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Notice of Exemption

To: Office of Planning and Research
State Clearinghouse
1400 Tenth Street, Room 113
Sacramento, CA 95814

From: **Wildlife Conservation Board**
P.O. Box 944209
Sacramento, CA 94244-2090

County Clerk (County of):
San Diego

Contact: Amy Henderson
Phone: 916-926-9585

Lead Agency: Resource Conservation District of Greater San Diego
Contact: Ann Baldridge
Phone: 619-562-0096 ext. 102

State Clearinghouse Number (if submitted by State Clearinghouse) 2026100740

Project Title: Encino Ranch Habitat Restoration and Enhancement Project

Project Location: 33°08'24.5"N 116°46'37.6"W

Project City: Santa Ysabel | **Project County:** San Diego

CEQA Region: S. CA

Description of Nature, Purpose, and Benefits of Project:

The Encino Ranch Habitat Restoration project (Project) addresses southern coast live oak riparian forest habitat degradation due to an infestation of gold spotted oak borer (GSOB). Coast live oak trees are succumbing to infestations of GSOB, leading to an accumulation of dead trees and ladder fuels that leave those areas susceptible to wildfire. Additionally, the Project proposes to remove several acres of invasive plant species and restore native grassland and pollinator habitat. The Project will increase wildfire and climate resiliency and improve native habitats by (1) improving the resilience of 30.5 acres of southern coast live oak riparian forest by removing ladder fuels and 60 dead oak trees; (2) establishing 200 Engelmann oaks, which are not susceptible to GSOB, and creating 2.05 acres of Engelmann oak woodland; (3) removing 6.1 acres of invasive species including Russian olive and Armenian blackberry; (4) restoring 12.3 acres of native grassland through burning, invasive species control and planting 500 native bunchgrass and forb seedlings; (5) installing 200 plantings of native forbs, sedges, and small shrubs to support native pollinators; (6) enhancing groundwater recharge through the installation of three beaver dam analogs (BDAs) or post assisted log structures (PALS); and (7) repairing perimeter fencing to prevent neighboring cattle from entering the ranch. WCB Project Tracker ID: 2025148.

This is to advise that the Wildlife Conservation Board has approved the above-described project on 11/19/26 and has made the following determinations regarding the above-described project. ☐ **Lead Agency** ☑ **Responsible Agency**

Exempt Status: (Check One)
- ☐ Ministerial (Sec. 15268):
- ☐ Declared Emergency [Sec. 15269 (b) and (c)]:
- ☐ Emergency Project [Sec. 15269 (b) and (c)]:
- ☑ Categorical Exemption, State Section Number and type: 15304 Class 4
- ☐ Statutory Exemptions, State Code Number and type:
- ☐ Other:

Reasons why project is exempt:

The Resource Conservation District of Greater San Diego determined that this project consists only 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.

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 (by this notice) ☐ No

Signature: Signed by: Rebecca J. Fris 1EAD9B041E6D476... **Title:** Deputy Executive Director **Date:** 11/20/2026

SCH#: 2026100740

Posted Date:
Date Received for Filing at OPR:

ec: WCB Project Tracker
WCB Board Meeting Folder