



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

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

PROJECT TITLE	Scotts Valley Fire Prevention Project		
PROJECT LOCATION	T13N R13W Section 34, Mt. Diablo Base & Meridian	COUNTY	Lake
LEAD AGENCY	California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE)		
CONTACT	Mike Wink Assistant Chief, Sonoma-Lake-Napa Unit	PHONE	707-967-1408
ADDRESS	1199 Big Tree Road, St. Helena, CA 94574		

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The purpose of this project is to create a shaded fuel break, reduce wildfire risk, and aid in fire suppression activities through fuel reduction treatments around tribal residences and community facilities at Scotts Valley Rancheria. The project area is located on the tribe's Red Hills property located 2.5 miles south of Clear Lake and approximately 5 miles east of Kelseyville. The ownership area is approximately 35.3 acres, and the project area is 5.5 acres in size, composed of one treatment unit. The project will be initiated this coming year, and maintenance treatments are expected over the next ten years. Treatment activities will involve thinning and pruning oak woodland vegetation within a 100' buffer zone along the parcel boundary as well as thinning manzanita shrubs behind residences on the property. All work will be completed using manual treatment methods (no off-road heavy equipment or ground disturbance is proposed). Hand crews will employ chainsaws, pole saws, weed whackers, and hand tools to remove small trees, brush, and surface/ground fuels. Live trees (10 inches in diameter or less) will be removed when appropriate. Larger trees will be pruned to provide for a minimum vertical clearance of 8 feet, when appropriate. Slash and debris created by this project will be chipped and spread on site or pile burned in piles not to exceed 4-feet by 4-feet. Chippers will remain on the cultivated agricultural field on the same ownership. Burn piles will be located outside the drip line of trees and away from identified sensitive resource areas.

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 meets the requirements of a CEQA Article 19 Class 4 Categorical exemption "Minor Alterations to Land" (Section 15304, Public Resources Code) as the proposed fuel management activities entail understory brush removal, 10" DBH or less tree removal, thinning, pruning, chipping, and burning to reduce wildfire threat. Although this project will modify some structural aspects of the vegetation, it will not convert the vegetation type or result in removal of otherwise "healthy, mature, and scenic trees."

Field review by CAL FIRE staff confirmed that no exceptions apply that would preclude the use of a notice of exemption for this project. The Department has concluded that no significant environmental impact would occur to aesthetics, agriculture and forestland/timberland, air quality, biological resources, cultural resources, energy, geology and soils, greenhouse gas emissions, hazards and hazardous materials, hydrology and water quality, land use planning, mineral resources, noise, populations and housing, public services, recreation, transportation/ traffic, utilities and service systems, or to wildfire. Documentation of the environmental review completed by the Department is kept on file at Cal Fire Sonoma-Lake-Napa Unit, 1199 Big Tree Road, St. Helena, CA 94574.

DATE RECEIVED FOR FILING

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4/23/2024

George Morris III, Northern Region Chief
California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

Date