



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

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

PROJECT TITLE	Elkhorn Road Shaded Fuel Break		
PROJECT LOCATION	T12N, R12W, Sections 16, 17, 20; MDB&M Project extends for 3.2-miles (62 acres), beginning at the intersection of Elkhorn Road & Hwy 128	COUNTY	Mendocino
LEAD AGENCY	California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE)		
CONTACT	Robert B. Douglas, Environmental Scientist CAL FIRE Mendocino Unit		
ADDRESS	Resource Management 17501 North Highway 101 Willits, CA 95490	PHONE	707-972-3795

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The project consists of the removal of vegetation located adjacent to 3.2 miles (62 acres) of Elkhorn Road to maintain ingress and egress routes in the event of a wildland fire. CAL FIRE hand crews will reduce surface and ladder fuels by cutting and chipping shrubs and understory trees for the purpose of reducing the fire hazard along the county road through a rural subdivision. The roadway treatment area consists of the county and private road Right-of-Ways (ROWs) extending approximately 80-ft in both directions from the centerline of the roadway. The vegetation consists of grassland, oak and conifer stands with areas of dense shrubs. Hand crews will utilize chainsaws, pole-saws and hand tools to remove brush and dead ground fuels. Live trees which are 10-in. diameter or less may be thinned and removed. Larger trees will have branches pruned up to 10-ft above ground level. Woody material generated by this project shall be chipped. A portion of this project may be masticated by a swing-boom masticator operating on the roadway.

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 project meets the requirements of a CEQA Article 19 Class 4 Categorical exemption "Minor Alterations to Land" (Section 15304, Public Resources Code) as the proposed activities involve small tree and brush removal, pruning and chipping to reduce wildfire threat. Although this project will modify some structural aspects of the vegetation, it will not convert the vegetation type or result in the removal of otherwise "healthy, mature, and scenic trees." The California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDDB) was searched and no rare, threatened or endangered plant or animal species were identified on the project site that will be negatively impacted by this project. The CAL FIRE Archaeologist has also been consulted and has determined that this project is exempt from further archaeological review.

Field review by CAL FIRE staff confirmed that no exceptions apply (Section 15300.2) 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, energy, 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, utilities and service systems, or wildfire. Documentation of the environmental review completed by the Department is kept on file at CAL FIRE Mendocino Unit, Resource Management, 17501 N. Highway 101, Willits, CA 95490, Attn. Environmental Coordinator.

DATE RECEIVED FOR FILING

Matthew Reischman

10/15/2020

Matthew Reischman, Assistant Deputy Director Date
California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection