



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

## NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

|                         |  |               |                       |
|-------------------------|--|---------------|-----------------------|
| <b>PROJECT TITLE</b>    | Upper Little Bear Fuels Reduction Project                        |               |                       |
| <b>PROJECT LOCATION</b> | Lake Arrowhead, CA; Section 20, T02N, R03W, SBBM                 | <b>COUNTY</b> | San Bernardino County |
| <b>LEAD AGENCY</b>      | California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) |               |                       |
| <b>CONTACT</b>          | David Haas, Unit Forester  |               |                       |
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### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Upper Little Bear Fuel Reduction Project is located on property owned by Upper Little Bear Mountain Club Home Owners Association in Lake Arrowhead, California. This project is in a mixed conifer-oak forest, with intermixed brush, in the San Bernardino mountains. Ponderosa pine, Jeffrey pine, white fir, incense cedar, sugar pine, black oak, and live oak species dominate the stand. Understory shrub species include a variety of ceanothus, manzanita, and other shrub species. Elevation is approximately 5,200 feet. The project is approximately 40 acres. This project will help reduce wildfire risk to nearby homes within State Responsibility Area (SRA) by reducing the hazardous fuels and improving forest health.

Fuel reduction treatments will consist of thinning trees under 12 inches in diameter at breast height to an average spacing of 20 feet between tree trunks. Residual trees will be pruned to a height of eight feet or ½ the tree height, whichever is less. All vegetation within the drip-line of residual trees will be removed using chainsaws or a masticator. Ground based equipment including a rubber tracked skid-steer and rubber tracked chipper will be used throughout the project area. Bark beetle infested wood will either be chipped or covered with six mil clear plastic. Within chaparral dominated areas, up to 85% of brush ground cover will be masticated or cut using chainsaws and chipped onsite or piled and burned in order to create a mosaic of islands of vegetation of various natural appearing shapes and sizes. Vegetation cut using chainsaws will either be chipped onsite or piled and burned. Inter-planting of seedlings will occur in the future to meet project and landowner needs.

No new roads will be constructed. Work will be accomplished using CAL FIRE crews. This project is anticipated to begin in the spring of 2021. Best management practices, including erosion control measures, and project design features have been incorporated into the project and significant adverse impacts to resources will be non-existent. The project will be ongoing until all areas are treated and will include maintenance entries.

### 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

This project fits under the Class 4 (Minor Alterations to Land) Categorical Exemption to CEQA. Class 4 is described as a “minor public or private alterations in the condition of land, water, and/or vegetation which do not involve removal of healthy, mature, scenic trees except for forestry or agricultural purposes.” This project as proposed, consists of mastication, chipping, thinning, and crew work and does not remove healthy, mature, or scenic trees. These activities are best described as minor in scope.

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 impacts 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, populations and housing, public services, recreation, transportation/traffic, utilities and service systems, or to wildfire. Documentation of the environmental review completed by the Department is kept on file at CAL FIRE’s BDU Headquarters in San Bernardino.

### DATE RECEIVED FOR FILING

*Matthew Reischman*

5/5/2021

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