

Notice of Exemption

Appendix E

To: Office of Planning and Research
P.O. Box 3044, Room 113
Sacramento, CA 95812-3044

From: (Public Agency): _____
Tuolumne Co. Resource Conservation District
PO Box 4394 Sonora CA 95370

County Clerk
County of: Tuolumne
2 S. Green St, Sonora, CA 95370

(Address)

Project Title: Brooks Ranch Fuel Reduction

Project Applicant: Tuolumne County Resource Conservation District

Project Location - Specific:
Township 1 N, Range 15 E, Portion Section 35 Mt Diable Meridian, CA

Project Location - City: Sonora Project Location - County: California

Description of Nature, Purpose and Beneficiaries of Project:
Fuel Reduction in Oak Woodland Forest in the Wards Ferry Road area with the goal of providing wildfire protection on landscape level. Treatments include mastication of brush and small trees, hand treatment and emergent brush follow up.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: Tuolumne County Resource Conservation District

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: Lindsay Mattos, District Manager

Exempt Status: (check one):

- Ministerial (Sec. 21080(b)(1); 15268);
- Declared Emergency (Sec. 21080(b)(3); 15269(a));
- Emergency Project (Sec. 21080(b)(4); 15269(b)(c));
- Categorical Exemption. State type and section number: 15304
- Statutory Exemptions. State code number: _____

Reasons why project is exempt:

Section 15304; which exempts minor alterations in the condition of land, water and/or vegetation which do not include the removal of healthy, mature, scenic trees except for forestry and agricultural purposes.

Lead Agency
Contact Person: Lindsay Mattos Area Code/Telephone/Extension: 2095599066

If filed by applicant:

1. Attach certified document of exemption finding.
2. Has a Notice of Exemption been filed by the public agency approving the project? Yes No

Signature: [Signature] Date: 5/25/22 Title: District Manager

Signed by Lead Agency Signed by Applicant

Authority cited: Sections 21083 and 21110, Public Resources Code.
Reference: Sections 21108, 21152, and 21152.1, Public Resources Code.

Date Received for filing at OPR: _____

NOTICE OF CEQA EXEMPTION

To: Tuolumne County Clerk
2 South Green St
Sonora, CA 95370

From: Tuolumne County RCD
81 N. Washington Suite B
P.O. Box 4394
Sonora, CA 95370

Date: May 18, 2022

Project Title: Brooks Ranch Fuel Reduction

Project Location: Tuolumne County:
Township 1 North, Range 15 East, Portion Section: 35
Mount Diablo Meridian, State of California

Project Description: The Tuolumne County Resource Conservation District (TCRCD) acting as the Lead Agency, will implement fuel reduction activities to improve the protection of communities and public and private lands from fire while protecting environmental, natural, and cultural resources. The project will reduce fuel loads in a oak woodland forest in the Wards Ferry Road area with the goal of providing landscape level treatments. The project site is oak brush woodland and the target fuels are brush and small and suppressed trees.

Treatment activities, including the mastication of brush and small trees, hand treatments of brush and small trees and emergent brush follow-up treatments will be conducted under this Notice of Exemption (NOE)

Exempt Status (Guidelines Section and Class) Categorical Exemption: Section 15304, which exempts minor alterations in the condition of land, water, and/or vegetation which do not involve removal of healthy, mature, scenic trees except for forestry or agricultural purposes.

Reasons Why Project is Exempt: The RCD has reviewed the environmental/specialists' reports prepared by Registered Professional Foresters and other specialists and has determined that the project's implementation will result in multiple benefits, including restoration of the forest, watershed, and wildlife habitat. There will be no significant adverse impacts on endangered, rare, or threatened species or their habitats. There are no hazardous materials at or around the project site. The project will avoid all archeological resource sites. The project will not result in cumulatively significant impacts. The project will have no significant adverse effect on the environment.

Public Agencies that will be involved with the project:
Tuolumne County Resource Conservation District (TCRCD)

Lindsay Rae Mattos, District Manager TCRCD
(209) 559-9066 or lindsay@tcrd.org

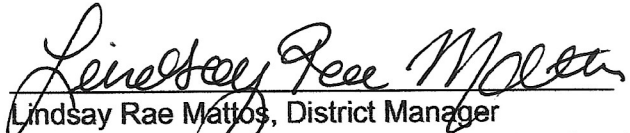
Signature: 
Lindsay Rae Mattos, District Manager
Tuolumne County Resource Conservation District

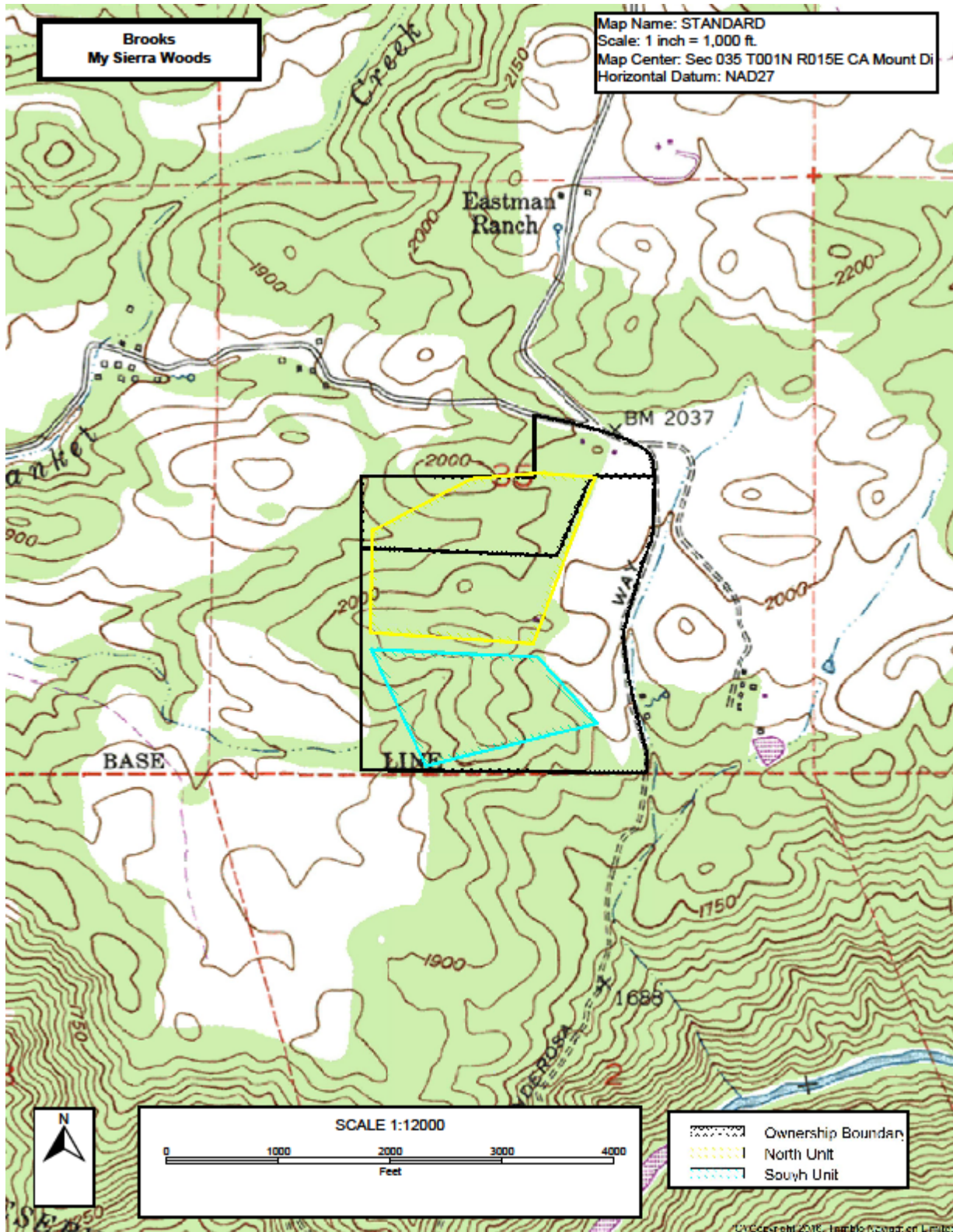
Date: 5/25/22

ATTEST:

I, Lindsay Rae Mattos, District Manager, Tuolumne County Resource Conservation District, do hereby certify that the Tuolumne County Resource Conservation District approved this Notice of Exemption on the 18th day of May 2022 by the following vote:

Ayes: Directors Phelan, Crook, Dietrich, and Sardella.
Noes: None.
Abstentions: None.
Absent: Directors Ford, Weston, and Morrison.


