



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

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

2020030837

PROJECT TITLE Riva Ridge Fuel Reduction Project

PROJECT LOCATION Portions T9S, R1W, Sec 17 & 20 MDBM

COUNTY Santa Cruz

LEAD AGENCY California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE)

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 Felton, CA 95018

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PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The project will utilize hand crews to create a shaded fuel break in forested areas on up to 82 acres along roads and residences in the Riva Ridge area of north-central Santa Cruz County. Fuel treatments will initially be nearest roads and homes and gradually progress outward over several years. Several areas of road corridors and commonly owned areas in the project areas will not be treated due to steep slopes, cut banks or light fuels. The objectives will be to disrupt the horizontal continuity of surface fuels, vertical continuity resulting from ladder fuels, and increase shrub and understory crown spacing. The fuel reduction will utilize a “thin from below” approach reducing surface and ladder fuels and increasing understory crown spacing by removing a majority of tree species up to 10 inches DBH. The lower limbs of “leave” trees will be pruned to a height of 8-10 feet. Cut material will generally be chipped and spread uniformly on-site or lopped-and-scattered to a height of 12 inches or less.

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

 3/19/20
 Matthew Reischman, Assistant Deputy Director Date
 California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

Governor's Office of Planning & Research

MAR 20 2020

STATE CLEARINGHOUSE