NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

2019090294

State of California
The Natural Resources Agency
California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE)

PROJECT TITLE	Thousand Pines Shaded Fuel Break		
PROJECT LOCATION	34° 14' 56"N 117° 16' 42"W	**COUNTY**	San Bernardino
LEAD AGENCY	California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE)		
CONTACT	David Haas		
ADDRESS	San Bernardino/Inyo/Mono Unit 3800 N. Sierra Way San Bernardino, CA 92405	**PHONE**	(909) 881-6955

This project will create a 58-acre shaded fuel break removing approximately 580 tons of woody biomass. 39 acres are located along the southern boundary of the property, from a newly acquired property on Old Mill Road to Huston Creek on the eastern side of the camp, and 19 acres on the northern boundary, extending the length of Pine Ridge Road.. Once completed, the project will aid in the protection of approximately 7500 habitable structures within the mixed conifer forests of the Crestline area. The fuel reduction operations will include removal of ladder fuels through mastication and hand cutting. Fuels cut by hand will be treated using a chipper..

Dominant and codominant trees include Jeffery, ponderosa and sugar pine. Intermediate and some codominant include incense cedar and white fir. The shade tolerant cedar and fir have produced significant, advance regeneration in the understory. The objective of these shaded fuel breaks is to reduce the amount of fir, cedar and brush species in the understory by 70%. Most of this work will be accomplished with a steel track, Rayco masticator. In areas that are inaccessible to track equipment, hand removal will be implemented. The contractor also has a walk behind chipper.

The project includes treatment of up to 70% of brush and understory growth to create a mosaic of islands of vegetation of various natural appearing shapes and sizes. Distance between islands of vegetation will be a minimum of 2.5 times the vegetation height. Thin trees under 12-inch diameter at breast height (DBH) to an average spacing of 20 feet between tree trunks. Residual trees will be pruned to a height of 8 feet or ½ their height, whichever is less. All vegetation within the drip-line of residual trees will be removed using chainsaws or a masticator. Dead or dying trees will be felled. Bark beetle infested wood will either be chipped or covered onsite with 6 mil plastic. Vegetation cut using chainsaws will be chipped onsite and deposited back onto the project site or cut and stacked for firewood use at the Camp. Chip depth will not exceed 3 inches in depth or cover more than 75% of the ground.

EXEMPTION STATUS

- [x] Categorical Exemption Type/Section: Class 4 §15304 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

Review by Tim Morin, RPF #2505, confirmed that no exceptions apply which would preclude the use of a Notice of Exemption for this project. The RPF has concluded that no significant environmental impact would occur to aesthetics, agriculture and forestland/timberland, air quality, biological resources, cultural resources, geology and soils, greenhouse gas emissions, hazards and hazardous materials, hydrology and water quality, land use planning, mineral resources, noise, population and housing, public services, recreation, transportation/traffic, or to utilities and service systems. Documentation of the environmental review completed by the RPF is kept on file at CAL FIRE's San Bernardino office, 3800 N. Sierra Way San Bernardino, CA 92405.

DATE RECEIVED FOR FILING

Governor's Office of Planning & Research

SEP 11 2019

STATE CLEARINGHOUSE

9/6/19

Matthew Reischman, Assistant Deputy Director Date
California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection
Environmental Review Report for an Exempt Project

Note: This report form is intended for use by California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) staff to document a limited environmental impact analysis supporting the filing of a Notice of Exemption (NOE) document for a proposed CAL FIRE project. Although the project appears to fit within the descriptions for allowable Categorical Exemptions, this report presents CAL FIRE's review for possible "Exceptions" that would preclude finding the project to be categorically exempt as discussed in CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2. This report will be filed with the CEQA administrative record for this project to document the environmental impact analysis conducted by the Department.

Author:	Tim Morin
Title:	RPF #2505
Address:	PO Box 361, Angelus Oaks, CA 92305
Phone:	909-332-0534
Email:	Tim.morin@davey.com

Project Name:	Thousand Pines Shaded Fuel Break
Project Number:	5GG17119
Program Type:	Fuels Reduction
CAL FIRE Unit:	San Bernardino/Inyo/Mono Unit 3800 N. Sierra Way San Bernardino, CA 92405
County:	San Bernardino
Acres:	58
Legal Location:	Sections 14, 22, 23, T02N, R04W, MDB&M

Name of USGS 7.5'Quad Map(s): Silverwood Lake, San Bernardino North

☒Project Vicinity Map Attached ☒Project Location Map Attached ☒Photos Attached

Other Public Agency Review/Permit Required:

Would the project result in:	YES	NO
alterations to a watercourse (DFG - Lake and Stream Alteration Agreement)	☐	☒
conversion of timberland (CAL FIRE - Conversion Permit or Exemption)	☐	☒
demolition (Local Air District - Demolition Permit)	☐	☒
soil disturbance over 1 acre (RWQCB - SWPPP)	☐	☒
fill of possible wetlands (404 Permit - USACE)	☐	☒
other:	☐	☒

Discuss any above-listed topic item checked Yes and consultation with agencies:

Project Description and Environmental Setting (Describe the project activities, project site and its surroundings, its location, and the environmental setting):

This project will create a 58-acre shaded fuel break removing approximately 580 tons of woody biomass. 39 acres are located along the southern boundary of the property, from a newly acquired property on Old Mill Road to Huston Creek on the eastern side of the camp, and 19 acres on the northern boundary, extending the length of Pine Ridge Road. Once completed, the project will aid in the protection of approximately 7500 habitable structures within the mixed conifer forests of the Crestline area. The fuel reduction operations will include removal of ladder fuels through mastication and hand cutting. Fuels cut by hand will be treated using a chipper.

Dominant and codominant trees include Jeffery, ponderosa and sugar pine. Intermediate and some codominant include incense cedar and white fir. The shade tolerant cedar and fir have produced significant, advance regeneration in the understory. The objective of these shaded fuel breaks is to reduce the amount of fir, cedar and brush species in the understory by 70%. Most of this work will be accomplished with a steel track, Rayco masticator. In areas that are inaccessible to track equipment, hand removal will be implemented. The contractor also has a walk behind chipper.

The project includes treatment of up to 70% of brush and understory growth to create a mosaic of islands of vegetation of various natural appearing shapes and sizes. Distance between islands of vegetation will be a minimum of 2.5 times the vegetation height. Thin trees under 12-inch diameter at breast height (DBH) to an average spacing of 20 feet between tree trunks. Residual trees will be pruned to a height of 8 feet or ½ their height, whichever is less. All vegetation within the drip-line of residual trees will be removed using chainsaws or a masticator. Dead or dying trees will be felled. Bark beetle infested wood will either be chipped or covered onsite with 6 mil plastic. Vegetation cut using chainsaws will be chipped

onsite and deposited back onto the project site or cut and stacked for firewood use at the Camp. Chip depth will not exceed 3 inches in depth or cover more than 75% of the ground. Chips will be kept at least 3 feet away from the base of residual trees.

Environmental Impact Analysis

Aesthetics

☐ This topic does not apply to this project and was not evaluated further.
☒ This topic could apply to this project, and results of the assessment are provided below:

The fuel break will straddle a ridge between a densely forested area and the Crestline community, and the design of the project will lend itself to more of a park-like setting than current. It is the RPF's determination that this project will not have an impact to the aesthetics of the area.

Agriculture and Forest Resources

☐ This topic does not apply to this project and was not evaluated further.
☒ Yes ☐ No Would any trees be felled? If yes, discuss protection of nesting birds and compliance with FPRs.
☐ Yes ☒ No Would the project convert any prime or unique farmland?
☐ Yes ☒ No Would the project result in the conversion of forest land/timberland to non-forest use?

☒ This topic could apply to this project, and results of the assessment are provided below:

This project will remove small diameter (less than 12 inches diameter), suppressed and intermediate tress that are positioned within the drip line of larger trees.

Tree felling operations will occur between June 1 and Dec. 31 in the year of operations, which will be within of the typical bird nesting seasons. Signs of nests include completed nests, accumulation of nesting material at base of tree, white wash and sound associated with nesting birds. Any nests that are discovered during operations will be completely avoided with a 50 foot buffer around the nest tree. Removal of understory ladder fuels provides ample opportunities to inspect proposed removal vegetation for nests prior to cutting. No conversion of prime or unique farmland and/or timberland will occur. It is the RPF's determination that impacts to agriculture and forest resources will be less than significant.

Air Quality

☐ This topic does not apply to this project and was not evaluated further.
☒ Yes ☐ No The local Air Quality Management District guidelines for dust abatement and other air quality concerns were reviewed for this project.
☒ This topic could apply to this project, and results of the assessment are provided below:

Travel to and from the project area will produce a short term increase to vehicle traffic on the access road and the use of a chainsaws, masticators and a chipper will create a short term increase of combustible engine emissions into the atmosphere. The project is expected to last four weeks, and is designed for fire protection with the potential to improve air quality by limiting combustible vegetation within the fuel break. It is RPF's determination that this project will not have significant impacts on air quality.

Biological Resources

☐ This topic does not apply to this project and was not evaluated further.
☐ Yes ☒ No Will the project potentially effect biological resources?
☒ Yes ☐ No Was a current NDDB review completed? Results discussed below:
☐ Yes ☒ No Was a biological survey of the project area completed? Results discussed below:
☐ This topic could apply to this project, and results of the assessment are provided below:

A query of the California Natural Diversity Data Base (CNDDB) was conducted to identify State and Federally listed species that might be present in the project area. The query was based on a 5-mile search. The query was further filtered to rule out species that don't have a listing status such as endangered, threatened, proposed or candidate, or a California Rare Plant Rank of 3.2 or less, or CDFW Species of Special Concern (SSC) and Fully Protected (FP). The search yielded 80 species. Of the 80-species identified, 5 may be present in the project area. The project is designed to minimize or eliminate possible impacts to these species. Species evaluations are documented below

arroyo toad (*Anaxyrus californicus*)
Anaxyrus californicus prefers sandy or cobbly washes with swift currents and associated upland and riparian habitats, in Southern California from Santa Barbara County south into northwestern Baja California. An arroyo, in the desert called a wash, is a predominantly dry creek or river bed. It fills and flows after sufficient rain, but only temporarily during specific seasons. The arroyo toad inhabits these areas alongside creeks and rivers with shallow pebble-like rocks near sandy terrains. Adults take refuge into the sandy soil for protection and shelter and for deposition of eggs. Areas with very little to no vegetation are the primary target. Habitat located in the project area does not meet the described habitat for this species. Occurrences of this species are not observed within the project area.

bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*)
The bald eagle occurs during its breeding season in virtually any kind of American wetland habitat such as seacoasts, rivers, large lakes or marshes or other large bodies of open water with an abundance of fish. Studies have shown a preference for bodies of water with a circumference greater than 11 km (7 mi), and lakes with an area greater than 10 km2 (4 sq mi) are optimal for breeding bald eagles. Habitat located in the project area does meet the described habitat for this species. Occurrences of this species have been observed within the project area.

California red-legged frog (*Rana draytonii*)
The California red-legged frog is found in California and extreme northern Baja California, northwestern Mexico. This species now occurs most commonly along the northern and southern Coast Ranges, and in isolated areas in the foothills of the Sierra Nevada mountains. The current southernmost California populations are on the Santa Rosa Plateau in Riverside County, and within the Upper Las Virgenes Canyon Open Space Preserve in the Simi Hills in eastern Ventura County, near the community of West Hills. In 2015, egg masses from the nearby Simi Hills were introduced to two streams in the Santa Monica Mountains. Juvenile frogs were found living at the locations a year later. Habitat located in the project area does not meet the described habitat for this species. Occurrences of this species are not found within the project area.

least Bell's vireo (*Vireo bellii pusillus*)
Historically, the least Bell's vireo was common to locally abundant species in lowland riparian habitat, ranging from coastal southern California through the Sacramento and San Joaquin Valleys as far north as Red Bluff in Tehama County. Populations also occurred in the foothill streams of the Sierra Nevada and Coast Ranges, and in Owens Valley, Death Valley, and scattered locations in the Mojave Desert. Least Bell's vireos winter in Baja California Peninsula. Outside of the breeding season, they are not limited to willow-dominated riparian areas, but occupy a variety of habitats including mesquite scrub within arroyos, palm groves, and hedgerows bordering agricultural and residential areas. Habitat located in the project area does not meet the described habitat for this species. Occurrences of this species are not found within the project area.

Mohave tui chub (*Siphateles bicolor mohavensis*)
The Mohave tui chub (Siphateles bicolor mohavensis) is an endangered chub originally found only in the Mojave River. Habitat located in the project area does not meet the described habitat for this species. Occurrences of this species are not found within the project area.

Nevin's barberry (*Berberis nevinii*)
This plant is endemic to southern California, where it is known from very few occurrences in the riparian areas of chaparral in inland canyons and foothills. It is a California state and United States federally listed endangered species, since 1987 and 1998, respectively. There are thought to be about 500 individuals remaining, with half of those being naturally occurring plants. It is also cultivated in gardens and parks as an ornamental and barrier plant. Presence of this species is unlikely within the project area. Occurrences of this species has not been observed within the project area.

quino checkerspot butterfly (*Euphydryas editha quino*)
The obvious factor in the decline of the Quino checkerspot is urban development. Much of the historic scrub land that it occupied, much like the Mission blue butterfly, also endangered, has been built over. The persisting habitat faces other threats. Invasive species, in the form of non-native plant life and overgrazing are just two of the hurdles facing the recovery of the Quino checkerspot. Today, there are eight populations of the Quino known. Presence of this species is unlikely within the project area. Occurrences of this species are not found within the project area.

slender-horned spineflower (*Dodecahema leptoceras*)
This plant grows in the silt-rich floodplains and washes of the foothills of the Transverse Ranges and the Peninsular Ranges of southern California. It is known from fewer than 40 reported sightings, many of which were in locations that have since been claimed for development or otherwise altered. About 19 occurrences are believed to exist now. This plant has been recorded in only a few general areas, including Tujunga Wash and the floodlands surrounding the Santa Ana and San Jacinto Rivers. Habitat located in the project area does not meet the described habitat for this species. Occurrences of this

species are not found within the project area.

southern mountain yellow-legged frog (*Rana muscosa*)
The mountain yellow-legged frog or southern mountain yellow-legged frog (Rana muscosa) is a species of true frogs endemic to California in the United States. It occurs in the San Jacinto Mountains, San Bernardino Mountains, and San Gabriel Mountains in Southern California and the Southern Sierra Nevada. The frog occurs in mountain creeks, lakes and lakeshores, streams, and pools, preferring sunny areas. It rarely strays far from water, and can remain underwater for a very long time, likely through cutaneous gas exchange. The tadpoles require a permanent water habitat for at least two years while they develop. The frog has been noted at elevations of between about 1,214 and 7,546 feet (370 and 2,300 meters) in Southern California. Presence of this species is unlikely within the project area. Occurrences of this species are not found within the project area.

southern rubber boa (*Charina umbratica*)
The range of this species is unclear and somewhat controversial because of its protected status. It is definitely found in a few disjunct areas in montane southern California in the San Bernardino and San Jacinto Mountains. The southern rubber boa typically inhabits Oak-conifer and mixed-conifer forests at elevations between roughly 5,000 to 8,200 ft. where rocks and logs or other debris provide shelter. Presence of this species is unlikely within the project area. Occurrences of this species are not found within the project area.

thread-leaved brodiaea (*Brodiaea filifolia*)
Brodiaea filifolia, known by the common name threadleaf brodiaea, is a rare species of flowering plant in the cluster-lily genus . It is endemic to southern California, mostly in the region around the junction of Orange, Riverside, and San Diego Counties. The bulb is a resident of scattered remaining vernal pool and grassland habitats. It is a federally listed threatened species and it is listed as an endangered species on the state level. Presence of this species is unlikely within the project area. Occurrences of this species are not found within the project area.

San Bernardino Mountains owl's-clover (*Castilleja lasiorhyncha*)
Castilleja lasiorhyncha is a species of Indian paintbrush is endemic to southern California known by the common name San Bernardino Mountains Indian paintbrush. Most of the plant's range is in the San Bernardino Mountains, where it grows in forests and meadows. Castilleja lasiorhyncha only existing populations are in San Bernardino County and possibly San Diego County, with historical occurrences also known from Riverside County. This wildflower is an annual herb usually not exceeding 20 centimeters in height. Its stem and foliage are coated in woolly glandular hairs. The inflorescence is a loose, narrow array of green bracts and larger flowers, each with rounded, pouched bright yellow petals and a hairy whitish beak Habitat located in the project area does meet the described habitat for this species. Occurrences of this species have not been observed within the project area.

As a result of the project design, the effects of this project on biological resources will be less than significant.

Cultural Resources
☐ This topic does not apply to this project and was not evaluated further.
☒ Yes ☐ No Was a current archaeological records check completed? Results discussed below:
☒ Yes ☐ No Was a CAL FIRE Staff or Contract Archaeologist consulted? Results discussed below:
☒ Yes ☐ No Was an archaeological survey of the project area completed? Results discussed below:
☐ Yes ☒ No Will the project effect any historic buildings or archaeological site?
☒ This topic could apply to this project, and results of the assessment are provided below:

A records search at the South Central Coastal Information Center on May 21, 2019, identified a single recorded resource within the Thousand Pines project area, P #36-020287. This site consists of sixteen structures and one trash scatter related to an early twentieth century lumber camp that occupied the property now used as a camp. Many of these structures are in current use as camp facilities. The entire 245-acre property was surveyed by Applied Earthworks for NRCS fuel management projects in 2004.

