



**NOTICE OF EXEMPTION**

2020030831

<b>PROJECT TITLE</b>	Loma Prieta School Fuel Reduction Project		
<b>PROJECT LOCATION</b>	Portions of S26 and S23, T9S R1W	<b>COUNTY</b>	Santa Cruz
<b>LEAD AGENCY</b>	California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE)		
<b>CONTACT</b>	Andrew Hubbs		
<b>ADDRESS</b>	6059 Highway 9 Felton, CA 95018	<b>PHONE</b>	(831) 335-6794

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The project consists of roadside fuel treatment within approximately 50' of Summit Road and several dense areas of vegetation on Loma Prieta School District property in northern Santa Cruz County. Vegetation is a mix of native tree and non-native tree species, as well as shrub species. Tree species are comprised of redwood, Douglas-fir, coast live oak, madrone, bay-laurel, tanoak and non-native Monterey pine, ponderosa pine, incense cedar and a few eucalyptus. Shrubs include coyote brush, poison oak, toyon and non-native French broom. A seasonal pond and associated riparian vegetation is present on the school property, but is excluded from the work area.

Vegetation will be removed by hand to create a shaded fuel break within forested areas of the school property, focusing on an understory treatment. Small diameter trees (generally less than 10") will be removed along with shrubs that act as "ladder fuels". Larger "leave" trees will be pruned to a height of 8 -10 ft; except along Summit Road where pruning will occur up to 15 ft. The shaded fuel break will not involve mechanical timber harvesting or the piling and burning of slash. An overstocked stand of planted ponderosa pine and incense cedar will be thinned which will include removing suppressed, intermediate and some codominant trees. Elsewhere, dead and dying trees of all sizes will be removed along with several large Monterey pine nearing the end of their life span. Some, but not all, of these trees are roadside hazard trees, however they are being removed because they are nearing the end of their life span and will free up growing space for more suitable replacement trees.

No stump removal, mechanical yarding, or site preparation is expected. Some larger trees along roadways may be removed using bucket trucks, however the trucks will remain entirely on pavement or in established dirt pull outs. Most cut material will be chipped and broadcast on-site. Material too large for chipping will be left on-site.

Work may be conducted year-round over two or more years, but will likely begin during the late winter or spring months of 2020.

**EXEMPTION STATUS**

- Categorical Exemption Type/Section: Class 4 §15304 Minor Alterations to Land
- Statutory Exemption (state code section):
- Ministerial (§21080(b)(1); 15268)
- Declared Emergency (§21080(b)(3); 15269(a))
- Emergency Project (§21080(b)(4); 15269(b)(c))

**REASONS PROJECT IS EXEMPT**

The work proposed is a minor alteration to vegetation which does not involve removal of healthy, mature, scenic trees and is consistent with Categorical Exemption Class 4 - Minor Alterations to Land. No activity is proposed that is listed as a limitation under CCR 15300.2 (a-f).

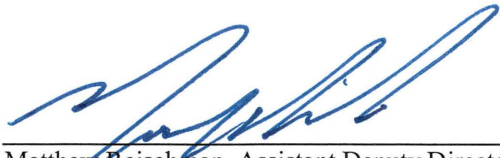
Field review by CAL FIRE staff confirmed that no exceptions apply which would preclude the use of a Notice of Exemption for this project. The Department has concluded that no significant environmental impact would occur to aesthetics, agriculture and forestland/timberland, air quality, biological resources, cultural resources, geology and soils, greenhouse gas emissions, hazards and hazardous materials, hydrology and water quality, land use planning, mineral resources, noise, population and housing, public services, recreation, transportation/traffic, or to utilities and service systems. Documentation of the environmental review completed by the Department is kept on file at San Mateo-Santa Cruz Unit Headquarters, 6059 Highway 9, Felton, CA 95018.



State of California  
The Natural Resources Agency  
California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE)

## NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

DATE RECEIVED FOR FILING

  
Matthew Reischman, Assistant Deputy Director      Date  
California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection      3/19/20

Governor's Office of Planning & Research

MAR 20 2020

STATE CLEARINGHOUSE