



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

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

PROJECT TITLE	Cal Poly Fuel Reduction EPP		
PROJECT LOCATION	T30S; R11E (Section 2, 11), T29S; R11E (Section 36), T29S; R12E (Section 31), T30S; R12E (Section 1, 2, 11, 12, 14).	COUNTY	San Luis Obispo
LEAD AGENCY	California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE)		
CONTACT	Brandon Sanderson, Environmental Scientist		
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PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Cal Poly SLO Fuel Reduction project will apply broadcast prescribed fire across approximately 535 acres within seven distinct treatment units of predominantly annual grasslands, intermixed with coyote brush. The seven treatment units are located within Cal Poly's ranchland, campus-adjacent wildlands, and WUI zones, all within a High Fire Hazard Severity Zone. The primary objectives are to reduce high fuel loading of fine fuels and improve ecological resilience. Burns will be conducted under CAL FIRE approved burn plans, favorable weather prescriptions, and SLO APCD smoke management requirements. No mechanical treatments are proposed. CAL FIRE and Cal Poly Hand crews will be used along the existing access roads and proposed control lines to improve the access/evacuation route; and as needed in equipment exclusion zones. Hand crews may be used prior to burning to improve control lines or protect infrastructure (e.g., improve access/evacuation routes, protect fences/structures, trim oak trees adjacent to unit). No tree removal is proposed. Burns will utilize existing roads and trails as primary control lines; no new roads are planned. No work will occur with known sensitive species occurrences. Treatment activities include manual fire control line construction, prescribed burning, hand crew thinning, chipping, pile burning, pruning, and hazard tree removal, ultimately, reducing the threat of catastrophic wildfires in this area in cooperation with landowner objectives will result in ecological restoration, hazard reduction and range improvement.

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 (enter one of the above primary purposes), 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 CAL FIRE SLU, Cal Poly - Technology Park II, 1 Grand Avenue, Building 84, Rm. 214, San Luis Obispo, CA 93407.

DATE RECEIVED FOR FILING

DocuSigned by:

Mike Van Loven Sels

10/6/2026

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