



**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
Santa Cruz District
303 Big Trees Road
Felton, CA 95018

PROJECT TITLE: Lodge Road Wildfire Resilience and Large Tree Restoration Project

LOCATION: Big Basin Redwoods State Park

COUNTY: Santa Cruz

DESCRIPTION OF THE NATURE AND PURPOSE OF PROJECT: Project consists of forest restoration work in the Lodge Road area of Big Basin Redwoods State Park to restore damage caused by the 2020 CZU Lightning Complex Fire. Extreme weather and other factors have led to vast numbers of hardwoods, Douglas-fir, and many small mid-diameter second growth redwoods (less than 18-inches in diameter) perishing. Forest Trend Plots identified prevalent mortality trends which helped conclude that the Lodge Road area is a priority location for forest management following the CZU Lightning Complex Fire.

Project goals include:

- Increase forest resilience by implementing forest health treatments to reduce forest density, which will accelerate growth of the remaining, larger second growth redwood trees;
- Develop later successional forest, with connectivity to existing old growth redwoods that support marbled murrelet;
- Promote structural diversity; and
- Increase public safety.

Associated work will:

- Remove second growth redwood trees with small to midrange diameters (≤ 24 -inches) exhibiting post-fire mortality;
- Use mechanized equipment and hand crews to remove dead hardwood trees; and
- Utilize prescribed fire in portions of project area as maintenance following initial treatments.

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

NAME OF DIVISION OR DISTRICT CARRYING OUT THE PROJECT: Santa Cruz District

EXEMPT STATUS:

Statutory Exemption; California Public Resources Code 21080.56

REASONS WHY PROJECT IS EXEMPT: This project is exempt pursuant to CEQA guidelines section 15025 (a)(I), and this project meets all the requirements described in the California Public Resources Code, section 21080.56, because the project is exclusively a project to restore and enhance habitat for California native fish and wildlife. The project obtained concurrence from the Director of the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, that the project qualifies as a statutorily exempt restoration project on July 24, 2024.

CONTACT: Linda Hitchcock
Santa Cruz District

PHONE NO.: (831) 227-8390
EMAIL: Linda.Hitchcock@parks.ca.gov

X Chris Spohrer

Chris Spohrer
District Superintendent