



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

## NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

<b>PROJECT TITLE</b>	Ponderosa – Mira Monte Shaded Fuel Break		
<b>PROJECT LOCATION</b>	Portions of Section 33 T2N R16E & Portions of Section 4 T1N R16E	<b>COUNTY</b>	Tuolumne
<b>LEAD AGENCY</b>	California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE)		
<b>CONTACT</b>	Adam Frese		
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### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This project is located in west central Tuolumne County along the ridgeline between the communities of Tuolumne City, Mira Monte and Ponderosa. The project will construct and complete a 300' wide shaded fuel break. The break will start at the intersection of 1st Avenue and Grizzly Mine Road, near Tuolumne City, from there it follows 1st Avenue in a north easterly direction, bordering Canyon Drive to the North West for approximately 1900 feet. From there the fuel break crosses Buchanan Mine Road and heads North following a ridgeline for 6,600 ft, generally following a Tuolumne Utility Districts water ditch where it ends near the intersection of Eastview Drive and Honey Lane. This fuel break is strategically placed at the ridgeline above the north fork of the Tuolumne river canyon and will help to protect the communities of Tuolumne, Twain Harte, Mi Wuk and others to the North and West of the ridgeline. The project will consist of fuel break construction by mechanical and manual methods.

#### Unit 1- 70 acres, Mechanical Fuel Break Construction

Located in the northern portion of the project this unit will use mechanical construction via a metal tracked masticator will be the preferred method throughout this unit. This area is designated on the map as mechanical construction in unit 1 the northern, blue unit 70 acres. This operation will create a mosaic of vegetation with crowns spaced at an average of 20'. Individual or small clumps of brush may be left but spaced at a distance equal to twice their height. Masticators will be equipped with heads capable of achieving a 12" high stubble height and reducing material so 90% is less than 24" long. No trees over 12" DBH will be removed. Following mastication residual trees will be pruned with hand crews to 10 feet or ½ the live crown height whichever is less to reduce ladder fuels, slash created by pruning will either be lopped and scattered or chipped.

#### Unit 2- 123 acres, Manual Shaded Fuel Break Construction

This unit is located in the Southern portion of the project and will be treated by manual methods, due to excessive slope and limited access. In this unit hand cutting will be the sole method of treatment. Material will be yarded/ winched by a rubber tracked chipper from existing roads only. All equipment will be restricted to existing roadways. The material will then be chipped and blown back on the hill side. Material less than 12" will be treated to achieve a minimum of 10' crown spacing. Hand pile and burn will be the secondary slash treatment method. Residual trees will be pruned to 10 feet or ½ the live crown height whichever is less to reduce ladder fuels. In areas where access is limited lop and scatter method of slash disposal will be used with a maximum height of 12".

### EXEMPTION STATUS

- Categorical Exemption Type/Section: Class 4 15304, Minor Alteration 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

This project fits under portions of 15304 Minor Alterations to Land. 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 18464 Striker Court, Sonora, CA 95370.

### DATE RECEIVED FOR FILING

*Matthew Reischman*

11/23/2020

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