



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

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

PROJECT TITLE	<i>Rock Mountain Elk Foundation Project</i>		
PROJECT LOCATION	<i>South 1/2 Section 20 & North 1/2 Section 29, Township 46 North, Range 4 West, MDBM</i>	COUNTY	<i>Siskiyou</i>
LEAD AGENCY	<i>California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE)</i>		
CONTACT	<i>Damon Denman, Forester I</i>		
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	<i>Yreka, CA 96097</i>		

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The project area consists of a one square mile parcel (640 acres) situated between York Road and Silva Road in the upper Willow Creek watershed in Siskiyou County. The vegetation type consists entirely of Oregon white oak / grassland. Due mainly to the exclusion of wildfire, western juniper is invading portions of the property and threatens to out compete elk forage species such as oak, grass and bitterbrush for limited soil moisture.

This project will involve cutting juniper with chainsaws and hand piling the material. The piles will then be burned as conditions allow. Most of the juniper to be removed range in size from 1-10 feet tall with a few scattered larger specimens. The juniper removal will occur on approximately 50 acres of ground where juniper is encroaching into the Oregon white oak / grassland vegetation type. These areas are scattered throughout the 640 acre project area.

The project will also include development of two springs with spring boxes and watering troughs for wildlife. The spring development will involve hand digging an approximately four foot diameter by four foot deep hole to accept a perforated 50 gallon barrel to collect water. The water will be piped approximately 25 feet down slope to a water trough for use by wildlife. Installation of the pipe will require a hand dug trench from the bottom of the barrel to the trough. Each of the two spring developments will require approximately 3 cubic yards of hand excavation and approximately 300 square feet of disturbed ground area. After installation, the tops of the sunken barrels will be fitted with a removable cover exclude debris and small animals.

The Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation purchased this parcel of land to preserve and enhance its function as elk habitat. Slowing the intrusion of western juniper and developing water sources is critical to maximizing elk habitat potential.

EXEMPTION STATUS

- Categorical Exemption Type/Section: Class *15304 Minor Alteration to Land; Class 4*
- 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 Alteration to Land; Class 4

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 CAL FIRE headquarters in Yreka.

DATE RECEIVED FOR FILING



William E. Snyder *3/27/12*

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