NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

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

PROJECT TITLE	Green Ridge/Mescal Ridge Fuel Break – Green Ridge Extension		
PROJECT LOCATION	Palo Colorado, CA (north Big Sur)	**COUNTY**	Monterey
LEAD AGENCY	California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE)		
CONTACT	CAL FIRE San Benito-Monterey Unit Headquarters		
ADDRESS	2221 Garden Road Monterey, CA 93940	**PHONE**	(831) 333-2600

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This project will reduce fuel loading on 90 acres along 7.46 miles of roads in Palo Colorado, Monterey County; the northernmost community in the greater Big Sur area. In addition, portions of the project area are used as access for fire suppression and emergency egress for the residents of Palo Colorado. The project includes fuel modification along paved and native surface roads in the community and on the ridgelines. The fuel break will be approximately 100 feet wide. The project will reduce woody vegetation less than 12" DBH. The vegetation is primarily chamise, with some manzanita and planted Monterey pine near ridgelines, and oaks generally in draws on north facing aspects. Vegetation will be reduced by approximately 60%. Dead, diseased, and dying trees that may impact a road or structure will be removed. All remaining trees near a road will be pruned up to 16 feet or 50% of the live crown whichever is less. This will open emergency ingress/egress in the event of an emergency as well as create defensible space for potential fires. The vegetation will be reduced by a combination of hand crews and mechanical means. The hand crews will use chainsaws; the resulting material shall be chipped and used as mulch on the property. The mechanical treatment area will be masticated, with the mulch left on site for soil protection and to control weed invasion. This is an extension of the Green Ridge/Mescal Ridge Fuel Break.

EXEMPTION STATUS

- [x] Categorical Exemption Type/Section: Class 1, 4 §15301 Existing Facilities, §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 Class 1 and Class 4 Categorical Exemptions described in the CEQA Guidelines (14 CCR Section 15301, 15304) pertaining to existing structures and minor alterations to land, will not have a significant effect on the environment, and is exempt from the provisions of CEQA.

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's San Benito-Monterey Unit Headquarters.

DATE RECEIVED FOR FILING

RECEIVED
OCT 13 2015
STATE CLEARING HOUSE

Duane Shintaku 10/8/15

Duane Shintaku, Deputy Director Date
California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection