

COUNTY RECORDER

Filing Requested by:

Yolo County Resource Conservation District

Name

221 West Court Street Suite 1

Address

Woodland, CA 95695

City, State, Zip

Filed in County Clerk's Office

Jesse Salinas
Yolo County - Clerk/Recorder

57-04182024-041

04/18/2024

FISH

Pages: 4

Fee: \$ 50.00

By zhernandez, Deputy



Notice of Exemption

To:

Yolo County Clerk-Recorder
625 Court Street, Room B-01
Woodland, CA 95695

Office of Planning and Research
1400 Tenth Street, Room 121
Sacramento, CA 95814

From:

Yolo County Resource Conservation District
221 West Court Street, Suite 1
Woodland, CA 95695
meyer@yolorcd.org

Project Title: State Highway 16 Fuels Reduction: Capay

Project Location – Specific: Highway 16 - Post Mile 25 to post Mile 22.5

Project Location – Capay, CA

Project Location – County: Yolo

Description of nature and purpose of the Project: The project is a narrow broadcast burn along the south side of CA-Hwy 16 in between the towns of Capay and Brooks to be implemented by CAL Fire Lake Napa Unit, the Capay Valley Fire Protection District and Yolo County Resource Conservation District (RCD)/Yolo Prescribed Burn Association (PBA) with support from CalTrans District 3. Yolo County RCD is the main project coordinator and will ensure implementation is consistent with burn and smoke permits and environmental review. CAL FIRE or the Capay Valley Fire Protection District will be the implementing entity to perform fuels management using low-intensity prescribed fire. Fire containment will be determined based on escape risk which depends on weather and time factors. If fire risk is low, containment lines will be created using weed whackers and backpack water pumps to create a barrier of lower vegetation and a wet edge.

The primary management objective for the prescribed burn is hazardous fuels reduction along a major highway in Yolo County to reduce the likelihood of human caused ignitions of wildfire. A secondary objective for the Highway 16 Prescribed Burn is to improve ingress and egress for Highway 16 which serves as a major evacuation route for rural Capay Valley. Additionally, the burn will serve as a training event for CAL FIRE firefighters and Yolo Prescribed Burn Association volunteers. The project benefits private landowners, suppression resources, and Caltrans. All burning will be performed or supervised by CAL FIRE Lake Napa Sonoma unit in accordance with the terms and conditions of a burn permit issued by the Yolo-Solano Air Quality Management District.

A biological assessment through the California Natural Diversity Database, performed by Yolo County RCD, identified potential habitat for Crotch bumblebee (*Bombus crotchii*) and Townsend's big-eared bat (*Corynorhinus townsendii*). The project footprint is extremely narrow (15-30 ft) and consists mostly of CalTrans right of way and minimal portions of private property which are already disturbed/managed sites (e.g. heavily grazed, disced, etc.) all of which consists of predominately

APR 18 2024

POSTED _____ TO _____

invasive vegetation and non-native annual grasses and lacks quality habitat forage for bees. There are no trees in the project footprint, so bat habitat will not be destroyed. Smoke impacts will be present but the burn is long and narrow and smoke will be generated for a very short time period. Yolo County RCD qualified biologists will survey the project area for species of concern such as ground nesting birds at least one week prior to treatment. If species of concern are located, activities will be modified to prevent impacts including using a piecemeal burn approach to ensure not all suitable habitat is burned at once or creating buffers around nests habitat. There are no trees within the project boundary. Control lines will be wet-lines or minimal handline construction.

Work may occur during nesting bird season. If work commences during nesting bird season (February 1st to September 15th) the project area will be surveyed for nesting birds no more than one week prior to operations by a qualified biologist. If nesting birds are located, the Yolo County Resource Conservation District will develop measures that minimize impacts and are consistent with the Migratory Bird Treaty Act.

Prescribed fire decreases fuel continuity reduces the probability of catastrophic wildfires, and promotes a healthy ecosystem. Low to moderate intensity fire results in levels of disturbance that are beneficial to California native ecosystems and the species that comprise them. Implementation of this broadcast burn along Highway 16 could potentially limit fire spread into thousands of acres of oak woodland south of the project site. It will also protect ingress and egress along a major evacuation route for rural Capay Valley.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: Yolo County Resource Conservation District

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: Yolo County Resource Conservation District

Exempt Status:

- Ministerial (Sec. 21080(b)(1); 15268);
- Statutory Exemptions. State code number _____
- Declared Emergency (Sec. 21080(b)(3); 15269(a));
- Emergency Project (Sec. 21080(b)(4); 15269(b)(c));
- Categorical Exemption. State type and section number: Class 4, Minor Alterations to Land CEQA Guidelines § 15304
- Statutory Exemptions. State code number _____

Reasons why project is exempt:

The project site is a highly disturbed roadside within Caltrans Right of Way that primarily contains non-woody vegetation, most of which are invasive grasses and broadleaf weeds which have very little habitat value. The purpose of this broadcast burn is to create a buffer between Highway 16 and a wildland area in the hills above the highway to limit potential ignition and create a fuel buffer to protect a major transportation and evacuation corridor for the Capay Valley. The ground will be left with reduced fuel loads and reduced weed pressure and in a condition that allows vegetative regrowth to occur.

