



# OLYMPIC VALLEY PUBLIC SERVICE DISTRICT



EXHIBIT F-6  
5 Pages

## EVACUATION ROUTE ROADSIDE HAZARD FUEL REDUCTION PROJECT (OV-3/S-TURNS) CEQA NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

**DATE:** August 27, 2024

**TO:** District Board Members

**FROM:** Charley Miller, General Manager; Brad Chisholm, Fire Chief;  
Jessica Asher, Program Manager

**SUBJECT:** California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Notice of Exemption

**BACKGROUND:** The District was awarded a \$50,000 grant from the TTCF's Forest Futures Program to fund fuels management on the 2.7-acre area adjacent to Olympic Valley Road at the S-Turn. This project area is dominated by young-growth Lodgepole Pine in excess of 1800 stems per acre, whereas appropriate stand density should range between 25-50 trees per acre. The existing stand density causes gradual drying of the meadow and conversion to conifer forest, and increases the vertical and horizontal continuity of hazardous fuels immediately adjacent to Olympic Valley Road, a key emergency ingress and egress route for the community.

The project was started in December 2021 by the Friends of Squaw Creek using funding from Trout Unlimited. Hand cutting and chipping was used to reduce growth on approximately 0.7 acres of the total approximately 2.7 acre project area. Additional thinning on the 0.7 acres is needed to achieve the project objective as well as full treatment on the remaining 2 acres.

Project benefits include reducing hazardous fuel loading adjacent to the community's evacuation route and within close proximity to homes, protecting the meadow system from conifer encroachment, improving access to the meadow, and increasing sun exposure on a historically shady and icy area, resulting in safer conditions on the bike path and Olympic Valley Road. The District is hopeful that the central location of the project within the community will generate additional interest in the Fuels Management Program, allowing the community to visualize the scope of tree-thinning work needed in the community.

**DISCUSSION:** The permitting process for this project includes compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The District will act as Lead Agency under CEQA pursuant to § 15367 and 15051 of Title 14, California Administrative Code. As the Lead Agency, the District has determined that this project will not have a significant effect on the environment and is thus exempt pursuant to Sections 15304 of Title 14, California Administrative Code.

Under CEQA Guidelines, the project qualifies for a Class 4, Minor Alterations to Land (Section 15304) categorical exemption, which allows minor alteration of vegetation, including fuel management activities, to reduce the volume of flammable vegetation. As detailed in the attached Notice of Exemption, the project, as designed, is consistent with the use of a Categorical Exemption. Finally, the project is to protect an emergency evacuation corridor necessary to maintain service essential to public health, safety and welfare and is thus exempt pursuant to Section 15269.

**ALTERNATIVES:**

1. Adopt Resolution 2024-27 authorizing the General Manager to execute and file a CEQA Notice of Exemption for the Project.
2. Do not adopt Resolution 2024-27

**FISCAL/RESOURCE IMPACTS:** There are no fiscal impacts associated with filing the CEQA NOE.

**RECOMMENDATIONS:** Staff recommends approval of Resolution 2024-27 authorizing the General Manager to execute and file a CEQA Notice of Exemption for the Project.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

- Resolution 2024-27 – A Resolution of the Board of Directors of the Olympic Valley Public Service District Authorizing the General Manager to Execute and File the Notice of Exemption for The Evacuation Route Roadside Hazard Fuel Reduction (OV-3) Project
- Notice of Exemption
- OV-3 Map

**DATE PREPARED:** August 23, 2024

## NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

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<b>PROJECT TITLE</b>	Evacuation Route Roadside Hazard Fuel Reduction (OV-3) Project		
<b>PROJECT LOCATION</b>	T16N, R16E, S28, MDBM	<b>COUNTY</b>	Placer
<b>LEAD AGENCY</b>	Olympic Valley Public Services District		
<b>CONTACT</b>	Charley Miller, General Manager		
<b>ADDRESS</b>	Olympic Valley Public Services District 305 Olympic Valley Rd Olympic Valley, CA. 96146	<b>PHONE</b>	(530) 583-4692

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### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed 2.7-acre project is located immediately adjacent to Olympic Valley Road within the community of Olympic Valley, California. The project area is a portion of a native upland meadow system that has been dominated by Lodgepole Pine regeneration. This conifer encroachment has established stands exceeding 1800 stems per acre with an average diameter at breast height (DBH) of 6 inches. The project area is California Wildlife Habitat Relationship (CWHR) Size 2 and 3 with a Canopy Closure M and D, meaning the project area is dominated by conifer regeneration of DBH 1" – 11" with a moderate canopy closure of 40-100%. This stand density causes gradual drying of the meadow and conversion to conifer forest, and increases the vertical and horizontal continuity of hazardous fuels immediately adjacent to Olympic Valley Road, a key emergency ingress and egress route for the community. The proposed project will remove all Lodgepole Pine less than 16" DBH from the project area utilizing a slash mat with low impact equipment and assistance from hand cutting methods. Trees greater than 16" DBH that appear free of damaging pathogen(s) will be retained as will live riparian hardwood and other riparian species. The slash mat will be removed upon completion of equipment operations. This project will ensure continuance of the native meadow system and reduce the continuity of surface and ladder fuels less than 16" (DBH) in effort to reduce hazardous fuel loading such that the flame length, intensity, rate of spread, and duration of potential wildfire is reduced.

### EXEMPTION STATUS

- Categorical Exemption Type and 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

This project fits under Categorical Exemption: 15304 Minor Alterations to Land (Class 4) which 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 waters. The pruning of residual trees will be restricted to those that reduce the vertical and horizontal continuity of fuels, and/or provide for improved ingress/egress in the event of wildfire. The proposed project has been designed to protect hydrology and water and soil resources to prevent significant erosion or sedimentation of waters. The project, as designed, is consistent with the use of a Categorical Exemption.

Field review confirmed that no exceptions apply that would preclude the use of a notice of exemption for this project. Environmental review consistent with California Environmental Quality Act has concluded that no significant environmental impact would occur to aesthetics, agriculture and forestland or timberland, air quality, biological resources, cultural resources, energy, 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 or traffic, utilities and service systems or to wildfire. Documentation of the environmental review completed by the Department is kept on file at the Olympic Valley Public Services District office at 305 Olympic Vly Rd, Olympic Valley, CA 96146. The Olympic Valley Public Service District Board of Directors has authorized staff to file appropriate documentation and determined on 8/27/2024 that the current fuel overgrowth poses a significant threat to the Olympic Valley Community and that it is an urgent priority to implement wildfire mitigation projects to protect life, property, and the environment from wildfire. Finally, the project is to protect an emergency evacuation corridor necessary to maintain service essential to public health, safety and welfare and is thus exempt pursuant to Section 15269.

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### DATE RECEIVED FOR FILING

[insert name]

**RESOLUTION 2024-27**

**A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE  
OLYMPIC VALLEY PUBLIC SERVICE DISTRICT  
AUTHORIZING THE GENERAL MANAGER TO EXECUTE  
AND FILE THE NOTICE OF EXEMPTION FOR THE  
EVACUATION ROUTE ROADSIDE HAZARD FUEL REDUCTION (OV-3) PROJECT**

**WHEREAS**, the Olympic Valley Public Service District (District) is a public agency organized pursuant to California Water Code §30000, et seq; and

**WHEREAS**, the Evacuation Route Roadside Hazard Fuel Reduction (OV-3) Project will reduce the continuity of surface and ladder fuels to reduce fuel loading and arrangement such that the flame length, intensity, rate of spread, and duration of potential wildfire is reduced; and

**WHEREAS**, the project is designed to be consistent with the use of categorical exemption 15304 Minor Alterations to Land (Class 4) which allows for minor alteration of vegetation, including fuel management activities to reduce the volume of flammable vegetation; and

**WHEREAS**, the current fuel overgrowth poses a significant threat to the Olympic Valley Community and is an urgent priority to implement wildfire mitigation projects to protect life, property, and environment from wildfire; and

**WHEREAS**, the District is acting as Lead Agency for the OV-4 Fuel Reduction Project (Project) under the California Public Resources Code §21000, et seq, (CEQA); and

**WHEREAS**, the District as Lead Agency has determined that the Project does not have a significant effect on the environment and is exempt pursuant to §15269 and 15304 of Title 14, California Code of Regulations.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Board of Directors of the Olympic Valley Public Service District hereby directs the General Manager to execute and file the attached Notice of Exemption on the grounds that said project is exempt from CEQA. The contents of said Notice of Exemption shall be filed with Governor's Office of Planning and Research State Clearinghouse and the Placer County Clerk's Office.

**PASSED AND ADOPTED** this 27<sup>th</sup> day of August, 2024 at a regular meeting of the Board of Directors of the Olympic Valley Public Service District, by the following vote on roll call:

AYES: Director Cox, Hover-Smoot, Hudson, Ilfeld, Smolen  
NOES: None  
ABSENT: None  
ABSTAIN: None

APPROVED:

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Dale Cox, Board President

ATTEST:


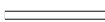

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Jessica Asher, Board Secretary

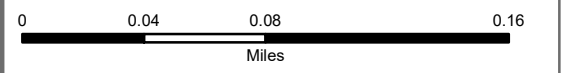
Map of Project Area Details:  
 - Project Area does not include WBBZ.  
 - Paved Bike Path will be used for landing.  
 - Project does not include watercourse crossings or over the snow skid trail crossings.



Washeshu Creek, Class I Watercourse

**Olympic Valley "S Turns" Fuel Reduction Project  
 Project Detail Map  
 T16N, R16E, S28, MDBM**

-  S Turns Project Area
-  Paved Bike Path
-  Existing Road, Permanent, Public



1:4,000  
 1 inch = 333 feet



Feather River Forestry LLC  
 Danielle Bradfield, RPF #2808  
 PO Box 1411  
 Quincy, CA. 95971