



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

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

PROJECT TITLE	Cultural Fire Climate Project Hwy 169		
PROJECT LOCATION	T9N R4E S 2,3,4,5,10,11 and 10N R3E S3,4,9,10 and T10N R 4E S18,19,30 and T11N R3E S 32,33, HB&M	COUNTY	Humboldt
LEAD AGENCY	California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE)		
CONTACT	Jason Butcher - SRA VMP Forester Humboldt - Del Norte Unit		
ADDRESS	118 S. Fortuna Blvd. Fortuna, CA 95540	PHONE	707-726-1258

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This project is a hazardous fuels reduction project utilizing accepted prescribed fire practices. It is a collaborative effort led by the Cultural Fire Management Council (CFMC), a 501(c)(3) non-profit run by Yurok Tribal members in coordination with the Yurok Tribe, CAL FIRE, and the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA). This project is a continuation of a community effort to reintroduce prescribed fire to the Klamath River area and to reduce or eliminate fire hazard along the State Highway 169 corridor. The project involves four separate geographic areas receiving fuels and prescribed fire treatments. These treatments mitigate accumulated fire fuels near tribal elder residences, along public roads, and along various private roads internal to the Yurok Reservation. The project will reduce the buildup of hazardous fire fuels on 300- 600 acres using two treatment methods. The first treatment involves using hand-tools, chainsaws, and chippers to clear fire fuels within 100 feet of key egress/ingress roads (~20 miles) and near the residences of 72 tribal elders. Brush, shrubs and small immature trees will be removed to eliminate fire ladder fuels and increase spacing between tree crowns. Treatment two involves using low intensity prescribed fire within the four areas during 5 separate Training Exchange (TRES) events. For any given TRES event on any one area, a maximum of 30 acres will be burned on average to treat tribal lands of accumulated fire fuels and provide ancillary benefits of reintroducing cultural practices which promote growth of essential ceremonial and native food sources. The reduced fuel zone will lessen the chance of a wildfire starting and increase the likelihood of fire crews being able to extinguish the fire.

EXEMPTION STATUS

- Categorical Exemption Type and 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

This project fits within the descriptions of a Class 4 Categorical Exemptions described in CEQA Guidelines (14 CCR §15304) pertaining to Minor Alterations to Land. This project will not have a significant effect on the environment and is exempt from the provisions of CEQA. These fuel management activities will reduce the volume of flammable vegetation improving community safety in the event of wildfire. Site disturbance will be limited to minor modification of vegetation.

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, 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 to wildfires. Documentation of the environmental review completed by the Department is kept on file at CAL FIRE Humboldt – Del Norte Unit, 118 Fortuna Blvd., Fortuna, CA 95540.

DATE RECEIVED FOR FILING

Matthew Reischman

4/6/2021

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