



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

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

PROJECT TITLE	MHDSF EPP		
PROJECT LOCATION	Mountain Home Demonstration State Forest Portions of Sec 25, 34, 36, T19S R30E & Sec 1, 2, 3, T20S R30E & Sec 6, T20S, R31E, & Sec 19, 30, 31, T19S, R31E; MDBM	COUNTY	Tulare
LEAD AGENCY	California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE)		
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PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Mountain Home Demonstration State Forest is approximately 5,137 acres of public timberland 18 miles east of Springville, CA in Tulare County. The project area encompasses 538 acres of the State Forest in the Sierran mixed-conifer and associated brush timber types. The main tree species include white fir, incense-cedar, red fir, ponderosa pine, sugar pine, giant sequoia, and black oak. The understory is mainly of *Ceanothus spp.*, hazel, elderberry, and cherry. The project area includes areas that were severely damaged by the 2020 SQF Complex, and there are numerous dying, dead, and down trees threatening public safety; as well as, creating a dangerous fuel load. Mechanical and manual cutting, pile and broadcast burning, and herbicide shall be used to complete the treatments. Some areas will receive tree planting following treatments to aid in forest rehabilitation

EXEMPTION STATUS

- ☐ Categorical Exemption Type and Section: Class
☐ Statutory Exemption (state code section):
☐ Ministerial (§21080(b)(1); 15268)
☒ Declared Emergency (§21080(b)(4); 15269(c))
☐ Emergency Project (§21080(b)(4); 15269(b)(c))

REASONS PROJECT IS EXEMPT

Pursuant to CEQA Section 21080(b)(4) and CEQA Guidelines Section 15269 (c) a project is exempt from CEQA if it is a “specific action necessary to prevent or mitigate an emergency.” On March 1, 2025, Governor Gavin Newsom proclaimed a State of Emergency to exist due to catastrophic wildfire risks created by forest conditions and found that conditions of extreme peril to the safety of persons and property exist within the State of California due to these conditions. Pursuant to the Emergency Proclamation, a critical fuels reduction project qualifies for CEQA exemption if: (1) it has as one of its primary objectives at least one of the following activities: (a) removal of hazardous, dead, and/or dying trees; (b) removal of vegetation for the creation of strategic fuel breaks as identified by approved fire prevention plans, including without limitation CAL FIRE Unit Fire Plans or Community Wildfire Preparedness Plans; (c) removal of vegetation for community defensible space; (d) removal of vegetation along roadways, highways, and freeways for the creation of safer ingress and egress routes for the public and responders and to reduce roadside ignitions; (e) removal of vegetation using cultural traditional ecological knowledge for cultural burning and/or prescribed fire treatments for fuels reduction; or (f) maintenance of previously-established fuel breaks or fuels modification projects; (2) has been approved by the appropriate Agency Secretary, or their designee, as being eligible to be conducted under the suspension; and (3) is conducted in accordance with the State Environmental Protection Plan (EPP). This project has as its primary purpose removal of hazardous, dead, and/or dying trees, has been approved by the Secretary of Natural Resources as being eligible to be conducted under the suspension, and will be conducted in accordance with the EPP. The action is therefore exempt from CEQA. Documentation of the environmental review completed by the Department is kept on file at 44316A Bear Creek Road, Springville, CA 93265.

DATE RECEIVED FOR FILING

DocuSigned by:

Mike Van Loben Sels

1/15/2026

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