



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

## NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

2020050289

<b>PROJECT TITLE</b>	Howard Forest Helicopter Pad and Hangar Replacement		
<b>PROJECT LOCATION</b>	17501 US-101, Willits, CA 95490	<b>COUNTY</b>	Mendocino
<b>LEAD AGENCY</b>	California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE)		
<b>CONTACT</b>	Robert B. Douglas, Environmental Scientist Louis Sciocchetti, Forester II		
<b>ADDRESS</b>	CAL FIRE Mendocino Unit 17501 North Highway 101 Willis, CA 95490	<b>PHONE</b>	707-972-3795

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The project area is located on the one-acre existing Helitack facility within the 87-acre Howard Forest Station and Training Center property. The project consists of the removal of two associated cement helicopter pads, to be replaced by one large pad on the same facility footprint to accommodate the new, longer and taller Sikorsky S-70i Firehawk, which replaces the UH-1H Super Huey helicopter. The site will be disturbed by a minor amount of grading. Most of the work will consist of importing fill to expand on the existing leveled area on a previously developed site. The new surface will be graded, compacted, and rocked prior to installing the new concrete helicopter pad. The existing primary and secondary helicopter pads are 33 ft and 25 ft in diameter, respectively. They will be replaced by a single, larger helicopter pad that will be 75 x 75 ft. The entire expansion area, located between the old Highway 101, has been previously disturbed by grading both for the highway and the original Helitack construction. Replacement of the helicopter pads will involve the use of heavy equipment such as an excavator, bulldozer, dump truck, and roller to translocate and compact soil to replace and prepare the foundations for these structures. Replacement of the two helicopter pads is expected to take approximately one week.

**EXEMPTION STATUS**

- Categorical Exemption Type/Section: Class 2/15302 Replacement or Reconstruction
- 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 project meets the requirements of a CEQA Article 19 Class 2 Categorical exemption, consisting of “replacement or reconstruction of existing structures and where the new structure[s] will be located on the same site as the structure[s] replaced and will have substantially the same purpose and capacity as the structure[s] replaced...”

The proposed project will not have a significant effect on the environment. 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 CAL FIRE Mendocino Unit, Resource Management, 17501 N. Highway 101, Willits, CA 95490, Attn. Environmental Coordinator

**DATE RECEIVED FOR FILING**

Governor's Office of Planning & Research

MAY 13 2020

STATE CLEARINGHOUSE

5/12/2020

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