



State of California
The Natural Resources Agency
California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

PROJECT TITLE	Eel River Peninsula –Garcia Creek Ranch		
PROJECT LOCATION	Sections 14 and 15. Portions of Sections 5, 8, 10, 11, 22, 23 24 and 25. Township 19 North, Range 12 West; Mount Diablo Base and Meridian. Sections 29 and 32, Township 20 North, Range 12 West; Mount Diablo Base and Meridian.	COUNTY	Mendocino
LEAD AGENCY	California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE)		
CONTACT	Jeff Calvert, Deputy Chief Forestry Assistance		
ADDRESS	1416 9th Street, Sacramento CA 95814	PHONE	(916) 653-8286

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Garcia Creek Ranch consists of 4,779 acres contiguous to the Sanhedrin Wilderness in Mendocino County. The property is located approximately 9 air miles northeast of Willits on the north side of the Eel River in Mendocino County. The property consists of 6 Assessor's Parcels ranging from 38 acres to 2,221 acres. Garcia Creek Ranch is one of three (the others being Foster Mountain Ranch and Summer camp) properties within the watershed being funded for conservation easements. CAL FIRE is acquiring the property as a conservation easement for the purpose of protecting forest and rangeland uses including wildlife habitat, watershed stabilization and the continued production of forest products. The federal 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 Title XII of the Food, Agriculture, Conservation and Trade Act of 1990 (16 U.S.C. Section 2013C). Congress has awarded a Forest Legacy Program grant to CAL FIRE in order to aid in the purchase of the easement conveyed for conservation of forested, agricultural and open-spaced land.

EXEMPTION STATUS

- Categorical Exemption Type/Section: Class 17 - §157317 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

This project is exempt pursuant to CEQA Categorical Exemptions: Class 17 (Open Space Contracts or Easements) and Class 25 (Transfer of Ownership of Interest in Land to Preserve Existing Natural Conditions and Historical Resources). Class 17 consists of the establishment of agricultural reserves, the making and renewing of open space contracts under the Williamson Act, or acceptance of easements or fee interests in order to maintain the open character of the area. Class 25 consists of transfers of ownership in interests in land in order to preserve existing natural conditions and historical resources. 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 headquarters at: 1416 9th Street, Sacramento, CA 95814.

DATE RECEIVED FOR FILING

Governor's Office of Planning & Research

MAR 22 2016

Helge Eng, Deputy Director Date 3/22/16
 California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection