

# Yosemite National Park

## NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

---

**TO:** Office of Planning and Research      **FROM:** Yosemite National Park  
P.O. Box 3044, Room 12                              PO Box 700  
Sacramento, CA 95812-3044                      El Portal, CA 95318

**TO:** County Clerk, County of Mariposa  
P.O. Box 247  
Mariposa, CA 95338

**Project Title:** Yosemite NP. Wawona Road Hazard Tree and Biomass Removal (SSARR Fuel Reduction and Biomass Utilization)

**Project Location – County/Specific:** Project is located in Yosemite National Park along Wawona Road (Highway 41) from Chinquapin (junction of Wawona Road and Glacier Point Road) to the South Entrance of the park. The project is located in Mariposa County. The tree removal work is typically conducted within a 200 foot distance of the road. Staging and storage areas for the project include Badger Pass, Wawona woodyard, and El Capitan woodyard.

**Description of Nature, Purpose and Beneficiaries of Project:** The Wawona Road hazard tree and biomass removal project mirrors the Mariposa County SSARR Fuel Reduction and Biomass Utilization project. The primary goal of the project is to remove hazard trees and biomass up to 200 feet from Wawona Road. Small diameter green trees (<20"DBH) or hazard trees will be fallen. Biomass may either be transported offsite or converted into biochar or electricity through a portable biogen plant staged at one of several locations in the park.

The work is critical to meet the public safety and tree disposal needs stemming from widespread tree mortality in the southern Sierra Nevada. The project protects infrastructure and increases public safety by removing hazard trees and thinning fuels on critical corridors. It also protects communities located within the Wildland Urban Interface, specifically Yosemite West and Wawona. This project also creates a fuels break in the event of wildland fire or if a prescribed fire is to be conducted.

No work will be done within the bed, bank or channel of any existing drainage, or culturally sensitive sites within the project areas.

**Name of Public Agency Approving Project:** Yosemite National Park

**Name of Person (Applicant) or Agency Carrying Out Project:** Yosemite National Park

**Exempt Status:**

- Declared Emergency (PRC §21080(b)(3); §15269(a) CEQA Guidelines): Proclamation of a State of Emergency, Executive Order 10-30-2015
- Emergency Project (PRC §21080(b)(4); §15269(b)(c) CEQA Guidelines)

- Categorical Exemption (Type and Section No.): Existing Facilities, §15301(c) and §15301(h) CEQA Guidelines
- Statutory Exemption (State Code No.): PRC Section §21080(b)(4); §15269(c) CEQA Guidelines

**Reason Why Project Is Exempt:**

The Yosemite Fire Management Plan Environmental Impact Statement (2004) describes creating fuel breaks along Wawona Road as a major goal. All necessary mitigations for this project have been included to protect natural and cultural resources that have the potential to be harmed during implementation.

Additionally, tree mortality hazard mitigation efforts are a short term task necessary to mitigate an emergency. As such, they are exempt pursuant to CEQA Guidelines, Statutory Exemptions, Section 15269 EMERGENCY PROJECTS. The felling of dead or dying hazard trees along federally-maintained roads and is necessary to prevent or mitigate an emergency to public health and emergency access. The abundance of dead or dying hazard trees in these locations is a result of a severe drought in the area and bark beetle-infestation and are a short-term project.

**Lead Agency Contact Person: Garrett Dickman, Botanist**  
**Phone Number: (209) 379-3282**

David Mecchi  
Signature

07/18/19  
Date

MCRCD Board President  
Title

Signed by Lead Agency

Signed by Applicant

Governor's Office of Planning & Research

Date Received for filing at OPR: JULY 18 2019

**STATE CLEARINGHOUSE**