



NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

San Luis Obispo County Fire Protection District
San Luis Obispo County Fire

PROJECT TITLE	County-Wide Hand Crew Project Exemption		
PROJECT LOCATION	San Luis Obispo County-Wide	COUNTY	San Luis Obispo
LEAD AGENCY/APPLICANT	San Luis Obispo County Fire Department	EMAIL	David.Erickson@fire.ca.gov
CONTACT ADDRESS	1150 Laurel Lane, Suite 175 San Luis Obispo, CA 93401	PHONE	805-543-4244

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The objectives for these projects are increased public and first responder safety and reduction of fuel loading through vegetation management and training utilizing hand crews throughout the County of San Luis Obispo. Methods will include the creation of defensible space, appropriately sized fuel breaks, and shaded fuel breaks utilizing hand and mechanical treatments to cut, chip, pile and burn vegetation as necessary and appropriate, beginning in the spring of 2025 and continuing annually based on resource availability. The level of treatment can vary based on the type of vegetation present from the creation of fuel breaks with cutting and chipping of vegetation (leaving root systems intact), to the creation of shaded fuel breaks where residual trees and shrubs are thinned and limbed at appropriate length and height for effective fire resilience. Hand crews will use hand tools and mechanical equipment including but not limited to chainsaws, pole saws, chippers, mowers, and weed whips to scrape, cut, prune, thin, chip, and mow vegetation. This project also includes treating linear features, such as roads, that involves the cutting of vegetation within the road right-of-way for a width of 10 to approximately 50 feet on each side to enhance emergency ingress and egress. No heavy equipment use will occur. Burning will be conducted where permissible with an approved permit from Air Pollution Control District.

An archaeological site review will be completed for projects not identified as an archaeological exempt practice, with follow up surveys if warranted. The project will avoid any operations within a buffer of at minimum 50 feet from identified cultural or archaeological resources. A desktop biological review with a minimum one-mile buffer will also be included for each project area to identify any listed plant or animal species present. This may include but not be limited to CNDDDB, BIOS, RareFind, CNPS, Calflora, and landowner records. Follow up surveys will be completed if warranted. Project operations will avoid any locations with identified sensitive or listed biological resources. These areas will be buffered to appropriate distances depending on individual identified biological resource, location, and time of year. All watercourses will be buffered on either side from project operations except for hand removal of dead vegetative material within or adjacent to the watercourse bed, bank, or channel.

EXEMPTION STATUS

- Categorical Exemption Type and Section:

Class 1	15301 Existing Facilities
Class 4	15304 Minor Alterations to Land
Class 7	15307 Actions by Regulatory Agencies for Protection of Natural Resources
- 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 fits under portions of Class 1 - Existing Facilities, Class 4 - Minor Alterations to Land, and Class 7 Actions by Regulatory Agencies for Protection of Natural Resources

Field review by San Luis Obispo County Fire Department staff confirmed that no exceptions apply that would preclude the use of a notice of exemption for this project. The County has concluded that no significant environmental impact would occur to aesthetics, agriculture and forestland or 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 or traffic, or to utilities and service systems. Documentation of the environmental review completed by the County Fire Department is kept on file at 1150 Laurel Lane, Suite 175 San Luis Obispo, CA 93401

DATE RECEIVED FOR FILING

Dave Erickson, Forester I
San Luis Obispo County Fire Department

2/4/25
Date