



State of California
 The Natural Resources Agency
 California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE)

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

2020030835

PROJECT TITLE	Portola Heights Fuel Reduction Project		
PROJECT LOCATION	Portions of S03 T8S R3W, and S34, S22, and S27 of T7S R3W	COUNTY	Santa Cruz
LEAD AGENCY	California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE)		
CONTACT	Matthew Mosher		
ADDRESS	6059 Highway 9 Felton, CA 95018	PHONE	(831) 212-3140

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The project will utilize hand crews to construct a shaded fuel break in mostly forested areas on approximately 28 acres along approximately 4.4 miles of roads in the area of the Portola Heights residential community, located off Skyline Boulevard in southwest San Mateo County. The roads pass through various private properties. Fuel treatments will be up to 25 feet from road centerlines on each side, on parcels where written owner permission has been obtained. Some areas of road corridors may not be treated due to steep slopes, cut banks or light fuels. The objectives will be to disrupt the horizontal continuity of surface fuels, disrupt vertical continuity resulting from ladder fuels and increase shrub and understory crown spacing. The fuel reduction will utilize a "thin from below" approach by removing the majority of trees and shrubs under 6 inches DBH, while leaving small clusters of these smaller-diameter plants for diversity retention. The lower limbs of "leave" trees will be pruned to a height of 8-10 feet or to 15 feet for branches over the roadbed itself. Some hazardous trees up to 10 inches DBH may be removed. Cut material will generally be chipped and spread uniformly on-site or lopped-and-scattered to knee-height or less, with large-diameter material left in ground-contact or in piles as firewood near safe turn-offs. The shaded fuel brake will not involve mechanical timber harvesting or the piling and burning of slash. No stump removal, mechanical yarding, or site preparation will occur. This project will be contiguous with work occurring along roadways on Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District (MROSD) property, and this will improve egress for the community during wildfire all the way to Highway 35.

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

The work proposed is a minor alteration to vegetation which does not involve removal of healthy, mature, scenic trees and is consistent with Categorical Exemption Class 4 - Minor Alterations to Land. No activity is proposed that is listed as a limitation under CCR 15300.2 (a-f).

Field review by CAL FIRE staff confirmed that no exceptions apply which would preclude the use of a Notice of Exemption for this project. The Department has concluded that no significant environmental impact would occur 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 San Mateo-Santa Cruz Unit Headquarters, 6059 Highway 9, Felton, CA 95018.

DATE RECEIVED FOR FILING

Governor's Office of Planning & Research

MAR 20 2020

STATE CLEARINGHOUSE


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