



## Notice of Exemption

**To:** Office of Planning and Research  
1400 Tenth Street, Room 121  
Sacramento, CA 95814  
&  
SLO County Clerk

**From:** Coastal San Luis RCD  
1203 Main Street, Suite B  
Morro Bay, CA 93420  
(805) 772-4391  
[salvarez@coastalrkd.org](mailto:salvarez@coastalrkd.org)

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**Project Title:** Oak woodland improvement on Avila Beach Drive

**Project Applicant:** Coastal San Luis Resource Conservation District

**Project Location:** 615 Avila Beach Drive, San Luis Obispo, CA 93405. See Attachment 1.

**SCH#:**

**Project Location- City:** Unincorporated

**County:** San Luis Obispo

**Description and Purpose of Project:** The purpose of the project is to implement forest improvement practices at a site in Avila Beach to improve the longevity of stands and increase fire resilience and climate change adaptation. Improvements include tree pruning, chipping, mastication, bucking, and other similar or suitable forest improvement practices approved by the lead agency.

**Public Agency Approving Project and Carrying out Project:** The Coastal San Luis Resource Conservation District will carry out the project with willing landowners. The California Association of Resource Conservation Districts approved grant funds for the above-described project.

**Categorical Exempt Status:**

Class 4 (Sec 15304)

**Reasons why the project is exempt:**

This project involves minor alterations to land, specifically focusing on vegetation management for forestry purposes. The primary goal is to enhance the forest's fire resilience and its ability to adapt to climate change. As part of this initiative, we will implement management tactics aimed at reducing fuel loads, thereby improving fire resilience.

The project includes the removal of trees, primarily for thinning, in alignment with the exemption's allowance for sustainable and managed forestry practices. It's important to note that the removal will not target healthy, mature, or scenic trees. This approach is consistent with the intent of the exemption and supports the project's goals of enriching forest health, conserving habitats, and mitigating wildfire risks—all integral aspects of the exemption objectives.



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By strictly adhering to the conditions outlined, such as ensuring environmentally compatible activities, limiting grading and tree removal to forestry purposes, and conducting responsible fuel management, this forestry project qualifies for the exemption and aims to create a more resilient and healthier forest ecosystem  
See Attachment 2

**Contact Person:** *Samantha Alvarez*

**Title:** *Restoration Project Manager*

*Signature*

*5/9/25*

*Date*

*Date received for filing with OPR:* \_\_\_\_\_

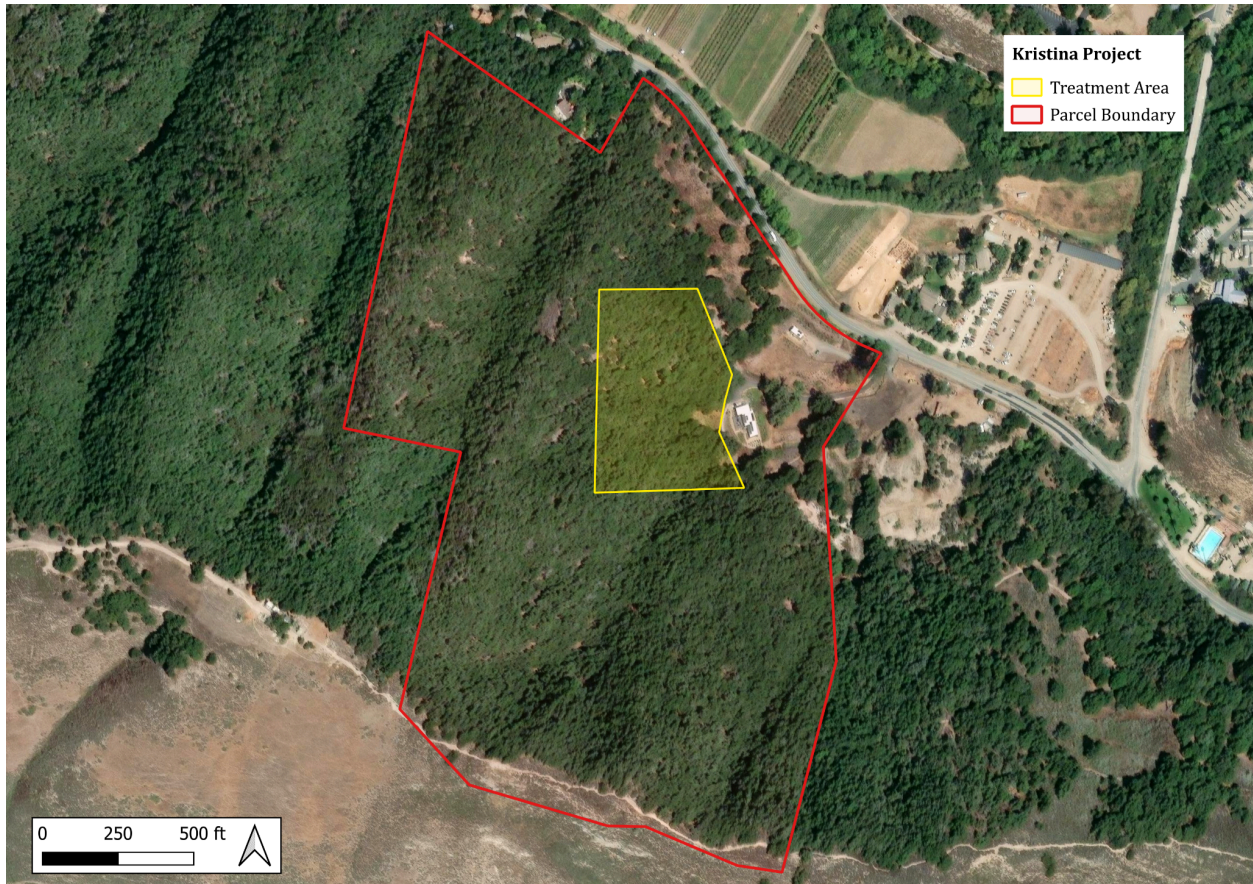


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## ATTACHMENT 1.





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## ATTACHMENT 2.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW FOR CATEGORICAL EXEMPTION		
<b>Project Applicant:</b> Coastal San Luis Resource Conservation District		
<b>Project Name:</b> Oak woodland improvement on Avila Beach Drive		
<b>Lead Agency:</b> Coastal San Luis Resource Conservation District		
<b>Description:</b> The purpose of the project is to implement forest improvement practices at a site in Avila Beach to improve the longevity of stands and increase fire resilience and climate change adaptation. Improvements include: tree thinning, tree limbing, chipping, mastication, and bucking; and other similar or suitable forest improvement practices that are approved by the lead agency.		
<b>Environmental Setting:</b> The project would occur in an oak woodland located in Avila Beach, California.		
Exemption Qualifications	Applicable Items	Supporting Information or Explanations
Class 4 Minor Land Alteration	X	Minor alterations in the condition of vegetation for the purpose of forestry and fire resilience.
Federal Statutes/Critical Concerns	Applicable Items	Supporting Information or Explanations
Agricultural Land	NA	The Project will not impact agricultural land.
Air Quality Regulations	NA	Construction of MPs may require the use of equipment for short durations. Due to the small size of the project, it is expected that air quality impacts will be insignificant and not expected to trigger any air quality permit thresholds. The majority of equipment travel will be on paved roads.
Archaeological/Historical	NA	The project will result in minimal to zero ground disturbance. No archaeological or historical sites are known to exist. In the event that an archeological site is found, work will stop immediately until a qualified professional reviews the site.
Coastal Zone	NA	The project site is within the coastal zone. The project will result in minimal to zero ground disturbance and zero loss to open space. To address impacts on coastal habitat and resources, mitigation measures for endangered species will be implemented.
Endangered Species	X	A review of the California Natural Diversity Database identified a list of potentially sensitive species. We will mitigate for both federally listed threatened and endangered species (T&E) and their critical habitats within the project area. To address impacts on birds, mitigation measures include scheduling work outside the nesting season or conducting nesting bird surveys if within the nesting season prior to construction for species like the California Condor, California Least Tern, California Ridgway's Rail, Least Bell's Vireo, Marbled Murrelet, Western Snowy Plover, and Yellow-billed Cuckoo. Additionally, a biologist will monitor insects, reptiles, and amphibians, such as the Monarch Butterfly, Southwestern Pond Turtle, California Red-legged Frog, Foothill Yellow-legged Frog, and Western Spadefoot prior to any work on the site. In the event that sensitive species are identified during the field survey, an appropriate biologist will be present during activities to



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		<p>monitor and relocate the species as necessary. If any sensitive species are found, those areas will be flagged and buffered according to the recommended guidelines for the specific species. Activities may also be avoided in those areas to ensure the protection of the identified species.</p> <p>The project will not affect the following plant species: Spreading Navarretia, Gambel's Watercress, Chorro Creek Bog Thistle, Indian Knob Mountainbalm, Morro Manzanita, Pismo Clarkia, Salt Marsh Bird's-beak, and California Jewelflower. A plant survey will be conducted one week prior to project installation to identify any sensitive plants on the project site. The project site is located outside the suitable habitat of the Southwestern Pond Turtle and Vernal Pool Fairy Shrimp, ensuring that there will be no impact on these species..</p>
Flood Plain	NA	The project will not occur within or impact adjacent floodplains.
National Forest	NA	There is no national forest within the project area.
Wetlands	NA	The project will not impact wetlands.
Wild and Scenic Rivers	NA	There are no wild and scenic rivers within the project area.
<b>Unusual Circumstances</b>	<b>Applicable Items</b>	<b>Supporting Information or Explanations</b>
Biological Resources	NA	<p>No unusual circumstances (including future activities) resulting in (or which might reasonably result in) significant impacts that threaten the environment.</p>
Cumulative Impacts	NA	
Climate	NA	
Erosion/Sedimentation Control	NA	
Flooding/Drainage	NA	
Geologic/Seismic	NA	
Groundwater	NA	
Growth Inducement	NA	
Health and Safety	NA	
Noise	NA	
Open Space	NA	
Public Services	NA	
Recreation	NA	
Scenic Attributes	NA	
Soils	NA	
Topography	NA	
Toxic/Hazardous Materials	NA	
Water Quality	NA	
Water Supply	NA	






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CATEGORICAL EXEMPTION FINDINGS			
APPLICANT	EXEMPTION CLASS	PROJECT NO.	DATE
Coastal San Luis RCD	Class 4		1/9/25
<b>PROJECT TITLE:</b> Oak woodland improvement on Avila Beach Drive			
<b>CATEGORICAL EXEMPTION QUALIFICATIONS</b>			
1. Is there a reasonable possibility that the project will have a significant effect on the environment due to unusual circumstances?		YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNDETERMINED <input type="checkbox"/>	
2. If a Class 4 exemption, will the project involve condition of land, water, and/or vegetation which do not involve removal of healthy, mature, scenic trees except for forestry or agricultural purposes?		YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> NA <input type="checkbox"/> UNDETERMINED <input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>FINDING</b>			
Based on the preceding findings and attached worksheet, it has been determined that this project is exempt from CEQA (pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Sections 15304, Class 4).			
<b>Environmental Scientist: Samantha Alvarez</b>			
<b>Signature</b> 		<b>Date: 5/9/25</b>	