

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION



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

PROJECT TITLE	Crafton Water Company Reforestation		
PROJECT LOCATION	S11 T1S R1W SBBM, Forest Falls CA	COUNTY	San Bernardino
LEAD AGENCY	California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE)		
CONTACT	Ian McBride		
ADDRESS	3800 N. Sierra Way San Bernardino, CA, 92405	PHONE	(909) 531-1459

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This project is located on Crafton Water Company property in the unincorporated community of Forest Falls in San Bernardino County. The property is a total of 161 acres, but the planting acreage will be limited to 2.75 acres. Adjacent to and within the vicinity of the property are public San Bernardino National Forest lands and private homes and recreational camps. Vegetation within the property includes incense cedars, ponderosa and coulter pine, black oaks, and interior live oaks, and other general chaparral species. The property and adjacent forest lands were heavily impacted by the 2020 El Dorado Fire and Apple Fires; the goal of this project is to assist in the reforestation of the area. Re-establishment of native trees within fire-impacted areas will promote reforestation both within the planted areas and adjacent areas as soon as seedlings mature to seed-producing age, reduce erosion and stabilize slopes, and assist with further ecosystem recovery by providing habitat for wildlife.

Planting will occur in the Spring of 2026 and species composition will be composed of Jeffrey Pine Sugar Pine, Ponderosa Pine and Coulter Pine. This project will be working in conjunction with the Mojave Desert RCD, Inland Empire RCD, ReLeaf foundation and CAL FIRE BDU. The planting of seedlings will be performed with a combination of CAL FIRE staff and volunteers. Specific locations within the property have been identified as planting locations and are mapped. Planting will be supervised by CAL FIRE Resource Management staff to ensure the prescription developed for the year is appropriately implemented and seedlings are properly planted to maximize survivability. Herbicide treatments may be applied during release of seedlings, to prevent out crowding from other species and improve survivability rates. Herbicide mixture will include a combination of glyphosate and imazapyr or triclopyr, none of which pose a significant risk to wildlife or health and human safety. Herbicides will be stored, handled, applied, and disposed of in accordance with their respective labels and EPA guidelines. Herbicide training, including information regarding the safe storage, handling, mixing, and application, will be provided to all applicators by a licensed pest control advisor and all applications will be supervised by a qualified applicator.

Project implementation is not expected to impact migratory birds, therefore no nesting season limitations or pre-activity surveys are necessary. No heavy equipment is necessary for project implementation; light duty vehicles will be utilized for the transportation of seedlings to the Reserve, which will occur on existing roads. All planting areas will be accessed by foot and planting will occur by hand via the use of hand tools. Holes will be prioritized in non-vegetated areas; however minimal site prep may occur in planting locations and will include shallow hand grubbing with hand tools to remove vegetation that would compete with seedlings. Site prep will be limited to less than a 4ft x 4ft scrape. Offsite travel will be necessary for the transportation of crews, seedlings, and equipment. No offsite improvements are necessary for project implementation. While watercourses exist within and adjacent to the property, they are excluded from consideration for planting and will not be impacted by project implementation. Maintenance needs, including but not limited to hand-grubbing of vegetation and/or chemical (herbicide) release treatments up to 4ft around each seedling, will occur as necessary to maximize seedling survival and may occur as frequently as an annual basis. Environmental review documents will be updated as necessary for maintenance activities.

EXEMPTION STATUS

- Categorical Exemption Type and Section: Class 4
- 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

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

2/19/2026

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