



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

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

PROJECT TITLE	Mill Creek Road Shaded Fuel Break		
PROJECT LOCATION	T15N R12W Section 25 & 36, T15N R11W Section 31, T14N R11W Section 4, 5, & 6 Mt. Diablo Base & Meridian.	COUNTY	Mendocino
LEAD AGENCY	California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE)		
CONTACT	Pablo Anguiano, Forestry Assistant II CAL FIRE Mendocino Unit		
ADDRESS	17501 North Highway 101 Willis, CA 95490	PHONE	707-326-6035

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The purpose of this project is to improve the ingress and egress of civilians and fire engines, reduce wildfire risk, and aid in fire suppression activities through roadside fuel reduction treatment along 5.8 miles of road (70 acres), approximately 5 miles east of the town of Ukiah. The project area consists of oak woodland intermixed with conifers and dense brush. Vegetation will be thinned and pruned within the road right-of-way up to 50 feet from either side of Mill Creek Road. Work will be completed using manual treatment methods and an excavator with masticator attachment. Woody materials will be lopped and scattered and/or dragged by hand to a chipper parked on the existing roadway. Portions of the project will be masticated by the excavator operating from the roadway. No off-road heavy equipment or ground disturbance is proposed for this project. All mastication activities will be limited to the maximum reach the excavator's boom and arm can attain without necessitating the tracks to leave the roadway. The masticator will be hovered above the ground to avoid direct contact with ground and eliminate ground disturbance. Hand crews will employ chainsaws, pole saws, string-trimmers, and hand tools to remove small trees, brush, and surface/ground fuels. Live trees, less than 10" diameter breast height (DBH), will be felled to improve tree spacing. Dead trees of any size that pose a safety hazard to the roadway, civilians, or firefighters will be felled. Live trees of any size severely overhanging the roadway will also be felled. All felled trees will be, limbed, bucked and then the rounds would be stacked neatly on site. If the tree is of a considerable size, it will be bucked to 8-foot sections and left on site. Live trees greater than 10" DBH will be pruned to provide for a minimum vertical clearance of 10 feet.

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 fuel management activities entail brush removal, 10 "DBH or less tree removal, thinning, pruning, chipping, masticating from existing roadway, and dead/tree removal to improve access of fire engines and reduce volume of flammable vegetation. As such, CAL FIRE has concluded that no significant environmental impact would occur to aesthetics, agriculture and forestland/timberland, air quality, biological resources, cultural resources, energy, and 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 to wildfire. No exceptions apply (Section 15300.2) which would preclude the use of a Notice of Exemption for this project. 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

DocuSigned by:

John Melvin, Assistant Deputy Director Date
California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection 2/14/2022