

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION



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

PROJECT TITLE	Trinity Community Protection and Landscape Resilience Project		
PROJECT LOCATION	The project is located on the Tule Creek Ranch in Hayfork, CA: T31N, R12W section 16 & 21	COUNTY	Trinity
LEAD AGENCY	California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CALFIRE)		
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PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Watershed Research and Training Center (WRTC), plans to implement fuels reduction and prescribed burning activities on the Tule Creek Ranch. The Tule Creek Ranch is a 420-acre contiguous-private land ownership, that is an integral part of the Watershed Research and Training Center's (WRTC) landscape strategy aimed at protecting the community of Hayfork from future catastrophic wildfire events. Hazardous fuel reduction and prescribed fire is the primary treatment proposed throughout the project area. Pre-burn fuel treatments that help to minimize fire intensities, especially adjacent to habitable structures and critical infrastructure, will occur where necessary on the property. Pre-fire treatments include handline construction, and fuels reduction in the form of hand thinning (with chainsaws) to remove suppressed trees (less than 10" DBH) and brush/shrubs in strategic locations to reduce fire intensities and protect residual trees. All species will be thinned, and the residual materials will be treated by piling and burning, chipping, and/or lop and scatter. All prescribed burning will be completed under a prescribed fire burn plan approved by the State Fire Management Officer. An approved prescribed fire plan is already in place for the property and burn units are subdivided by natural features on the landscape (roads, watercourses, etc.) to facilitate control efforts and manage smoke impacts based on burn day smoke dispersion. Broadcast burning will be implemented during appropriate environmental conditions that will allow us to meet our resource objectives as per the prescribed fire burn plan. Burns will be conducted using hand ignition and other standard prescribed fire methods. Burn prescriptions would aim to reduce surface fuel loading 25-85% and understory woody vegetative cover by 15-65% from pre-burn levels. Our prescribed fire objectives include; reducing the risk of catastrophic wildfire, stimulating the growth of woody shrubs, oaks, and conifers, increasing water yields, meadow and oak restoration, encouraging the return of native grasses by reducing non-natives invasive plants, reducing conifer encroachment into the oak woodland and grassland areas.

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

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. Documentation of the environmental review completed by the Department is kept on file at 2180 Harvard St., Suite 200, Sacramento, CA 95815.

DATE RECEIVED FOR FILING

Governor's Office of Planning & Research

Governor's Office of Planning & Research SEP 30 2019

SEP 30 STATE CLEARINGHOUSE

STATE CLEARINGHOUSE


Matthew Reischman, Assistant Deputy Director Date
California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

9/30/19