

Notice of Determination

To: Office of Planning and Research
 PO Box 3044, 1400 Tenth Street, Room 222
 Sacramento, CA 95812

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

To: Santa Cruz County Clerk
 701 Ocean Street, Room 520
 Santa Cruz, CA 95060

**Subject: Filing of Notice of Determination
 in Compliance with Section 21108 or 21152 of the Public Resource Code.**

State Clearinghouse Number: 2019012052

Project Title: Last Chance Road Forest Health Project

Project Location: Last Chance Road, Santa Cruz County

Project Description: The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) awarded the Resource Conservation District (RCD) of Santa Cruz County a Forest Health Grant for the Last Chance Road Forest Health Project (project), which involves ecological restoration by conducting forest management actions to enhance habitat condition and forest function, with the added benefit of improving safety and reducing wildfire risk. Ecological restoration would involve vegetation treatments consistent with Coastal Vegetation Treatment Standards (CVTS) and the objectives of the California Vegetation Treatment Program (CalVTP). The RCD has prepared a Project-Specific Analysis (PSA) for the project as a later activity covered by the CalVTP Program EIR.

The project would occur within an approximately 60-acre area along Last Chance Road in western Santa Cruz County that was severely burned in the 2020 CZU Lightning Complex. Manual treatments, mechanical treatments (i.e., cutting or limbing vegetation with a masticator, feller-buncher, skid steer, or chipper), and targeted application of herbicides using hand-held devices (i.e., cut stump or foliar spray application of herbicides) would be used to implement the project. The project would be implemented in three phases, including Phase I treatments, Phase II treatments, and ongoing maintenance treatments. Phase I would involve ecological restoration treatments using mechanical equipment only to remove dead, dying, and diseased trees, hazard trees, and downed material. Phase II would involve ecological restoration treatments and the creation of a shaded fuel break using manual and mechanical treatment activities, and targeted herbicide application. Ongoing treatment maintenance would occur as needed using manual and mechanical treatment activities, and targeted herbicide application. Treatment crews would consist of up to 10 people working at any one time. Treatment vehicle and equipment staging would occur within the designated treatment area and within pullouts along Last Chance Road. All work would occur during daytime hours.

This Notice of Determination is to advise that the Resource Conservation District of Santa Cruz County (Lead Agency or Responsible Agency) has approved the above-described project on March 15, 2022 and has made the following determinations related to the PSA:

1. The project will have a significant effect on the environment.
2. The Last Chance Road Forest Health Project PSA (SCH# 2019012052) was prepared for this project pursuant to the provisions of CEQA.
3. The CalVTP Program EIR sufficiently analyzes and addresses potential environmental impacts from the project, and the project will not trigger any of the criteria requiring additional CEQA review pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15162. The project will not result in new significant impacts or a substantial increase in the severity of the significant environmental impacts identified in the CalVTP Program EIR. The proposed project is within the scope of the CalVTP Program EIR consistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15168(c)(2), as documented in the PSA.
4. Mitigation measures and standard project requirements from the CalVTP Program EIR were made a condition of the approval of the project; no new project-specific mitigation measures are required.
5. The implementation of applicable CalVTP Program EIR mitigation measures and standard project requirements will be monitored and reported pursuant to the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program that was adopted for this project.
6. The previous statement of overriding considerations in the CalVTP Program EIR was reaffirmed and adopted for this project by the Resource Conservation District of Santa Cruz County.
7. Findings were made pursuant to the provisions of State CEQA Guidelines Section 15091.

Dated Received for filing at OPR:

Authority cited: Sections 21083 and 21087, Public Resources Code.
 Reference: Sections 21000-21174, Public Resources Code.

This is to certify that the Last Chance Road Forest Health Project PSA and record of project approval are available to the general public. The custodian of these documents is Matt Abernathy, Program Specialist. Please contact Matt Abernathy at mabernathy@rcdsantacruz.org or (831) 464-2950 ext. 28 to arrange document viewing.

Signature:

Jim McKenna

James McKenna

Title:

Board President

Date:

March 16, 2022

Dated Received for filing at OPR:

Authority cited: Sections 21082 and 21087, Public Resources Code.
Reference: Sections 21000-21174, Public Resources Code.