

Notice of Exemption 21-2026-016

Appendix E

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

From: (Public Agency): Ross Valley Fire Department  
777 San Anselmo Ave  
San Anselmo, CA, 94960

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

(Address)

Project Title: Residential Direct Assistance Program for Defensible Space Fuel Reduction in the Ross Town Limits

Project Applicant: Ross Valley Fire Department

FILED

Project Location - Specific:  
The Town of Ross

JAN 15 2026

Project Location - City: Ross Project Location - County: Marin

SHELLY SCOTT  
MARIN COUNTY CLERK  
BY: [Signature], Deputy

Description of Nature, Purpose and Beneficiaries of Project:

The Residential Direct Assistance and Voluntary Abatement program sponsored by the Ross Valley Fire Department in coordination with the Town of Ross, using MWFA funds will benefit residents within the Ross town limits who are unable to carry out fuel reduction activities to create defensible space in compliance with Federal, State and Local Regulations due to limited financial resources or other physically limiting factors. Residents in need will be identified during defensible space evaluations and invited to apply for direct assistance. Residents can also request assistance from the Ross Valley Fire Department if necessary. Work to be conducted will be identified and prescribed by the Fire Code Official or their designated representative and carried out by the Ross Valley Fire Department in coordination with the Town of Ross. All vegetative debris management will be carried out by contracted crews. All work will be conducted a minimum of 100' up to 200' of structures when topographic conditions or combustible vegetation necessitate removal and follow environmental best practices.

The goal of this program is to make the Town of Ross and surrounding communities more fire safe by assisting residences who cannot either physically or financially complete the work needed to remove hazardous fuels from around their homes. There is a need to provide positive stimulus to the residents to make their homes and neighboring communities more fire safe, and help to reduce the risk of a catastrophic fire damaging the community and its neighbors.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: Ross Valley Fire Department

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: Ross Valley Fire Department

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: 15304(i), Minor alterations to land for fuel management activities
- Statutory Exemptions. State code number: \_\_\_\_\_

Reasons why project is exempt:

The scope of the project is consistent with fuel reduction activities outlined in categorical exemption 15304(i). Fuel reduction activities within the 200' defensible space zone are consistent with Federal, State and Local Regulations, the objectives of the Marin Wildfire Prevention Authority, and the Marin County Community Wildfire Protection Plan. The mitigation activities will not result in the taking of endangered, rare, or threatened plant or animal species or significant erosion and sedimentation of surface waters.

Lead Agency  
Contact Person: Daniel Mahoney Area Code/Telephone/Extension: 415-258-4686

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: [Signature] Date: 1/7/26 Title: Fire Chief

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: \_\_\_\_\_

POSTED 1/15/26 TO 2/14/26

## **Attachment B – Supplemental Information**

**Project Title:** Residential Direct Assistance Program for Defensible Space Fuel Reduction in Ross Town Limits

### **Project Description:**

The Residential Direct Assistance and Voluntary Abatement program sponsored by the Ross Valley Fire Department in coordination with the Town of Ross, using MWPA funds will benefit residents within the Ross town limits who are unable to carry out fuel reduction activities to create defensible space in compliance with Federal, State and Local Regulations due to limited financial resources or other physically limiting factors. Residents in need will be identified during defensible space evaluations and invited to apply for direct assistance. Residents can also request assistance from the Ross Valley Fire Department if necessary. Work to be conducted will be identified and prescribed by the Fire Code Official or their designated representative and carried out by the Ross Valley Fire Department in coordination with the Town of Ross by contracted crews. All vegetative debris management will be carried out by contracted crews. All work will be conducted a minimum of 100' and up to 200' of structures when topographic conditions or combustible vegetation necessitate removal and follow environmental best practices. Fuel reduction practices will be limited to manual thinning with hand tools, chainsaws, and weed wrenches. No mechanical removal, prescribed fire, or other significant ground disturbing practices are proposed. The mitigation activities will not result in the taking of endangered, rare, or threatened plant or animal species or significant erosion and sedimentation of surface waters.

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### **Discussion of Section 15300.2. Exceptions to Categorical Exemptions:**

#### **(a) Location:**

When determining individual work sites sensitive habitats, including watercourses and riparian areas will be excluded from the treatment area and will be identified and avoided, therefore, exception (a) does not apply.

#### **(b) Cumulative Impact:**

Maintenance of defensible space created by projects within the program over time in the same treatment location will be limited to the types of activities described above and will be performed annually or less often, as needed, to maintain defensible space, but will not cause significant cumulative biological impacts, as no sensitive habitats would be affected; therefore, exception (b) does not apply.

#### **(c) Significant Effects due to "Unusual Circumstances":**

All work proposed by this program, and future maintenance of project sites is considered routine vegetation management work in environments that are prevalent and typical throughout the County and Bay Area region. Sensitive habitat will be avoided and the aesthetic change in the existing environment will not be substantial. Therefore, there are no unusual circumstances associated with the project or the environment in which it will be implemented, and exception (c) does not apply.

(d) Scenic Highways:

No Caltrans designated Scenic Highways occur within the boundaries of program area (Ross Town Limits), therefore, exception (d) does not apply.

(e) Hazardous Waste Sites:

Per the current Cortese List at the time of this filing, there are no listed hazardous waste sites within the boundaries of the program area (Ross Town Limits), therefore, exception (e) does not apply.

(f) Historical Resources:

Projects within the program will not propose any practices likely to cause substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource. Projects within the program will be limited to practices unlikely to impact cultural resources, therefore, exception (f) does not apply.

Residential Direct Assistance Program for Defensible  
Space Fuel Reduction in Ross Town Limits



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