

## NOTICE OF EXEMPTION



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

<b>PROJECT TITLE</b>	Graham Hill Extension Fuel Break		
<b>PROJECT LOCATION</b>	T10S, R2W section 23 Mount Diablo Meridian	<b>COUNTY</b>	Santa Cruz
<b>LEAD AGENCY</b>	California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE)		
<b>CONTACT ADDRESS</b>	Scott Bullock, Forester I CAL FIRE CZU Headquarters 6059 Highway 9, Felton CA 95018	<b>PHONE</b>	831.335.6794 (Office)

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The proposed project will establish a shaded fuel break along the Mount Hermon Association property adjacent to Graham Hill Road. Approximately 29 acres of roadside understory will be thinned within 500 feet of the Mount Hermon property along Graham Hill Road. Project crews will selectively remove small-diameter trees, shrubs, and ladder fuels to reduce vertical and horizontal fuel continuity and roadside fire hazards. Treatments will focus primarily on conifers and hardwoods less than 12 inches DBH, while also addressing dead or hazardous trees that pose safety risks. Residual trees will be pruned to a height of no more than one-third of their total height. Cut material less than 12 inches in diameter will be chipped on site, piled for later burning, or lopped and scattered. Downed material larger than 12 inches in diameter will be retained on site to maintain habitat and soil health.

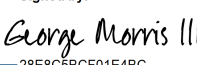
**EXEMPTION STATUS**

- Categorical Exemption: Type and Section:
- 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 as described in section (d) and 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. Field review by CAL FIRE staff confirmed that no exceptions apply that would preclude the use of a notice of exemption for this project. Documentation of the environmental review completed by the Department is kept on file at 6059 Highway 9, Felton CA 95018 in the Resource Management office.

**DATE RECEIVED FOR FILING**

Signed by:  28E8C5BCF01E4BC...	2/11/2026
George Morris III, Northern Region Chief <span style="float: right;">Date</span> California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection	