NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

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

PROJECT TITLE	Chalk Mountain Ranch Conservation Easement Phase 2		
PROJECT LOCATION	485 Chalk Mt. Road Bridgeville, CA 95526	**COUNTY**	Humboldt
LEAD AGENCY	California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE)		
CONTACT	Jeff Calvert, State Forest Legacy Program Coordinator I Resource Management		
ADDRESS	CAL FIRE P.O. Box 944246 Sacramento, CA 94244-2460	**PHONE**	(916) 653-8286

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The subject property (Chalk Mountain Ranch) is situated about three miles south of State Highway 36 and Alderpoint Road intersection and 34 air miles east of the Pacific Ocean in the County of Humboldt, California. The Chalk Mountain Ranch Conservation Easement Phase 2 acquisition is the second proposed conservation easement transaction that includes approximately 4,024 acres of privately-owned forestlands and oak woodlands. CAL FIRE is acquiring the conservation easement for the purpose of protecting typical forestland uses including wildlife habitat, watershed stabilization and the continued production of forest products. The Forest Legacy program was created with clearly delineated open-space conservation goals and objectives to protect environmentally important private forest lands threatened with conversion to non-forest uses pursuant to Section 1217 of Title XII of the Food, Agriculture, Conservation and Trade Act of 1990 (16 U.S.C. Section 2103C).

EXEMPTION STATUS

☒ Categorical Exemption Type/Section: Class 17 §15317 Open Space Contracts or Easements
Class 25 §15325 Transfers of Ownership of Interest in Land to Preserve Existing Natural Conditions and Historical Resources

☐ 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

Field review by DGS and 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 1416 9th Street, Sacramento, CA 95814. This project fits under two classes of Categorical Exemptions to CEQA: Class 17 (Open Space Contracts or Easements), and Class 25 (Transfers of Ownership of Interest in Land to Preserve Existing Natural Conditions and Historical Resources). Acquisition as a Conservation Easement through the State and Federal Forest Legacy Programs will protect the area from the encroachment of residential development pressure facing Humboldt County today. The Chalk Mountain Ranch provides significant wildlife habitat for several threatened and special-concern species. This protection will allow continued traditional forestry and ranching activities while affording public recreational and educational opportunities.

DATE RECEIVED FOR FILING

RECEIVED
FEB 02 2012
STATE CLEARING HOUSE

William E. Snyder 2/1/12

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