

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION



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

PROJECT TITLE	Sierra Way Fuel Break		
PROJECT LOCATION	Section 15 T25S R33E; Section 10 T25S R33E	COUNTY	Kern
LEAD AGENCY	California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE)		
CONTACT	Ethan Kennedy		
ADDRESS	5642 Victor St Bakersfield, CA 93308	PHONE	(661) 301-9765

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed fuel reduction project is intended to reduce wildfire fuels adjacent to residential and community structures along the eastern side of Sierra Way in Kernville, California, thereby reducing threats to human life, property, and the environment. The project area is situated off Sierra Way, between the intersecting streets of James Road and Kernville Road.

The southern portion of the project shall commence immediately south of Kernville Elementary School at the point where Kernville Road terminates at Sierra Way. From this location, fuel reduction activities shall proceed eastward and subsequently turn northward upon clearing the school grounds. Work shall continue in a northerly direction around Kernville Elementary School and the Sierra Gateway Market, where the treated area shall connect to existing dirt access roads extending northward to the Masonic Lodge located off James Road. Upon passing the Masonic Lodge, treatment shall extend westward to protect the remaining residential structures at the northern end of the project area, ultimately tying back into Sierra Way. Crews will use a wide range of manual/mechanical treatments to accomplish our fuel reduction goals. These will range from hand thinning, mowing, chipping, piling, pile burning, and mastication.

The entirety of the project area lies within High and Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones as designated by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CalFIRE), is situated on privately owned land, and is bordered on multiple sides by federally administered property.

EXEMPTION STATUS

- Categorical Exemption Type and Section: Class Section 15304, (Class 4) Minor Alterations to Land
- 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

This project fits under sections of California Environmental Quality Act guidelines: Section 15304 Class 4. The area is under immediate threat from wildfire and due to the proximity to homes and fire history is a prime candidate for resource management/fuels reduction work. The Class 4 exemption due to "minor public or private alterations in the condition of the land, water, and/or vegetation which do not involve the removal of healthy, mature, scenic trees except for forestry and agricultural purposes."

Section 15061 (b) (3) states "The activity is covered by the general rule that CEQA applies only to projects, which have the potential for causing a significant effect on the environment. Where it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the activity in question may have a significant effect on the environment, the activity is not subject to CEQA."

Field review by Kern County Fire Department 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 wildlife. Documentation of the environmental review completed by the Department is kept on file at 5642 Victor St Bakersfield CA 93308.

DATE RECEIVED FOR FILING

DocuSigned by:

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