

Notice of Exemption ²¹⁻²⁰²⁵⁻¹²¹

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

County Clerk County of: Marin
Marin Civic Center
3501 Civic Center Dr., Suite 234,
San Rafael, CA 94903

From (Public Agency): Southern Marin Fire District
28 Liberty Ship Way
Sausalito, CA 94965

FILED

AUG 11 2025

SHELLY SCOTT
MARIN COUNTY CLERK

By A. Oxlaj Arevalo Deputy

Project Title: Southern Marin Community Fuels Management at 279 Camino Alto

Project Applicant: Southern Marin Fire District

Project Location – Specific: The proposed fuel reduction work would be located on the property of 279 Camino Alto, Mill Valley, CA and limited portions of imidaidlty adjacent parcels.

Project Location – City: Mill Valley, California

Project Location – County: Marin County

Description of Nature, Purpose and Beneficiaries of Project:

The purpose of the proposed project is to establish and maintain a defensible space zone along the thoroughfare, Camino Alto, located in the Mill Valley residential hillside communities, surrounded by high fire danger zones. There is also defensible space work being completed on the property to remove dead and dying accumulation of vegetation surrounding the buildings on and adjacent to the property. These communities are located along steep slopes, where any wildfire would rapidly escalate, and fire suppression activities would be challenging due to limited road access and excessive overgrowth on the properties.

Additional efforts for re-occurring maintenance and treatment efforts are being pursued under this exemption to track the regrowth and monitor for successful type conversion in the proceeding seasons. By creating a buffer between both Camino Alto and the surrounding structures, the encroaching vegetation would be protected by this project. This project would extend evacuation times for the surrounding community, slow fire intensity, and provide firefighters better access to the fire's edge if a wildfire were to occur. The project aims to remove invasives in the area and allow for native and established vegetation to remain while the property

establishes a nature return to a shaded fuel reduction zone that meets the requirements for defensible space.

All standing and fallen dead trees on the property will be removed by a licensed arborist. The project includes the selective removal of small trees and saplings up to 6 (six) inches diameter at breast height (DBH), measured at 4.5 feet above ground level. This removal is necessary to reduce ladder fuels, eliminate fire-prone vegetation, and create appropriate defensible space around structures and along evacuation routes.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: Southern Marin Fire District

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: Southern Marin Fire District

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));
- Common Sense Exemption (Sec. 15061(b)(3));
- Categorical Exemption. State type and section number: 15304(i). Minor alterations to land for fuel management activities**
- Statutory Exemptions. State code number:

Reasons why project is exempt:

The project is categorically exempt under California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines Section 15304, Class 4 for Minor Alterations to Land. A Class 4 exempt project consists of minor public or private alterations in the condition of land, water, and/or vegetation which do not involve removal of healthy, mature, scenic trees except for forestry or agricultural purposes. The proposed project would involve vegetation reduction activities within 100 feet of structures on flat terrain, and up to 200 feet of structures on sloped terrain greater than 40 degrees; the project is along the perimeter of the City of Mill Valley residential hillside communities. This expanded defensible space treatment remains fully compliant with state standards, as California's defensible space law explicitly allows for greater distances when warranted by hazardous fire conditions. The 200-foot treatment zone represents a reasonable and proportionate response to the extraordinary fire risks present at this specific location, ensuring enhanced protection for the Mill Valley residential hillside communities while maintaining compliance with all applicable fire safety codes and environmental regulations. "Vegetation reduction activities" includes (e.g., brush clearing, ladder fuel removal, defensible space creation). The scope of the proposed project is consistent with a minor alteration to the condition of the property at 279 Camino Alto and adjacent lands, as shown in Figure 1.

Additionally, no healthy, mature, scenic trees would be removed when over the DBH of 6 (six) inches at 4.5 feet above ground level. The selective removal of trees 6 (six) inches DBH and

smaller constitutes forestry management for fire safety purposes, which is specifically allowed under Section 15304. No work would take place within sensitive habitat, including wetlands or waterways; and no ground disturbance, such as excavation, would take place. There are no facts or circumstances specific to this project that would support an exception to the categorical exemption. No exceptions listed under Section 15300.2 apply.

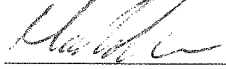
If filed by applicant:

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

Yes No

Lead Agency Contact Person: Marshall Nau

Area Code/Telephone/Extension: 415-388-8184

Signature:  **Date:** 8-11-25 **Title:** Deputy Fire Marshall

Signed by Lead Agency Signed by Applicant

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

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

Date Received for filing at OPR: _____

