

CEQA – Notice of Exemption



Santa Barbara County Fire Department

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PROJECT TITLE	Lompoc Valley Fuel Reduction Grant – Roadside Clearance		
PROJECT LOCATION	SBC County, Lompoc Valley Fuel Reduction Phase Two Project		
LEAD AGENCY	Santa Barbara County Fire Department (SBC)		
CONTACT	Deputy Fire Marshal, Vince LaRocco		
ADDRESS	4410 Cathedral Oaks Road	PHONE	805-681-5500
	Santa Barbara, CA 93101		
	VLaRocco@countyofsb.org		

Project Description and Environmental Setting (Describe the project activities, project site and its surroundings, its location, and the environmental setting):

The project consists of maintenance of roadside fuel reduction treatment along public roads totaling 22.1 miles (187 acres). The purpose of this project is to comply with CA Fire Code road clearance requirements, increase fire apparatus response, reduce the fire size of any roadside ignitions and increase public safety during a potential evacuation. The project is located within the unincorporated area north and south of the City of Lompoc within Santa Barbara County Fire (SBC) jurisdiction. The four roads to be treated are; Burton Mesa Road (from the intersection of Rucker Road and Burton Mesa Road west to the intersection of Constellation Road and Burton Mesa Road), Harris Grade Road (from the intersection of Purisima Road north to the agricultural fields just south of Los Alamos), Rucker Road (from the intersection of Purisima Road north to the intersection of Rucker Road and Harris Grade Road), and San Miguelito Road (from the intersection of San Miguelito Road and West Willow Avenue to 0.75 miles before its terminus at Vandenberg Space Force Base property).

The reduction of flammable fuel along roads will occur within a horizontal distance of 10 to 15 feet from the paved edge of the road and a vertical height (overhead) of 14 feet from the paved edge of the road. In addition, hazard trees (dead pine trees) located within 100 feet of the road will be removed.

Methods to reduce flammable fuel are as follows:

- 1) Within chaparral/oak woodland areas vegetation within 15 feet of the road will be selectively removed using hand cutting of vegetation on both sides of the road. Flammable chaparral will be removed, flashy fuels will be weed whacked, and live trees will be limbed up and ladder fuels removed. Overhanging branches for a horizontal distance of 14 feet will be removed. Single specimen trees that are compromised or diseased within 15 feet of road may be removed. Cut material will be chipped and spread uniformly on site or accumulated into burn piles on site for disposal on the properly determined time.
- 2) Within Bishop Pine areas located at the top of summit of Harris Grade Road healthy single specimen trees will be limbed up and ladder fuels removed using hand cutting of vegetation on both sides of the road. Overhanging branches for a horizontal distance of 14 feet will be removed. Cut material will be chipped and spread uniformly on site or accumulated into burn piles on site for disposal on the properly determined time.

Areas that have continuous solid stands of Bishop Pine within 15 feet of the paved road edge on both sides of the road will be masticated to reduce the continuous vegetation cover. Individual healthy Bishop Pines will be selected to remain in place to allow for healthy growth of single specimen trees. Masticated material will be left on site to stabilize slopes and to retain soil moisture for single specimen trees.

- 3) Periodic single specimen dead pine trees exist along Burton Mesa Roads. Any dead trees within 100 feet of the road will be removed. Where possible and when safe to accomplish dead tree trunks will be left in place. Branches attached to trees and any branches that have accumulated on the ground will be chipped or piled for burning later. Chipped debris will be spread uniformly on site.

The existing fuel is predominately Central Maritime Chaparral and scattered Oak trees. There is approximately 1 mile of Bishop Pine vegetation located at the summit of Harris Grade Road. Individual dead pine trees are located within 100 feet of all four roads. From the uniformity of their location they appear to have been planted along all four roads and are not part of the native habitat.

A query of the National Diversity Database was completed to identify the presence of endangered plants and/or animals. Department of Fish and Wildlife will be consulted for input as necessary. Chips will not be deposited within the standard width of a watercourse or lake protection zone. No work will occur within 50 feet of a riparian corridor.

EXEMPTION STATUS

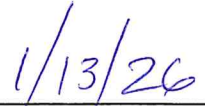
- ☒ Categorical Exemption Type/Section: 15301 Existing Facilities
 15304 Minor Alterations to Land
 15308 Actions Taken for Protection of Environment
- ☐ Statutory Exemption (state code section):
- ☐ Ministerial (§21080(b)(1); 15268)
- ☐ Declared Emergency (§21080(b)(3); 15269(a))
- ☐ Emergency Project (§21080(b)(4); 15269(b)(c))
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REASONS PROJECT IS EXEMPT

SBC staff confirmed that no exceptions apply which 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, 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. Documentation of the environmental review completed by the Department is kept on file at 4410 Cathedral Oaks Road, Santa Barbara, CA 93101.

DATE RECEIVED FOR FILING

Fred Tan, Fire Marshal
Santa Barbara County Fire Department



Date