



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

## NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

<b>PROJECT TITLE</b>	Bearpaw Reserve Tree Planting		
<b>PROJECT LOCATION</b>	38801 Valley of the Falls Drive, Forest Falls, CA 92399	<b>COUNTY</b>	San Bernardino
<b>LEAD AGENCY</b>	California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE)		
<b>CONTACT</b>	David Haas, Unit Forester		
<b>ADDRESS</b>	3800 N. Sierra Way San Bernardino, CA 92405	<b>PHONE</b>	(909) 881-6955

### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This project is located on the Bearpaw Reserve, a 575-acre reserve privately-owned and managed by The Wildlands Conservancy. Vegetation within the preserve includes incense cedars, ponderosa and coulter pine, black oaks, and interior live oaks, and other general chaparral species. The Reserve and adjacent forest lands were heavily impacted by the 2020 El Dorado Fire; the goal of this project is to assist in reforestation of the Reserve. Re-establishment of native trees within fire-impacted areas will promote reforestation both within the planted areas and adjacent areas as soon as seedlings mature to seed-producing age, reduce erosion and stabilize slopes, and assist with further ecosystem recovery by providing habitat for wildlife. Planting will occur as seedlings are available and will consist of appropriate native species. Species mix and spacing of seedlings will be dependent of the availability of seedlings and site restraints. Areas that would benefit from planting and the timing of planting will be identified by the CAL FIRE Unit Forester on an annual basis, in coordination with Reserve management and other partnering entities. The entire Reserve property is open for planting, with the exclusion of watercourses and associated habitat. Planting will be supervised by CAL FIRE Resource Management staff. Project implementation is not expected to impact migratory birds, therefore no nesting season limitations or pre-activity surveys are necessary. No heavy equipment is necessary for project implementation; light duty vehicles will be utilized for the transportation of seedlings to the Reserve, which will occur on existing roads. All planting areas will be accessed by foot and planting will occur by hand via the use of hand tools. No ground disturbing activities will occur except for the digging of planting holes. Holes will be placed in non-vegetated areas; no impacts to existing vegetation will occur other than minor, non-significant impacts associated with foot traffic to and from planting areas. Offsite travel will be necessary for the transportation of crews, seedlings, and equipment. No offsite improvements are necessary for project implementation. Maintenance needs, including but not limited to hand-grubbing of vegetation and/or chemical (herbicide) release treatments up to 4' around each seedling, will occur as necessary to maximize seedling survival and may occur as frequently as an annual basis.

### 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 Class 4 Categorical Exemption (Minor alterations to land) Section 15304. Project implementation will result in alterations to the land that are best described as minor in scope, that will not significantly impact the aesthetic of the property, or biological and/or cultural resources, and that do not involve the removal of mature, scenic trees for any purpose. No exceptions apply which would preclude the use of a "Notice of Exemption" for this project. It has been concluded that no significant adverse environmental impacts would occur to aesthetics, agriculture and forest resources, air quality, biological resources, cultural resources, energy, geology and soils, greenhouse gas emissions, hazards and hazardous materials, hydrology and water quality, land use and planning, mineral resources, noise, populations and housing, public services, recreation, transportation and traffic, utilities and service systems, or wildfire. Documentation of the environmental review completed by the CALFIRE staff is kept on file at CAL FIRE's San Bernardino Unit Headquarters in San Bernardino, CA.

### DATE RECEIVED FOR FILING

DocuSigned by:  
*John Melvin*  
John Melvin, Assistant Deputy Director  
Resource Protection and Improvement  
California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

1/20/2022  
Date