# NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

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

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| **PROJECT TITLE** | Oak Glen/Water Canyon Hazardous Fuel Reduction | | |
| **PROJECT LOCATION** | Portions of Sections 5, 6, 7, 8, 16, 17, 18, 20,21, and 28, T2S, R1E, and portions of Sections 1, 12, 13, 14, and 23, T2S, R1W, SBB&M. Quadrangle reference (7.5'): Beaumont and Forest Falls. | **COUNTY** | Riverside |
| **LEAD AGENCY** | California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) | | |
| **CONTACT** | Gregg Bratcher, Forester II, RRU, CALFIRE | **PHONE** | (951)-940-6902 |
| **ADDRESS** | P.O. BOX 2097, Idyllwild CA 92549 | | |

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

This project is part of a multi-phased project designed to reduce fuel loadings and modify the fuel arrangement on the existing fuelbreak (defensible fuel profile zone) adjacent to the Cherry Truck Tail, International Truck Trail, Little Pine Bench Truck Trail, Mile High Truck Trail and on private existing fuel breaks along Mias Canyon Rd, Banning Canyon Rd, and Raywood Flat. This will enhance the ability of firefighting agencies to prevent a major conflagration from moving into the Oak Glen, Beaumont, Banning, Oak Glen or the Cherry Valley areas from off site. The project area consists of ~ 640 acres of mixed chaparral, coastal sage scrub, and grassland with pockets of timber. Elevation ranges between 3,200 and 5,600 feet. Slopes are variable throughout the project area, averaging 20-30%, with the majority of operations occurring adjacent to existing roads and truck trails. Lack of maintenance on the existing fuelbreaks has allowed the shrub component to become thick, with a substantial amount of dead and dying vegetation throughout. This combined with a thick understory and hazardous ladder fuels within the timber stands has resulted in significantly hazardous fuel loadings and arrangements within the project area. Work will include cutting, removing, chipping on site, piling and burning, broadcast burning, and mastication of re-sprouting and overgrown vegetation. Tree removal will be limited to trees less than 14 inches DBH or those that are dead, dying, or diseased. Retained trees will be limbed to a height of 8 feet or no more than 1/2 the height of the tree. Heavy equipment use will be limited the use of a rubber tracked skidsteer with a masticator head, tracked chipper, and/or a towed chipper. No new roads are to be constructed.

**EXEMPTION STATUS**

- [x] Categorical Exemption Type and 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 portions of 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". Field review by CAL FIRE staff confirmed that no exceptions apply that 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 or 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 or traffic, or to utilities and service systems. Documentation of the environmental review completed by the Department is kept on file at the CAL FIRE, Riverside Unit, 25380 Franklin Dr. Idyllwild CA, 92549.

**DATE RECEIVED FOR FILING**

Governor's Office of Planning & Research

MAR 25 2019

STATE CLEARINGHOUSE

3/21/19

Matthew Reischman, Assistant Deputy Director Date
California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection