemented. In this event the following will occur:

- A.** If the patient is unable to safely drive themselves to receive medical attention

another crew member designated by the Field Crew Leader may drive them. Both must follow the vehicle travel protocol in **Section VII**.

- B.** The designated crew member and the patient will be the only ones to interact with medical staff within the medical facility. The designated crew member should only accompany the patient into the medical facility if deemed essential. If essential the designated crew member supporting the patient should minimize their time in the facility with the exception of remaining with P-CREW patients.
- C.** Masks should be worn at all times within the medical facility and gloves are to be worn while handling paperwork.
- D.** Once discharged from medical facility both the designated crew member and released patient should shower and change clothes.

A map showing the location of the hospital nearest to the work area is included in **Appendix E**; the address and contact number for the hospital is:

**Seneca Healthcare District  
130 Brentwood Drive Chester CA 96020  
(530) 258-2151**

**\*\*For cases of potential COVID-19 illness refer to Section XII below\*\***

## **XII. Staff COVID-19 Outbreak or Exposure**

The protocols in this section outline preparation activities in expectation of suspected COVID-19 signs and symptoms.

These are strict protocols which ***must*** be followed in the event that a field crew member presents with signs and symptoms similar to those COVID-19 can present.

Known signs and symptoms associated with COVID-19 infection include: fever, cough, shortness of breath, chills, repeated shaking with chills, muscle pain, headache, sore throat, new loss of taste or smell (CDC website May 1, 2020).

### **A. Exposure/Outbreak Preparation**

In the event a crew member shows signs/symptoms similar to those of COVID-19, the Field Crew Leader will isolate the crew member and request s/he wear a surgical mask *provided it does not compromise breathing* and sanitize hands. Field Crew Leader will notify the Project Manager immediately. In most circumstances, the Project Manager will ask the field crew members to maintain consistent contact and to continue monitoring the patient. Standard practices for dealing with illness in the field will be maintained, in addition to the Sierra institute's COVID-19- related field protocols outlined below.

Should the situation worsen (either the symptoms of one patient worsens or are severe, and with risk of transmission to others members of the crew), the Sierra Institute will initiate an “emergency response,” which means that the Project Manager and other designated office staff will assist field crew members in coordinating a formal response.

An Office Emergency Director (OED) will be designated to help determine the most appropriate response based upon the situation. The OED’s role will be to:

1. Determine if external medical assistance is warranted utilizing all organizational assets, including physician advisor.
2. Support the field staff. This will include providing guidance about how to set-up camp to mitigate the risk of transmission among crew-participants.
3. Build a Response Team. Possible key roles of the Response Team are included in the **Table 1** below. Staff may be tasked with more than one role on the Response Team as long as it does not compromise their ability to effectively carry out their task(s).
4. Manage and record information.
5. Secure a physical area to coordinate the response effort.
6. Mobilize Help. The OED will decide if and how to get additional resources into the field to support the crew. This support will include a healthy staff member (who may be already staffing the crew) in the response effort, and who will take stringent precautions while providing support activities to the crew; and a “Spot Device” or other means of direct communication to Sierra Institute staff or other designated communications coordinator.

This support may also include assistance in evacuating field crew member(s) who meet the organization’s evaluation criteria; and additional supplies or resources to aid in the crew’s recuperation and recovery including extra tents to help keep healthy crew members isolated from asymptomatic crew members, and/or sufficient resources to establish two camps.

7. Determine if it is necessary to organize a Critical Incident Stress Debriefing (CISD)
8. Determine how to support remaining non-infected crew members, including evaluating if self-isolation is necessary.

**Table 1: Recommended Roles/Responsibilities of Response Team**

Title	Role
Camp Operations Lead	Focuses on care of ill crew members and requests for needed supplies/supports. This individual also focuses on keeping things running, augmenting facilities as needed (e.g., digging more “toilets”, dealing with laundry needs), overseeing changes to the physical set-up (e.g., adding quarantine tents), running between areas, keep tools working, etc.
Field Crew Lead	Focus will be operating the rest of the crew in a manner that mitigates the medical situation’s impact to those participants. This might include helping the crew maintain a work schedule or coordinating structured time in a non-work environment. If the Field Crew Lead is the ill individual then the Project Manager will designate a Field Crew Member to assume the Field Crew Lead position.
Logistics Lead	Focus will be to collect supplies, arrange for needed travel, and get people and materials heading out to the scene
Documentation Lead	Focus will be to document the entire response including phone calls, decisions made, actions taken, and response.
Media/Reporting Lead	Focus will be to handle potential media and discussions with agency and law enforcement
Communications Lead	Handles the phone system and routes phone calls
Finance Lead	This staff member will identify funds and have authority to release funds in order to respond to the emergency
Contact Tracer	Focus will be on identification of persons who may have come into contact with an infected person(s) and subsequent collection of further information about these contacts.
Parent Liaison	Focus will be to call crew members Emergency Contact(s) and keep them updated with information
Support	One or more staff members will provide general office duties such as pulling files, gathering data, and offering general assistance to the Response Team

**B. Exposure/Outbreak Field Response Protocols**

When symptoms consistent with COVID-19 arise, the following steps will be taken:

1. The participant presenting with symptoms of COVID-19 will be provided a mask and isolated from other members of the crew.
2. If transport is required to contact external support, the Field Crew Leader should perform a quick thorough sanitizing of the vehicle. After making the plan clear to the entire field crew, the Field Crew Leader (and two asymptomatic Field Crew Members or other Sierra Institute staff, if available) should gain cell reception to initiate a support response from the Sierra Institute. They shall travel back to the crew as soon as possible to minimize the amount of time the crew is without a vehicle.

3. The Field Crew Leader should contact the Project Manager or other appropriate Sierra Institute office staff to alert them to the situation and specific symptoms. At that juncture, Sierra Institute will initiate a Response Team to continue monitoring the situation and provide guidance on appropriate actions, including:
  - a. Collaborating with the Field Crew Leader in creating an emergency response plan;
  - b. Evaluating the need to contact local health care providers if care is needed and the Department of Health and/or other oversight bodies, and making that contact if deemed necessary;
  - c. Evaluating the need for additional assistance, determining who and when external support will be arriving, and how interactions with outside entities will be handled;
  - d. Planning how routine activities will continue for non-infected crew members;
  - e. Considering how laundry might get handled and by whom, especially when it may be infectious; and
  - f. Identifying what additional resources might be required (additional sanitizing supplies, PPE, tents, cots, etc.)
4. Once the Response Team is activated to launch the plan, team members will leave knowing when the Response Team will meet again.
5. Sierra Institute will initiate communication with the crew's Emergency Contacts following the established outreach protocols, including:
  - a. A stringent office-based record-keeping system to track information exchange and response activities;
  - b. Protocols for contacting and working with the crew's Emergency Contacts;
  - c. Communication with the project partners. Sierra Institute will create a communication plan between the office and the crew. If reliable communication is not possible from camp, plans will be made to ensure a "Spot" device is made available ASAP;
  - d. Preparation to handle inquiries from media;
  - e. Engagement of Worker's Compensation; and

f. Systems to capture incurred expenses.

6. The patient suspected of having signs and symptoms similar to those associated with COVID-19 warrants immediate medical care and evacuation. If a patient has a fever over 100.4, and also present with shortness of breath, blue lips, chest pressure, altered mental status, etc., steps should be taken to get the patient to emergency care immediately. In the event that a decision is made to transport the participant exhibiting symptoms, the following rules should be followed during and after transport:

a. Be calm, model calm;

b. The number of people exposed to the symptomatic individual during transport shall be limited to as few people as possible. In some cases, this may require a crew to accompany a patient in order to mitigate the risks of leaving a crew in a remote location without transport/evacuation options. Any transportation of the symptomatic patient requires that appropriate masks and gloves are worn, and resources are available to sanitize the vehicle;

These decisions will be made on a case by case basis by the Response Team. If a crew is left temporarily without a vehicle, their activities will be limited to minimize risks;

c. Call the Sierra Institute's emergency phone number as soon as possible to activate an Emergency Response Team, including outreach to our Physician Advisor. If outside guidance has been obtained, follow all directions from the Response Team, healthcare staff, etc. This will include recommendations about direct care of the participant, keeping the crew isolated, and a plan of action for the next few days;

d. In the event that a third-party will be aiding in the transport, follow the specific directions of the guidance given from the Sierra Institute, and healthcare staff. Sierra Institute will assist with or coordinate plan for evacuation. In the event that a medical evacuation is required, air medical support will make the decision whether to extract the patient via air or not. In fire season, air resources are typically scarce; and

e. Crew will regularly monitor and document patient's vitals and symptoms.

**C. Direct Care of Symptomatic Participants**

The following protocols will be put into effect if a field crew member or associated Sierra Institute/Partner staff member tests positive for COVID-19.

Once symptoms arise, field crew members and anyone coming into contact with them will wear masks and gloves. If symptoms are mild or do not merit external medical assistance or testing, as assessed in consultation with Sierra Institute's Physician Advisor, the OED will help create a plan to set up camp in a manner that minimizes risk of transmission to the degree possible given the specific circumstances. In general, the following steps should be taken while a plan is being put into action:

1. Field crew members presenting symptoms will be isolated from Field crew members who are asymptomatic;
2. Fully brief the entire crew. Explain what to do if they start feeling ill. In so doing, expect that some "sympathetic" illness may show up;
3. Create a "holding area" until illness status is determined for each crew member;
4. Measures will be taken to get the ill crew member back to their residence, or to an appropriate facility in which they can be tested for COVID-19 or practice self-isolation for 14 days with assurances of appropriate medical care. The OED with assistance from the Response Team will determine best practices for ensuring frequent check-ins with the ill crew member throughout the duration of his/her self-isolation;
5. These arrangements will be made with the aid of the Sierra Institute Response Team; and
6. Field Crew Leaders must work to spread calm and allow the group to express their emotions. If further mental health support is needed, efforts can be made to seek local and or teletherapy options which may exist.
7. Provide clear, consistent guidelines for field crew members to use should they choose to communicate with external constituents (friends, family, etc.). For example, out of respect to the symptomatic field crew member(s) who may still be in the middle of contacting their own families, no one should share names or other private information. Sierra Institute supports crew members and other staff reaching out to their external community as needed so long as it does not negatively impact their immediate Sierra Institute community or their families. For field crew members who do not have phones, they will likely wish to contact parents, spouses, or close friends. Sierra Institute will assist with this communication as soon as the situation has stabilized (this may need to wait until additional staff

resources are present).

8. While the health screening process should have eliminated more medically vulnerable populations, review health forms and engage the crew to identify individuals who may be at greater risk for the presenting illness, and take appropriate steps to protect these people. Should the circumstances warrant external medical care and/or testing due to severe symptoms that arise rapidly, or due to the perceived deteriorating health of the field crew member, that field crew member will be provided a mask and be isolated.

#### **D. Crew Operations**

In the event a field crew member tests positive for COVID-19, the crew shall quarantine in place until testing can be arranged or for two weeks (preferably in the current location) or until program's end, whichever comes first. If a crew member is evacuated and tests positive, Sierra Institute will work with Plumas District Hospital or another approved facility to have all crew members tested. After the field season is concluded, all field crew members are urged to continue self-quarantine as a general measure which helps ensure the safety of the general public.

During this time, and continually throughout the quarantine process, the asymptomatic field crew members will ensure all shared surfaces are disinfected, per CDC guidelines.

The OED will help make a determination about if the remainder of the crew can remain working (if no additional symptoms arise), though physical exertion may be limited to avoid exhaustion.

In the case that additional symptoms arise, these symptoms will be handled as described in the protocols above.

### **XIII. Communication**

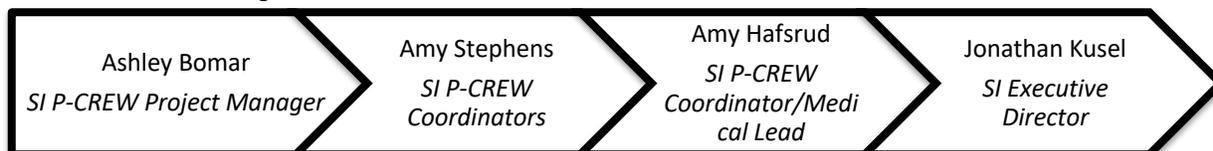
All general communication protocols will be established by the Project Manager and Field Crew Members upon initiation of operations. Contact information for key Sierra Institute and partner staff involved in the management, coordination, and operation of field crews are provided in **Table 2** below.

In the event of an emergency Field Crew Members should follow the notification hierarchy respective to their project as follows:

Wilderness Fuels Module Crew



P-CREW and Swamper Crew



Other Field Crews



**Table 2: Key Contacts**

Name	Organization	Title/Role	Contact Information
Ashley Bomar	Sierra Institute	P-CREW Project Manager	O: (530) 284-1022 C: (530) - E: @sierrainstitute.us
Danielle Berry	Sierra Institute	Stewardship Project Coordinator/ WFMC Project Manager	O: (530) 284-1022 C: (530) - E: @sierrainstitute.us
Amy Hafsrud	Sierra Institute	Medical Lead/ P-CREW Coordinator	O: (530) 284-1022 C: (530) - E: @sierrainstitute.us
Amy Stephens	Sierra Institute	P-CREW Field Coordinator	O: (530) 284-1022 C: (530) - E: @sierrainstitute.us
Steven Buckley	Lassen Volcanic National Park	Ecologist & Botanist/ WFMC Co-Manager	O: C: E:
Kyle Rodgers	Sierra Institute	Collaborative Forestry Program Mgr.	O: (530) 284-1022 C: (530) - E: @sierrainstitute.us
Jonathan Kusel	Sierra Institute	Executive Director	O: (530) 284-1022 C: (530) - E: @sierrainstitute.us
Kristie Dailey	Sierra Institute	Human Resources Lead	O: (530) 284-1022 C: (530) - E: @sierrainstitute.us



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**APPENDIX B: Health Certification Form**

To be completed upon initiation of work with the Sierra institute.

1.	Did you conduct a 2-week self-quarantine prior to arriving?	Yes	No	Explain:
2.	Have you traveled to an area as a known COVID-19 “hot spot” in the past 14-days?	Yes	No	Explain:
3.	Have you had a suspected or confirmed COVID-19 diagnosis? *if YES, proof medical clearance required	Yes	No	Explain:
4.	Have you, or anyone in your residence, come into close contact with (within 6 feet) with someone who has a suspected or confirmed COVID-19 diagnosis in the past 14 days?	Yes	No	Explain:
5.	Have you had a fever (greater than 100.4 F) OR symptoms of lower respiratory illness such as cough, shortness of breath, or difficulty breathing in the past 14 days?	Yes	No	Explain:
6.	Are you currently experiencing a fever (greater than 100.4 F) OR symptoms of lower respiratory illness such as cough, shortness of breath, or difficulty breathing?	Yes	No	Explain:
7.	Temperature upon arrival:			

I, \_\_\_\_\_, hereby certify that the above responses are true to the best of my knowledge.

Crew Member Name:	Field Crew Lead or authorized representative name:
Signature:	Signature:
Date:	Date:

**APPENDIX C: Health Screening Questionnaire**

Crew members must, to the best of their knowledge, answer the following questions prior to returning to work should they travel out of County on their off days.

1.	Have you traveled to an area with known spread of COVID-19 in the past 14-days?	Yes	No	Explain:
2.	Have you, or anyone in your residence, come into close contact with (within 6 feet) with someone who has a suspected or confirmed COVID-19 diagnosis in the past 14 days?	Yes	No	Explain:
3.	Have you had a fever (greater than 100.4 F) OR symptoms of lower respiratory illness such as cough, shortness of breath, or difficulty breathing in the past 14 days?	Yes	No	Explain:
4.	Are you currently experiencing a fever (greater than 100.4 F) OR symptoms of lower respiratory illness such as cough, shortness of breath, or difficulty breathing?	Yes	No	Explain:
5.	Temperature upon arrival:			

Crew Member Name:	Field Crew Lead or authorized representative name:
Signature:	Signature:
Date:	Date:



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**APPENDIX E: Map to Hospital**

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