

Notice of Exemption

Appendix E

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

County Clerk

County of: Ventura County

Hall of Administration, Main Plaza

800 S. Victoria CA 93009

From: (Public Agency): _____
Ventura County Resource Conservation District
PO Box 147, Somis, CA 93066

(Address)

Project Title: Site Prep and Reforestation

Project Applicant: Ventura County Resource Conservation District

Project Location - Specific:

Centroid lat/longs: 34.2292, -118.97119; 34.43942, -119.18161; 34.32108, -118.94962

Project Location - City: Ojai, Moorpark, Camarillo, and Somis Project Location - County: Ventura

Description of Nature, Purpose and Beneficiaries of Project:

Ventura County RCD plans to plant 4000 native trees and 2180 native companion plants within degraded oak and riparian sites. The purpose of this project is to restore native tree canopy to areas that were historically covered in riparian and oak forest. Oak woodland sites have lost tree canopy from 21 century wildfires (i.e. Thomas Fire) and from oak logging that occurred between 1800-1950's, particularly Valley oak logging in upper Ojai. Valley oak woodlands were cut down to make way for non-native walnut orchards. This project seeks to restore valley oak and coast live oak trees to these sites. Riparian forests have been degraded as a result of Arundo donax, a non-native invasive bamboo like plant. This project will include staking native willow, cottonwood, and sycamore tree plantings into upland riparian banks to increase soil stabilization and restore native tree species canopy to areas that were historically native riparian forest. Beneficiaries of this project will include human residents, native birds, deer, and various other organisms that rely on native oak and riparian forests of Ventura County.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: Ventura County Resource Conservation District

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: Kevin Mason

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: Section 15304, Minor Alterations to Land
- ☐ Statutory Exemptions. State code number: _____

Reasons why project is exempt:

The project will include site prep to make way for native tree plantings. Site prep activities will include saw work, minor brushing, thinning, chipping, and pile burning of deadwood and non-native invasive trees (i.e. pepper tree and eucalyptus) leftover from recent wildfires. Some sites will include grazing and mowing in non-native invasive grasslands (i.e. star thistle, Bromus diandrus, Bromus rubens, and Avena fatua) to make way for native tree plantings. This project will reduce the risk of fire spread, protecting communities of people and critical ecosystems. No impacts to hazardous or critical resources and no cumulative effects from successive projects will occur. The District finds that this project does not have the potential to significantly degrade environmental factors, such as aesthetics, agriculture/forestry, long-term air quality, biological/cultural/tribal resources, geology/soils, greenhouse gases, hydrology/water quality, land use, minerals, population, public services, recreation, transportation, or utilities and is therefore, categorically CEQA exempt.

Lead Agency

Contact Person: Kevin Mason Area Code/Telephone/Extension: 805-764-5135

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:  Date: 10/14/2026 Title: Fire Preparedness Team Lead

■ 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: _____