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5/14/2025

Contra Costa County Clerk  
P.O. Box 350  
Martinez, CA 94553

**SUBJECT:** NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

**PROJECT TITLE:** Carquinez Strait Regional Shoreline, Post Scenic Fire Resiliency Project

**LEAD AGENCY/  
APPLICANT:** East Bay Regional Park District  
Attn: Jason Rosenburg  
2950 Peralta Oaks Ct.  
Oakland, CA 94605  
Telephone: 888-327-2757

**PROJECT LOCATION:** The project is in Carquinez Strait Regional Shoreline (Carquinez Strait), a portion of one parcel (APN 368-150-003).

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION:** On June 22, 2022 the Scenic Fire sparked near the Bull Valley Staging Area of Carquinez Strait, on Carquinez Scenic Drive near the town of Crockett, CA. A southwest breeze quickly spread the fire through the staging area and into the park. The fire entered a dense and overgrown eucalyptus plantation, and burned with high severity through over 100 acres on East Bay Regional Park District (Park District), private, and county lands. The fire was stopped before it could enter the town of Port Costa, to the north of Carquinez Strait In 2023, the Park District mitigated the burn area by removing the burned trees and initiating a restoration project re-introducing native habitats to the burn scar.

The Park District proposes to expand the fuels reduction project at Carquinez Strait. The project area is 4 acres, split between a 2.3-acre western section and a 1.7-acre eastern section.

The project would remove approximately 4 acres of eucalyptus trees, at a density of approximately 20 trees per acre. The majority of trees are multi-stemmed: multiple stems originating from one common stump/root system at ground level. Approximately 60% of the stems are under 12” diameter at breast height (dbh), thirty percent are 12-24” dbh, and ten percent above 24” dbh. For the purpose of this proposal, “trees” is defined as originating from one common stump/root system and stems are defined as trunks diameter at breast height (DBH) greater than 6 inches diameter. No native trees would be removed.

The project area would then be restored with a suite of oak woodland, grassland / forbland, and ephemeral riparian species.. The bulk of the restoration activities would occur after the removal of the eucalyptus, with at least one more year of intensive monitoring and maintenance to ensure restoration success. Future restoration will be conducted as funds become available.

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The vegetation management work is scheduled to begin in August and is expected to take approximately 3 weeks, at eight hours per day, five days per week. The work will be performed by a tree contractor and overseen by the Park District Fire and Stewardship Departments. The trees will be felled by chainsaw and/or feller buncher. Small debris will be chipped and broadcast on-site with a track chipper, masticated in place, or piled for burning. Larger logs will be forwarded to a landing via skidder and removed from the site via log trucks.

Both sections would be accessed from a Park District service road via Bull Valley Staging Area to the west located on Carquinez Scenic Drive. The Bull Valley Trail and Carquinez Overlook Loop Trail would both be used to move equipment and felled trees around/off the site.

The restoration project will be completed by a combination of the Park District stewardship department, contractors, and volunteers. The restoration project will be conducted over two years, with plant installation occurring until 2026. Ongoing maintenance will be conducted as needed to establish vegetation.

**DETERMINATION:** The Park District has reviewed the proposed project activities, along with its environmental setting and has determined it to be exempt from California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requirements under *Article 19, Categorical Exemptions*, of the State CEQA Guidelines in the California Administrative Code:

- **Section 15304 – Class 4 Minor Alterations to Land:** The Class 4 exception applies to “minor public or private alterations in the condition of land, water, and/or vegetation which do not involve the removal of healthy, mature, scenic trees except for forestry or agricultural purposes.” The project would remove dense and overgrown eucalyptus trees in a 4-acre area. The Park District has determined that this is a minor removal of trees when considered across Carquinez Strait and the Park District as a whole. Therefore, the project is exempt under Class 4.
- **Section 15307 – Class 7 Actions By Regulatory Agencies For Protection of Natural Resources:** The Class 7 exception allows public agencies to take actions that would protect natural resources. The project would remove dense, overgrown, and highly flammable trees that, if left untreated, present a clear fire danger to the surrounding park and community. An uncontrolled wildfire in Carquinez Strait Regional Shoreline could destroy the natural resources of the park. Removal of the trees will lessen the risk of devastating wildfire, protecting the parks natural resources. Therefore, the project is exempt under Class 7.
- **Section 15308 – Class 8 Actions by Regulatory Agencies for the Protection of the Environment:** The Class 8 exception allows public agencies to take actions that would benefit the environment. The project would remove dense, overgrown, and highly flammable trees that otherwise untreated present a clear fire danger to the surrounding park. While fire can be good and natural for some ecosystems, this most often applies to low ground fires which clear the forest floor of debris. Dense and overgrown trees allow the fire to climb into the tree canopy and make wildfires more dangerous and more challenging to control. An uncontrolled wildfire in Carquinez Strait Regional Shoreline would have the potential to destroy the park’s environment. The removal of the dead and dying standing fuels serves to lessen the likelihood of wildfire, protecting the environment (U.S Department of Agriculture, 2003). Therefore, the project is exempt under Class 8.

- **Section 15333 – Class 33 Small Habitat Restoration Projects:** The Class 33 exception applies to small habitat restoration projects that do not exceed five acres in size and “assure the maintenance, restoration, enhancement, or protection of habitat for fish, plants, or wildlife.” The project will restore native habitats to approximately 4 acres within Carquinez Strait Regional Shoreline, increasing habitat function for local and migrating birds as well as a host of other wildlife. The project would have no impact on endangered, rare, or threatened species or their habitat, and no hazardous materials are located on site. Therefore, the project is exempt under Class 33.




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Signed by: Brian Holt, Division Lead of the  
Planning, Trails, Cultural Resources, and GIS Department  
[bholt@ebparks.org](mailto:bholt@ebparks.org)

## **References**

U.S Department of Agriculture (2003). Influence of Forest Structure on Wildfire Behavior and the Severity of Its Effects.



Scenic Site: Phase 2: Remove eucalyptus and restore native habitat






# Post Scenic Fire Resiliency NOE

Final Audit Report

2025-05-14

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