



**CEQA EXEMPTION / NEPA CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION
DETERMINATION FORM (rev. 06/2022)**

Project Information

Project Name (if applicable): I-5 San Dieguito Lagoon Eucalyptus Removal

DIST-CO-RTE: 11-SD-005

PM/PM: 35.25/35.32

EA: NA

Federal-Aid Project Number: NA

Project Description Caltrans proposes a Tree Removal project to remove 5 River Red Gum (*Eucalyptus camaldulensis*) located adjacent to Southbound I-5 within San Dieguito lagoon between Post Mile 35.32 and 35.25. These trees are healthy, but their removal will benefit the lagoon ecosystem. They provide a perfect location for Raptors which might target the critically Endangered California Least Tern's young offspring that have breeding grounds next to these trees. By removing these trees, it will better allow the young chicks a chance to mature into breeding adults. This area also has a good amount of habitat that is used for the threatened Coastal Gnatcatcher, and due to the relative remote location of where these trees are located, passive restoration of various native shrub species will reemerge and provide increased suitable habitat for the Gnatcatcher. Environmental Commitments are contained in the ECR.

Caltrans CEQA Determination (Check one)

- Not Applicable** – Caltrans is not the CEQA Lead Agency
- Not Applicable** – Caltrans has prepared an IS or EIR under CEQA

Based on an examination of this proposal and supporting information, the project is:

- Exempt by Statute.** (PRC 21080[b]; 14 CCR 15260 et seq.)
- Categorically Exempt. Class 1c.** (PRC 21084; 14 CCR 15300 et seq.)
 - No exceptions apply that would bar the use of a categorical exemption (PRC 21084 and 14 CCR 15300.2). See the [SER Chapter 34](#) for exceptions.
- Covered by the Common Sense Exemption.** This project does not fall within an exempt class, but it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the activity may have a significant effect on the environment (14 CCR 15061[b][3].)

Senior Environmental Planner or Environmental Branch Chief

Shay Lynn M. Harrision

03/14/2024

Print Name

Signature

Date

Project Manager

Scott Rose

03/14/2024

Print Name

Signature

Date



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Caltrans NEPA Determination (Check one)

[X] Not Applicable

Caltrans has determined that this project has no significant impacts on the environment as defined by NEPA, and that there are no unusual circumstances as described in 23 CFR 771.117(b). See SER Chapter 30 for unusual circumstances. As such, the project is categorically excluded from the requirements to prepare an EA or EIS under NEPA and is included under the following:

[] 23 USC 326: Caltrans has been assigned, and hereby certifies that it has carried out the responsibility to make this determination pursuant to 23 USC 326 and the Memorandum of Understanding dated April 18, 2022, executed between FHWA and Caltrans. Caltrans has determined that the project is a Categorical Exclusion under:

- [] 23 CFR 771.117(c): activity (c)(___)
[] 23 CFR 771.117(d): activity (d)(___)
[] Activity ___ listed in Appendix A of the MOU between FHWA and Caltrans

[] 23 USC 327: Based on an examination of this proposal and supporting information, Caltrans has determined that the project is a Categorical Exclusion under 23 USC 327. The environmental review, consultation, and any other actions required by applicable Federal environmental laws for this project are being, or have been, carried out by Caltrans pursuant to 23 USC 327 and the Memorandum of Understanding dated May 27, 2022, and executed by FHWA and Caltrans.

Senior Environmental Planner or Environmental Branch Chief

Not Applicable

Print Name

Signature

Date

Project Manager/ DLA Engineer

Not Applicable

Print Name

Signature

Date

Date of Categorical Exclusion Checklist completion (if applicable): Not Applicable

Date of Environmental Commitment Record or equivalent: Not Applicable

Briefly list environmental commitments on continuation sheet if needed (i.e., not necessary if included on an attached ECR). Reference additional information, as appropriate (e.g., additional studies and design conditions).