Lindsay Rae Mattos, District Manager
Tuolumne County Resource Conservation District



Natural Diversity Database Findings
 My Sierra Woods
 Brooks
 Section 35 Township 1 North, Range 15 East MDB&M
 2,100 feet to 1,800 feet elevation
 Tuolumne County, CA
 Standard Quadrangle

Project Summary:

Review of the Natural Diversity Database Research records for a 3-mile radius was conducted May 3,2022. The 3-mile radius had 7 species with 9 unique occurrences.

The CNDDDB 3-mile radius report returned 7 species: 1-amphibians, 1-crustaceans, 1-Fish, 3-mammal and 1-Mollusk. See below for the full list of species:

Scientific Name	Common Name	FED LIST	CAL LIST	CDFW-Status
<i>Hesperoleucus symmetricus symmetricus</i>	central California roach	None	None	SSC
<i>Rana boylei</i>	foothill yellow-legged frog	None	Endangered	SSC
<i>Stygobromus harai</i>	Hara's Cave amphipod	None	None	
<i>Monadenia circumcarinata</i>	keeled sideband	None	None	
<i>Antrozous pallidus</i>	pallid bat	None	None	SSC
<i>Euderma maculatum</i>	spotted bat	None	None	SSC
<i>Corynorhinus townsendii</i>	Townsend's big-eared bat	None	None	SSC

***Antrozous pallidus* (pallid bat):**

Status: CDFW- SSC

Habitat: General: Deserts, grasslands, shrublands, woodlands and forests. Most common in open, dry habitats with rocky areas for roosting.

Micro: Roosts must protect bats from high temperatures. Very sensitive to disturbance of roosting sites.

Location: 2.5 mi ESE Jacksonville, Tuolumne River.

Detail: Mapped according to Lat/Long coordinates given in MANIS, with uncertainty of 30 m. Coordinates put site at wards ferry bridge. There is no place called "Jacksonville" in California.

Ecological: None Listed.

General: 1 male specimen collected by Mary C. Ramage on 18 Sep 1945, MVZ #103893.

Threats: None listed.

Project impact: None found on the property

Mitigation/ Protection: If any are found during the project, operations will stop until full extent can be surveyed and proper mitigations can be enabled.



Figure - *Antrozous pallidus* (pallid

***Corynorhinus townsendii* (Townsend's big-eared bat):**

Status: None Listed

Habitat: General: Throughout California in a wide variety of habitats. Most common in mesic sites.

Micro: Roosts in the open, hanging from walls and ceilings. Roosting sites limiting. Extremely Sensitive to human disturbance.

Location: About 3 mi NNW of Farretti road at Boitano road and about 3.4 mi SSE of grinding rock 2018 dam.

Detail: Exact location unknown. Mapped to provided localities of t1n r16e section 32, 33, and 34.

Ecological: None listed

General: 13 Sep 1997: guano at Ellen Winton mine #1; 1 bat and guano at Ellen Winton mine #2; guano found at riverbend mine #1. 14 Sep: guano found at mine near Stamphill. 15 Sep: 1 bat and guano observed at devils gate adit #2.

Threats: None Listed

Project impact: No habitat for species within the scope of this project. Habitat is within caves.

Mitigation/ Protection: None required.



***Euderma maculatum* (spotted bat):**

Status: None Listed

Habitat: General: Occupies a wide variety of habitats from arid deserts and grasslands through mixed conifer forests.

Micro: Feeds over water and along washes. Feeds almost entirely on moths. Needs rock crevices in cliffs or caves for roosting.

Location: 2.2 miles southeast of standard; intersection of Woodhams-Carne Road and Yosemite Road (ponderosa way).

Detail: Cluster of locations south of buckhorn mountain.

General location "Tuolumne" included here.

Ecological: Annual grassland openings with some riparian vegetation within blue oak woodland.

General: 5 individuals observed foraging within 1 mile radius of intersection 10 Jul 1995. Calls recorded 11 Jul 1995.

Threats: None Listed

Project impact: No habitat for species within the scope of this project. Habitat is within caves.

Mitigation/ Protection: None required.



***Hesperoleucus symmetricus symmetricus* (central California roach):**

Status:

Habitat: General: Generally found in small streams of the Sierra Nevada foothills flowing into the central valley and are particularly well adapted to life in intermittent watercourses; dense populations are frequently observed in isolated pools.

Micro: Rarely above 1,000 meters in elevation. Tolerant of wide temperature ranges and dissolved oxygen levels. Most abundant when only species present, occupying large pools in open water. With other fish, found in shallow margins, pool edges, or dense cover.

Location: Rough and Ready creek, Wards Ferry Road, 0.15-mile NW of Morgan chapel, about 3 miles south of Standard.

Detail: Creek, in area around road crossing. Surrounding land use is farmland.

Ecological: Large cobbles, isolated pools, strong water flow, water 1 to 3 feet deep.

General: 5 breeding adults captured, fin clipped, and released; fin clips at UCSC museum, #wjls40.

Threats: Road/trail construction/maint. Erosion/runoff

Project impact: No habitat for the species within the scope of this project. Habitat is within class I watercourses.

Mitigation/ Protection: None required.



Figure - *Hesperoleucus symmetricus symmetricus* (central California)

***Monadenia circumcarinata* (keeled sideband):**

Status: None Listed

Habitat: General: Occurs in limestone where fractures or loose talus allow deep, sub-surface sheltering.

Micro: None listed.

Location: **a.** Paper cabin ridge, on north side of Tuolumne River.
b. South of Tuolumne River, 0.5 mile downstream from confluence with north fork Tuolumne River.

Detail: **a.** 1985 and earlier collections from throughout the area. 2005 record from riparian area along the North fork Tuolumne River near the confluence with the main stem.

b. none listed

Ecological: **a.** Habitat is limestone outcrops containing crevices or piled rock which enable the snail to retreat. Underground where it is cool and humid; food is plant detritus and living plant material.

b. Habitat consists of surface limestone outcrops containing crevices or talus, which provide a cool, humid, subsurface retreat for the snails; food consists of plant detritus or living plant material.

General: **a.** Numerous observations and collections from the area in 1985 and earlier. 1 adult Observed/collected by b. Roth on 18 Jul 2005. Lampyrid beetle larvae are probably important Predators of this species.

b. Lampyrid beetle larvae may be important snail predators.

Threats: None Listed.

Project impact: No habitat for the species within the scope of this project.

Mitigation/ Protection: None required.



Figure - *Monadenia circumcarinata* (keeled)

***Rana boyllii* (foothill yellow-legged frog):**

Status: State- Endangered

Habitat: General: partly-shaded, shallow streams and riffles with a rocky substrate in a variety of habitats.

micro: needs at least some cobble-sized substrate for egg-laying. Needs at least 15 weeks to Attain metamorphosis.

Location: **a.** Mainstem Tuolumne River, 0.7 mi e of confluence with its n fork, Stanislaus national forest, 4 mi s of town of Tuolumne.

b. Along Tuolumne River between turnback creek and north fork Tuolumne River, south of the town of Tuolumne.

Detail: **a.** At Tuolumne River mile 82. Mapped to coordinates provided. Site name: Mohican.

b. Mapped to provided coordinates. Between Tuolumne River mile 80 and 81.



Figure - *Rana boyllii* (foothill yellow-legged frog)

Ecological: a. Late-stage larvae found in river Edgewater. New froglets found along river shoreline and on emergent cobbles. Site is remote (access via foot trail or boat only) and disturbed by recreation (fishing, hiking swimming).

b. Along Tuolumne River between turnback creek and north fork Tuolumne River, south of the town of Tuolumne.

General: a. 3 larvae and 12 froglets observed on 15 Sep 2018. 1 late metamorph found and photographed on 22 Aug 2020.

b. Mapped to provided coordinates. Between Tuolumne River mile 80 and 81.

Threats: Threatened by future development.

Project impact: No habitat for the species within the scope of this project.

Mitigation/ Protection: If species is found in or near project operations will stop until proper mitigations can be made.

Stygobromus harai (Hara's cave amphipod):

Status: None listed

Habitat: General: Central California foothills.

Micro: Mostly found in caves and mine tunnels. Also taken from a spring.

Location: Unnamed spring, 9 miles southeast of Sonora.

Detail: Exact location unknown. Locality given as "unnamed spring, 15 km southeast of Sonora." mapped about 9 air miles southeast of Sonora along main road in area.

Ecological: Taken at a spring beneath rocks and organic debris.

General: 15 females collected on 19 Feb 1979; 1 was ovigerous, with 8 embryos in the brood pouch.

Threats: Potential threat due to vehicle collisions and human presence.

Project impact: No observations are known in the project.

Mitigation/ Protection: None required.

