



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

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

| | | | |
|-------------------------|--|---------------|--------------|
| PROJECT TITLE | Timber-Blue Lake-Ridge-Willits Creek Roadside Fuel Reduction | | |
| PROJECT LOCATION | T19N R14W Secs 17, 18, 19, 20, 29, 32, 33 T18N R14W Secs 4, 11, 12, 13; MDB&M | COUNTY | Mendocino |
| LEAD AGENCY | California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) | | |
| CONTACT | Robert B. Douglas, Environmental Scientist CAL FIRE Mendocino Unit | | |
| ADDRESS | Resource Management 17501 North Highway 101 Willits, CA 95490 | PHONE | 707-972-3795 |

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The purpose of this project is to improve ingress and egress safety, reduce wildfire risk, and aid in fire suppression activities through fuel reduction treatments in the community of Brooktrails, 2 miles northwest of downtown Willits. This project aims to reduce roadside fuels along 8.2 miles of roads. The project area contains mixed conifer/hardwood woodlands, open grasslands and areas with woody shrubs and small trees. Minor grading and infrastructure upgrades are proposed in a select area. Vegetation will be thinned and pruned within the road right-of-way up to 100 feet from the centerline. Hand crews will employ chainsaws, pole saws, weed-whackers, and hand tools to remove small trees, brush, and surface/ground fuels. Live trees (less than 10" in diameter) will be removed to improve tree spacing. Larger trees will be pruned to provide for a minimum vertical clearance of 10.5 feet. Slash and debris created by this project will either be chipped, lop-and-scattered, or left in place. Chippers will not leave the roadway. Any material to be chipped will be transported by hand to the parked equipment.

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

The project meets the requirements of a CEQA Article 19 Class 4 Categorical exemption "Minor Alterations to Land" (Section 15304, Public Resources Code) as the proposed activities involve small tree and brush removal, pruning and chipping to reduce wildfire threat. This project will not convert the vegetation type or result in the removal of otherwise "healthy, mature, and scenic trees."

Field review by CAL FIRE staff confirmed that no exceptions apply (Section 15300.2) 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 wildfire. Documentation of the environmental review completed by the Department is kept on file at CAL FIRE Mendocino Unit, Resource Management, 17501 N. Highway 101, Willits, CA 95490, Attn. Environmental Coordinator.

DATE RECEIVED FOR FILING

Matthew Reischman 10/4/2021
 Matthew Reischman, Deputy Director Date
 California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection