



**State of California – The Resources Agency
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION**

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

TO: Office of Planning and Research
1400 Tenth Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

FROM: Department of Parks and Recreation
2241 Harvard Street, Suite 200
Sacramento, CA 95815

PROJECT TITLE: Mitchell Canyon Education Center

LOCATION: Mount Diablo State Park

COUNTY: Contra Costa

DESCRIPTION OF THE NATURE AND PURPOSE OF PROJECT: The proposed project will create a larger, ADA-compliant space at the Mitchell Canyon Staging Area of Mount Diablo State Park to accommodate the growing number of park visitors. In total, the project consists of four (4) main elements; the Education Center, a Native Plant Garden and Pavilion, rehabilitated restroom facilities and an improved parking area. Work will:

- Remove an existing Park Host campsite, metal storage shed and the shed's existing concrete slab;
- **For the Education Center:**
 - Remove an approx. 4-foot-high, damaged, retaining wall and install proper sub-drainage with swale inlets at the top;
 - Remove a nearby above ground power pole;
 - Excavate a trench from a power pole located further away, through the parking lot to the new building to underground the necessary electrical utilities; and
 - Construct a new 1,600 square foot wood-framed building.
- **For the Native Plant Garden Pavilion:**
 - Construct an 850 square foot, open air pavilion, to provide visitors with posted information and for much needed shade;
 - Construct a lookout for viewing of the Native Plant Garden;
 - Extend the walking paths through the Native Plant Garden and make them ADA-compliant;
 - Add drainage to the area to alleviate the possibility of flooding during the rainy season, and direct water away from the Education Center and toward Mitchell Canyon Creek; and
 - Add or repair trail work, signs and gateways in the vicinity of the existing plant garden and trailhead.
- **For the Restroom Renovations:**
 - Remove the existing damaged roof and replace with a non-combustible Class 'A' metal roof;
 - Reconfigure the interior to accommodate ADA accessible stalls and fixtures; and
 - Construct a storage shed on the backside of the structure to house tools used to maintain the Native Plant Garden.
- **For the Parking Lot and Plaza:**
 - Excavate approx. 2 ft deep to establish appropriate grades for ADA access to the plaza, and through to the Native Plant Garden Pavilion, Education Center, restrooms, and Mitchell Canyon Trailhead from the ADA parking spaces, school bus loading zone parking, and the gravel parking lot adjacent to the plaza; and
 - Regrade portions of the gravel parking lot to accommodate a fire truck turn around.

PUBLIC AGENCY APPROVING THE PROJECT: California Department of Parks and Recreation

NAME OF DIVISION OR DISTRICT CARRYING OUT THE PROJECT: Northern Service Center

EXEMPT STATUS:

Categorical Exemption Class: 1, 2, 3 & 4 Section: 15301, 15302, 15303 & 15304

REASONS WHY PROJECT IS EXEMPT: Project consists of the operation or minor alteration of existing public or private structures, facilities or topographical features involving negligible or no expansion of use beyond current levels; construction and location of limited numbers of new, small facilities or structures and is included as "Construction or installation of park facilities such as restrooms, and interpretive signing or panels" in the Department of Parks and Recreation's list of exempt activities in accordance with CCR §15300.4; and the minor public or private alterations in the condition of land and/or vegetation which do not include the removal of healthy, mature, scenic trees,

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 10/26/2023
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Brian Dewey DATE
Assistant Deputy Director
Facilities and Development Division