



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

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

PROJECT TITLE	Mokelumne Hill Shaded Fuel Break Project		
PROJECT LOCATION	T5N, R11E, Por. Sec. 12 & T5N, R12E, Por. Sec 7, MDBM	COUNTY	Calaveras
LEAD AGENCY	California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE)		
CONTACT	Jan Bray, Area Forester		
ADDRESS	795 Mountain Ranch Road San Andreas, CA 95249	PHONE	(209) 754-2708

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed project area is approximately 49 acres in size, and is located near the community of Mokelumne Hill. Dense manzanita and other vegetation will be masticated with a tracked mastication machine, or, crews will hand cut vegetation with chainsaws and related equipment, then pile and burn resulting material to reduce ladder fuels to create a shaded fuel break along the ridge just north of the community development. Vegetation consists primarily of grasses, Oregon-grape, currant, wild rose, snowberry, poison oak, Himalayan blackberry, Manzanita, yerba santa, canyon oak, with scattered live oaks and pines. The majority of these scattered trees will be retained. The shaded fuel break will extend a varying width of 100 to 300 feet on both sides of the existing Sanitation District access road. The project area avoids watercourses.

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 15304- Minor Alterations to Land. A query of the CNDDDB listed an 1893 occurrence of Leech's skyline diving beetle (*Hydroporus leechi*). However, the Department of Fish & Game Biologist's review determined no impact to this species or habitat because the project will not disrupt any aquatic habitat where this beetle might be found. An archaeological investigation was conducted in May and June, 2012; no prehistoric cultural resources were discovered within the project area. Historical resources related to the Mokelumne Hill Sanitation District sewage treatment plant and adjacent mining features were discovered and will be avoided. The project area is located near the ridge tops just north of the town area and will not affect watercourses. The project will reduce ladder fuels and result in an open and park like setting in the project area. No adverse impacts to visual resources are expected. Any burning will be conducted in compliance with a burn permit from the Calaveras County Air Pollution Control District.

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 the CAL FIRE Tuolumne/Calaveras Unit Headquarters in San Andreas.

DATE RECEIVED FOR FILING

RECEIVED

DEC 10 2012

STATE CLEARING HOUSE

William E. Snyder, Deputy Director Date 12/6/12
 California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection