

FILED

NOV 16 2023



JENNIFER A. VISE
TEHAMA COUNTY CLERK & RECORDER

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

BY: *[Signature]*

To: County Clerk
Tehama County, CA
633 Washington St., Room 111
Red Bluff, CA 96080

FROM: RCD of Tehama County
2 Sutter St., Suite D
Red Bluff, CA 96080

PROJECT TITLE	County Roadside Fuel Treatments		
PROJECT LOCATION	PROJECT LOCATION – City Red Bluff	COUNTY	Tehama
DESCRIPTION OF NATURE, PURPOSE, AND BENEFICIARIES OF PROJECT	<p>Luce Griswold Rd., Evergreen Rd., Eighthmy Rd., Bowman Rd., Matlock Loop Rd., McCoy Rd., Jelly Ferry Rd., Bend Ferry Rd., Reeds Creek Rd., Johnson Rd., Balis Rd., Ball Rd., Red Bank Rd., Joint Rd., Colyear Springs Rd.,</p> <p>The project entails roadside vegetation development and maintenance treatments (cutting, chipping, mastication and herbicide applications) along forementioned paved roads within Tehama County.</p> <p>The RCDTC will manage, operate, and maintain the (15" throat) chipper unit along with the Bobcat with forestry cutter head and mower deck during roadside fuel treatment projects. In addition, the RCDTC will conduct photo monitoring as well as prepare field progress reports and mapping which will be incorporated into project status reports submitted to the funder by the RCDTC Project Manager.</p> <p>Treatment areas will extend up to 75' along both sides of the road edge depending upon terrain type and site conditions. The roads to be included in this effort are all paved and part of the Tehama County Road system. The total area addressed will entail approximately 300 acres. Those roads proposed for treatment include Luce Griswold Rd., Evergreen Rd., Eighthmy Rd., Bowman Rd., Matlock Loop Rd., McCoy Rd., Jelly Ferry Rd., Bend Ferry Rd., Reeds Creek Rd., Johnson Rd., Balis Rd., Ball Rd., Red Bank Rd., Joint Rd., Colyear Springs Rd.,</p> <p>High traffic volumes along the roads proposed for treatments create a significant risk of roadside ignition and fire spread into numerous publicly and privately maintained parcels as well as adjacent healthy mature oak woodlands that contain permanently inhabited structures. Specific treatments to be completed in connection with this project include the cutting and chipping of ground fuels along with shrubs and small, poorly developed trees (oaks < 6" in diameter) that create ladder fuels extending into the crowns of mature oaks. Once cutting and chipping operations were completed and after several months, up to one growing season, herbicides approved by the State and the Tehama County Agriculture Department would be applied to treatment areas. The removal and control of target vegetation will reduce roadside ignition risk, reduce the rate of fire spread and intensity as well as removal excess trees and other vegetation thus improving conditions for larger, more mature trees particularly oaks that are currently in good health and continue to sequester Greenhouse Gases (GHGs). The goal of this project proposal is to reduce the risk of roadside ignitions and rate of fire spread into adjacent grasslands, shrublands and high-quality oak woodlands that contain many permanently inhabited structures. In addition,</p>		

project work would result in the continued expansion and maintenance of an in-place fuel break network that is used during wildfire events to protect homes and developed parcels and create a space from which backfire operations or future landscape scale vegetation treatments not affiliated with this project can be conducted.

LEAD AGENCY RCD of Tehama County

CONTACT PERSON Drew Barnhart **PHONE** (916) 525 5510

ADDRESS 2 Sutter St., Suite D
Red Bluff, CA 96080

NAME OF PUBLIC AGENCY APPROVING PROJECT: Resource Conservation District of Tehama County

NAME OF PERSON OR AGENCY CARRYING OUT PROJECT: Tehama Conservation Fund

EXEMPTION STATUS

- ☒ Categorical Exemption Type/Section: Class 4 §15304 (e) Minor Alterations to Land
☐ Statutory Exemption (state code section):
☐ Ministerial (§21080(b)(1); 15268)
☐ Declared Emergency (§21080(b)(3); 15269(a))
☐ Emergency Project (§21080(b)(4); 15269(b)(c))

REASONS PROJECT IS EXEMPT

Public Resources Code, Division 13, Chapter 6, Article 19, Section 15304 allows minor alteration of vegetation including fuel management activities to reduce volume of flammable vegetation provided the activities do not result in the taking of endangered, rare, or threatened plant/animal species, or cause significant erosion and sedimentation of surface waters. This project is considered low impact given that the nature of the project work occurs on already disturbed and developed roadsides and biomass chips will be broadcast onsite. A current California Natural Diversity Database search was conducted, and it has been determined that Project activities will have a low impact on the environment and low potential to effect cultural resources.

IF FILED BY APPLICANT:

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

SIGNATURE: Drew Barnhart **DATE:** 11/16/23

TITLE: RCD of Tehama County Project Manager, Drew Barnhart

X Signed by Lead Agency
☐ Signed by Applicant

Date received for filing at OPR:

Scope of Work

TinderSmart Tehama – County Roadside Fuel Reduction Project - 5GA21151

Description

To address the seventeen county roads identified by Tehama County Public Works that are located broadly across Tehama County (**See attached project maps (Map 1-3)**). The proposed project work will improve existing conditions along the county rights-of-way within Tehama County that run along scattered nearby developed sites including rural homesites, cabins, ranchettes, vineyards, public utility infrastructure and sportsman's clubs. Importantly, ingress by firefighting personnel and egress by residents during wildfire events will be significantly improved. A full effort will be made to address all roadsides with herbicide applications if time and staff qualifications permit. Broadly, all communities in the county will benefit from project work, including the habitable structures within those communities as shown in the attached project maps.

High traffic volumes along the roads proposed for treatments create a significant risk of roadside ignition and fire spread into numerous publicly and privately maintained parcels as well as adjacent healthy mature oak woodlands that contain permanently inhabited structures. Specific treatments to be completed in connection with this project include the cutting and chipping of ground fuels along with shrubs and small, poorly developed trees that create ladder fuels extending into the crowns of mature oaks. Once cutting and chipping operations were completed and after several months, up to one growing season, herbicides approved by the State and the Tehama County Agriculture Department would be applied to treatment areas. The removal and control of target vegetation will reduce roadside ignition risk, reduce the rate of fire spread and intensity as well as removal excess trees and other vegetation thus improving conditions for larger, more mature trees particularly oaks that are currently in good health and continue to sequester Greenhouse Gases (GHGs).

Objective

The primary goals of the **TinderSmart Tehama Program: County Roadside 197Fuel Reduction Project** are to improve the ingress and egress in and out of communities across Tehama County and expand/improve or develop areas along Tehama County roads.

Prescription

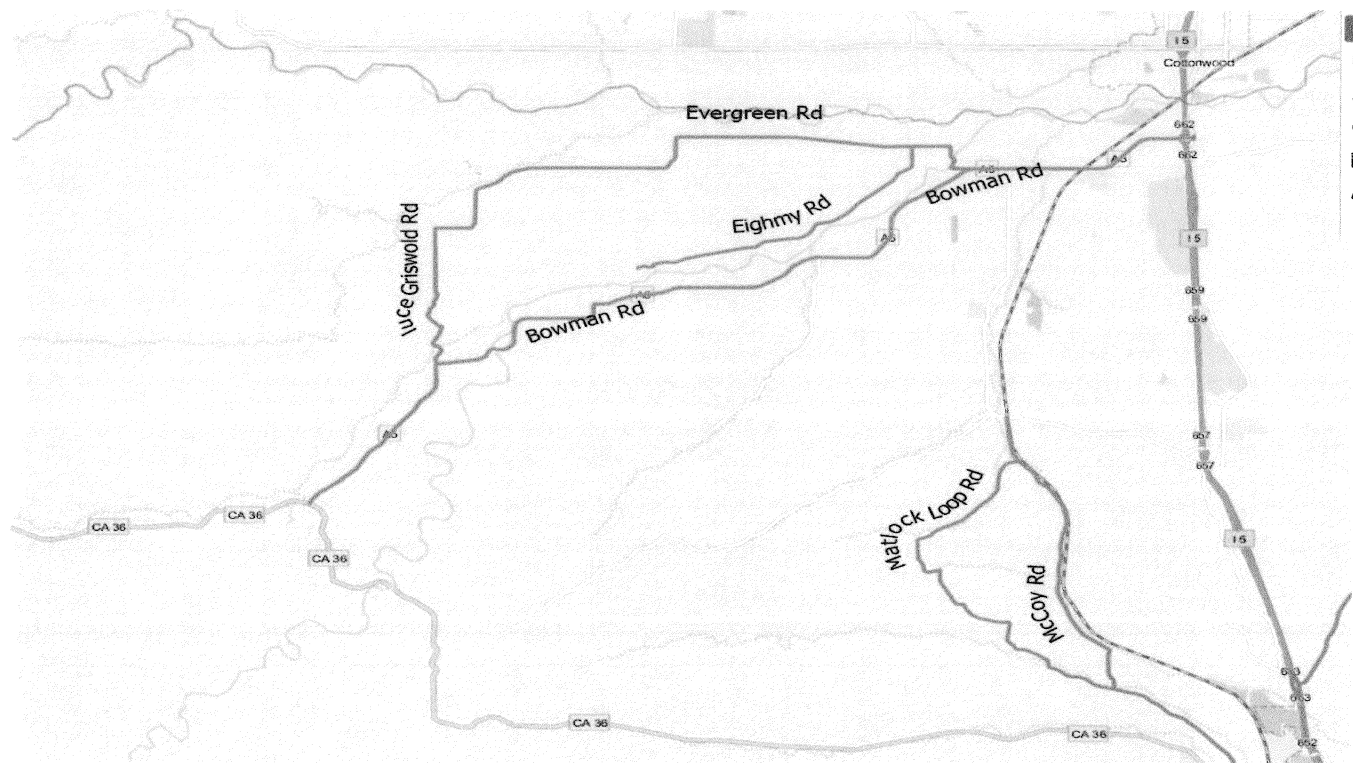
Treat 300 acres of roadsides across Tehama County within the county rights-of-way. Treatment will include removing all appropriate fuels 10dbh and below, conducting ladder fuel reduction by limbing all fuels above 10dbh to 8ft, mowing tall grass and resprouts, and (budget permitting) a follow up herbicide treatment under a QAL. Removal of brush will be executed by hand crew and/or mastication. CEQA NOE's will be filed, Notification provided to adjacent landowners, and Encroachment permit(s) obtained through Tehama County. A traffic control plan will be created and include appropriate signage and flaggers.

List of Roads

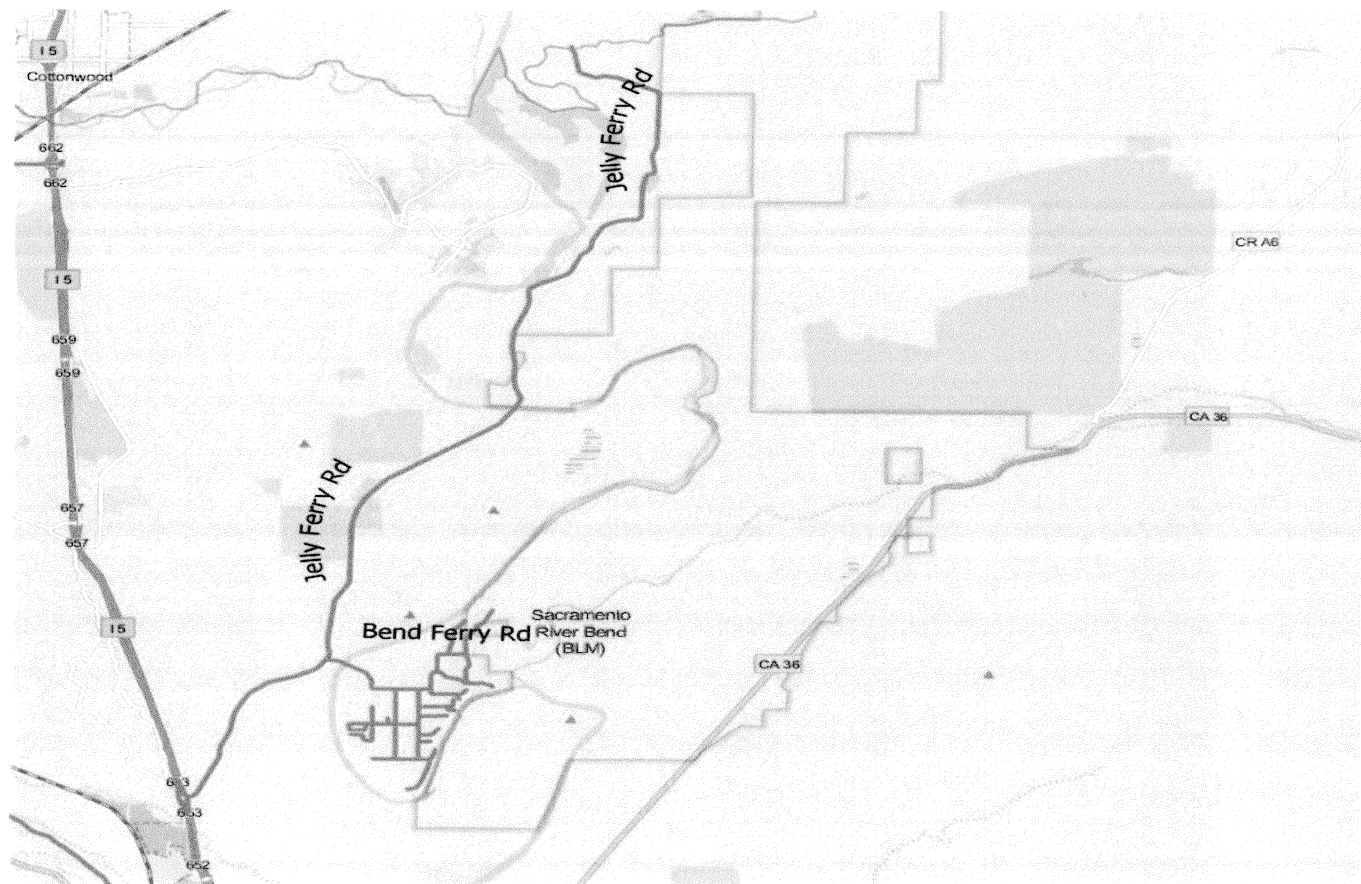
Luce Griswold Rd., Evergreen Rd., Eighthmy Rd., Bowman Rd., Matlock Loop Rd., McCoy Rd., Jelly Ferry Rd., Bend Ferry Rd., Reeds Creek Rd., Johnson Rd., Balis Rd., Ball Rd., Red Bank Rd., Joint Rd., Colyear Springs Rd.,

Maps

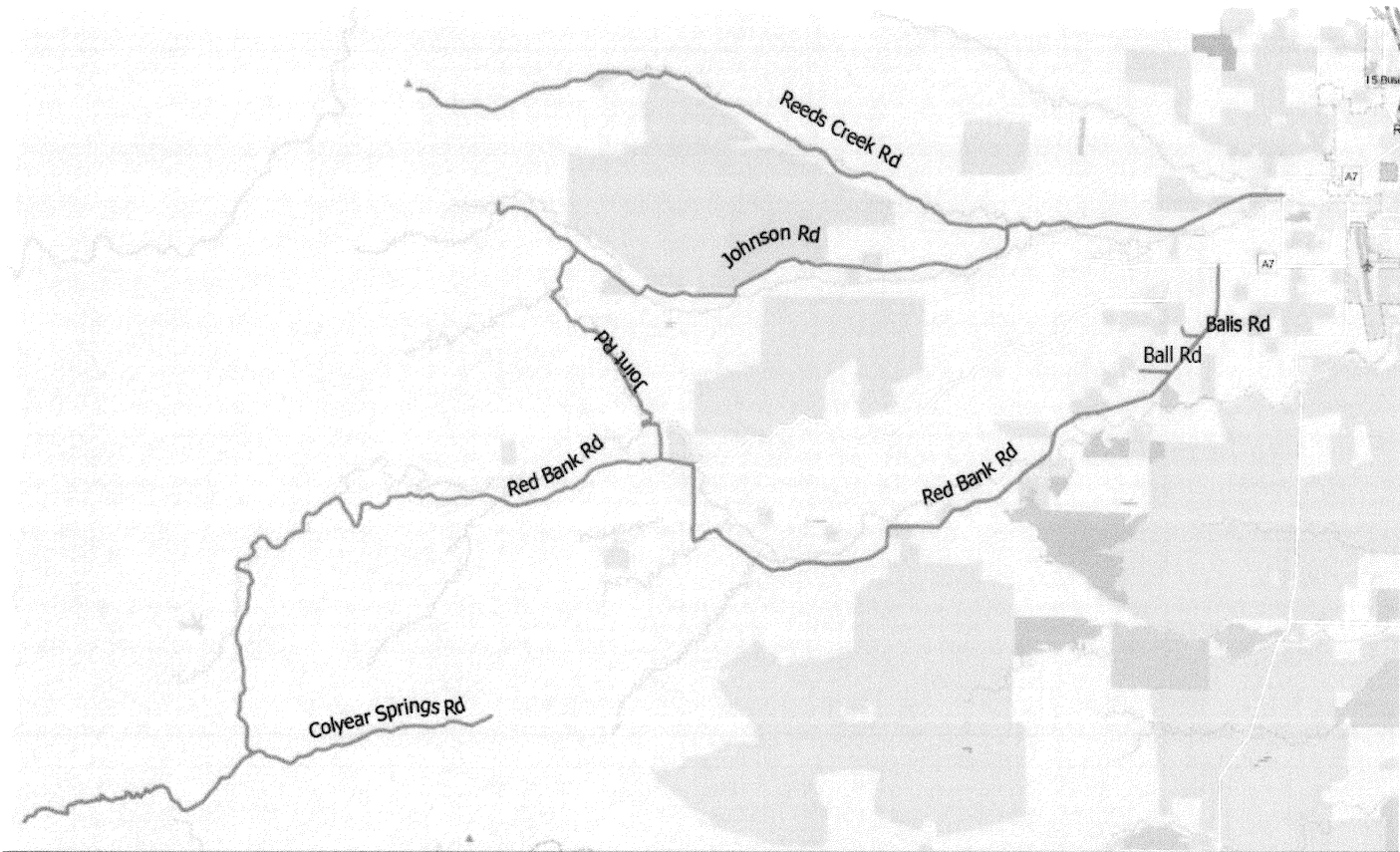
Map 1: NW Tehama County – West of I-5. Project area highlighted.



Map 2: NE Tehama County – East of I-5. Project Area highlighted.



Map 3: SW Tehama County – West of I-5. Project Areas highlighted.



Cal. Code Regs. tit. 14 § 15304

Section 15304 - Minor Alterations to Land

Class 4 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 and agricultural purposes. Examples include but are not limited to:

- (a) Grading on land with a slope of less than 10 percent, except that grading shall not be exempt in a waterway, in any wetland, in an officially designated (by federal, state, or local government action) scenic area, or in officially mapped areas of severe geologic hazard such as an Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone or within an official Seismic Hazard Zone, as delineated by the State Geologist.
- (b) New gardening or landscaping, including the replacement of existing conventional landscaping with water efficient or fire resistant landscaping.
- (c) Filling of earth into previously excavated land with material compatible with the natural features of the site.
- (d) Minor alterations in land, water, and vegetation on existing officially designated wildlife management areas or fish production facilities which result in improvement of habitat for fish and wildlife resources or greater fish production.
- (e) Minor temporary use of land having negligible or no permanent effects on the environment, including carnivals, sales of Christmas trees, etc.
- (f) Minor trenching and backfilling where the surface is restored.
- (g) Maintenance dredging where the spoil is deposited in a spoil area authorized by all applicable state and federal regulatory agencies.
- (h) The creation of bicycle lanes on existing rights-of-way.
- (i) Fuel management activities within 30 feet of structures to reduce the volume of flammable vegetation, provided that the activities will not result in the taking of endangered, rare, or threatened plant or animal species or significant erosion and sedimentation of surface waters. This exemption shall apply to fuel management activities within 100 feet of a structure if the public agency having fire protection responsibility for the area has determined that 100 feet of fuel clearance is required due to extra hazardous fire conditions.

Cal. Code Regs. Tit. 14, § 15304

Note: Authority cited: Section 21083, Public Resources Code. Reference: Section 21084, Public Resources Code.

1. Amendment of subsections (a) and (b) and new subsection (i) filed 10-26-98; operative 10-26-98 pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21087 (Register 98, No. 44).
2. Change without regulatory effect amending Note filed 10-6-2005 pursuant to section 100, title 1, California Code of Regulations (Register 2005, No. 40).