



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

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

PROJECT TITLE	CCPBA Arroyo Seco Prescribed Burn		
PROJECT LOCATION	T19S, Portions of S31 and S32, R5E, MDBM	COUNTY	Monterey
LEAD AGENCY	California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE)		
CONTACT	Tim Montgomery		
ADDRESS	Unit Forester – San Benito Monterey Unit 2221 Garden Rd., Monterey, CA. 93940	PHONE	(831) 601-6547

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This project is a light, understory oak woodland burn on private property that aims to restore the plant community that has deteriorated due to 1) competition from non-native grasses and forbs; 2) encroachment by brush and resulting dead material; 3) lack of frequent, low-intensity fires. The project is part of CAL FIRE Fire Prevention Grant #5GG20134, awarded to University of California Cooperative Extension and the Resource Conservation District of Monterey County to help the Central Coast Prescribed Burn Association accomplish several training burns. The burn area (36 acres total) is located approximately 16 miles from the town of Greenfield and 18 air miles from the Mesa Del Rey Airport in King City. Vegetation is mixed live, blue, and valley oak woodland with buckeye and elderberry; shrub areas with coyote brush, chemise, poison oak, scrub oak, ceanothus, and coastal sage; and grasslands composed of native and non-native species, including a large thistle component.

The Burn Plan will be written by technical experts from Prometheus Fire Consulting LLC. Prometheus will also provide a competent and experienced Burn Boss. Pretreatment includes cutting brush and piling for burning during the broadcast burn. Roads border the project perimeter, so there will be minimal line construction; however, hand crews may cut/scrape line to bare mineral soil to subdivide smaller burn units to achieve the biological and cultural objectives of the project and to allow for flexibility and variation in the seasonality of the burn. All potential Burn Units are adjacent and are bordered at least in part by a road. The burn will take place in approximately one day.

Arroyo Seco River is approximately 800 feet from the project area, across Arroyo Seco Road. One Class III seasonal drainage disperses from a canyon to the north onto the property. There are no drainages with connectivity to the Arroyo Seco River on or near the property and no riparian habitat. The project's southern edge runs adjacent to Arroyo Seco Road for approximately 0.5 miles.

EXEMPTION STATUS

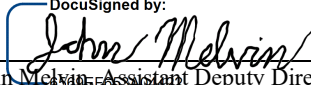
- Categorical Exemption Type and Section: Class 4 (15304)
- Statutory Exemption (state code section):
- Ministerial (§21080(b)(1); 15268)
- Declared Emergency (§21080(b)(3); 15269(a))
- Emergency Project (§21080(b)(4); 15269(b)(c))

REASONS PROJECT IS EXEMPT

This project fits under portions of Categorical Exemptions to CEQA §15304: Class 4 (Minor Alterations to Land). Class 4 includes minor public or private alterations in the conditions of land, water, and/or vegetation which do not involve removal of healthy, mature, and scenic trees except for forestry and agricultural purposes. Most of the project activities would occur within previously disturbed areas, and the activities will not result in the taking of endangered, rare, or threatened plant or animal species, or sedimentation to surface waters. These activities would result in temporary alterations to vegetation and are best described as minor in scope with a net benefit of ecosystem resiliency, native plant stimulation and invasive plant reduction. No new ground disturbing activities will occur.

Field review by the Registered Professional Forester confirmed that no exceptions apply that would preclude the use of a notice of exemption for this project. CAL FIRE 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, populations and housing, public services, recreation, transportation/ traffic, utilities and service systems, or to wildfire. Documentation of the environmental review completed by the Department is kept on file at 2221 Garden Road, Monterey, CA 93940.

DATE RECEIVED FOR FILING

DocuSigned by:

John Melvin, Assistant Deputy Director 5/30/2023
California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection Date