



State of California  
 The Natural Resources Agency  
 California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

## NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

<b>PROJECT TITLE</b>	Muniz Ranches Property Owners Association Fire Prevention Project-Phase 3 - 2018-2020		
<b>PROJECT LOCATION</b>	Section 28 and projected Section 36, T8N, R12W, projected Section 1 T7N, R12W, MDB&M	<b>COUNTY</b>	Sonoma
<b>PUBLIC AGENCY</b>	California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE)		
<b>CONTACT</b>	Ben Nicholls, Fire Prevention Grants Local Contact		
<b>ADDRESS</b>	Sonoma-Lake-Napa Unit 1199 Big Tree Road St. Helena, CA 94574-9711	<b>PHONE</b>	(707) 967-1408

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

This fuels reduction-shaded fuel break project is located along portions of Muniz Ranch Road (a private road), situated on a ridgetop in western Sonoma County, 2.5 miles from the Pacific Ocean. Vegetation in the project area is predominantly Douglas-fir and redwood trees that are competing with overstocked hardwoods (mostly tanoak) and brush. Treatment will include the use chainsaws, handsaws, a chipper, and possibly a masticator (depending on slope) to remove ladder fuels from an 18-acre area approximately 100 feet from each side of approximately 3,900 feet of Muniz Ranch Road. During project implementation mostly brush (but also dead or dying trees) will be removed. Thickets of small trees (hardwoods, redwood and Douglas-fir up to 12 inches) will be thinned and pruned. The result will be a shaded fuel break with a leave tree stand (including seedlings) that will have a range of spacing between 15x15 to 20x20 feet. Leave trees will be pruned to a height of 15 feet to reduce additional ladder fuels. Hardwoods will be treated with a County approved herbicide, under strict regulations by a Certified Pesticide Applicant, to control regrowth and maintain project objectives for a longer period of time. All target species (mostly tanoak) 1 inches or greater will be treated, up to a maximum diameter of approximately 20 inches DBH. Applicators will leave at least one tree untreated (regardless of diameter) per 9 conifers, per acre, to maintain a 9:1 conifer hardwood ratio in the stand. A sample area will be marked by the advising forester or under supervision by a forester to illustrate the desired leave stand condition. Overall, slash treatment objectives are to reduce fuel loading and will meet or exceed the standards for slash disposal in the Forest Practice Rules by the end of the project contract. All debris will generally be chipped and spread over the landscape near the road or (on steeper slopes) lopped and scattered.

**EXEMPTION STATUS**

- Categorical Exemption Type/Section: Class 4
- 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**

This project fits under portions of Class 4 Minor Alterations to Land, §15304. Field review by Matt Greene RPF #2747 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 CAL FIRE's St. Helena office.

**DATE RECEIVED FOR FILING**

5/29/20  
 Matthew Reischman, Assistant Deputy Director      Date  
 California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection