

Notice of Exemption

To: Office of Planning and Research
P.O. Box 3044, Room 113
Sacramento, CA 95812-3044

From: 500 South Main Street
Bishop CA. 93514

Project Title: The Lava Timber Sale

Project Applicant: Inyo National Forest

Project Location - Specific: US Highway 395 Post Mile 31/32

Project Location - City: Mammoth Lakes Project Location - County: Mono

Description of Nature, Purpose, and Beneficiaries of Project:

The Lava Project is a forest health and fuels reduction project that requires mechanical tree removal. The goal of the project is to thin the number of trees to reduce the risk of wildfire around the community of Mammoth Lakes and improve forest health. The Lava Project is managed by the National Forest Foundation in partnership with the Inyo National Forest.

One of the units (Unit 3) has a boundary that is 15-65 feet from the edge of pavement of Highway 395 Southbound. The unit is located between post-mile 31-32. We are applying to do a shoulder closure of Highway 395 South during fall 2026.

The contractor will be cutting trees with a Tigercat 1165 Harvester. They will fall marked trees away from the direction of the highway using machinery that can control the direction of fall. The unit parallels highway 395 for approximately 600 feet. It will take one to two days of cutting to complete. See Agreement for avoidance and minimization measures to be implemented

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: California Dept of Transportation

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: Inyo National Forest

Exempt Status (**check one**):

- ☐ Ministerial (Sec. 21080(b)(1); 15268);
- ☐ Declared Emergency (Sec. 21080(b)(3); 15269(a));
- ☐ Emergency Project (Sec. 21080(b)(4); 15269(b)(c));

- ☒ Categorical Exemption. State type and section number: Class 4 (Section 15304)
☐ Statutory Exemptions. State code number: _____

Reasons why project is exempt:

The Lava Timber Sale project qualifies for a Class 4 categorical exemption because it involves mechanical tree removal/thinning for forest health and fuels reduction, with the work limited to a small area adjacent to SR 395 and lasting only one to two days. The project will use controlled falling techniques and implement avoidance and minimization measures, and the activity is not expected to result in significant environmental impacts.

Lead Agency Contact Person: Stephen Pfeiler Phone number: 760-874-8329

If filed by applicant:

1. Attach certified document of exemption finding.
2. Has a Notice of Exemption been filed by the public agency approving the project?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Signature: Stephen Pfeiler Date: 10/2/2026 Title: Branch Chief

☐ Signed by Lead Agency ☐ Signed by Applicant

Date Received for filing at OPR: _____

Authority cited: Sections 21083 and 21110, Public Resources Code.

Reference: Sections 21108, 21152, and 21152.1, Public Resources Code.