



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

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

PROJECT TITLE	Round Tree – BLM Parcel		
PROJECT LOCATION	North of the Ponderosa Basin community T 5S, R 20E, S 26	COUNTY	Mariposa
LEAD AGENCY	California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) Madera-Mariposa-Merced Unit		
CONTACT	Brian Mattos, Unit Forester Sebastien Cordier, Environmental Scientist	PHONE	(559) 706-8807 (559) 706-8808
ADDRESS	5366 Highway 49 North Mariposa, CA 95338		

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

CAL FIRE will manage implementation of the Round Tree Fuel Break project on the associated Bureau of Land Management (BLM) parcel to complete fuel reduction activities. The primary objective is to create a strategic and effective shaded fuel break across private and federal lands (i.e., BLM and Forest Service) that would reduce high intensity fire behavior and make suppression efforts more effective. The proposed fuel break would be up to 600 feet wide and treat approximately 502 acres, with most of those acres on Forest Service lands. The fuel break would cross one BLM parcel, treating approximately 14 acres of BLM land. The project would be accomplished by reducing dense surface fuel loads, reducing live and dead understory and mid-story fuel loading (often referred to as “ladder fuels”), and by increasing crown spacing and retaining large fire-resistant trees within the remaining overstory fuels. Treatments would not remove live conifer trees that are greater than 11 inches diameter-at-breast-height (DBH). The project would include the felling of hazard trees within the parcel, including greater than 11” DBH, when they are deemed hazard trees to increase safety for the public. Vegetation management treatments could include the use of hand tools, chainsaws, chippers, and/or mechanized mastication equipment. A combination of mechanical thinning, manual thinning, pile burning, post-treatment understory burning, herbicide application, and first entry prescribed fire may be utilized to achieve the desired ecological conditions.

EXEMPTION STATUS

- Categorical Exemption Type and Section:
 Statutory Exemption (state code section): Public Resources Code Section 4799.05(d)(1)
 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 California Environmental Quality Act does not apply to prescribed fire, thinning, or fuel reduction projects undertaken on federal lands to reduce the risk of high-severity wildfire that have been reviewed under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) if the primary role of a state or local agency is providing funding or staffing for those projects. CAL FIRE would provide funding to the BLM to reduce forest fuels on federal land. Project Design Features relevant to the proposed action [Appendix B of the Programmatic Environmental Assessment (pEA): Statewide Wildland Urban Interface Fuels Treatments (SWFT) DOI-BLM-CA-9000-2022-0001-EA] as listed in the Decision of NEPA Adequacy (DNA) DOI-BLM-CA-C080-2024-0012-DNA, signed March 2024, will be implemented.

DATE RECEIVED FOR FILING

DocuSigned by:

David Fulcher

4/22/2024

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David Fulcher, Southern Region Chief Date
California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection