

State of California
Department of Parks and Recreation

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

TO: Office of Planning and Research
1400 Tenth Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

FROM: Department of Parks and Recreation
1416 Ninth Street
P.O. Box 942896
Sacramento, CA 94296-0001

PROJECT TITLE: North Bloomfield Fuel Reduction at Malakoff Diggins State Historic Park

LOCATION: Malakoff Diggins State Historic Park - North Bloomfield/Graniteville and Relief Hill
COUNTY: Nevada

DESCRIPTION OF THE NATURE AND PURPOSE OF PROJECT:

Create a 300 -foot defensible fuel profile zone (DFPZ) along both sides of North Bloomfield - Graniteville Road through the town site and along the eastern side of Relief Hill Road at Malakoff Diggins State Historic Park. Purpose of the project is to re-establish defensible space around the resources of the North Bloomfield town site; minimize the damage to watershed resources (in the event of a wildfire) in the project area along Humbug Creek; increase firefighter abilities to control a large fire; eventual achievement of old-growth forest characteristics. A total of 70 acres shall be treated in the DFPZ and a prescribed burn unit (less than 12 acres) will be prepared in addition to the DFPZ. The defensible fuelbreak shall include a more intensively treated shaded fuel break within 100 feet of structures. The shaded fuelbreak shall be centered on the edge of the burn unit (50 feet inside and 50 feet outside). Riparian vegetation will be retained near Humbug Creek, Blair Pond, and one seasonal tributary. Wood chips will not be spread in the creeks and pond, nor will burn piles be located in the waterways. No new skid trails will be created. Treatment shall be performed by hand crews and will include cutting of vegetation with chainsaws, chipping and burning of debris piles. No heavy equipment will used with the exception of a chipper.

Project will reduce the risk of catastrophic wildfire to the State Park, historical resources, private residences, and create a fire-defensible fuels complex. Adjacent residents and landowners shall be notified before work begins. All necessary burn permits shall be obtained and all department fire management policies will be followed. No burning activities will be conducted until the Draft Wildfire Management Plan for Malakoff Diggins State Historic Park is finalized, approved and on file with all proper authorities. Defensible fuel profile zone maintenance shall be required approximately every 8 - 10 years depending on growth rates.

Conduct pre-construction archaeological field survey and resource inventory to identify archaeological resources that require protection necessary only in the prescribed burn unit. If the systematic survey results in the positive identification of archaeological sites and/or significant isolates, protective measures will be implemented to avoid impacts from the proposed actions of the prescribed burning. Measures will consist of delineation of the cultural resources with flagging, identification of the resources on a topographic map. Any fuel reduction in areas within and adjacent to recorded archaeological sites and cultural resource features will be limited to hand clearing and may be monitored by a DPR-qualified archaeologist. Vehicles shall be prohibited within these exclusion zones. Hand clearing will take place first in areas of identified resources and work outward to fully identify and protect the newly documented and/or extended resources. Pile burning within site boundaries is prohibited.

If evidence of potentially significant historical/archaeology resources are discovered at any point during the project, work shall be suspended until the find can be assessed by either the District or Service Center archaeologist.

PUBLIC AGENCY APPROVING THE PROJECT: California Department of Parks and Recreation

NAME OF DIVISION OR DISTRICT CARRYING OUT THE PROJECT: Sierra District

EXEMPT STATUS:

- Declared Emergency (Section 15269(a))
- Emergency Project (Section 15269(b) and (c))
- Statutory Exemption (Section: _____)
- Categorical Exemption

Class: 4 & 6 Section: 15304, 15306

REASONS WHY PROJECT IS EXEMPT:

Project consists of basic data collection activities that will not result in a serious or major disturbance to an environmental resource, and minor alteration in the condition of land and vegetation that does not involve the removal of healthy, mature scenic trees except for forestry purposes and is included as "archaeological investigations by department staff" and "prescribed burns to restore native vegetation, reduce fuel loads, and control invasive exotic or alien species" in the Department of Parks and Recreation's list of exempt activities, in accordance with CCRS 15300.4.

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Sierra District

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Signature on Original Document
Hayden Sohm, District Superintendent

DATE _____