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NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

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

PROJECT TITLE	Big Pine Fuel Reduction – School St.		
PROJECT LOCATION	Big Pine, CA. APN's 004-060-41-00, 004-090-02-00, and 004-090-03-00.	**COUNTY**	Inyo
LEAD AGENCY	California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE)		
CONTACT	David Haas, Unit Forester		
ADDRESS	3900 N. Sierra Way San Bernardino, CA 92405	**PHONE**	(909) 881-6900

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This project consists of fuel reduction within and adjacent to the riparian zone associated with the irrigation channel west of and paralleling School St in Big Pine, CA on Los Angeles Department of Water and Power property. The riparian zone primarily consists of black locust, cottonwood, and willows with a mix of herbaceous and woody understory. Fuel reduction within the riparian zone will include a combination of: removing 50% of black locust trees under 6 inches in diameter, starting with the smallest diameter material until 50% removal is achieved; limbing 75% of retained trees up to 6 ft. from the ground; pruning 50% of dead material from retained trees reachable with a pole saw; removing dead and down material up to 4 inches in diameter; removing of non-native live understory; retaining native live understory and large diameter down material to the maximum extent possible. Large diameter down material may be redistributed throughout the project area to reduce fuel density. The project also includes upland treatments both west and east of the irrigation channel, including the maintenance of the fuel break west of the LADWP access road. Additionally, removal of invasives, dead and downed material, debris, and up to 85% removal of native vegetation will occur in the upland area between the eastern bank of the irrigation channel and the western residential property boundary. All removal of vegetation will occur manually. Cut trees and large diameter brush suitable for firewood or fence post use will be cut to length and stacked. The remainder of cut material will be chipped, burned via curtain burning, or hauled away. Staged material and chips will not be placed in or where they may enter the irrigation channel. Equipment utilized within the riparian zone is limited to hand-operated equipment such as chainsaws. Operation of other equipment, such as chippers or air curtain burners, will not occur within the riparian zone and will be limited to established roadways, inclusive of established dirt roads. Maintenance will occur as necessary to maintain the standards listed above and may occur as frequently as an annual basis.

EXEMPTION STATUS

- [x] Categorical Exemption Type and Section: Class 4, §15304
- [ ] 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

The project meets the requirements of Class 4 Categorical Exemption (Minor alterations to land) Section 15304: *Class 4 consists of minor public or private alterations in the condition of land, water, and/or vegetation which do not involve removal of mature, scenic trees except for forestry and agricultural purposes.* As described above, project implementation will result in alterations to the land that are best described as minor in scope. 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/timberland, air quality, biological resources, cultural resources, energy, geology and soils, greenhouse gas emissions, hazards and hazardous materials, hydrology and water quality, land use planning, mineral resources, noise, populations and housing, public services, recreation, transportation/ traffic, utilities and service systems, or to wildfire. Documentation of the environmental review completed is kept on file at the address above.

DATE RECEIVED FOR FILING

DocuSigned by:
Mike Van Loben Sels
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8/27/2025

Mike Van Loben Sels, Southern Region Chief Date
California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection