



NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

21-2024-171

FILED

OCT 08 2024

SHELLY SCOTT
MARIN COUNTY CLERK
BY: *Shelly Scott*, Deputy

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

Date: October 2, 2024
Project Title: SAN GERONIMO VALLEY FIRE ROAD FUEL REDUCTION PROJECT
Project Location: San Geronimo Valley, surrounding Nicasio Valley Road and Sir Francis Drake Boulevard, San Geronimo, California

Assessor's Parcel: 121-160-05, 121-160-54, 121-190-07, 121-200-01, 121-200-04, 121-200-11, 121-200-12, 121-210-62, 164-320-03, 168-250-25, 168-250-26, 168-270-09, 168-270-18, 168-270-26, 172-350-31, 172-350-35

Description of Nature, Purpose, and Beneficiaries of the Project: The Marin County Fire Department (MCFD) is proposing to implement a fire fuel reduction and fire road hardening project along fire roads within and adjacent to the San Geronimo Valley in Marin County. The purpose of the project is to reduce the risk of rapid wildfire spread, improve vehicle access, enhance biodiversity, and protect communities within 50 feet of fire roads in the undeveloped portions of several private parcels in San Geronimo, Lagunitas, Forest Knolls, and Woodacre. The project will thin Douglas fir stands and reduce ladder fuels in shrubland and woodlands dominated by coast live oak and California bay laurel. Work within the Project Area will include the utilization of both mechanical and manual treatments depending on vegetation community type, fuel loading/ condition, slope, and topography. Vegetation thinning and removal will vary depending on the location of the fire road and the vegetation present along the roadway. Mechanical mastication will be utilized on appropriate slopes where access is feasible to treat understory vegetation, brush, dead and downed material, hazard trees, and small diameter dead, dying, and diseased trees. Manual treatments will be utilized where equipment access is limited and/or treatment areas include or are adjacent to sensitive resources. All plant material removed as part of the proposed project would be chipped onsite or piled to be burned in-place. Pile burning would be conducted in compliance with Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) Regulation 5 for open burning and burn day restrictions. The proposed project would be implemented in October 2024 to December 2026 by contracted landscape companies, MCFD Tam Crew, or MCFD Fire Foundry Crew. Implementation of the proposed project would occur within seven days of nesting bird and bat surveys yielding negative results and after woodrat nests are vacated. All tools, equipment, and clothing would be clean and free of dirt and vegetative material and treated with a 10 percent bleach solution after working to reduce the spread of sudden oak death. There are no structures or surface waters located within or immediately adjacent to the project area. The proposed project would be funded by a CALFIRE Wildfire Grant with matching wildfire prevention funds from MCFD.

Public Agency Approving Project: Marin County Fire Department
Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out the Project: Jordan Reeser, Battalion Chief

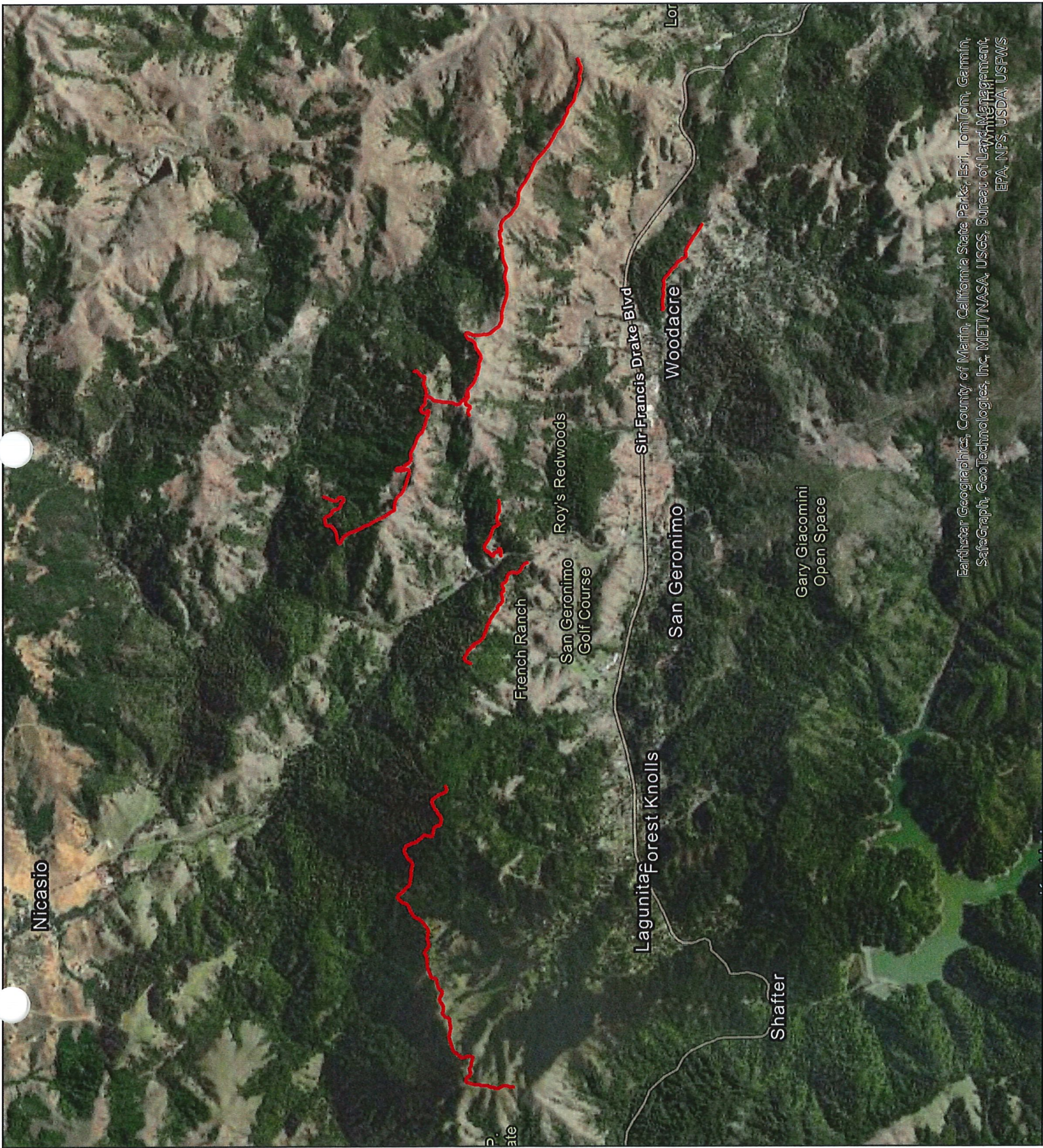
Reasons for Exemption: MCFD has reviewed the project along with its environmental setting and has determined it to be categorically exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act under the following section of the California Administrative Code:

Section 15304: Minor Alterations to Land: The proposed project consists of fuel management activities to reduce the volume of flammable vegetation with the purpose of reducing the risk of rapid wildfire spread and improving vehicle access on fire roads. Best Management Practices consistent with those outlined in the Final Program EIR for the California Vegetation Treatment Program would be implemented to ensure that nesting birds, bats, and woodrats are not impacted and to reduce the spread of sudden oak death. For these reasons, implementation of the proposed project would not impact endangered, rare, or threatened plan species. The proposed project would not result in erosion or sedimentation of surface waters because there are no surface waters located within or immediately adjacent to the project area and stormwater measures such as straw wattles would be utilized if needed to prevent soil disturbance during the rainy season. The project area is not located within a state scenic highway and given the dense vegetation within the project area, implementation of the proposed project would not negatively affect scenic resources. The project area is not located on a hazardous waste site pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5. Implementation of the project would not affect historical buildings or other historical resources. No significant fuel reduction activities have occurred in the project area during the past 5 years, so implementation of the proposed project would not result in cumulative impacts or result in a significant effect to the environment due to unusual circumstances.

Lead Agency Contact Person:

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San Geronimo Valley
Fire Road
Fuel Reduction Project

Earthstar Geographics, County of Marin, California State Parks, Esri, TomTom, Garmin, SafeGraph, GeoTechnologies, Inc, MET/NASA, USGS, Bureau of Land Management, EPA, NPS, USDA, USFWS

