



NOTICE OF DETERMINATION

FROM: Marin County Parks and Open Space District
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TO: **Office of Planning and Research**
PO Box 3044
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1400 Tenth Street, Room 113
Sacramento, CA 95814

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

Filing of Notice of Determination in compliance with Section 21108 or 21152 of the Public Resources Code

Date:	July 25, 2023	FILED 7/25/2023 SHELLY SCOTT MARIN COUNTY CLERK By O. Lobato, Deputy 21 - 2023 - 175
CEQA Lead Agency:	California Board of Forestry and Fire Protection	
CEQA Responsible Agency:	Marin County Parks and Open Space District	
State Clearinghouse Number:	2019012052	
Project Title:	Greater Novato Shaded Fuel Break	
Project Location (include county):	Ignacio Valley, Indian Valley, Little Mountain, Loma Verde, Mt. Burdell, Pacheco Valle, Rush Creek, and Verissimo Hills Open Space Preserves; Marin County	

Background: The California Board of Forestry and Fire Protection (Board of Forestry) was the CEQA Lead Agency for the California Vegetation Treatment Program’s Programmatic Environmental Impact Report (CalVTP PEIR), which directs implementation of vegetation treatments within the State Responsibility Area (SRA) and for which a Notice of Determination was filed on December 30, 2019. Consistency with the CalVTP PEIR is demonstrated through preparation of a Project Specific Analysis (PSA) analyzing proposed activities by the project proponent. ¹ Proposed projects must overlap the “treatable landscape” as defined by CalFire and may extend beyond the treatable landscape and remain consistent with treatment types and treatment activities covered by the CalVTP PEIR, in which case the project proponent may prepare a joint PSA and Addendum to the CalVTP PEIR.

The Marin Wildlife Prevention Authority (MWPA) is a joint powers authority created for the purpose of funding, planning, and implementing wildfire risk reduction activities in cooperation with its 17 member agencies and is also providing funding and support for the project. The Novato Fire District proposed a MWPA Core Project, referred to as the Greater Novato Shaded Fuel Break project (project). The MWPA met with CalFire staff who confirmed that the project and the approach of conducting CEQA analysis through a PSA and PEIR Addendum were consistent with the CalVTP PEIR process. The MWPA coordinated with the Novato Fire Department and the MCOSD to define the project and as a Project Proponent, prepared a PSA and Addendum to the CalVTP PEIR consistent with CEQA and the process outlined in the CalVTP PEIR. The MWPA Board of Directors adopted Resolution 2023-008 on April 20, 2023 that the project qualifies as an activity within the scope of the CalVTP and PEIR and adopted the Findings of Fact and Statement of Overriding Considerations, the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Plan, and approved the project. The MWPA filed a Notice of Determination on the PSA after their Board’s approval. The project would be implemented on private and public lands including lands managed by the Marin County Open Space District (MCOSD), and therefore the MCOSD is a Project Proponent as defined in the CalVTP PEIR and is a Responsible Agency pursuant to CEQA. The MCOSD’s Board of Directors adopted Findings of Fact and Statement of Overriding Considerations, the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Plan, and approved the portion of the project on MCOSD open space preserves. The MCOSD is filing this Notice of Determination in the capacity of a CEQA Responsible Agency and Project Proponent utilizing the CalVTP PEIR.

Location: The project would involve reducing fuel loads around the City of Novato, including the neighborhoods of North Novato, Green Point, Black Point, Bel Marin Keys, Loma Verde, St. Vincent’s, South Novato, and Indian Valley, bordering open spaces and within the WUI. The project includes land owned and/or managed by local jurisdictions, MCOSD/Marin County Parks, North Marin Water District (NMWD), and private landowners. The entire project area is serviced by the Novato Fire District. Approximately 520 acres of the project are within the MCOSD’s open space preserves including: Ignacio Valley Open Space Preserve, approximately 61 acres; Indian Valley Open Space Preserve, approximately 32 acres; Little Mountain Open Space Preserve, approximately 31 acres; Loma Verde Open Space Preserve, approximately 57 acres; Mt.

¹ For the purposes of implementing the CalVTP, a project proponent is a public agency that provides funding for vegetation treatment or has land ownership, land management, or other regulatory responsibility in the treatable landscape and is seeking to fund, authorize, or implement vegetation treatments consistent with the CalVTP. If through the Project Specific Analysis (PSA) a project proponent determines that a proposed project is within the scope of the CalVTP PEIR, then the project proponent would act as a responsible agency pursuant to CEQA. A regulatory agency seeking to use the CalVTP PEIR to issue any secondary approval or permit for vegetation treatments would also be a responsible agency.

Burdell Open Space Preserve, approximately 144 acres; Pacheco Valle Open Space Preserve, approximately 105 acres; Rush Creek Open Space Preserve, approximately 42 acres; Verissimo Hills Open Space Preserve, approximately 47 acres.

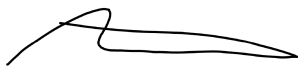
Project Description: The goal of the project is to create and maintain a continuous reduced-fuel and forest-health-restoration zone around Novato. The project would involve conducting vegetation management activities to create an approximately 60-mile-long continuous shaded fuel break. A Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) fuel reduction may also be treated. The project would involve conducting vegetation management activities to create an approximately 60-mile-long continuous shaded fuel break within a 2,123-acre area and may also include a Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) fuel reduction area consisting of 1,340 acres adjacent to the shaded fuel break to address undeveloped areas between the fuel break and structures for a total of 3,462 acres. Of the total, 1,228 acres are within the State Responsibility Area (SRA), 2,227 acres are within the Local Responsibility Area (LRA), and 8 acres are within the Federal Responsibility Area (FRA). Vegetation treatments would vary with distance from homes. The entire forest health zone is between 100 and 300 feet from structures. The shaded fuel break would create a continuous fuel break approximately 200 feet and up to 300 feet in width and would include thinning understory and invasive species removal. The WUI fuels reduction area would reduce fuels in open spaces to reduce wildfire hazards. Treatments would include manual hand thinning, ground-based mechanical treatments including mowing, grazing, targeted spot treatment with approved herbicide, pile burning, and broadcast burning. The project would restore the treatment areas to a more natural, health, and fire-adapted condition, reducing accumulated ground and ladder fuels, dead, and downed woody debris. Width and intensity of treatment would vary based on locations of hazards such as existing dry brush piles or dense stands of dead vegetation. Treatments in areas up to 150 feet of structures may include higher intensity fuel reduction typical of defensible space with a focus on vertical and horizontal spacing in addition to removal of invasive species, dead, and dying vegetation. Treatment areas between 150 and 300 feet of structures may be lower intensity, with a focus on removal of invasive and non-native, fire hazardous vegetation, removal of dead and dying vegetation, and limbing of native trees to mimic conditions that might exist in an environment where fires were allowed to occur naturally. Maintenance of treatment areas with similar methods would occur every one to five years depending on vegetation type and conditions on the ground. The project area includes oak and mixed woodland, grasslands, and shrub vegetation communities and treatments would vary by vegetation community. Healthy, mature native trees would typically be left intact unless removal were required due to structural or health defects that place infrastructure or lives at risk or if tree densities pose a fire hazard risk. Implementation of the project on lands owned and managed by the MCOSD would be permitted by MCOSD through a right-to-enter agreement in coordination with the Novato Fire Department and associated fire agencies who are leading and managing the project with the MWPA. Implementation of the project is expected to begin in August 2023.

This is to advise that the MCOSD, as a Responsible Agency through the MCOSD Board of Directors, has approved the above-described project on JULY 25, 2023 and has made the following determinations regarding the above-described project.

1. The project [will will not] have a significant effect on the environment.
2. An Environmental Impact Report was prepared for this project pursuant to the provisions of CEQA.
 A Project Specific Analysis and Addendum to the CalVTP PEIR was prepared for this project pursuant to the provisions of CEQA.
3. Mitigations measures [were were not] made a condition of the approval of the project.
4. A mitigation reporting or monitoring plan [was was not] adopted for this project
5. A Statement of Overriding Considerations [was was not] adopted for this project.
6. Findings [were were not] made pursuant to the provisions of CEQA.

This is to certify that the final Project Specific Analysis and Addendum to the CalVTP PEIR, with comments and responses and record of project approval, and the associated CalVTP PEIR, is available to the General Public at the Marin Wildfire Prevention Authority administrative office located at 28 Liberty Ship Way, Ste 2800; Sausalito, CA 94965.

Signature:



**Max Korten, Director and General Manager
Marin County Parks and Open Space District**

Date: July 25, 2023

Contact: Michelle Julene, Senior Regulatory Open Space Planner at mjulene@marincounty.org or 415.444.6740