



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

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

PROJECT TITLE	Mariposa Non-maintained County Roads Fuel Treatment		
PROJECT LOCATION	<p>French Camp Road Segment, Portions of Sections 3, 8, & 15 T5S R18E, approximately 2 miles NW of Mariposa; Montano Del Oro Segment, Portions of Sections 12 & 13 T5S R19E, approximately 3.5 miles NE of Bootjack off Darrah Road; Ponderosa Way –Midpines Segment, Portion of Section 5 T4S R18E and Portion of Sections 30 & 31 T4S R19E, approximately 1 mile north of Midpines; Rancheria Creek Segment, Portions of Sections 15, 16, & 22 T4S Range 18E, approximately 3.4 miles NW of Midpines off Colorado River Road; Sherrod Road Segment Portions of Sections 22, 23, 24, & 26 T5S R19E, approximately 1.36 miles NE of Bootjack off Darrah Road; Cuneo Road Segment, Portion of Sections 10, 11, 15, & 22 T2S R16E, approximately 3.25 miles north of Coulterville; Texas Hill Road Segment portions of Sections 3 & 4 T3S R17E, approximately 5.6 miles east of Coulterville; all in Mt Diablo B&M.</p>	COUNTY	Mariposa
LEAD AGENCY	California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (Cal Fire)		
CONTACT	Len Nielson	PHONE	(209)966-3622
ADDRESS	5366 Hwy 49 North Mariposa, CA 95338		

Project Description

The project consists of fuel reduction along 7 non-maintained county roads. These roads are in the 1,750 to 3,600 elevation range. The roads provide access for residents and emergency vehicles. Two road segments are in the northern portion of the county between Coulterville and Greeley Hill. The five other projects are near Mariposa between the Merced River and Highway 49 near Bootjack. The French Camp Road segment is approximately 1.54 miles long running from Hwy 49 north of Mariposa, north to Gold Creek Lane. The fuel treatment area will lie 150' on either side of the road. Elevation ranges between 2,250 feet in the south to 2,500 feet at the north termini. Acreage of this segment is approximately 56 acres. The Montano Del Oro Road segment is approximately 1.25 miles long running from Darrah Road east along Montano Del Oro Road to the end. The segment lies approximately 3.5 miles northeast of Bootjack. The fuel treatment area will lie 150' on either side of the road. Elevation ranges between 3,000 feet in the west to 3,400 feet at the east termini. Acreage of this segment is approximately 46 acres. The Ponderosa Way-Midpines Road segment is approximately 3.15 miles long running from Hwy 140 just north of Midpines, east along Ponderosa Way to the intersection with Carstens Road. The fuel treatment area will lie 150' on either side of the road. Elevation ranges between 2,500 feet in the west to 3,600 feet at the east end. Acreage of this segment is approximately 115 acres. The Rancheria Creek Road segment is approximately 3.25 miles long running from Colorado Road approximately 3.4 miles northwest of Midpines, north along Rancheria Road to the end. The fuel treatment area will lie 150' on either side of the road. Elevation ranges between 1,750 feet in the north to 2,800 feet in the southern portion. Acreage of this segment is approximately 118 acres. The Sherrod Road segment is approximately 1.75 miles long running from Darrah Road approximately 1 mile northeast of Bootjack along Sherrod Road to the end. The fuel treatment area will lie 150' on either side of the road. Elevation ranges between 2,450 feet in the west to 2,700 feet at the east termini. Acreage of this segment is approximately 64 acres. The Cuneo Road segment is approximately 2.0 miles long running from Priest-Coulterville road approximated 3 miles north of Coulterville along Cuneo Road to the intersection of Dexter Road. The fuel treatment area will lie 150' on either side of the road. Elevation ranges between 2,500 feet in the south to 3,300 feet at the north termini. Acreage of this segment is approximately 73 acres. The Texas Hill Road segment is approximately 0.64 miles long running from the intersection of Dogtown Road, approximately 5 miles east of Coulterville, along Texas Hill Road to the US Forest Service boundary. The fuel treatment area will lie 150' on either side of the road. Elevation ranges between 2,900 feet in the west to 2,700 feet at the east end. Acreage of this segment is approximately 24 acres. Vegetation types are a combination of Blue Oak Woodland, Montane Chaparral, Ponderosa Pine, and Montane Hardwood Conifer habitat types. Live Oak, Blue Oak, Gray Pine, and Ponderosa Pine are the dominate tree species with Ponderosa Pine occurring in the higher elevations on the Cuneo, Texas Hill, and Montano Del Oro Road Segments. At the higher elevation Incense Cedar and Sugar Pine are present as minor species. Valley Oak is present at the lower elevations as a minor species. Brush species include several ceanothus species, manzanita, toyon, poison oak, redbud, and buckeye. These habitats are fire adapted. Mature plants sprout back from the root crown and some species require fire scarification to germinate. Vegetation densities vary with portions of the oak woodland having open grassland and other areas consisting of dense chaparral 15 ft. tall.

Residences are scattered throughout and around the project areas. Parcels range in size from 0.25ac lots to 100+ acre ranches. The project consists of constructing shaded fuel breaks approximately 150 feet wide on either side of the roads. Understory brush and chaparral densities will be reduced to a level that will reduce the rate of wildfire spread and provide for potential fire suppression efforts as well as safe ingress and egress during emergency situations. Over story trees will be left providing shade and habitat. Leave trees will be pruned to remove fuel ladders. Vegetation removal will consist of hand cutting and piling for burning during a safe burn window, hand chipping and broadcasting of chips, along with mechanical mastication with light and/or heavy equipment. Heavy equipment will be confined to existing roads. Excavators or similar equipment equipped with masticating heads will treat material reachable from the roads. This equipment will be restricted to operation on existing roads. Trees up to 12 inches DBH may be removed to achieve the necessary spacing needed for achieving a functional fuel break. Larger trees shall not be cut unless deemed to be a safety hazard. Grass, forbs and other low-lying ground vegetation will not be targeted for removal. The primary goal is to disrupt the horizontal and vertical continuity of fuels in order to provide a safe and feasible means of defense against the high probability of vegetation fire within the wildland urban interface.

EXEMPTION STATUS

- Categorical Exemption Type/Section: Class 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

This project fits under portions of 15304- Minor Alterations to Land.

A query of the CNDDDB did not reveal the presence of any sensitive species. Protection measures for watercourses are consistent with The California Forest Practice Rules. Protection measures for archaeological sites are consistent with the Best Management Practices and impacts are not expected. All burning will be done in accordance with a permit for the Mariposa County Air Pollution Control District. Field review by the RPF 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.

DATE RECEIVED FOR FILING

 9/20/16

Helge Eng, Deputy Director Date
California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

Governor's Office of Planning & Research
SEP 21 2016
STATE CLEARINGHOUSE