All equipment shall remain outside of the designated cultural site boundaries as mapped. No significant impacts to cultural resources are anticipated. If previously undocumented cultural resources are located during project implementation, work will be temporarily halted until the archaeologist is contacted to evaluate the find and provide recommendations in accordance with the Secretary of the Interiors Standards and Guidelines for archaeological resource protection. In the event that human remains are discovered, work will cease immediately in the area of the find and the project manager/site supervisor will notify the regional archaeologist and the County Coroner, in accordance with §7050.5 of the California Health and Safety Code. Larrynn Carver, Senior State Archaeologist, CAL FIRE

Geology and Soils

☒ This topic does not apply to this project and was not evaluated further.
☐ This topic could apply to this project, and results of the assessment are provided below:

No unstable land features were noted in the project area. If an unstable area is identified during operations, work will be halted and the area will be completely avoided. Therefore, the effects of this project on soils or geology will be less than significant.

Greenhouse Gas Emissions

☐ This topic does not apply to this project and was not evaluated further.
☐ Yes ☒ No Would the project generate significant greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions?
☐ Yes ☒ No Would these GHG emissions result in a significant impact on the environment? Discuss below:
☐ Yes ☒ No Would the project conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases? Discuss below:

Estimates for GHG emissions were done based on total fuel consumption per day for planned motor vehicles operations to facilitate this project. The common conversion factors were obtained from the California Climate Action Registry (CCAR) General Reporting Protocol U.S. EPA. The results are listed below:

One pickup truck containing an 5.7 liter engine towing a chipper will be traveling on average 20 miles round trip for 45 days, using a total of 4 gallons of diesel per day. The chipper will likely use an average of 32 gallons of diesel per day. A skid steer with a masticator head uses an average of 32 gallons of diesel per day. Total amount of diesel used each day will be 68 gallons, or 2880 gallons for the entire project.
About 1 gallon of a gas mixture will be used per crew for the day, using a total of 45 gallons of gasoline for the use of chainsaws.
Estimation of GHG emissions are based on total fuel consumption per day. The results are listed below:

- Net Diesel Fuel per day = 68 gallons: 68 gal*10.15 (conversion factor) = 690.2 KG/1000 = 0.6902 metric tons CO2 emissions per day
- Project total = 0.6902 metric tons of CO2 emissions per day X 45 days= 31.059 metric tons CO2 emissions for the entire project.
- Net Gasoline Fuel = 45 gallons: 45 gal* 8.18 (conversion factor) = 368.1 KG/1000=0.3681 metric tons CO2 emissions for the entire project.
- All vehicles, masticators and chippers will comply with current Air Quality Management District standards. This project may temporarily increase traffic in the area due to construction equipment. As a result, a minor increase in emissions will occur for a short duration.

Decomposition of Cut Vegetation
Vegetation in the project area is best classified as Fuel Model 10 (mixed conifer), which is estimated to have a total fuel load of 17 tons per acre. Project activities will cut approximately 70% of the total vegetation, or 11.9 tons per acre Calculations are based on the assumption that approximately half the weight of the vegetation is carbon:

- 11.9 tons/acre cut vegetation x 0.5 = 5.95 tons C/acre
- 5.95 tons C/acre x 3.67 (Carbon tones per acre conversion to CO2 Equivalent) = 21.84 tons CO2/acre
- 21.84 tons CO2/acre x 58 acres = 1266.52 tons CO2
- 1266.52 tons CO2 x 0.907185 = 1148.97 metric tons CO2e from vegetation decomposition

The proposed project will not generate significant GHG emissions due to the small size, short duration (approximately 45 days) and limited scope of the project. Greenhouse gas emissions will be emitted from the decomposition of cut vegetation, from diesel engines on the pickup truck and chipper. Due to the limited nature of the project no significant effects will occur.

Hazards and Hazardous Materials
☒ This topic does not apply to this project and was not evaluated further.
☐ This topic could apply to this project, and results of the assessment are provided below:

The project consists of chipping woody material within an area that is not listed on a hazardous materials site. There are no hazards, hazardous materials or hazardous emissions created as a result of the proposed project, other than the use of chipping equipment and chainsaw use. For the chipping equipment, all diesel fuel will be transported using appropriate containers and stored in the appropriate manner. For chainsaws, fuel and bar oil will be transported and stored in the appropriate containers. All Personal Protective Equipment will be worn by personnel, and all personnel will be properly trained in the usage of the equipment. No other exercise activity or operational conditions will expose people to impacts with regard to hazards or hazardous materials. It is RPF's determination that this project will not have negative impacts to hazardous materials.

Hydrology and Water Quality
This topic does not apply to this project and was not evaluated further.
☐ Yes ☒ No Will the project potentially affect any watercourse or body of water?
☐ This topic could apply to this project, and results of the assessment are provided below:

No riparian areas or riparian vegetation is present within the project boundaries. There will be no impacts to hydrology or water quality.

Land Use and Planning
☒ This topic does not apply to this project and was not evaluated further.
☐ This topic could apply to this project, and results of the assessment are provided below:

Land use and planning will not be impacted by this project.

Mineral Resources
☒ This topic does not apply to this project and was not evaluated further.
☐ This topic could apply to this project, and results of the assessment are provided below:

There are no mineral resources within the project area.

Noise
☐ This topic does not apply to this project and was not evaluated further.
☒ This topic could apply to this project, and results of the assessment are provided below:
The project will create a short-term increase in noise due to the operation of gas/diesel powered equipment. Operations are only scheduled during normal daylight hours. There will not be a long-term increase in noise levels as a result of this project. Due to the short project duration, it is RPF's determination that negative impacts from noise will be less than significant.

Population and Housing
☒ This topic does not apply to this project and was not evaluated further.
☐ This topic could apply to this project, and results of the assessment are provided below:
Population and housing will not be effected because of the small scale of this project.

Public Services
☒ This topic does not apply to this project and was not evaluated further.
☐ This topic could apply to this project, and results of the assessment are provided below:

This project is intended to reduce the fire risk to the public. Public services will not be effected by this project.

Recreation
☒ This topic does not apply to this project and was not evaluated further.
☐ This topic could apply to this project, and results of the assessment are provided below:

It is RPF's determination that this project will not have an impact to recreation. The parcels are privately owned and the road is used to access the private parcels.

Transportation/Traffic

☐ This topic does not apply to this project and was not evaluated further.

☒ This topic could apply to this project, and results of the assessment are provided below:

It is anticipated that this project will utilize the following equipment: passenger vehicles, tow vehicle with chipper, and tow vehicle with trailers. Most traffic will occur at the beginning of the project, as the equipment is moved into place, and at the end of the project, when the equipment is removed. The day-to-day traffic will only consist of passenger vehicles. This project may create short-term increases in traffic on the local road adjacent to the project area, however it is intended to assist ingress/egress into the properties during emergencies, and will provide for better sight distances upon completion. Upon completion of the project, it is RPF's determination that negative impacts to transportation/traffic will be less than significant.

Utilities and Service Systems

☒ This topic does not apply to this project and was not evaluated further.

☐ This topic could apply to this project, and results of the assessment are provided below:

All utility and service systems will be protected.

Changes Made to Avoid Environmental Impacts: None

Mandatory Findings of Significance:	**YES**	**NO**
(a) Does the project have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal, or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?	☐	☒
(b) Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probably future projects)	☐	☒
(c) Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?	☐	☒

Justification for Use of a Categorical Exemption (discuss why the project is exempt, cite exemption number(s), and describe how the project fits the class):
This project meets the requirements of Class 4 Categorical Exemption (Minor Alterations to Land), 15304. 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. This project as proposed consists of chipping and does not remove healthy, mature, or scenic trees. The chipping activities are best described as minor in scope.
Review by CAL FIRE staff and Tim Morin, RPF, confirmed that no exceptions apply which would preclude the use of a "Notice of Exemption" for this project. The Department has concluded that no significant environmental impacts would occur to aesthetics, agriculture and forestland/timberland, air quality, biological resources, cultural resources, geology and soils, greenhouse gas emissions, hazards and hazardous materials, hydrology and water quality, land use planning, mineral resources, noise, populations and housing, public services, recreation, transportation/traffic, or to utilities and service systems.

Conclusion:

☒ After assessing potential environmental impacts and evaluating the description for the various classes of Categorical Exemptions to CEQA, CAL FIRE has determined that the project fits within one or more of the exemption classes and no exceptions exist at the project site which would preclude the use of this exemption. The Department considered the possibility of (a) sensitive location, (b) cumulative impact, (c) significant impact due to unusual circumstances, (d) impacts to scenic highways, (e) activities within a hazardous waste site, and (f) significant adverse change to the significance of a historical resource. A Notice of Exemption will be filed at the State Clearinghouse.

☐ After assessing potential environmental impacts and evaluating the description for the various classes of Categorical Exemptions to CEQA, CAL FIRE has determined that the project does not fit within the description for the various exemption classes or has found that exceptions exist at the project site which precludes the use of a Categorical Exemption for this project. Additional environmental review will be conducted and the appropriate CEQA document used may be a Negative Declaration or a Mitigated Negative Declaration.

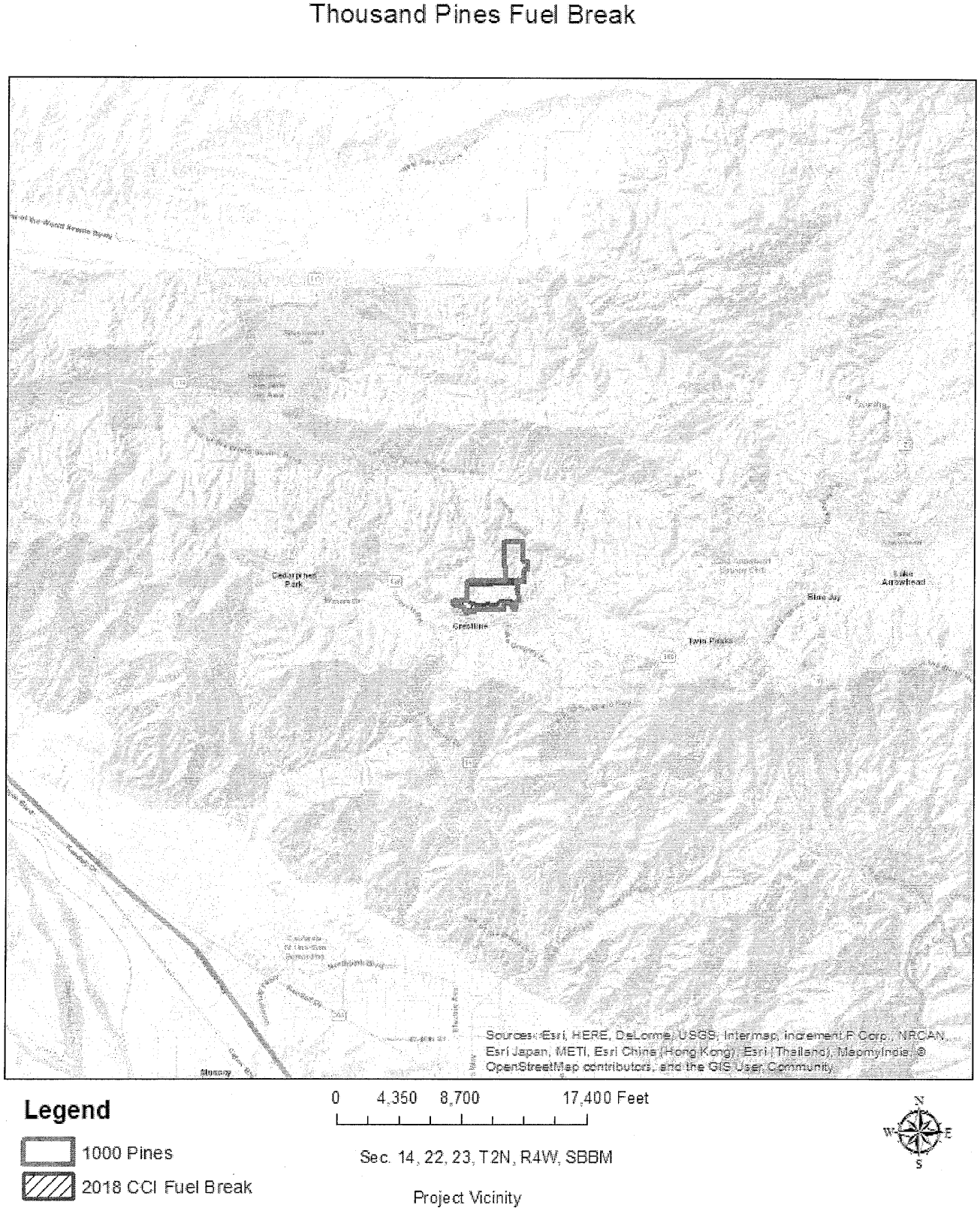

Figure 1. Project Vicinity, not to scale

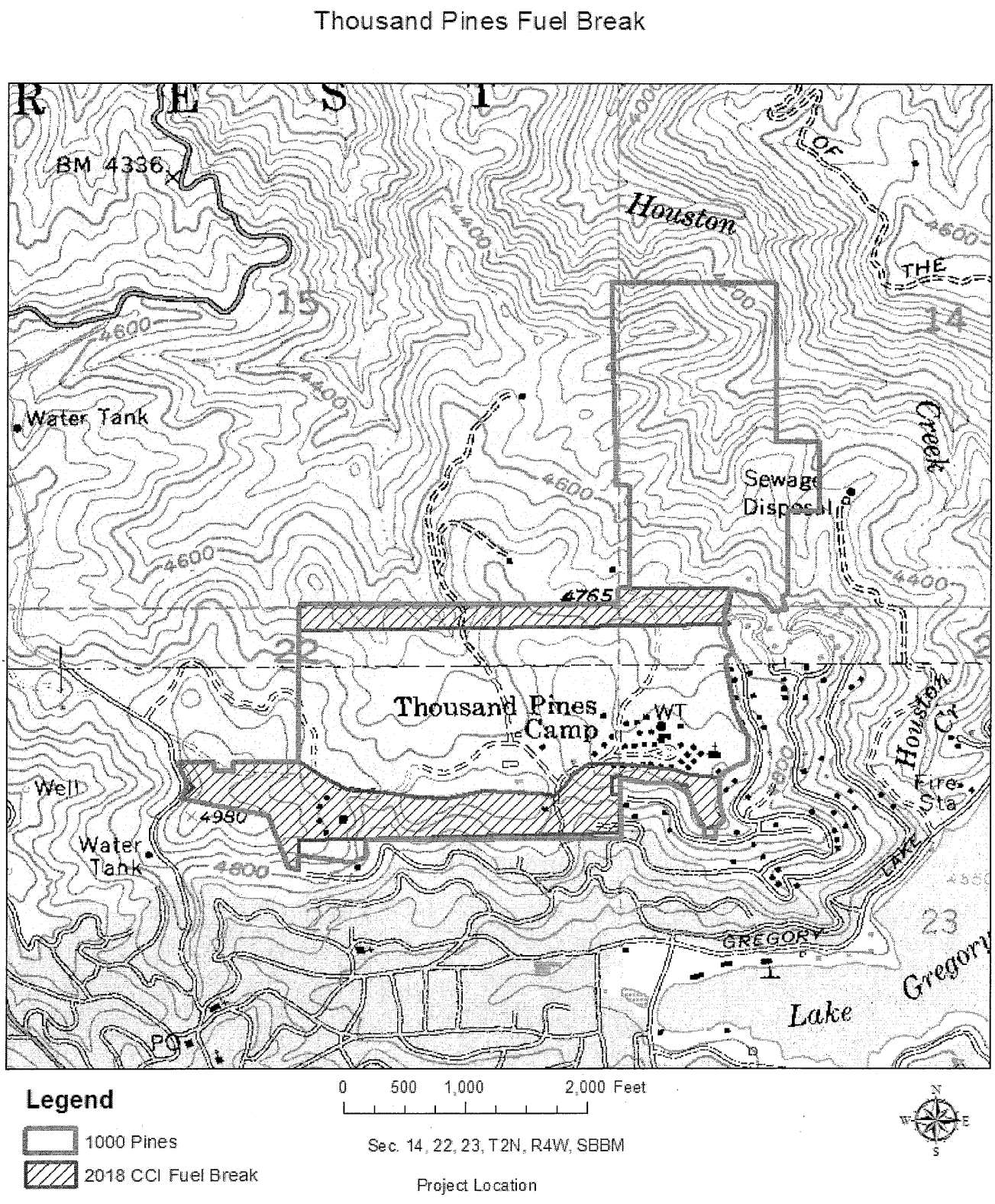

Figure 2. Project Area, not to scale

Figure 3. Picture of fuels

Figure 4. Picture of fuels