



NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

Marin County Parks and Open Space District
3501 Civic Center Drive, Suite 260, San Rafael, CA 94903
www.marincountyparks.org
(415) 473-6387

FILED

02/22/2023

Marin County Clerk
3501 Civic Center Drive, Suite 234
San Rafael, CA 94903

SHELLY SCOTT
MARIN COUNTY CLERK
By **J. Gilardi, Deputy**
21- 2023 -017

Date: February 21, 2023
Project Title: VALLEY MEMORIAL PARK EUCALYPTUS REMOVAL PROJECT
Project Location: Rush Creek Open Space Preserve, along the eastern property boundary adjacent to the Valley Memorial Park Cemetery and Funeral Home, Novato, California
Assessor's Parcel: 143-151-20 (access from 143-151-15)

Description of Nature, Purpose, and Beneficiaries of the Project: The Marin County Open Space District (MCOSD) is proposing to implement a fire fuel reduction project adjacent to Valley Memorial Park Cemetery and Funeral Home (VMP) within Rush Creek Open Space Preserve. The purpose of the project is to reduce the risk of rapid wildfire spread and eliminate hazardous tree conditions in the undeveloped open space parcel adjacent to the VMP by removing invasive mature blue gum (*Eucalyptus globulus*) trees. The treatment area is approximately 0.39 acre. Approximately 42 trees with breast-height diameter between 2 and 30 inches would be removed. Understory consists of eucalyptus debris, such as shedded bark and branches. There are no woodrat nests in the project area. The treatment involves using mechanical tools including chainsaws as well as mechanized equipment such as skidsteers or backhoes to remove vegetation from the project area. Trunk stumps and roots will remain in the ground. All plant material removed as part of the proposed project would be hauled off site for disposal. The proposed project would be implemented prior to bird nesting season, which begins March 01, 2023, by a contracted licensed arborist. Implementation of the proposed project would occur within seven days of nesting bird and bat surveys yielding negative results. All tools, equipment, and clothing would be clean and free of dirt and vegetative material and treated with a 10 percent bleach solution after working to reduce the spread of sudden oak death. There are no structures located within or immediately adjacent to the project area. The proposed project would be funded by Marin County Parks Measure A.

The project area is located upon a convex slope that contains a dewatered drainage feature. The project area is entirely above the top-of-bank of the potentially wetted bottom portion of the drainage feature. The drainage feature is not included in the National Wetland Index and has insufficient hydrophytic vegetation to meet United States Army Corps of Engineers wetland delineation standards. For these reasons, the drainage feature is not within USACOE, Regional Water Quality Control Board, and California Department of Fish and Wildlife jurisdiction and no regulatory permits are required. Straw wattles are currently installed at the toe of the slope on the adjacent private property for construction activities unrelated to the proposed project. Additional straw wattles would be keyed in at 10 foot intervals on the slope for erosion control.

Public Agency Approving Project: Marin County Parks and Open Space District.

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out the Project: Max Korten, Director and General Manager

Reasons for Exemption: The MCOSD has reviewed the project along with its environmental setting and has determined it to be categorically exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act under the following section of the California Administrative Code:

Section 15304: Minor Alterations to Land: The proposed project consists of fuel management activities to reduce the volume of flammable vegetation with the purpose of reducing the risk of rapid wildfire spread. Best Management Practices would be implemented to ensure that nesting birds and bats are not impacted and to reduce the spread of sudden oak death consistent with the MCOSD's Road and Trail Management Plan and Vegetation Biodiversity Management Plan and for these reasons, implementation of the proposed project would not impact endangered, rare, or threatened plan species. The proposed project would not result in erosion or sedimentation of surface waters because straw wattles would be keyed in at 10 foot intervals on the slope. The project area is not located within a state scenic highway and given the vegetation that would remain within the project area, implementation of the proposed project would not negatively affect scenic resources. The project area is not located on a hazardous waste site pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5. Implementation of the project would not affect historical buildings or other historical resources. Fuel reduction activities in the project area during the past 5 years includes manual and mechanical removal of eucalyptus. In consideration of these past fuel reduction activities relative to the existing environmental setting, implementation of the proposed project would not result in cumulative impacts or result in a significant effect to the environment due to unusual circumstances.

Lead Agency Contact Person:

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