



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

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

PROJECT TITLE	Wells Mountain Fuel Break Trinity Community Resilience Project		
	Hayfork, CA.		
PROJECT LOCATION	T32N, R10W, Sec. 28, 33, MDBM T31N, R10W, Sec 4, 8, 9, MDBM	COUNTY	Trinity
LEAD AGENCY	California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection		
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PROJECT DESCRIPTION

CAL FIRE would provide funding to the Watershed Research and Training Center (WRTC) to implement fuels reduction activities in the form of hand thinning, mastication, and roadside chipping on an approximately 323-acre footprint associated with this project on a strategic ridgeline near Hayfork, Trinity County, California. These types of projects are an integral part of the WRTCs landscape strategy aimed at protecting Trinity County communities from future catastrophic wildfire events and returning the landscape to a healthy, less hazardous state. The project area is exclusively on Sierra Pacific Industries (SPI) land. The topography is characteristic of a ridgeline, with mixed slopes ranging from nearly flat to over 60% slope, and elevations range from approximately 3,360' – 5,440'.

The prescription includes manual thinning, mastication, and chipping of small diameter (less than 12" DBH) conifers and shrubs in order to disrupt the continuity of surface and ladder fuels. Some sub canopy trees may be removed to break up vertical continuity to dominant trees as well as to raise the canopy base height, which will reduce future fire intensity. Any material that cannot be chipped or masticated will be lopped and scattered to the minimum depth feasible. In accessible areas with slopes averaging less than 35%, and outside of standard width watercourse protection zones, a masticator will be utilized for fuels treatments.

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

It has been determined that no exceptions apply which would preclude the use of a Notice of Exemption for this project. This project is consistent with the requirements stated in Section 15304: Minor Alterations to Land, because the project involves the minor alteration of the condition of land and/or vegetation and does not require the removal of healthy, mature scenic trees. The Department has concluded that no significant environmental impact would occur to aesthetics, agriculture and forestland/timberland, air quality, biological resources, cultural resources, 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. Documentation of the environmental review completed by the Department and project proponent is kept on file at the CAL FIRE Headquarters in Sacramento.

DATE RECEIVED FOR FILING

DocuSigned by:

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John Melvin, Assistant Deputy Director
Resource Management
California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

6/1/2023
Date