The project meets the requirements of Class 4 Categorical Exemption (minor alterations to land) Section 15304. Project implementation will result in alterations to the land that are best described as minor in scope, that will not significantly impact the aesthetic of the property, or biological and/or cultural resources, and that do not involve the removal of mature, scenic trees for any purpose. No exceptions apply which would preclude the use of a "Notice of Exemption"

for this project. It has been concluded that no significant adverse environmental impacts would occur to aesthetics, agriculture and forest resources, air quality, biological resources, cultural resources, energy, geology and soils, greenhouse gas emissions, hazards and hazardous materials, hydrology and water quality, land use and planning, mineral resources, noise, populations and housing, public services, recreation, transportation and traffic, utilities and service systems, or wildfire.

Lead Agency Contact: Heather Nichols Phone: (530) 661-1688 ext. 3

If filed by Applicant:

1. Attach a certified document of exemption finding
2. Has a notice of Exemption been filed by the public agency approving the project? Yes No

Signature (Lead Agency):



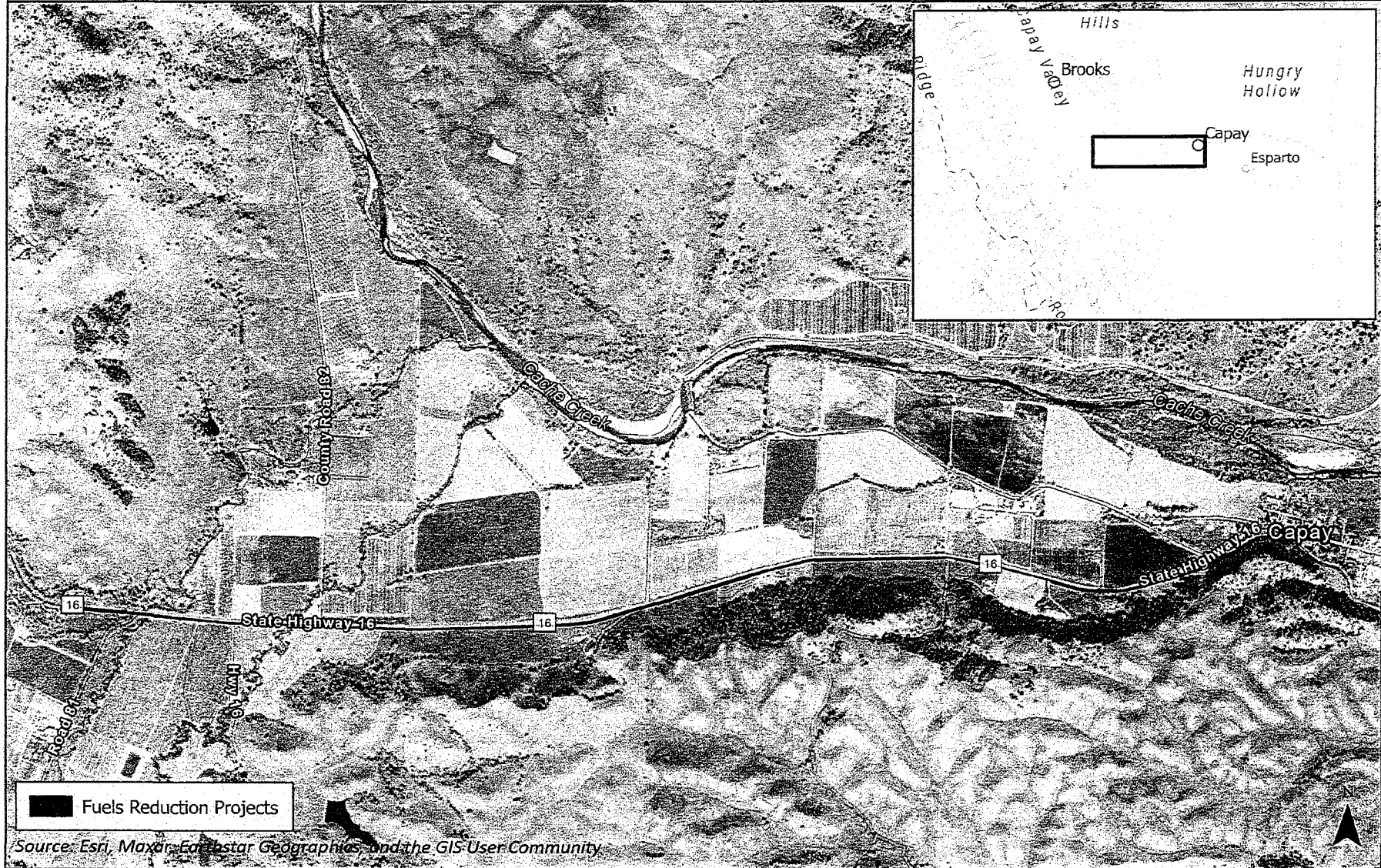
Name/Title:

Heather Nichols, Executive Director

Date:

4/15/2024

State Highway 16 Fuels Reduction: Capay



Source: Esri, Maxar, Earthstar Geographics, and the GIS User Community

Project coordinates: 38°42'23.1"N 122°04'46.7"W
Project length = 3.33 miles
Project area: 10.49 acres

