



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

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

PROJECT TITLE	Wooster Shaded Fuel Break		
PROJECT LOCATION	T3N, R11E, Portion of Sections 21, 28, 29, 31, 32 & 33 MDBM	COUNTY	Calaveras
LEAD AGENCY	California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE)		
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PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The project area is located in western Calaveras County between New Hogan and Salt Spring Valley Reservoirs and 3.2 miles southeast of the Jenny Lind. 2 units comprise the project; Unit 1 in the north (449 acres); Unit 2 in the south (476 acres). Protection from wildfire is paramount to the public safety of Calaveras County. The 2016 Pacheco, 2018 Waverly fire and 2020 Walker fires have all burned near the property. This fuel break is strategically located in a vegetation transition zone from relatively low-density vegetation to moderate/ high density ecosystems. Vegetation type is in the Oak woodland and Chaparral. In unit one the area is overstocked with vegetation and crown closure nears 90%, this lessens somewhat in unit two with an average of approximately 75% of crown closure. Understory brush is thick through most of the project. Project will consist of fuel reduction activities conducted with mastication and light equipment. Spacing of residual vegetation will target crown spacing of 20 feet or brush spaced at a distance equal to twice the height. All leave trees will be pruned to 10' or to leave a minimum of 50% of live crown. Mechanical Shaded Fuel Break Construction: (925 acres) via mastication & pole pruning. Small isolated areas within unit may not be accessible to equipment because of either slope or other mechanical deterrent. In these areas, vegetation will be hand cut with chainsaws, piled and burned. It is anticipated piles will be no larger than 6' tall and 6' in diameter. Depending on density of vegetation, piles may be as close as 30 feet apart. Piles will be located to protect residual vegetation during burning operations.

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 portions of 15304- Minor Alterations to Land.

The Class of Exemption to be used is 14 CCR 15304- Minor Alterations to Land. The project consists of constructing shaded fuel breaks. A query of the CNDDDB did not reveal the presence of any sensitive species. Protection measures for watercourses and archaeological sites are consistent with Best Management Practices implemented in the area and project impacts are not expected. All burning will be done in accordance with a permit for the Calaveras County Air Pollution Control District. No large trees will be removed. Ground disturbance will be minimal and chips will be broadcast on site acting as a mulch matt. Operation will not significantly change the qualities of the site maintaining site productivity and lessening the potential fire hazard. 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, potential for wildfire, or to utilities and service systems. Documentation of the environmental review completed by the Department is kept on file at the Tuolumne-Calaveras Unit Headquarters in San Andreas.

DATE RECEIVED FOR FILING

DocuSigned by:

11/24/2021

John Melvin

Date

Assistant Deputy Director
California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection