

**NOTICE OF EXEMPTION**

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

<b>PROJECT TITLE</b>	Whitebark Institute of Interdisciplinary Environmental Sciences, "ESCCRP: Phase I Implementation:" Mammoth Lakes Basin Hazardous Fuels Reduction Project (USFS)		
<b>PROJECT LOCATION</b>	Mammoth Lakes Ranger District, Inyo National Forest	<b>COUNTY</b>	Mono
<b>LEAD AGENCY</b>	California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE)		
<b>CONTACT</b>	Shannon Johnson		
<b>ADDRESS</b>	PO Box 944246 Sacramento, CA 94244-2460	<b>PHONE</b>	916-902-9345

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

CAL FIRE would provide funding to the Whitebark Institute to conduct fuels reduction to reduce standing and surface fuel loads to reduce fire severity and create defensible space around developed infrastructure within the wildland-urban interface (WUI) in the Lakes Basin. Treatments are needed to preserve the economic, hydraulic, and ecological function of the Lakes Basin. These treatments will reduce wildfire risks to local resources and community members, promote native plant and wildlife species, and improve forest resiliency.

**EXEMPTION STATUS**

- Categorical Exemption Type and Section: Class
- Statutory Exemption (state code section): Public Resources Code Section 4799.05(d)(1)
- Ministerial (§21080(b)(1); 15268)
- Declared Emergency (§21080(b)(3); 15269(a))
- Emergency Project (§21080(b)(4); 15269(b)(c))

**REASONS PROJECT IS EXEMPT**

CEQA does not apply to fuel reduction, reforestation, & habitat restoration projects undertaken, in whole or in part, on federal lands to reduce the risk of high severity wildfire that have been reviewed under the NEPA, if the primary role of a state or local agency is providing funding or staffing for those projects. The proposed project was reviewed in its entirety under the Mammoth Lakes Ranger District, Inyo National Forest NEPA Mammoth Lakes Basin Hazardous Fuels Reduction Project Environmental Assessment and Decision Notice and Finding of No Significant Impact, signed March 5, 2018.

**DATE RECEIVED FOR FILING**

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

9/29/2023

Date