

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

To: x Office of Planning and Research
P.O Box 3044, 1400 Tenth Street Rm 222
Sacramento, CA 95812-3044

From: Mendocino County Resource Conservation District
410 Jones Street, Ste. C-3
Ukiah, CA 95482

x County Clerk- County of Mendocino
501 Low Gap Rd. #1020
Ukiah, CA 95482

Project Title: Tenmile Creek (Laytonville Rancheria) Forest Health Project

Project Location - City: Laytonville, CA

Project Location - County: Mendocino

Project Location Specific: The project is located in northern Mendocino County, approximately two miles west of Laytonville, CA. It is within the Tenmile Creek watershed part of the South Fork Eel River watershed. Location data is as follows:

Section 1421N TN 21N, R 15 W Humboldt Base & Meridian

USGS Quadrangle: Cahto Peak

County: Mendocino

Cal Watershed ID: 1111.330101

CAL FIRE Forest Health Grant # 8GG2660

Description of Nature, Purpose, and Beneficiaries of Project: This shaded fuel break project proposes forest fuel treatments to restore forest health and wildfire resilience on the Cahto Tribe of the Laytonville Rancheria located in near Laytonville, CA. Benefits include enhanced forest health and carbon storage potential, mitigation of wildfire risk, and support for community safety and local employment. Proposed shaded fuel break activities/treatments include: 1) Thinning high density young forest stands and creating shaded fuel breaks in strategic locations. Thinning will also release desirable black oak and white oak trees where they are being overtopped and crowded out by conifers; 2) prescribed fire and cultural fire, including pile burning and 3) Invasive plant removal. Treatment areas located along roads, ingress and egress points, near habitable structures and firefighting infrastructure to provide for improved safety for ingress and egress of evacuating residents and responding emergency personnel. Trees that have firewood value will be put into decks for tribal members and staff to access and/or tribal elders and community use. The value of the fuel treatments, both in terms of reduced fire behavior/intensity and in terms of impacts will produce long-term benefits.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: Mendocino County Resource Conservation District (RCD).

**Note the Mendocino County RCD approved the greater Tenmile Creek Forest Health Project under the CalVTP PEIR Project Specific Analysis (PSA) on 9/17/24 for the non-federal land portion of a larger CAL FIRE Forest Health grant project. SCH# 2019012052.*

Exempt Status:

X Statutory Exemptions. State code number: Statutory Exemption Public Resources Code Section 4799.05(d)(1). The California Environmental Quality Act does not apply to prescribed fire, thinning, or fuel reduction projects undertaken on federal lands to reduce the risk of high-severity wildfire that have been reviewed under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) if the primary role of a state or local agency is providing funding or staffing for those projects.

Reasons why project is exempt: CEQA does not apply to forest health fuel reduction projects undertaken on federal lands to reduce the risk of high severity wildfire that have been reviewed under the NEPA, if the primary role of a state or local agency is providing funding or staffing for those projects. The Mendocino County RCD and Eel River Recovery project will provide funding from CAL FIRE Forest Health Grant for fuel reduction on 109 acres of tribal trust land (federal FRA) within the Laytonville Rancheria. The proposed activities were approved by the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) in their entirety under NEPA TR-4900 P5 J51, Laytonville Rancheria Forest Health Project 516 DM 10.5 Categorical Exclusion approved on 8/24/24.

Documentation on the NEPA environmental review for this project is on file with the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) and is kept on file at the Mendocino County RCD office at 410 Jones Street, Ste. C-3 Ukiah, CA., and the Eel River Recovery Project office POB 214 Loleta, CA 95551 (eelrecovery@gmail.com).

Contact Person: Stephanie Garrabrant-Sierra

Area Code/Telephone/Extension:

Date: 10/1/2024

707 462-3664 ex.107

Signature: Stephanie Garrabrant-Sierra

Title: Executive Director

If filed by applicant:

1. Attach certified document of exemption finding.

2. Has a Notice of Exemption been filed by the public agency approving the project? Yes X No

Signed by : _____ X Lead Agency _____ Signed by Applicant

Authority cited: Sections 21083 and 21110, Public Resources Code.

Reference: Sections 21108, 21152, and 21152.1, Public Resources Code.

Date Received for filing at OPR: _____