



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

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

PROJECT TITLE SRA Woods Valley and Paradise Mountain Road Fuel Reduction Project

PROJECT LOCATION Portion of Sections 19, 20, 21, 22, 24, and 24; T 11S, R 1W, SBB&M **COUNTY** San Diego

LEAD AGENCY California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE)

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 Valley Center, CA 92082

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

The purpose of this project is to provide a fuel reduction zone for a second major evacuation route through a dense wooded area adjacent to homes and properties along both sides of Woods Valley Road and Paradise Mountain Road, for portions of the unincorporated community of Valley Center, located in northeastern San Diego County, Valley Center, California. The project area encompasses both sides of Woods Valley Road from the intersection of Valley Center Road, to the intersection of Paradise Mountain Road, and along both sides of Paradise Mountain Road from the intersection of Woods Valley Road, to the intersection of Los Hermanos and Elizabeth Road. This project will incorporate properties owned by private landowners.

This project proposes establishing a fuel reduction zone by reducing the vertical and horizontal continuity of fuels. The width of the proposed fuel reduction zone is approximately 20 feet wide and is approximately 6.7 miles in length, encompassing a total of 32.42 acres. Treatment includes reducing the existing fuel loading of chaparral, coastal sage scrub, coastal sage scrub/scrub oak, coast live oak woodland, Engelmann oak woodland, eucalyptus woodland, Peruvian peppertree woodland, non-native grassland, and ornamental vegetation by approximately 75%. Native vegetation targeted for removal will include chamise, laurel sumac, toyon, felt-leaved yerba santa, Mission manzanita, chaparral honeysuckle, coast live oak, Engelmann oak, scrub oak, jimson weed, and telegraph weed; and non-native vegetation will include non-native grasses, Russian thistle, milk thistle, Peruvian peppertree, oleander, Mexican fan palm, eucalyptus and tocalote that commonly occur within the project area. For coastal sage scrub species, such as California sagebrush, California buckwheat, black sage, coyote brush, purple needlegrass, mulefat, blue elderberry, and white sage; only every other bush will be stump cut and removed creating an open mosaic pattern. The project work will be implemented by CAL FIRE Rainbow Camp hand crews using manual methods with no removal of root structures. Depending on the location and access, the cut material generated as a result of this project will be chipped and spread on site, not to exceed three inches in depth. Large diameter unchippable material will be left on site for residents to use as fuel. There will be no ground disturbing activities associated with this project.

EXEMPTION STATUS

- Categorical Exemption Type/Section: Class 4 1530. 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 the description for a Class 4 Categorical Exemption pertaining to minor alterations to land as identified in the CEQA Guidelines. After completing an environmental analysis, the Department has determined this project will have no significant impact on the environment. This determination is based on field assessments, a CNDDDB and RareFind, and BIOS search, greenhouse gas emission calculations, and an archaeological review completed by CAL FIRE Resource Management staff.

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 MVU Headquarters in El Cajon.

DATE RECEIVED FOR FILING

Governor's Office of Planning & Research

JUL 05 2016

STATE CLEARINGHOUSE

for  *7-1-16*
 Helge Eng, Deputy Director Date
 California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection