

CEQA # 13377
Project # 21-23



**State of California – The Resources Agency
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION**

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

TO: Office of Planning and Research
1400 Tenth Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

FROM: Department of Parks and Recreation
Diablo Range District
15751 Tesla Road
Livermore, CA 94550

PROJECT TITLE: Drought Resiliency of Mt. Diablo Manzanita and Knobcone Pine Forests

LOCATION: [Mount Diablo State Park](#)

COUNTY: Contra Costa

DESCRIPTION OF THE NATURE AND PURPOSE OF PROJECT: Reduce the fuel buildup from dead material and over-crowded conditions along roads and trails in Mount Diablo State Park to reduce risk of high intensity wildfire and prepare the sites for potential prescribed burns in future project phases which is essential for promoting regeneration of healthy manzanita and pine populations. This project will start Winter 2021 and is expected to be ongoing for two (2) years. Work will:

- Use District Staff, youth corps crew, and/or contractor crews to remove standing fuel resulting from manzanita and pine die-back along portions of Knobcone Point Road, Black Hawk Ridge Road, Wall Point Road, Summit Trail Road, and Summit Road;
- Thin approx. 50% of live plants and remove all dead and symptomatic material within a 100' buffer of the roads that surround known mortality areas (approx. 160 acres);
- Thin an additional 210 acres, within the potential burn areas, of 50% of ladder fuels;
- Develop experimental thinning plots to evaluate the effectiveness of removing dead and symptomatic material to reduce the spread of pathogens and the feasibility of large-scale manual management. Plot numbers, size, and locations are yet to be determined but all vegetation removal across all plots will equal less than one acre;
- Dispose of all removed material via trailer mounted curtain burner or chip and transport to a landfill to reduce potential for spread of pathogens;
- Develop a prescribed fire plan for approximately 450 acres along Wall Point and Knobcone Point. Use existing roads and trails as a natural fire break and establish additional control lines reflective of previous burns; and
- Have District Staff collect seeds from knobcone pines for long-term storage and take 100 cuttings each from Mt. Diablo and Contra Costa manzanita for propagation in a native plant nursery.

PUBLIC AGENCY APPROVING THE PROJECT: California Department of Parks and Recreation

NAME OF DIVISION OR DISTRICT CARRYING OUT THE PROJECT: Diablo Range District

EXEMPT STATUS:

Categorical Exemption

Class: 1 & 4

Section: 15301 & 15304

REASONS WHY PROJECT IS EXEMPT: Project consists of the operation or minor alteration of existing public or private structures, facilities or topographical features involving negligible or no expansion of use beyond current levels and the minor public or private alterations in the condition of land and/or vegetation which do not include the removal of healthy, mature, scenic trees, included as "Resource management projects" in the Department of Parks and Recreation's list of exempt activities in accordance with CCR §15300.4.

CONTACT: Gina Benigno
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DocuSigned by:

Eduardo Guaracha

9/8/2021

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Eduardo Guaracha
State Park Superintendent V
Diablo Range District

DATE