



# County of Los Angeles Fire Department

## Environmental Review Report for an Exempt Project

**Note:** This report form is intended for use by County of Los Angeles Fire Department (LACoFD) staff Foresters to document a limited environmental impact analysis supporting the filing of a Notice of Exemption (NOE) document for a proposed LACoFD project. Although the project appears to fit within the descriptions for allowable Categorical Exemptions, this report presents LACoFD’s review for possible “Exceptions” that would preclude finding the project to be categorically exempt as discussed in CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2. This report will be filed with the Vegetation Management Coordinator for this project to document the environmental impact analysis conducted by the Department.

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Project Name:	Conservation Concierges Fire-safe Residential Vegetation Management & Fuel Clearance Project		
Project Number:			
Program Type:	Hazardous Fuels Reduction		
CAL FIRE Unit:	LAC		
County:	Los Angeles		
Acres:	662		
Legal Location:	Chatsworth Lake Manor T2N R16W (SBM), Twin Lakes T2N R17W (SBM)		
Name of USGS 7.5’ Quad Map(s):	Thousand Oaks, Calabasas, Simi Valley East, Oat Mtn, San Fernando, Newhall, and Sunland		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Project Vicinity Map Attached <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Project Location Map Attached <input type="checkbox"/> Photos Attached			

<b>Other Public Agency Review/Permit Required:</b>			
Would the project result in:	<b>YES</b>		<b>NO</b>
alterations to a watercourse (DFG - Lake and Stream Alteration Agreement)	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
conversion of timberland (CAL FIRE - Conversion Permit or Exemption)	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
demolition (Local Air District - Demolition Permit)	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
soil disturbance over 1 acre (RWQCB - SWPPP)	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
fill of possible wetlands (404 Permit - USACE)	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
other:	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>Discuss any above-listed topic item checked Yes and consultation with agencies:</b>			

<b>Project Description and Environmental Setting (Describe the project activities, project site and its surroundings, its location, and the environmental setting):</b>
<p>The project consists of fire-safe vegetation management, hazardous fuels reduction, and removal of dead or dying vegetation within a homeowner’s property line and fuel clearances up to 30 - 100 feet from structures depending on Fire Hazard Severity Zone (FHSZ). The purposes of this project are to make fire safety recommendations, provide vegetation management services, and maintain fuel clearances around residences to reduce ignitability of homes in the event of a wildfire.</p> <p>Conservation Concierges has received a Wildfire Prevention Grant from the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) to perform hazardous fuel reductions and increase fire resiliency and preparedness for communities most vulnerable to the threat of wildfire in the region. The project area represents communities around the San Fernando Valley that have a high risk of danger from prevalent wildfire incidence in the region.</p> <p>Homeowners in these target communities are in the Very High Fire Severity Zone (per CAL FIRE FRAP) and thus are highly susceptible to the danger of wildfire. A primary goal of the CAL FIRE grant program is to prevent the need for cleanup and</p>

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rebuilding of communities following destructive wildfire events. Research overwhelmingly shows that the closer fuels treatment is to a home, the more effective it is at preventing ignitions of that structure. Likewise, fuels treatments within and immediately surrounding communities are the most effective at preventing the spread of wildfire from the surrounding environment into communities. However, many homeowners are either unaware of the need, unable financially, or otherwise unable to make fire-safe defensible space changes to their property to lower the probability of ignition to their home in the event of a wildfire. This project aims to address that need by conducting outreach in these communities and providing evaluations to participating homeowners followed by subsequent subsidized vegetation management services and fuel clearances to increase wildfire preparedness and make homes more resilient to ignition by wildfire.

Activities proposed by this project are covered under a class 4 exemption for minor alterations to land (Sec. 15304). Vegetation management activities proposed by this project are exempt because they will replace existing vegetation with more fire-safe and drought-tolerant options (15304(b)), and fuels reduction for the purpose of fire safety is exempt within 30 feet of a structure or within 100 feet in high fire hazard areas (15304(i)), which will cover targeted areas for fuels reduction within the property line. All vegetation treatment activities will adhere to Los Angeles County Code Section 325.2 and ensure residences are in compliance with relevant ordinances. Activities will include tree trimming, weed whipping, removal of dead and dying vegetation, and replacement of non-fire-safe vegetation with plantings of fire-safe and/or drought-tolerant vegetation.

All relevant local policies and ordinances will be followed in the region in which vegetation management services are to be conducted. The project may involve removal of several non-protected trees that have been identified by an International Society of Arboriculture Certified Arborist as being dead or dying and/or posing a health and safety risk to the public. All treatment activities concerning oak trees will be conducted by an Arborist and follow Section 22.56.2050 of the Los Angeles County Code. All removed material will be disposed of in a legal manor and where invasive plant species material will not be dispersed; depending on the specific plant material, it will either be hauled off-site or chipped or composted on-site.

## Environmental Impact Analysis

### Aesthetics

- This topic does not apply to this project and was not evaluated further.  
 This topic could apply to this project, and results of the assessment are provided below:

The project consists of fire-safe vegetation management, hazardous fuels reduction, and removal of dead or dying vegetation within a homeowner's property line and fuel clearances up to 30 - 100 feet from structures depending on Fire Hazard Severity Zone (FHSZ). Some properties or portions of properties could be visible to recreation enthusiasts from public trails in the surrounding landscape. There could be minor, temporary aesthetic impacts from the activities of this project, but these impacts would be less than significant.

x

### Agriculture and Forest Resources

- This topic does not apply to this project and was not evaluated further.  
 Yes  No Would any trees be felled? If yes, discuss protection of nesting birds and compliance with FPRs.  
 Yes  No Would the project convert any prime or unique farmland?  
 Yes  No Would the project result in the conversion of forest land/timberland to non-forest use?  
 This topic could apply to this project, and results of the assessment are provided below:

The project involves limbing and pruning of trees as well as removal of trees that have been identified by an Arborist as being dead or dying and posing a health and safety risk to the public. Treatment activities may take place year-round. If any vegetation removal is to be conducted within the nesting bird season (February 1st -September 15th), a qualified biologist will conduct pre-work nesting bird surveys and establish no-work buffers around any active nest(s) to ensure compliance with the Federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act and other regulations that afford protections to nesting birds. The project would have no impact on agricultural resources and no significant impacts on forest resources. The project is not associated with any Timber Harvest Plan and is therefore not subject to California Forest Practice Rules (FPRs). An arborist will oversee all tree work to ensure that standard best trimming/removal practices are implemented. All pruning shall be implemented in accordance with ANSI A300,

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Part 1, 2017, Specifications 5.2 (natural pruning systems), 7.1 (pruning cuts, general), 7.2 (removal cuts), 7.3 (reduction cuts), 8.0 (pruning practices), as well as the ANSI Z133, 2017 (Arboricultural Operations Safety Standards).

**Air Quality**

- This topic does not apply to this project and was not evaluated further.
- Yes  No The local Air Quality Management District guidelines for dust abatement and other air quality concerns were reviewed for this project.
- This topic could apply to this project, and results of the assessment are provided below:

The project consists of fire-safe vegetation management, hazardous fuels reduction, and removal of dead or dying vegetation within a homeowner's property line and fuel clearances up to 30 - 100 feet from structures depending on FHSZ at the location. The project does not involve construction activities or ground disturbance that would have potential to substantially adversely impact regional air quality. Minor, temporary impacts to localized air quality in the direct vicinity of work activities may result from the use of hand tools and masticating equipment, vehicles, and other mechanized equipment. The impact of this project on air quality has been determined to be less than significant.

**Biological Resources**

- This topic does not apply to this project and was not evaluated further.
- Yes  No Will the project potentially effect biological resources?
- Yes  No Was a current CNDDDB review completed? Results discussed below:
- Yes  No Was a biological survey of the project area completed? Results discussed below:
- This topic could apply to this project, and results of the assessment are provided below:

Manual and mechanical treatments could result in the direct destruction of burrows and nests. Additionally, noise generated by treatment activities could disturb nesting species and cause nest abandonment, which could result in mortality of fledglings, juveniles, or eggs. Treatment activities that result in habitat modifications from changes in the shading from shrubs or trees may also change habitat function and affect the suitability of habitat for special-status wildlife. The impacts of treatment activities entailed by this project on special-status species and other sensitive biological resources were evaluated and discussed below.

All laws, ordinances, and regulations concerning removal or damage to protected plant species will be followed. In the event of that a nest is found during the active nesting season (February 1<sup>st</sup>-September 15<sup>th</sup>) during site evaluations, a Conservation Concierges qualified biologist will conduct pre-work nesting bird surveys and establish no-work buffers around any active nest(s) to ensure compliance with the Federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act and other regulations that afford protections to nesting birds. As the project site occurs within developed semi-urban areas, the project area consists of relatively disturbed habitats where conditions are not suitable for regionally occurring special-status plant species. A California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDDB) and records search was conducted on January 11, 2024, to document all special-status species occurrences in the area. As the project entails fuel clearances with relatively disturbed habitats that have been historically maintained for hazardous fuel reduction, conditions are not suitable for regionally occurring special-status plant species. However, whenever fuel clearances are requested by homeowners, a Conservation Concierges Biologist will survey the site for special-status plant species from the relevant CNDDDB data. The project consists of fire-safe vegetation management, hazardous fuels reduction, and removal of dead or dying vegetation within a homeowner's property line and fuel clearances up to 30 - 100 feet from structures depending on FHSZ at the location. Mainly non-native and some native plant species would be removed or damaged from treatment activities. The habitat in these areas is relatively disturbed from ongoing anthropogenic disturbances in these areas. No special-status natural communities would be removed as part of the project.

A species list was compiled for special-status animal species documented within 5 miles of the project site from the CNDDDB database. All animals that depend on bodies of water or riparian environments were removed from the list as crews will not work in or significantly near water sources (per CDFW guidelines) as to impact these species. The CNDDDB search revealed the following recorded incidences of special status species within 5 miles of project boundaries : American badger (*Taxidea taxus*), American peregrine falcon (*Falco peregrinus anatum*), big free-tailed bat (*Nyctinomops macrotis*), burrowing owl (*Athene cucularia*), California glossy snake (*Arizona elegans occidentalis*), California leaf-nosed bat (*Macrotus californicus*), California legless lizard (*Anniella spp.*), coast horned lizard (*Phrynosoma blainvillii*), coastal whiptail (*Aspidoscelis tigris stejnegeri*), grasshopper sparrow (*Ammodramus savannarum*), hoary bat (*Lasiurus cinereus*), monarch - California overwintering population (*Danaus plexippus plexippus* pop. 1), Pacoima shoulderband (*Helminthoglypta traskii pacoimensis*), pallid bat (*Antrozous pallidus*), prairie falcon (*Falco mexicanus*), Quino checkerspot butterfly (*Euphydryas editha quino*), San Bernardino ringneck snake (*Diadophis punctatus modestus*), San Diego black-tailed jackrabbit (*Lepus californicus bennettii*),

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San Diego desert woodrat (*Neotoma lepida intermedia*), San Gabriel chestnut (*Glyptostoma gabrielense*), Santa Monica grasshopper (*Trimerotropis occidentiloides*), Santa Monica shieldback katydid (*Aglaothorax longipennis*), silver-haired bat (*Lasionycteris noctivagans*), Soledad shoulderband (*Helminthoglypta fontiphila*), southern California rufous-crowned sparrow (*Aimophila ruficeps canescens*), southern grasshopper mouse (*Onychomys torridus ramona*), southwestern willow flycatcher (*Empidonax traillii extimus*), spotted bat (*Euderma maculatum*), Swainson's hawk (*Buteo swainsoni*), tidewater goby (*Eucyclogobius newberryi*), tricolored blackbird (*Agelaius tricolor*), and two-striped gartersnake (*Thamnophis hammondi*).

All recorded incidences of California leaf-nosed bat and Quino checkerspot butterfly (*Euphydryas editha quino*) were identified as being extirpated. The project would not impact suitable monarch roosting habitat or Crotch's bumblebee (*Bombus crotchii*) nesting habitat. While individuals of these species could forage within or over the project areas, these highly mobile species are not expected to experience any direct project-related impacts. Similarly, the coastal whiptail (*Aspidoscelis tigris stejnegeri*) is a highly mobile species that would likely avoid suitable habitats near work areas during the temporary work activities. Bank swallow nesting colonies and two-striped garter snakes (*Thamnophis hammondi*) do not have suitable habitat that would be removed by the project. All bat species listed are not expected to roost within the work areas due to the lack of potential roosting habitat in the trees planned to be removed. Therefore, impacts to nonvolent (e.g., flightless) young bats would be avoided, and no take of protected bat species or wildlife nursery sites would occur as a result of the project.

The project does not involve the construction or placement of barriers that could adversely impact or limit the movement of mountain lions (*Puma concolor*). Temporary work areas would be expected to be avoided by mountain lions for the duration of the work activities. The wildlife species in the project vicinity are adapted to the urban-wildland interface, and the noise, vibration, dust, and other human disturbances within the vegetation maintenance areas would only temporarily deter wildlife from using immediate vicinity areas. Although these indirect effects could temporarily alter movement behaviors, territories, or foraging habitats in select areas, the temporary nature of the project's effects suggests that wildlife would adjust their normal functions during the project activities and revert to their typical behavior once all temporary effects have been removed. All crew members will receive training on identification and appropriate protection measures for biological resources.

All clearances will be surveyed prior to treatment by a qualified biologist to check for and record the incidence of any special-status species listed in the event that homeowners request fuel clearances within 30-100 feet from their home. Since this is routine maintenance required under the Los Angeles Fire Code and the work would occur within existing fuel modification zones, the baseline condition of the project area regarding biological resources would not be significantly impacted or altered. Wildlife species that occur in the project vicinity are adapted to the urban-wildland interface. The noise, vibration, dust, and other human disturbance within vegetation maintenance areas would only temporarily deter wildlife from using areas in the immediate vicinity of such activities. These indirect effects could temporarily alter movement behaviors, territories, or foraging habitats in select areas. However, because these are temporary effects, it is likely that wildlife already living and moving in close proximity to urban development would alter their normal functions for the duration of the project activities and then re-establish these functions once all temporary effects have been removed. If after pre-treatment biological resource surveys are conducted, sensitive species or biological species are identified, avoidance measures outlined by relevant CDFW protocol will be followed and CDFW will be contacted for coordination of mitigation measures. The impact is considered less than significant with mitigation.

### Cultural Resources

- This topic does not apply to this project and was not evaluated further.
- Yes  No Was a current archaeological records check completed? Results discussed below:
- Yes  No Was a CAL FIRE Staff or Contract Archaeologist consulted? Results discussed below:
- Yes  No Was an archaeological survey of the project area completed? Results discussed below:
- Yes  No Will the project effect any historic buildings or archaeological site?
- This topic could apply to this project, and results of the assessment are provided below:

On January 11, 2024, Rincon Consultants, Inc. (Rincon) conducted a Desktop Archaeological review and evaluation on behalf of Conservation Concierge's CAL FIRE grant funded treatment for Defensible Space Areas (DSA). The DSA locations are directly associated with the Chatsworth Lake Manor Project's Designated Treatment Areas (Conservation Concierges: 2023). The DSA locations and their corresponding Chatworth Lake Manor's Treatment Areas (Defensible Space Cultural Analysis Map) are stated below:

- No. 4 Garden of the Gods: Sections 01 and 12 of Township 2 North, Range 17 West on the Oat Mountain, California United States Geological Survey (USGS) 7.5-minute topographic quadrangle.

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- No. 3 Chatsworth Oak Park: Sections 23 and 24 of Township 2 North, Range 17 West on Calabajas and Canoga Park, California United States Geological Survey (USGS) 7.5-minute topographic quadrangles.
- No. 2 Chatworth Nature Preserve: Sections 21, 22, 23, and 24 of Township 2 North, Range 17 West on Calabajas, California United States Geological Survey (USGS) 7.5-minute topographic quadrangle.
- No. 7 Mid Slope: Sections 21, 22, 23, and 24 of Township 2 North, Range 17 West on Calabajas, California United States Geological Survey (USGS) 7.5-minute topographic quadrangle.
- No. 10 Sage Ranch: Sections 21, 22, 23, and 24 of Township 2 North, Range 17 West on Calabajas, California United States Geological Survey (USGS) 7.5-minute topographic quadrangle.
- No. 11 Woolsey Canyon: Sections 21, 22, 23, and 24 of Township 2 North, Range 17 West on Calabajas, California United States Geological Survey (USGS) 7.5-minute topographic quadrangle.
- No. 12 Valley Circle: Sections 21, 22, 23, and 24 of Township 2 North, Range 17 West on Calabajas, California United States Geological Survey (USGS) 7.5-minute topographic quadrangle.
- No. 13 Black Canyon: Sections 21, 22, 23, and 24 of Township 2 North, Range 17 West on Calabajas, California United States Geological Survey (USGS) 7.5-minute topographic quadrangle.
- No. 14 Huston & Brooks: Sections 21, 22, 23, and 24 of Township 2 North, Range 17 West on Calabajas, California United States Geological Survey (USGS) 7.5-minute topographic quadrangle.

DSA grant funding provides fire-safe vegetation management services, hazardous fuels reduction, and removal of dead or dying vegetation within a homeowner's property line and fuel clearances from 30 - 100 feet and will be performed above ground and do not involve subsurface ground disturbances greater than 3 inches below the presented grade for structures in high-risk wildfire areas, located incorporated and unincorporated portions of Los Angeles County.

The desktop review examined the South Central Coast Information Center (SCCIC) record search results, Native American Heritage Commission's Sacred Land File search results, archival materials, and historical research gathered for the archaeological resources technical study for the Chatsworth Lake Manor Project for a California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CALFIRE) California Vegetation Treatment Program (CalVTP) project (LAC-5GG20146) and to comply with CEQA guidelines. These activities are spread across 14 designated treatment areas, addressing the increasing prevalence of wildfires in the region. The Chatsworth Lake Manor Project focuses on removing fire fuel vegetation and implementing other fire prevention treatment activities outlined in the PEIR (Conservation Concierges: 2023).

The Chatsworth Lake Manor Project's archaeological resources study and buffer area(s) encompasses most, if not all, of the proposed DSA service areas. CALFIRE approved the Chatsworth Lake Manor Project's Cultural resources Technical Report on April 28, 2023, and Los Angeles County Fire Department approved the report on May 15, 2023. The desktop review and analysis were conducted from this approved (lead agency) technical report. Additionally, this desktop review adheres to the guidelines provided by the California Office of Historic Preservation's Archaeological Resource Management Reports (ARMR): Recommended Contents and Format (Conservation Concierges: 2023).

On November 15, 2022, and again on December 5, 2022, the record search for the Chatsworth Lake Manor Project was conducted at the SCCIC at California State University, Fullerton. On January 5, 2023, Rincon received the results of the Sacred Land Files search from the Native American Heritage Commission. From December 6, 2022, to April 24, 2023, Rincon carried out pedestrian field surveys, archival research, and report writing (Conservation Concierges: 2023).

## **Findings**

### **Previously Conducted Archaeological resources Studies**

The SCCIC records search results identified four archaeological resources studies previously conducted within the current DSA project boundaries and there are 12 studies conducted within a 0.5-mile radius of the DSAs. The studies, conducted between 1972 and 2014, indicate that no archaeological resources will be altered and/or impacted by DSA service actions (Conservation Concierges: 2023).

**Previously Recorded Archaeological resources**

The SCCIC records search results identified six archaeological resources, located within the current DSA boundaries and three archaeological resources within a 0.5-mile radius of the DSAs. The six archaeological resources were identified as prehistoric rock shelters, groundstone (prehistoric stone milling equipment), and lithic scatter sites located in the No. 4 Garden of the Gods' DSA service area. The six prehistoric resources have been demolished, taken, and/or impacted/alterd by the construction of the California Interstate Route Highway 18 and with the construction of residential housing developments, and industrial facilities. No historic-period built-environment resources were identified within the DSA service areas. Currently, there are no existing previously recorded archaeological, historical, or historic built environments located within the DSA service areas (Conservation Concierges: 2023).

**Native American Outreach**

Rincon sent tribal notification letters and requests for additional Native American cultural information in areas identified by the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC). as having a positive Sacred Lands File search result. A DSA review of the Sacred Lands File search results and Rincon's tribal outreach efforts indicate that there are no tribal concerns regarding services and/or treatments in DSA service areas (Conservation Concierges: 2023).

**Aerial Imagery and Map Review**

Historic aerial photographs from 1947-1986 depict the DSA service areas as largely undeveloped, with the exception of California Interstate Route Highway 18, which first appears in 1980. Subsequent aerial photographs from 1992-2020 portray the DSA service areas as highly distributed, featuring residential housing developments, light commercial and warehousing facilities, along with paved roads/highways, above ground and subsurface utilities, and infrastructure. (NETR Online 2024, USGS 2024).

Historic topographic maps from 1903-1943 depict the DSA service areas and the immediate vicinity as undeveloped, with sporadic buildings/structures located to the south/southeast. Maps from 1944-1967 show the DSA service areas as sparsely developed, with growth increasing from the north and east. Subsequent maps from 1970-2022 portray the DSA service areas as highly distributed, featuring residential housing developments, light commercial and warehousing facilities, along with paved roads/highways (NETR Online 2024, USGS 2024). Prior to 1924, the land in and around the Chatsworth Reservoir is depicted as undeveloped. The reservoir first appears on historic topographic maps in 1924, located outside the DSA service areas, with additional surrounding development appearing in the 1960s (NETR Online 2023, USGS 2023)

**Archaeological Survey**

An archaeological survey was not part of this DSA review. However, a significant portion, if not all, of the DSA service areas underwent windshield surveys as part of the archaeological efforts for the Chatsworth Lake Manor Project. The windshield surveys were conducted as the survey crews traveled by vehicle through the DSAs to pedestrian survey locations. Rincon's windshield surveys and historic aerial photographs depict the DSA service areas as heavily distributed, featuring private properties, streets, streetlights, sidewalks, landscaping, and supporting infrastructure that has been developed since at least 1970 (Conservation Concierges: 2023). Disturbances in the DSA service areas have remained constant for at least the past 50 years. The DSA review indicates a low potential to encounter cultural (archaeological or historic) resources during implementation of DSA services and/or treatments.

**Conclusions**

The SCCIC archaeological resources studies within the DSA service areas were conducted between 1972 through 2014 and indicate that there are no archaeological resources (prehistoric, historic, and built environments) located within DSA service areas. Therefore, there are no impacts and/or alterations to known archaeological resources during DSA implementation (Conservation Concierges: 2023). Further, proposed DSA services and treatments will be performed above ground and do not involve subsurface ground disturbances greater than 3 inches below the presented grade. Based on the findings, Rincon recommends a finding of no impact to historical resources under CEQA.

If unanticipated archaeological or tribal resources are encountered as a result of DSA service activities and/or treatments, the requirements set forth in the CalVTP PEIR, as specified in SPR-CUL-5 and SPR-CUL-6, should be followed, as they are CEQA-approved mitigation measures and industry best management practices (BMP). (Conservation Concierges: 2023). SPR-CUL-5 avoidance of archaeological resources is the preferred method of treatment. If these resources cannot be avoided or if additional resources are identified during the course of the project that cannot be avoided, additional effort outlined in SPR-CUL-5 will be required. Additionally, under SPR-CUL-5, a qualified archaeologist must be retained to notify Native American tribes listed by NAHC as culturally affiliated with the treatment area and determine effective protection measures to be written in clear, enforceable language in a survey report.

SPR-CUL-6 requires that the project proponent, in consultation with the culturally affiliated tribe(s), will develop effective protection measures and that the project proponent will defer implementing the treatment until the tribe(s) approves of the

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protection measures, or if an agreement cannot be reached after a good-faith effort, the proponent will determine that any or all feasible measures have been implemented, where feasible, and the resource is either avoided or protected.

**Reference**

Conservation Concierges

2023 Chatsworth Lake Manor Project's Cultural Resources Technical Report. Prepared for Conservation Concierges, Chatsworth, California, CAL FIRE, Perris California, and Los Angeles County Fire Department, Alhambra, California, prepared by Rincon Consultants, Inc, Los Angeles, California.

On file, Los Angeles County Fire Department, Alhambra, California.

**Energy**

- This topic does not apply to this project and was not evaluated further.  
 This topic could apply to this project, and results of the assessment are provided below:

The project consists of fire-safe vegetation management, hazardous fuels reduction, and removal of dead or dying vegetation within a homeowner's property line clearances up to 30 - 100 feet from structures depending on FHSZ at the location. The project will avoid inefficient, wasteful, and unnecessary consumption of energy, and the project would not conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency.

**Geology and Soils**

- This topic does not apply to this project and was not evaluated further.  
 This topic could apply to this project, and results of the assessment are provided below:

The project does not involve construction activities or ground disturbance.

**Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

- This topic does not apply to this project and was not evaluated further.  
 Yes  No Would the project generate significant greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions?  
 Yes  No Would these GHG emissions result in a significant impact on the environment? Discuss below:  
 Yes  No Would the project conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases? Discuss below:

The project is funded in part through the CAL FIRE's Fire Prevention (FP) Grants Program which is founded upon California Climate Investments (CCI). The primary purpose of the project is to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from wildfire and prevent need for cleanup and rebuilding of communities following destructive wildfire events. No more than negligible, temporary emissions would result from work activities. Reducing the probability of wildfire ignition and susceptibility of structures to ignition by already occurring wildfires has potential to reduce GHG emissions.

**Hazards and Hazardous Materials**

- This topic does not apply to this project and was not evaluated further.  
 This topic could apply to this project, and results of the assessment are provided below:

The project does not involve any ground or structural disturbances that could inadvertently spread or impact hazardous materials. Use and servicing of mechanized equipment containing hazardous materials (i.e., gas, diesel, lubricants, etc.) will be governed by standard best management practices, including the staging and fueling of equipment within upland areas away from drainages along with regularly inspecting all mechanized equipment to ensure the absence of leaks. To minimize the potential for leaks to occur, all equipment brought to the project site will be inspected and will be in good working order prior to use on site. No significant impacts are anticipated.

**Hydrology and Water Quality**

- This topic does not apply to this project and was not evaluated further.  
 Yes  No Will the project potentially affect any watercourse or body of water?  
 This topic could apply to this project, and results of the assessment are provided below:

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The project consists of fire-safe vegetation management, hazardous fuels reduction, and removal of dead or dying vegetation within a homeowner's property line and fuel clearances up to 30 - 100 feet from structures depending on FHSZ at the location. All vegetation disturbance would occur outside of drainages. A Conservation Concierges qualified biologist will guide work crews to limit impacts to native vegetative cover that provides slope stability if steep areas are present within a property, thereby reducing the risks of increased erosion. Staging and fueling of equipment will occur away from drainages and all relevant best management practices to maintain hydrology and water quality of nearby drainages will be followed. There would be no change to the existing baseline with regard to hydrology or water quality.

**Land Use and Planning**

- This topic does not apply to this project and was not evaluated further.  
 This topic could apply to this project, and results of the assessment are provided below:

The project consists of fire-safe vegetation management, hazardous fuels reduction, and removal of dead or dying vegetation within a homeowner's property line and fuel clearances up to 30 - 100 feet from structures depending on FHSZ at the location.

**Mineral Resources**

- This topic does not apply to this project and was not evaluated further.  
 This topic could apply to this project, and results of the assessment are provided below:

The project consists of fire-safe vegetation management, hazardous fuels reduction, and removal of dead or dying vegetation within a homeowner's property line and fuel clearances up to 30 - 100 feet from structures depending on FHSZ at the location. No construction or ground disturbance is proposed by the project.

**Noise**

- This topic does not apply to this project and was not evaluated further.  
 This topic could apply to this project, and results of the assessment are provided below:

Treatment activities will consist of tree trimming, weed whipping, removal of dead and dying vegetation, and replacement of non-fire-safe vegetation with plantings of fire-safe and/or drought-tolerant vegetation. This would include the use of mechanized equipment which can be a substantial source of noise within the vicinity of the treatment area. Treatment activities would result in a temporary increase of noise within the vicinity of properties. As treatment activities occur within residential communities, all relevant local ordinances and regulations concerning the timing of treatments within the day and throughout the week as well as maximum allowable noise levels will be followed.

**Population and Housing**

- This topic does not apply to this project and was not evaluated further.  
 This topic could apply to this project, and results of the assessment are provided below:

The project consists of fire-safe vegetation management, hazardous fuels reduction, removal of dead or dying vegetation within a homeowner's property line, and fuel clearances up to 30 - 100 feet from structures depending on FHSZ at the location.

**Public Services**

- This topic does not apply to this project and was not evaluated further.  
 This topic could apply to this project, and results of the assessment are provided below:

The project consists of fire-safe vegetation management, hazardous fuels reduction, removal of dead or dying vegetation within a homeowner's property line, and fuel clearances up to 30 - 100 feet from structures depending on FHSZ at the location. Treatment activities have the potential to enhance public services such as fire and emergency response by limiting the ignitions of homes during a wildfire and thereby freeing up limited emergency response resources during a wildfire.

**Recreation**

- This topic does not apply to this project and was not evaluated further.  
 This topic could apply to this project, and results of the assessment are provided below:



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The project consists of fire-safe vegetation management, hazardous fuels reduction, removal of dead or dying vegetation within a homeowner’s property line, and fuel clearances up to 30 - 100 feet from structures depending on FHSZ at the location. No significant recreational impacts are anticipated.

**Transportation/Traffic**

- This topic does not apply to this project and was not evaluated further.
- This topic could apply to this project, and results of the assessment are provided below:

The project consists of fire-safe vegetation management, hazardous fuels reduction, removal of dead or dying vegetation within a homeowner’s property line, and fuel clearances up to 30 - 100 feet from structures depending on FHSZ at the location. No significant transportation/traffic impacts are anticipated.

**Utilities and Service Systems**

- This topic does not apply to this project and was not evaluated further.
- This topic could apply to this project, and results of the assessment are provided below:

The project consists of fire-safe vegetation management, hazardous fuels reduction, removal of dead or dying vegetation within a homeowner’s property line, and fuel clearances up to 30 - 100 feet from structures depending on FHSZ at the location. No significant utilities and service systems impacts are anticipated.

**Wildfire**

- This topic does not apply to this project and was not evaluated further.
- This topic could apply to this project, and results of the assessment are provided below:

The project consists of fire-safe vegetation management, hazardous fuels reduction, removal of dead or dying vegetation within a homeowner’s property line, and fuel clearances up to 30 - 100 feet from structures depending on FHSZ at the location. No significant recreational impacts are anticipated. Targeted communities of this project are in the Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone. The project would not impair emergency responses to the project area, exacerbate wildfire risks, or expose people or structures to significant risks associated with wildfires. In areas where vegetative cover provides slope stability, removal of native vegetation will be limited to the extent practicable (reducing the potential for downslope flooding or landslides that could result from runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes). Public services such as fire and emergency response would be enhanced from treatments by virtue of the decreased susceptibility of ignition and freeing or limited emergency response resources in the event of a wildfire

**Changes Made to Avoid Environmental Impacts:**

The project incorporates standard best management practices and regulatory compliance measures, addressing slope stability/erosion and avoidance of impacts to nesting birds and recreational activities in the project area.

**Mandatory Findings of Significance:**

	YES	NO
(a) Does the project have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal, or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
(b) Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? (“Cumulatively considerable” means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probably future projects)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
(c) Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

**Justification for Use of a Categorical Exemption (discuss why the project is exempt, cite exemption number(s), and describe how the project fits the class):**

Activities proposed by this project are covered under a class 4 exemption for minor alterations to land (Sec. 15304) and are therefore exempt from CEQA. vegetation management activities proposed by this project are exempt because they will replace existing vegetation with more fire-safe and drought-tolerant options (15304(b)), and fuels reduction for the purposes of fire safety are exempt up to 30 feet from a structure or 100 feet in high fire hazard areas (15304(i)), which will cover targeted areas for fuels reduction within the property line. In the absence of funding from CAL FIRE, this project would be a non-discretionary action required to meet the provisions of the City's Fire Code (L.A.M.C. 57.322).

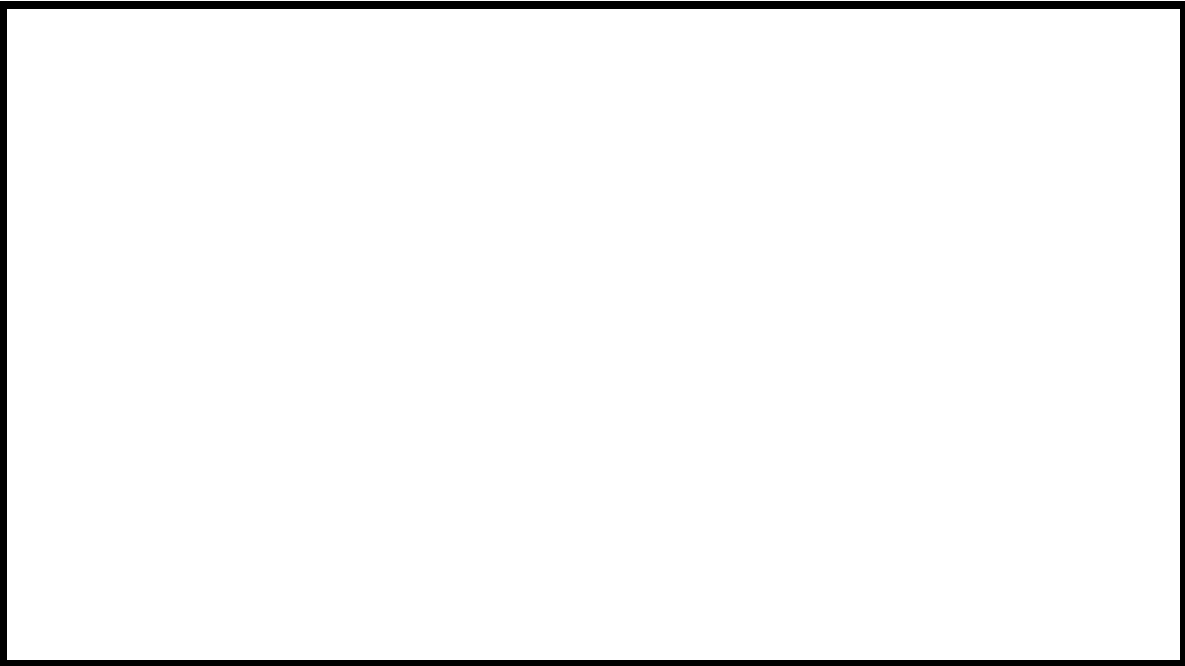
**Conclusion:**

After assessing potential environmental impacts and evaluating the description for the various classes of Categorical Exemptions to CEQA, County of Los Angeles Fire Department Foresters has determined that the project fits within one or more of the exemption classes and no exceptions exist at the project site which would preclude the use of this exemption. The Department considered the possibility of (a) sensitive location, (b) cumulative impact, (c) significant impact due to unusual circumstances, (d) impacts to scenic highways, (e) activities within a hazardous waste site, and (f) significant adverse change to the significance of a historical resource. A Notice of Exemption will be filed with the County Clerk County of Los Angeles. A Notice of Exemption will be filed with the State Clearinghouse and posted online at CEQANET.

After assessing potential environmental impacts and evaluating the description for the various classes of Categorical Exemptions to CEQA, County of Los Angeles Fire Department Foresters has determined that the project does not fit within the description for the various exemption classes or has found that exceptions exist at the project site which precludes the use of a Categorical Exemption for this project. Additional environmental review will be conducted and the appropriate CEQA document used may be a Negative Declaration or a Mitigated Negative Declaration.

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A large, empty rectangular box with a thick black border, occupying the upper half of the page. It is intended for the user to provide detailed information or comments related to the project.A second large, empty rectangular box with a thick black border, identical in size and style to the one above. It is positioned in the lower half of the page and is also intended for user input.