

## NOTICE OF EXEMPTION



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

<b>PROJECT TITLE</b>	Wells Mountain Fuel Break South - Trinity Community Resilience Project		
	Hayfork, CA.		
<b>PROJECT LOCATION</b>	Secs. 4, 8, 9, 17, 18, 20, 29; T31N, R10W; MDBM	<b>COUNTY</b>	Trinity
<b>LEAD AGENCY</b>	California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE)		
<b>CONTACT</b>	Alexander Winter, RPF 3155 <a href="mailto:xander@thewatershedcenter.com">xander@thewatershedcenter.com</a>		
<b>ADDRESS</b>	The Watershed Research and Training Center P.O Box 356, Hayfork, CA. 96041	<b>PHONE</b>	530-628-4206

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

CAL FIRE would provide funding to The Watershed Research and Training Center (WRTC), to implement fuels reduction activities in the form of hand thinning, mastication, and roadside chipping on approximately 232 acres, creating a strategic shaded fuelbreak near Hayfork, Trinity County, California. Once completed, the fuelbreak would be nearly 6 miles in length, and up to 300 feet in width. These types of projects are an integral part of the WRTCs landscape strategy aimed at protecting Trinity County communities from future catastrophic wildfire events and returning the landscape to a healthy, less hazardous state. The project area is exclusively on Sierra Pacific Industries (SPI) land, and will serve as a connector between completed private land fuels projects with proposed federal projects. The topography is characteristic of a ridgeline, with mixed slopes ranging from nearly flat to over 60% slope, and elevations range from approximately 3,360' – 5,440'.

The prescription includes manual thinning, mastication, and chipping of small diameter (less than 12" DBH) conifers and shrubs in order to disrupt the continuity of surface and ladder fuels. Some sub canopy trees may be removed to break up vertical continuity to dominant trees as well as to raise the canopy base height, which can reduce future fire intensity. Any material that cannot be chipped or masticated will be lopped and scattered to the minimum depth feasible. In accessible areas with slopes averaging less than 35%, a masticator may be utilized for fuels treatments.

**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**

It has been determined that no exceptions apply which would preclude the use of a Notice of Exemption for this project. This project is consistent with the requirements stated in Section 15304; Minor Alterations to land, and will have no significant environmental impacts 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.

**DATE RECEIVED FOR FILING**

DocuSigned by:  John Melvin, Assistant Deputy Director Resource Management California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection	10/16/2024 Date
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