



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

## NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

**PROJECT TITLE** Meadow Lakes North Fuel Break Tree Felling Modification

**PROJECT LOCATION** This project is located in eastern Fresno County in the Pine Ridge area just west of the community of Meadow Lakes and ties into the Meadow Lakes fuel break in the south and the Acorn Road fuel break in the north and is further described as portions of Sections 2, 11 T10S, R23E MDBM

**COUNTY** Fresno

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

**CONTACT** Edwin Simpson  
 CAL FIRE – Fresno Kings Unit

**ADDRESS** 210 S. Academy Sanger, Ca 93657

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**PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The Meadow Lakes North project is an existing shaded fuel break installed by CAL FIRE. This project provides connectivity to a series of adjacent fuel treatments on private and federal land to provide wildfire community defense to the surrounding communities of Meadow Lakes, Pine Ridge, and the upslope community of Shave Lake, CA. This project lies at approximately 4,500 feet encompassing 58 acres. Project area understory was removed during fuel break installation. The overstory trees consist of ponderosa pine, sugar pine and incense cedar. The combination of ongoing drought conditions and the increased population of bark beetles have resulted in almost 100% mortality of overstory conifers in the project area. In order to ensure continued fuel break effectiveness, and to provide for an increased measure of public safety, this project will remove all overstory conifers that are dead or likely to die within 1 year as certified by a Registered Professional Forester. Material will be piled by tractor and burned. Fuel break understory maintenance may be performed by piling of material by hand or tractor and burned where it may be necessary.

**EXEMPTION STATUS**

- Categorical Exemption** Type/Section: Class 4 15301 (c) Existing Facilities  
 15304 (f) 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**

Field review by CAL FIRE staff confirmed that no exceptions apply which would preclude the use of a Notice of Exemption for this project. CAL FIRE staff 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. A biological assessment in consultation with CA Department of Fish and Wildlife which included a search of the California Natural Diversity Database, supplemented by a California Native Plants Society review and subsequent field surveys was completed for the original project July-August of 2010 and again in 2015. A Professional CALFIRE Archaeologist was consulted and there shall be no anticipated impacts to cultural resources. Burning will only be done on approved air quality burn days. The project as proposed shall not have a significant impact on the environment.

**DATE RECEIVED FOR FILING**

**RECEIVED**

OCT 22 2015

STATE CLEARING HOUSE

*Duane Shintaku* 10/22/15  
 Duane Shintaku, Deputy Director Date  
 California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection