

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

TO: Office of Planning and Research
State Clearinghouse
CEQASubmit.opr.ca.gov
 County Assessor/Recorder/Clerk
Attn: Fish and Wildlife Notices
1600 Pacific Highway, Suite 260, MS A-33
San Diego, CA 92101

FROM: County of San Diego, Department of Public Works
Environmental Services Unit
Attn: Anissa Busch
5510 Overland Avenue, Suite 410, MS O-332
San Diego, CA 92123

SUBJECT: FILING OF NOTICE OF EXEMPTION IN COMPLIANCE WITH PUBLIC RESOURCES CODE SECTION 21108 OR 21152

Project Name: OCOTILLO AIRPORT – AIRPORT USE PERMIT TO BELGIUM DEFENSE (OA-45)
(DISTRICT: 5)

Project Location: The project is located at Ocotillo Airport in the unincorporated community of Ocotillo Wells within San Diego County, California

Project Applicant: County of San Diego, Department of Public Works, Airports Division
1960 Joe Crosson Drive, MS S-119, El Cajon, CA 92020

Project Description: The proposed action is to approve an Airport Use Permit for non-exclusive use of Ocotillo Airport (Airport) by the Belgium Defense (Air Force) Air Traffic Controllers, to conduct a runway survey, including the use of a ground drone, to inspect and take measurements of the airfield. The proposed action includes aircraft performing up to three landings on the runway. This permit approval is restricted to activities associated with the runway survey and will be limited to the runway and already developed and disturbed portions of the Airport.

Agency Approving Project: County of San Diego

County Contact Person: Jeremy Roth, Associate Real Property Agent Telephone: (619) 956-4800

Date Form Completed: March 27, 2026


This is to advise that the County of San Diego Department of Public Works (County decision-making body) has approved the above-described project on March 27, 2026 and found the project to be exempt from CEQA under the following criteria:

Exempt status and applicable section of the CEQA (“C”) and/or State CEQA Guidelines (“G”): (check only one)

- Categorical Exemption:** Sec. G 15301 - Existing Facilities
- Declared Emergency:** Sec. C 21080(b)(3); Sec. G 15269(a)
- Emergency Project:** Sec. C 21080(b)(4); Sec. G 15269(b)(c)
- General:** Sec. C.
- Ministerial:** Sec. C 21080(b)(1); G 15268
- Preliminary Review:** Sec. G
- Statutory Exemption:** Sec. G

Statement of reasons why project is exempt: Section 15301 of the State CEQA Guidelines exempts the “operation, repair, maintenance, permitting, leasing, licensing, or minor alteration of existing public or private structures, facilities, mechanical equipment, or topographical features involving negligible or no expansion of existing or former use.” The key consideration in applying this exemption is whether the proposed action involves expansion of an existing or former use. The proposed action consists of approval of the use of portions of the airport for a runway survey and associated aircraft landings. Issuance of the permit identified above will not result in an expansion of uses of existing facilities. Accordingly, the proposed action is exempt from CEQA review pursuant to Section 15301 of CEQA Guidelines.

The following is to be completed only upon formal project approval by the appropriate County of San Diego decision-making body.

Signature:  Telephone: (619) 385-7591

Name (Print): Masha Landau Title: Environmental Planner III

This Notice of Exemption has been signed and filed by the County of San Diego.

This notice must be filed with the Recorder/County Clerk as soon as possible after project approval by the decision-making body. The Recorder/County Clerk must post this notice within 24 hours of receipt and for a period of not less than 30 days. At the termination of the posting period, the Recorder/County Clerk must return this notice to the Department address listed above along with evidence of the posting period. The originating Department must then retain the returned notice for a period of not less than nine months. Reference: CEQA Guidelines Section 15062.