

## NOTICE OF EXEMPTION



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

<b>PROJECT TITLE</b>	Yorkville Ranch Road Shaded Fuel Break		
<b>PROJECT LOCATION</b>	T12N R13W Section 2; T13N R13W Sections 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 34, 35 & 36; T13N R12W Section 19 Mt. Diablo Base & Meridian.	<b>COUNTY</b>	Mendocino
<b>LEAD AGENCY</b>	California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE)		
<b>CONTACT</b>	Monica Morris VMP Environmental Scientist	<b>PHONE</b>	707-972-9837
<b>ADDRESS</b>	802 North Main Street Fort Bragg, CA 95437		

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The purpose of this project is to improve ingress and egress safety, reduce wildfire risk, and aid in fire suppression activities through fuel reduction treatments. This project aims to reduce roadside fuels along approximately 13 miles of private roads through a rural subdivision off Yorkville Ranch Road which connects to Highway 128 east of the town of Boonville and west of the town of Yorkville, CA. The project area contains Douglas-fir/mixed hardwood woodlands, pines, open grasslands and areas with a dense understory of woody shrubs and small trees. Vegetation will be thinned and pruned on either side of the road up to 50 feet from the center of the road, totaling up to 160 acres. Work will primarily be completed using manual treatment methods (no off-road heavy equipment or ground disturbance proposed) with the potential to masticate ladder fuels in select areas. Limited use of an excavator, or skid steer, with a masticator head attachment (swing-boom mechanics) will remain on the existing roadway and reach in to treat above-ground vegetation. The masticator head will avoid direct contact with the ground to eliminate ground disturbance. Hand crews will employ chainsaws, pole saws, weed whackers, and hand tools to remove small trees, brush, and surface/ground fuels. Live trees, 12-inches in diameter or less, will be removed to improve tree spacing. Larger trees will be pruned to provide for a minimum vertical clearance of 14 feet. Dead/dying or hazard trees of any size that pose a safety hazard to the roadway or people will be removed. Slash and debris created by this project will either be chipped or lop-and-scattered, and logs will be bucked and left on site. Chippers and masticators will not leave the roadway. Any material to be chipped will be scattered on site. Broadcast and pile burning are not proposed. This project includes long-term maintenance of fuel loading and hazard tree removal as necessary.

**EXEMPTION STATUS**

- Categorical Exemption Type/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**

The 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, 12-inch DBH or less tree removal, thinning, pruning, chipping, from an existing roadway, and dead/tree removal to improve access for fire engines and reduce volume of flammable vegetation. As such, CAL FIRE 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, population and housing, public services, recreation, transportation/traffic, utilities, and service systems, or to wildfire. No exceptions apply (Section 15300.2) which would preclude the use of a Notice of Exemption for this project. Documentation of the environmental review completed by the Department is kept on file at CAL FIRE Mendocino Unit, 802 N. Main Street. Attn. VMP Coordinator.

**DATE RECEIVED FOR FILING**

DocuSigned by:  
  
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9/29/2024

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