



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

## NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

<b>PROJECT TITLE</b>	RRU 2016 Dead/Dying/Diseased Tree Removal		
<b>PROJECT LOCATION</b>	Various APN's in Idyllwild-Pine Cove mountain community areas and surroundings, CA	<b>COUNTY</b>	Riverside
<b>LEAD AGENCY</b>	California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE)		
<b>CONTACT</b>	Gregg Bratcher, Forester II, CAL FIRE, RRU		
<b>ADDRESS</b>	PO Box 2097, Idyllwild, CA 92549	<b>PHONE</b>	951-659-3335

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

This project goal is to remove dead, dying and diseased trees with various diameters on approximately 20 acres located on private properties in and around the mountain communities of Idyllwild, CA. The area has experienced extremely high tree mortality due to the recent severe drought conditions. The gold spotted oak borer (GSOB) and native bark beetles are killing oak and pine species in the southern California forested landscape. The California Board of Forestry and Fire Protection has declared the aforementioned area as a Zone of Infestation for both the pine bark beetle and GSOB. Trees are an important component of forested ecosystems in California and removal of already infested, dead, dying, diseased trees will eliminate pests and slow the spread rate, enhancing the survival rate of existing tree populations, and; create a fire safe condition, an imperative requirement in a forested mountain community. Depending on the tree species, treatment will consist of felling, limbing, debarking, bucking and chipping of infested trees assessed by an RPF. Under direct supervision of a CAL FIRE crew captain, camp crews will fall, limb, debark, buck, chip or tarp targeted trees. No commercial operations are planned.

**EXEMPTION STATUS**

- Categorical Exemption Type/Section: Class 4, 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 meets the requirements of a Class 4 Categorical Exemption "15304 Minor Alterations to Land" - "Class 4 consists of minor public or private alterations in the conditions of land, water and/or vegetation which do not involve removal of healthy, mature and scenic trees except for forestry and agricultural purposes". The project is small in size and will enhance forest health, increase general fire safety, and improve aesthetics while creating minimal ground disturbance which will not result in significant effects on biological and archeological resources nor the environment. Field reviews conducted by CAL FIRE staff have confirmed that no impacts will occur which would justify 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 CALFIRE, Riverside Unit, Mountain Resource Center, 25380 Franklin Dr. Idyllwild, CA 92549.

**DATE RECEIVED FOR FILING**

	3/21/16
Helge Eng, Deputy Director	Date

California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

Governor's Office of Planning & Research

MAR 22 2016

STATE CLEARINGHOUSE