EBMUD

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

TO:
Calaveras County
Clerk Recorder's Office
891 Mountain Ranch Road
San Andreas, CA 95249

FROM: (LEAD AGENCY)
EAST BAY MUNICIPAL UTILITY DISTRICT
Office of the Secretary - (510) 287-0404
375 Eleventh Street, MS 806
Oakland, CA 94607-4240

☒ Lead Agency is the Project Applicant
☒ Lead Agency is Public Agency Approving Project
☒ Lead Agency is Carrying Out Project

PROJECT INFORMATION

1. TITLE: Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund (GGRF) Fuel Reduction Project
2. LOCATION: *(City, County, and specific location)*
   The project will occur at four sites, one of which falls within Calaveras County at the end of Goodell Road along the southeastern side of Pardee Reservoir (see Attachment A).
3. DESCRIPTION: The project will consist of brushing fire access road segments at four sites in the vicinity of the Pardee Reservoir. The purpose of the project is to manage vegetation along the fire access road corridors to allow the roads to serve as fuel breaks. This helps minimize the risk to life, property, and water quality from wildfires in the EBMUD-owned portion of the Mokelumne watershed and adjacent lands. See Attachment A for more information.

EXEMPTION FINDING (Check one)

This project is exempt from CEQA because:

1. ☐ Activity is not a project
2. ☐ Activity is Ministerial (Sec.21080(b)(1); Guideline 15268)
3. ☐ Activity is a Declared Emergency (Sec.21080(b)(3); Guideline 15269(a))
4. ☐ Activity is an Emergency Project (Sec.21080(b)(4); Guideline 15269(b)(c))
5. ☒ Activity is Categorically Exempt Under Guideline 15304
6. ☐ Activity is Statutorily Exempt Under Guideline _____
7. ☒ Reasons why project is exempt: This project is exempt under Guideline 15304. Minor Alterations to Land; and can be categorized under example (i) for the following reasons: 1) This project involves fuel management activities within 30 feet of structures to reduce the volume of flammable vegetation (vegetation will be cleared for fuel reduction within 20ft. on either side of fire access roads); 2) The activities will not result in the taking of endangered, rare, or threatened plant or animal species; and 3) The activities will not result in significant erosion and sedimentation of surface waters.

   This project's circumstances are not substantially different from typical circumstances surrounding the types of projects covered by Class 4 exemptions (Guideline 15304). The project will have no significant environmental effects relative to location; cumulative impact; or significant effects due to unusual circumstances, hazardous waste, or historical resources; pursuant to Section 15300.2 of the CEQA Guidelines.

APPROVAL BY INITIATING UNIT: Mokelumne Watershed & Recreation Division

10/26/2020	Justin Mynk JM	Justin Mynk JM
1. DATE PREPARED	2. PREPARED BY (initial)	3. REVIEWED BY (Unit Supv. initial)

Chris Swann
4. RECOMMENDED BY (Division/Section Manager)

Justin Mynk	MOK	Ranger Supervisor	209-772-8259
5. CONTACT PERSON	MAIL SLOT #	TITLE	PHONE

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION APPROVED FOR FILING WITH THE COUNTY CLERK

11/17/20	Michael Tognolini
DATE	DEPARTMENT DIRECTOR
12/11/20	Rischa S. Cole
DATE FORWARDED TO COUNTY CLERK	SECRETARY OF THE DISTRICT

ATTACHMENT A

EAST BAY MUNICIPAL UTILTIY DISTRICT

Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund (GGRF) Fuel Reduction Project

Overview and Background

The project consists of brushing fire access road segments at four sites (F, G, H and I) in the vicinity of the Pardee Reservoir on property owned by the East Bay Municipal Utility District (EBMUD; Figure 1).

Site F

Site F is comprised of multiple fire access road segments within what is known as the Kirkwood area along the northeastern side of Pardee Reservoir (Figure 1; Figure 2). The scope of work throughout Site F will consist of brushing approximately 2 miles of fire access roads, 20 feet off the edge of the road on both sides of the road (8 acres). Cut material and slash that is generated from these measures will be exhausted by creating burn piles that will be burned at an appropriate time. Chipping and broadcasting may not be available throughout the entire site due to equipment access restrictions.

Site G

Site G is comprised of multiple fire access road segments within what is known as the Anderson Ranch area located at the northeastern side of the EBMUD Mokelumne Watershed property (Figure 1; Figure 3). The scope of work throughout Site G will consist of brushing approximately 1 mile of fire access roads, 20 feet off the edge of the road on both sides of the road (4 acres). Dense and decadent brush stands are the predominant vegetation type in this area. Cut material and slash that is generated from these measures will be exhausted by chipping and broadcasting.

Site H

Site H, Goose Hill West, is a 112 acre pasture that contains 1 fire access road (Figure 1; Figure 4). The site is mainly comprised of dense brush stands. Multiple vegetation management projects have occurred on the site over the past several years. Goose Hill West is located between EBUMD's Pardee Recreation Area to the east, and the Goose Hill subdivision of houses to the west. The long-term objective for the pasture is to create a maintainable fuel break between the recreation area and subdivision. Previous projects have focused on breaking up the continuous brush stands by removing sections of brush and leaving a mosaic pattern of brush islands. Native grasses have been planted where the vegetation has been removed in an attempt to convert portions of the site to grasslands. This change in vegetation type allows for the use of cattle grazing to maintain fuel loads within the site.

The scope of work throughout Site H will consist of brushing approximately 0.5 mile of fire access roads, 20 feet off the edge of the road on both sides of the road. Small fuel breaks will be created and tie into previous vegetation management projects to further support the overall management plan for the pasture. Dense and decadent brush stands will be removed in a mosaic pattern that allows for islands of brush to remain. In all 4 acres of the site will be treated.

Cut material and slash that is generated from these measures will be exhausted by chipping and broadcasting. In areas that have restricted access to vehicles cut material and slash will be organized into burn piles that EBMUD staff will burn at an appropriate time.

Site I

Site I is a fire access road segment is located off of the end of Goodell Road along the southeastern side of Pardee Reservoir (Figure 1; Figure 5). The road segment identified for treatment is the sole access for vehicles in this portion of EBMUD's Mokelumne watershed property.

The scope of work throughout Site I will consist of brushing approximately 1 mile of fire access roads, 20 feet off the edge of the road on both sides of the road (3 acres).

Cut material and slash that is generated from these measures will be exhausted by chipping and broadcasting. The formation of burn piles with cut debris will also be utilized. Piles will be burned at an appropriate time.

Project Purpose and Objectives

The fire road system allows EBMUD staff to access watershed lands for management, maintenance, and emergency needs. Fire engines, fire equipment, and emergency vehicles utilize the road system to gain access to wildfires and other emergencies that may occur within the Districts watershed lands. Proper vegetation management along the fire access road corridors enables the roads to serve as a fuel break. This helps minimize the risk to life, property and water quality from wildfires in the EBMUD-owned portion of the Mokelumne watershed and adjacent property owners.

Project Location

The project will occur near fire access roads at four sites (Figure 1). Site F is located in the Kirkwood area along the northeastern side of Pardee Reservoir. Site G is located in the Anderson Ranch area located at the northeastern side of the Mokelumne Watershed and Recreation Division's Mokelumne watershed property. Site H is located in Goose Hill West along the northwestern side of Pardee Reservoir. Site I is located at the end of Goodell Road along the southeastern side of Pardee Reservoir.

Project Characteristics

Fuel models that are present at each site will be treated by the following methods:

- Tree and timber fuel models will be treated as shaded fuel breaks. Trees located within the road prism or fence corridor with a DBH of 12 inches or less may be considered for removal. Trees with a DBH greater than 12 inches will be pruned and the canopies raised, with the removal of understory vegetation and ladder fuels including brush.
- Chaparral and brush fuel models will be treated as a fuel break with the thinning or removal of dense vegetation stands. (Note: native grass seed will be applied to these areas to encourage the change from brush habitat to grassland habitat)
- Slash and dead woody debris will be cleared out to reduce fuel loads.

Permits and Approvals

All work will be on EBMUD property. Encroachment permits are not required since there is no work within the public right-of-way. All required permits from the regulatory agencies will be obtained before commencing work.

Schedule and Work Hours

The construction is anticipated to start in winter of 2020 and run into April 30 of 2021. Construction activities will occur in the daytime weekday hours (8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.).

EBMUD Practices and Procedures

Standard construction biological, environmental, and safety practices applicable to all EBMUD construction projects have been incorporated into the Project. California Storm water Quality Association (CASQA) Best Management Practices will be utilized. These standard practices minimize impacts to the public resulting from EBMUD construction projects.



Figure 1. Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund (GGRF) Fuel Reduction Project site locations.



Figure 2. Representative site conditions for Site F.



Figure 3. Representative site conditions for Site G.



Figure 4. Representative site conditions for Site H.



Figure 5. Representative site conditions for Site I.