

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: San Diego

From: (Public Agency): Resource Conservation

District of Greater San Diego County (RCDGSDC)

11769 Waterhill Rd, Lakeside, CA 92040

(Address)

Project Title: Encino Ranch Habitat Restoration and Enhancement Project (Project)

Project Applicant: Encino Conservancy

Project Location - Specific:

Encino Ranch [33.140144, -116.777117], a historical livestock operation and olive orchard that was acquired by the Encino Conservancy in 2020/2021. The Project includes work on Assessor Parcel Numbers (APNs) 245-070-09-00; 245-070-10-00; 245-070-12-00; 245-070-13-00.

Project Location - City: Santa Ysabel Project Location - County: San Diego

Description of Nature, Purpose and Beneficiaries of Project:

The Encino Ranch Habitat Restoration and Enhancement Project entails enhancing the resilience of the Ranch's 30.5 acre riparian forest community through fuel reduction (e.g., removal of 50 to 60 dead or diseased coast live oaks (*Quercus agrifolia*) infested with gold spotted oak borer (GSOB), ladder fuel removal, pruning, etc.) restoration / enhancement of 12.3 acres of native grassland through prescribed fire and subsequent revegetation with native grass species, removal of 6.1 acres of invasive species including Armenian blackberry (*Rubus armenianus*) and Russian olive (*Olea europaea*), reforestation of 2.05 acres of Engelmann oak woodland, 0.25 acre of groundwater enhancement via process based restoration (PBR) practices, installation of 200 pollinator-friendly native plants, and fence repairs to protect sensitive habitats from potential livestock browsing / herbivory. No herbicide use or work within designated waters of the United States (WOTUS) will be required as part of the Project.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: RCDGSDC

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: Encino Conservancy

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: Class IV
- ☐ Statutory Exemptions. State code number: _____

Reasons why project is exempt:

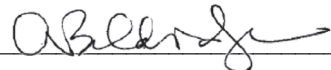
RCDGSDC has determined that the Project is eligible for a Categorical Exemption from environmental review under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). As proposed, the Project enhances public safety and forest ecosystem resilience without resulting in significant environmental effects, qualifying for exemption under Class 4 Minor Alterations to Land (14 CCR §15304). The Project involves minor alterations to land and vegetation through removal of GSOB infested oak, selective thinning, and invasive species removal to improve forest health and reduce wildfire risk within the Encino Ranch property. No grading or significant ground disturbance will occur. All work will be conducted by hand crews and low pressure ground based equipment, following best management practices to avoid impacts to water quality, biological resources, and cultural sites.

Lead Agency

Contact Person: Ann Baldridge Area Code/Telephone/Extension: (619) 562-0096 Ext. 102

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: 10/19/2026 Title: Executive Director

✓ 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: _____