



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

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

PROJECT TITLE:	Donovan Fuels Reduction Project		
PROJECT LOCATION	T3N, R13E, portions of sections 7, 8, 9, 10, 15, 16, 17, 18, 20, 21, 22 MDMB	COUNTY	Calaveras
LEAD AGENCY	California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE)		
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PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Grant funding from the California Climate Investments Fire Prevention Program has been awarded to the Calaveras Foothills Fire Safe Council for the Donovan Fuel Reduction Project. 1,100 acres are proposed for mechanical mastication all of which has been surveyed. The fuel treatment project is located in the foothills of Central California, approximately two miles north of Angels Camp. Fuel treatments will reduce the vertical and horizontal fuel composition to create a shaded fuel break, improve wildlife habitat and restore oak woodland. No burning will occur. The fire prone area has a history of large wildfires, the most recent being the 2015 Butte Fire which burned through a portion of the project area. This project is listed as strategically important in both the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection Tuolumne Calaveras Unit Fire Plan and in the Community Wildfire Protection Plan for Calaveras County. The project will help protect the communities of Murphys and Angels Camp and the 1,000 homes in the area and tie in with other fuel reductions projects to cumulatively reduce the fire threat. The project area generally contains two fuel types: Chaparral: manzanita, scrub oak, buck brush, toyon, annual grasses, and scattered California gray pines (ghost pines); The second fuel type consists of Oak Woodland: blue, white, and black oak, interior live oak, gray pine, scattered ponderosa pine, annual grasses, interspersed with pockets of chaparral. Mastication fuel treatment in Oak Woodland areas will concentrate on removing suppressed unhealthy oaks and live oak clumps will be thinned out retaining the larger, healthier stems. In general, live oak clumps and other unhealthy oak species with diameter breast height (DBH) less or equal to 10 inches will be removed. In the chaparral areas, brush will be thinned out and reduced in size, live oak clumps will be reduced to the healthiest, largest stems and dead and dying oak and pines will be removed. Standing dead trees in both fuel types may be retained for wildlife purposes when appropriate. The overall goal to create a fire resistant forest while still maintaining a chaparral/oak woodland forest. No habitat conversion will result from this project.

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 under portions of 15304-Minor Alterations to Land. The Class of Exemption to be used is 14 CCR 15304- Minor Alterations to Land. Field review 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, air quality, biological resources, cultural resources/tribal 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 or traffic, utilities and service systems, or wildfire. A query of the CNDDDB did not reveal the presence of sensitive species within project areas. Protection measures for cultural sites have been developed with guidance from Project CAL FIRE Archaeologist and are consistent with Best Management Practices of the industry. Documentation of the environmental review completed by the Department is kept on file at the Cal Fire San Andreas Office.

DATE RECEIVED FOR FILING

9/13/2021

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