

**CEQA Notice of Exemption**

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To:  Office of Planning and Research  
1400 Tenth Street, Room 121  
Sacramento, CA 95814

From: Resource Conservation District of Santa Cruz County  
820 Bay Avenue, Suite 136  
Capitola, CA 95010

Clerk of the Board  
701 Ocean Street, Rm 500  
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

**Project Title:** Summit Road Shaded Fuel Break

**Project Locations – General:** Summit Road from Highway 17 to the Highland Way and Mount Bache Road stop sign.

**Project Locations – City:** Los Gatos, CA **Project Locations – County:** Santa Clara and Santa Cruz Counties

**Description of Nature, Purpose and Beneficiaries of Project:** This project will create a shaded fuel break by removing small trees, underbrush and low hanging limbs on trees within 100’ of Summit Road. Large (over 8” measured at diameter at breast height), healthy trees will be retained; dead/dying trees will be removed. Also removed will be trees leaning over the roadway that are at increased susceptibility to falling over the road during wildfires as well as dead trees that have fallen onto the ground. Where large, healthy trees are not present or there are large gaps in the tree canopies, small trees and/or shrubs will be retained, spaced about 15-20’ apart. Most of the cut material will be chipped and broadcast back onsite; material too large for chipping will be hauled off-site. By removing this vegetation, a future wildfire will burn with less intensity, at a slower rate of spread and with a decreased potential for fire to climb into treetops – making fire suppression easier and evacuation during a wildfire safer. Portions of this 100’ zone along the roadside will not receive any work where the project interfaces with the maintained yards of residents. This generally occurs within the 100’ “Defensible Space” residents have already created. Within this project the woody invasive species, such as French broom, will be cut and removed. The stumps of broom over one inch in diameter will be treated with herbicide; specimens smaller than this will receive a direct foliar application of herbicide. All application will occur with a Licensed Applicator in accordance with the guidelines specified by a licensed Pest Control Advisor (PCA). It is anticipated much of the project will be conducted during the summer and fall months, with follow-up maintenance occurring periodically, as needed.

**Name of Public Agency Approving Project:** Resource Conservation District of Santa Cruz County (RCDSCC)

**Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project:** RCDSCC

**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 (Sec. 15304 Class 4 (i))
- Statutory Exemptions. State code number.

**Reasons why project is exempt:**


This project is categorically exempt pursuant to Sec. 15304 Minor Alterations to Land for the following reasons: The RCD is proposing the qualification of exemption from comprehensive CEQA analysis under the Class 4

category for minor alterations of land. This project will consist of fuels management activities for the creation of a shaded fuel break. The proposed project will reduce flammable vegetation and will not result in the taking of endangered, rare, or threatened plant or animal species, significant impacts to surface waters, or impact to cultural resources. For the reasons stated above, this project shall be exempt from the provisions of CEQA.

**Lead Agency Contact Person:** Matt Abernathy **Telephone:** (831) 464-2950 ext. 28

**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: 4/13/22 Title: Board President, Resource Conservation District of Santa Cruz County

Signed by Lead Agency       Signed by Applicant      Date received for filing at OPR: