



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

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

PROJECT TITLE	Wilkerson Fuelbreaks Project		
PROJECT LOCATION	Section 31, T7S, R32E; Sections 5-8, T8S, R32E, MDBM	COUNTY	Inyo County
LEAD AGENCY	California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE)		
CONTACT	Henry Herrera, Unit Forester		
ADDRESS	3800 N. Sierra Way San Bernardino, CA 92405	PHONE	(909)881-6955

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Wilkerson Fuelbreaks Project is a series of fuelbreaks and road improvements on Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (LADWP) and private land adjacent to the communities of New Wilkerson and Old Wilkerson. The road improvements will take place on a dirt access road on LADWP land. The fuelbreaks will complement old and new fuelbreaks on Bureau of Land Management (BLM) land. The goal of the project is to reduce the fire risk to the communities of New and Old Wilkerson and improve firefighter and public safety by establishing fuelbreaks and improving road conditions to access the surrounding area in the event of a fire. The total project area is approximately 20 acres. Elevation ranges from approximately 4,200'-4,800'. The project is located in shrubland/mixed desert scrub consisting of sage, rabbitbrush, bitterbrush and other plant species. The fuelbreaks will be up to 50 feet wide. Brush will be cut using chainsaws. All cut vegetation will be chipped onsite resulting in a chip depth layer of no more than two to four inches or vegetation will be hauled away. Vegetation islands of various shapes and sizes will be left within 20 feet of private property lines to meet visual resources needs. Vegetation retention will not exceed 30% ground cover. Riparian areas, including Rawson Creek, within the fuelbreak will have trees pruned up to 10' or no more than 1/3 their height, whichever is less. Understory trees (i.e. willows) will be thinned to approximately 10' spacing. No riparian herbaceous understory plants will be removed. All cut vegetation will be chipped outside of the riparian areas. The road improvements will consist of removing up to 10 feet of vegetation from each side the road's edges. Existing waterbars will be improved and new ones will be constructed where necessary. Large rocks protruding through the road surface within the road prism will be removed. Implementation of the project will begin once the CEQA is completed and will be maintained for the next five years. It is anticipated that work may begin as early as late 2016 or early 2017. All work will be done using hand crews, chainsaws, chippers, and hand tools. All vehicles will stay on existing roads or previously disturbed areas. Project implementation will be partially funded by the Fire Prevention Fee.

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 fits under Class 4 (Minor Alterations to Land) Categorical Exemption to CEQA. Class 4 is described as "minor public or private alterations in the condition of land, water, and/or vegetation which do not involve removal of healthy, mature, scenic trees except for forestry and agricultural purposes." This project proposes to construct fuelbreaks and improve roads. 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 3800 North Sierra Way in San Bernardino, California.

DATE RECEIVED FOR FILING

Governor's Office of Planning & Research

OCT 31 2016

STATE CLEARINGHOUSE

Helge Eng, Deputy Director Date: 10/27/16
 California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection