

Exempt Status: (check one)

☒ Categorical Exemptions: CEQA Guidelines Class 1 Section 15301(c), Existing Facilities, and Class 4 Section 15304, Minor Alterations to Land

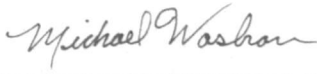
Reasons why project is exempt: The Project is categorically exempt pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15301(c), Class 1, Existing Facilities, and Section 15304, Class 4, Minor Alterations to Land. Class 1 applies to maintenance and minor alteration of existing highways and streets involving negligible or no expansion of use. The Project consists of roadside vegetation and fuel maintenance along an existing County-maintained roadway and would not add travel lanes or expand roadway capacity. Class 4 applies to minor alterations in the condition of land and vegetation that do not involve removal of healthy, mature, scenic trees. The CEQA-exempt scope of this Project is limited to vegetation thinning, removal, and chipping needed for roadside fuel reduction and evacuation safety and does not include removal of healthy, mature, scenic trees. Based on the project information provided, the County has determined that none of the exceptions to the use of categorical exemptions set forth in CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2 apply. Work outside County right-of-way or on federal lands shall occur only after obtaining any separate property-owner or federal authorization that may be required.

Environmental Assessment Officer: Reed Schenke, P.E., RMA Director/EAO

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: County of Tulare

Project Planner/Representative: Kevin Riggi, Division Chief, Tulare County Fire Department **Telephone:** (559) 802-9808

Signature:  **Date:** Oct 6, 2026
Gary A. Mills, Chief Planner, Environmental Planning Division

Signature:  **Date:** Oct 6, 2026
Michael G. Washam, A.C.E., Associate RMA Director, Designee

☒ Signed by Lead Agency

Date submitted to the LCI/SCH: _____

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

Fee Exempt per Government Code Section 6103

To: ☒ Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation
1400 Tenth Street, Room 121
Sacramento, CA 95814

☒ Tulare County Clerk
Room 105, Courthouse
221 South Mooney Blvd.
Visalia, CA 93291

FILED TULARE COUNTY
OCT 7 2026
ASSESSOR / CLERK-RECORDER BY:
DATE RECEIVED FOR FILING AT TULARE COUNTY CLERK'S OFFICE

Lead Agency: County of Tulare c/o Resource Management Agency
5961 S. Mooney Blvd.
Visalia, CA 93277 (559) 624-7000
Attn: gmills@tularecounty.ca.gov and jwillis@tularecounty.ca.gov

Applicant(s): Tulare County Fire Department
835 South Akers Street
Visalia, CA 93277 (559) 802-9808

Project Title: Kennedy Meadows Roadside Fuels Reduction Project

Project Location - Specific: Approximately 3 miles along Sherman Pass Road in the Kennedy Meadows area, between the project start and end points depicted on the attached Kennedy Meadows Project map. Portions of the roadway corridor are within the Sequoia National Forest.

Project Location - Section, Township, Range: Various; see attached project location map.

Project Location - City/Community: Kennedy Meadows **Project Location - County:** Tulare

Description of Nature, Purpose, and Beneficiaries of Project: The Project will reduce hazardous roadside vegetation along approximately 3 miles of Sherman Pass Road to improve life safety, roadside safety, ingress and egress for evacuation, and reduce the intensity and spread of wildland fire into the wildland-urban interface. Tulare County Fire Department Type II IA crews will physically remove and/or chip vegetation along the roadway right-of-way and adjacent properties. All work will be within the County Right-of-way and will extend no further than 80 feet from centerline of roadway, creating a 160-foot wide (including the road) reduction of fuel, where access is authorized. Sherman Pass Road is County maintained, is located within the State Responsibility Area, and portions of the project corridor extend through the Sequoia National Forest. The roadway is in a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone and serves as the primary ingress and egress route for approximately 200 habitable residential structures. The Project also includes public outreach intended to improve community wildfire safety and readiness.