

**NOTICE OF EXEMPTION**

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

<b>PROJECT TITLE</b>	CAL FIRE Sonoma – Lake – Napa Unit Station 26 Vegetation Management		
<b>PROJECT LOCATION</b>	T8N R6W S00 Mount Diablo Principal Meridian, Latitude 38.5480392 Longitude -122.5109455	<b>COUNTY</b>	Napa
<b>LEAD AGENCY</b>	California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE)		
<b>CONTACT</b>	Hailey Laskey Environmental Scientist, CAL FIRE	<b>PHONE</b>	(707) 967-1400
<b>ADDRESS</b>	1199 Big Tree Road Saint Helena, CA 94574		

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The CAL FIRE Station (Station 26) in Calistoga, CA is located off Highway 29 three miles North of the Town of St. Helena and four miles South of the Town of Calistoga directly across from the CAL FIRE LNU Headquarters. The 7-acre parcel that Station 26 is located on is surrounded by undeveloped mixed Douglas Fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*), Madrone (*Arbutus menziesii*), and Oak trees (*Quercus* species) with a dense understory of non-native Himalayan blackberry (*Rubus armeniacus*) and various fern species (*Polystichum* sp. and *Polypodium* sp.). CAL FIRE plans to manage the vegetation behind Station 26 by using mechanical equipment—a tow behind vehicle chipper and chainsaws—to thin vegetation, create and burn piles of thinned vegetation, and broadcast burn the understory of the forest. Hand tools will be used to create containment lines for broadcast burning. Trees chosen to be felled include hazardous trees to life and property as well as, dead and dying trees. Douglas fir trees less than ten inches in diameter at breast height may be removed to provide more space for larger trees. All limbs on all trees within eight feet of the ground will be removed in addition to targeting the removal of non-native blackberry. Prescribed fire will occur during times of favorable weather and CAL FIRE staffing availability. Vegetation management will be maintained as needed to create defensible space for the structures on the station which were threatened by the 2020 Glass Fire.

**EXEMPTION STATUS**

- Categorical Exemption Type and 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**

This project fits under the description for a Class 4 Categorical Exemption “Minor Alterations to Land” (Section 15304, Public Resources Code) as the proposed project activities involve the removal of trees and understory vegetation through chipping and burning to reduce the threat of wildfire.. CAL FIRE staff conducted an environmental review to confirm that no exceptions apply which would preclude the use of a Notice of Exemption for this project. This review included on-the-ground field inspection by the Unit Environmental Scientist and a CALFIRE State Archaeologist and consultation over the telephone and via email with representatives of the California Department of Fish and Wildlife and the Regional Water Quality Control Board. 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, or to utilities and service systems, wildfire, and energy. Documentation of the environmental review completed by the Department is kept on file at CAL FIRE LNU Headquarters at, 1199 Big Tree Road Saint Helena CA 94574.

**DATE RECEIVED FOR FILING**

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 2/27/2024  
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George Morris III, CALFIRE Northern Region Chief Date  
California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection