



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

# NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

**PROJECT TITLE** Cuesta Camp County-Wide Exempt Conservation & Training Projects (Cut/Pile/Burn)

**PROJECT LOCATION** SLU County-Wide **COUNTY** San Luis Obispo

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

**CONTACT** Alan Peters, Unit Forester

**ADDRESS** 635 N. Santa Rosa **PHONE** 805-543-4244  
 San Luis Obispo, CA 93405

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION - CUT/PILE/BURN**

The most common treatment method utilized for both training and conservation projects involves crews cutting and piling excess vegetation and then disposing of it by burning. Piles are occasionally burned immediately after cutting but most often burning occurs after the vegetation has been allowed to dry for several days or weeks in order to facilitate faster more complete consumption and less smoke production. This method is used where burning is permissible which generally means the less populated areas of the County outside of cities and urban/village reserve lines boundaries. Prior to any burning, either CAL FIRE or the project sponsor must secure a burn permit from the Air Pollution Control District (APCD). The APCD may grant a variance, but burning is generally allowed only during permissive burn days.

This is the most common project method performed by Cuesta CC and comprises approximately 80% or more of the non-emergency work performed by hand crews in any given year. Depending on incident activity and on site conditions, 200-300 acres are annually treated by this method county-wide. No heavy equipment use is authorized under this document. A CAL FIRE Archaeologist will review the project to prevent impacts to cultural resources. A query of the Natural Diversity Database will be performed for each project area to check for the presence of listed plants or animals. DFG and the CCRWQCB will be consulted as necessary for input on an individual project basis. Piles will not be burned within the standard width of a watercourse or lake protection zone.

This exemption will be reevaluated every five years.

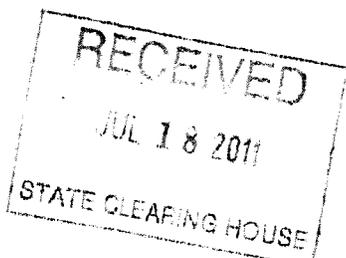
**EXEMPTION STATUS**

- Categorical Exemption Type/Section: Class
  - 15301 Existing Facilities
  - 15304 Minor Alterations to Land
  - 15308 Actions Taken for Protection of the Environment
- 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**

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 the contact address above.

DATE RECEIVED FOR FILING



*William E. Snyder*  
 William E. Snyder, Deputy Director Date  
 California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection