

Notice of Exemption

44-08202025-1028 Appendix E

To: Office of Planning and Research
P.O. Box 3044, Room 113
Sacramento, CA 95812-3044

County Clerk

County of: Santa Cruz
701 Ocean St #310

Santa Cruz, CA 95060

From: (Public Agency): Pajaro Regional Flood Management Agency
701 Ocean St, Room 410
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

(Address)

109-25

Project Title: Pajaro River, Salsipuedes and Corralitos Creeks |2025 Debris, Vegetation and Fuel Reduction

Project Applicant: Pajaro Regional Flood Management Agency (PRFMA)

Project Location - Specific:

Pajaro River channel and levees from Murphy's Crossing to the Pacific Ocean, Corralitos

Project Location - City: N/A

Project Location - County: Santa Cruz & Monterey

Description of Nature, Purpose and Beneficiaries of Project:

The project is proposed to protect public safety and private property from hazards associated with illegal encampments and vegetation overgrowth (i.e., reduced river capacity), protect property from damage that is being caused by nuisance trees, and prevent the spread of invasive weeds and non-native trees within the river corridor. The project includes hand-pulling weeds, tree pruning, removal of hazardous and nuisance trees (invasives or that impact the normal function of levee system), and removal of temporary structures and associated debris associated with dispersed illegal encampments along the river corridor. The work would prevent the spread of invasive plants, minimize hazards from dropped limbs, trunk failure, and fire, prevent damage to private property, and promote effective maintenance & operation of the river corridor. Crews would use chain saws and hand tools to complete the work, leaving the stumps in place and chipping downed trunks and limbs. Abandoned encampment property will be properly collected and disposed of at land fill facilities in accordance with their respective policies. Laydown areas would be provided by the project applicant (Pajaro Regional Flood Management Agency). Access roads would be provided by the local agencies public roads (City of Watsonville, County of Monterey, and County of Santa Cruz). Best Management Practices (BMPs) have been incorporated into the project design.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: Pajaro Regional Flood Management Agency

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: Pajaro Regional Flood Management Agency

Exempt Status: (check one):

- ☐ Ministerial (Sec. 21080(b)(1); 15268);
- ☐ Declared Emergency (Sec. 21080(b)(3); 15269(a));
- ☐ Emergency Project (Sec. 21080(b)(4); 15269(b)(c));
- ☒ Categorical Exemption. State type and section number: §15304; Class 4, "Minor Alterations to Land"
- ☐ Statutory Exemptions. State code number: _____

Reasons why project is exempt:

The proposed Project would address the removal of vegetative overgrowth within the understory of the lower channel bank, upper channel bank, and inner channel bench along the Pajaro River, Salsipuedes Creek, and Corralitos Creek. Natural regrowth within the project area has occurred and promoted suitable areas for the establishment of illegal encampments near the waterway. The removal of illegal encampments and associated abandoned structures, debris, and other miscellaneous materials will promote a more environmentally sustainable and healthy landscape for the river system and wildlife. To reduce the likelihood of illegal encampments re-establishing along the river corridor, vegetation trimming shall be conducted within the understory to manage regrowth. Furthermore, the proposed project meets the requirements of CEQA Guidelines §15306 and is eligible for a CE.

"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 or agricultural purposes."

None of the conditions noted under the CEQA Guidelines §15300.2 will occur.

Lead Agency

Contact Person: Forrest Revere, PRFMA

Area Code/Telephone/Extension: 831-345-8128

If filed by applicant:

1. Attach certified document of exemption finding.
2. Has a Notice of Exemption been filed by the public agency approving the project? Yes No

Signature: Forrest Revere Date: 8/20/25 Title: Environmental Program Manager

• Signed by Lead Agency Signed by Applicant

Authority cited: Sections 21083 and 21110, Public Resources Code.
Reference: Sections 21108, 21152, and 21152.1, Public Resources Code.



Date Received for filing at OPR: _____

THIS NOTICE HAS BEEN POSTED AT THE CLERK
OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OFFICE FOR A

PERIOD COMMENCING 8/20 2025

AND ENDING 9/25 2025
Revised 2020



State of California - Department of Fish and Wildlife
**2025 ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENT FILING FEE
CASH RECEIPT**
DFW 753.5a (REV. 01/01/25) Previously DFG 753.5a

Print

StartOver

Save

RECEIPT NUMBER:

44-08202025-128

STATE CLEARINGHOUSE NUMBER (if applicable)

SEE INSTRUCTIONS ON REVERSE. TYPE OR PRINT CLEARLY.

LEAD AGENCY Pajaro Regional Flood Management Agency	LEAD AGENCY EMAIL	DATE 8/20/2025
COUNTY/STATE AGENCY OF FILING Santa Cruz	DOCUMENT NUMBER 109-25	
PROJECT TITLE		

Pajaro River, Salispuedes & Corralitos Creeks/2025 Debris, Veg & Fuel Reduction

PROJECT APPLICANT NAME Pajaro Regional Flood Management Agency	PROJECT APPLICANT EMAIL	PHONE NUMBER 831-345-8128
PROJECT APPLICANT ADDRESS 701 Ocean St., Room 410	CITY Santa Cruz	STATE CA
		ZIP CODE 95060

PROJECT APPLICANT (Check appropriate box)

☐ Local Public Agency ☐ School District ☒ Other Special District ☐ State Agency ☐ Private Entity

CHECK APPLICABLE FEES:

- | | | |
|---|----|--------------|
| ☐ Environmental Impact Report (EIR) | \$ | |
| ☐ Mitigated/Negative Declaration (MND)(ND) | \$ | |
| ☐ Certified Regulatory Program (CRP) document - payment due directly to CDFW | \$ | 0.00 |
|
 | | |
| ☐ Exempt from fee | | |
| ☒ Notice of Exemption (attach) | | |
| ☐ CDFW No Effect Determination (attach) | | |
| ☐ Fee previously paid (attach previously issued cash receipt copy) | | |
|
 | | |
| ☐ Water Right Application or Petition Fee (State Water Resources Control Board only) | \$ | 0.00 |
| ☒ County documentary handling fee | | 50.00 |
| ☐ Other #460828 Check 338 | \$ | |

PAYMENT METHOD:

☐ Cash ☐ Credit ☒ Check ☐ Other

TOTAL RECEIVED \$ **50.00**

SIGNATURE 	AGENCY OF FILING PRINTED NAME AND TITLE Lori Welch Bettencourt, Admin. Aide Clerk of the Board
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PAJARO REGIONAL FLOOD MANAGEMENT AGENCY

To: Santa Cruz County
Clerks Office
701 Ocean St Rm 310
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

From: Pajaro Regional Flood Management Agency
701 Ocean St, Rm 410
Santa Cruz CA 95060
Telephone (831) 345-8128

Project Title: Pajaro River, Salsipuedes and Corralitos Creeks |2025 Debris, Vegetation and Fuel Reduction

Project Location–Specific: Pajaro River channel and levees from Murphy’s Crossing to the Pacific Ocean, Corralitos Creek channel from Green Valley Road to East Lake Ave/Highway 152, Salsipuedes Creek channel and levees from East Lake Ave/Highway 152 to the confluence of Pajaro River and Salsipuedes Creek; Assessor’s Parcel Number: N/A

Project Location-City: Unincorporated

Project Location-County: Santa Cruz/Monterey

Project Purpose: The 2025 Debris, Vegetation, and Fuel Reduction Project is proposed to abate illegal encampments along the river corridor and perform vegetation trimming maintenance.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: Pajaro Regional Flood Management Agency

Name of Agency or Person Carrying Out Project: Pajaro Regional Flood Management Agency

Exempt Status: (*check one*)

- ☐ Ministerial [Sec. 21080(b)(1); 15268];
- ☐ Declared Emergency [Sec. 21080(b)(3); 15269(a)];
- ☐ Emergency Project [Sec. 21080(b)(c); 15269(b)(c)];
- ☒ Categorical Exemptions [§15304, Minor Alterations to Land]
- ☐ Statutory Exemptions.

Reasons Why Project is Exempt: The proposed Project would address the removal of vegetative overgrowth within the understory of the lower channel bank, upper channel bank, and inner channel bench along the Pajaro River, Salsipuedes Creek, and Corralitos Creek. Natural regrowth within the project area has occurred and promoted suitable areas for the establishment of illegal encampments near the waterway. The removal of illegal encampments and associated abandoned structures, debris, and other miscellaneous materials will promote a more environmentally sustainable and healthy landscape for the river system and wildlife. To reduce the likelihood of illegal encampments re-establishing along the river corridor, vegetation trimming shall be conducted within the understory to manage regrowth. Furthermore, the proposed project meets the requirements of CEQA Guidelines §15306 and is eligible for a CE.

“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 or agricultural purposes.”

None of the conditions noted under the CEQA Guidelines §15300.2 will occur.

Description of Project: The project is proposed to protect public safety and private property from hazards associated with illegal encampments and vegetation overgrowth (i.e., reduced river capacity), protect property from damage that is being caused by nuisance trees, and prevent the spread of invasive weeds and non-native trees within the river corridor.

The project includes hand-pulling weeds, tree pruning, removal of hazardous and nuisance trees (invasives or that impact the normal function of levee system), and removal of temporary structures and associated debris associated with dispersed illegal encampments along the river corridor. The work would prevent the spread of invasive plants, minimize hazards from dropped limbs, trunk failure, and fire, prevent damage to private property, and promote effective maintenance & operation of the river corridor. Crews would use chain saws and hand tools to complete the work, leaving the stumps in place and chipping downed trunks and limbs. Abandoned encampment property will be properly collected and disposed of at land fill facilities in accordance with their respective policies. Laydown areas would be provided by the project applicant (Pajaro Regional Flood Management Agency). Access roads would be provided by the local agencies public roads (City of Watsonville, County of Monterey, and County of Santa Cruz). Best Management Practices (BMPs) have been incorporated into the project design. The work would be completed in between 7am and 7pm in accordance with the applicable Municipal Code (City of Watsonville, County of Monterey, and County of Santa Cruz).

Monitoring Schedule

The project area would be monitored twice a year at minimum: once in July/August and once in September/October to monitor the efficacy of vegetation maintenance. An optional spring monitoring can also identify appropriate timing and gauge efficacy of the previous year's efforts.

Storing, Transport, and Spill Prevention/Cleanup of Equipment

Equipment would be stored and transported in vehicles. Prior to use, equipment would be inspected for any leaks or residue that would have the potential to enter the waterway. Staff will be trained in the appropriate use and operation of said equipment.

Lead Agency: Pajaro Regional Flood Management Agency
Contact Person: Forrest Revere

Area Code/Telephone/Extension
(831) 345-8128

Signature: Forrest Revere

Date: 8/20/25

Title: Forrest Revere
Environmental Program Manager