

Notice of Exemption

Appendix E

To: Office of Planning and Research
P.O. Box 3044, Room 113
Sacramento, CA 95812-3044

County Clerk

County of: Sonoma

From: (Public Agency): Gold Ridge Resource Conservation District
2776 Sullivan Road
Sebastopol, CA 95472

(Address)

Project Title: Westminster Woods Hazardous Fuel Reduction Project

Project Applicant: Gold Ridge Resource Conservation District

Project Location - Specific:

6510 Bohemian Highway, Occidental, CA 95465

Project Location - City: Occidental Project Location - County: Sonoma

Description of Nature, Purpose and Beneficiaries of Project:

The project is located near the town of Occidental, CA, approximately 1.5 miles North of the post office. The purpose of the project is to reduce hazardous fuels and improve forest resilience on approximately 25 acres. Project area slopes are moderate, with generally east-facing aspect. Vegetation (in descending order of prominence) is primarily redwood, California bay-laurel, tanoak, Douglas-fir, coast live oak and associated species. Treatments will target roughly 30-300 trees per acre with the majority of trees to be treated ranging from 4-6" DBH for removal and follow-up treatment involving piling or chipping of residual material. Treatments in all units will cut down trees within contract specification (all under 12" DBH), and this material will either be scattered to a height not to exceed 18" off the ground, chipped, or piled for habitat or later burning at the landowner's expense. Some areas may be restocked where equipment remains on established road systems. Some trees larger than 12" DBH may be treated, but these trees shall be limited to those determined to be dying or an imminent hazard due to either Sudden Oak Death disease (*Phytophthora ramorum*) or otherwise determined and marked by a Registered Professional Forester or their qualified designee. Work will largely be completed using hand crews. Operational limitations for watercourses shall include a no operation buffer without clearance from a qualified Registered Professional Forester or qualified biologist determining non-presence of species listed under the Federal or State Endangered Species Act; these limitations shall take place within 50 feet for Class II watercourses and 75 feet for Class I watercourses for side slopes under 50%; side slopes over 50% shall include an additional 25-foot buffer.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: Gold Ridge Resource Conservation District

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: Westminster Woods

Exempt Status: (check one):

- Ministerial (Sec. 21080(b)(1); 15268);
- Declared Emergency (Sec. 21080(b)(3); 15269(a));
- Emergency Project (Sec. 21080(b)(4); 15269(b)(c));
- Categorical Exemption. State type and section number: 15304 Minor Alteration to Land
- Statutory Exemptions. State code number: _____

Reasons why project is exempt:

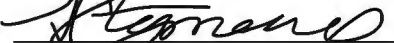
The project is exempt because the planned activities meet the definition of "forestry" in PRC§753, and have been reviewed and approved by a Registered Professional Forester in consultation with experts from other pertinent fields who have attested that the activities proposed in this project will only have the potential for at most impacts that are less than significant to the environment, having provided adequate measures for avoidance of sensitive environmental resources. Project activities will not involve the removal of healthy, mature, or scenic trees, and will not result in a substantial alteration of the current function of the land. Project specific analysis is on file at the RCD.

Lead Agency

Contact Person: Jason Wells, RPF#3014 Area Code/Telephone/Extension: 707-769-1448 x-107

If filed by applicant:

1. Attach certified document of exemption finding.
2. Has a Notice of Exemption been filed by the public agency approving the project? Yes No

Signature:  Date: 7/14/25 Title: Adriana Stagnaro, Project Manager

- Signed by Lead Agency Signed by Applicant

Authority cited: Sections 21083 and 21110, Public Resources Code.
Reference: Sections 21108, 21152, and 21152.1, Public Resources Code.

Date Received for filing at OPR: _____