



Notice of Exemption

- To: Office of Planning and Research
P.O. Box 3044
1400 Tenth Street, Room 121
Sacramento, CA 95812-3044
- County Clerk
County of San Luis Obispo
1144 Monterey Street, Suite A
San Luis Obispo, CA 93408

PROJECT APPLICANT

From: City of San Luis Obispo
~~Community Development Department~~
990 Palm Street
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401-3249
BOB HILL, RHILL@SLOCITY.ORG
(805) 781-7211
 Filing Not Required

Project Title: Johnson Ranch Restoration Project

Project Location - Specific: 5190 Ontario Rd, San Luis Obispo, CA 93405

Project Location - City: San Luis Obispo

Project Location - County: San Luis Obispo

Description of Project: The proposed project consists of the implementation of three restoration projects at Johnson Ranch Open Space (JROS). Together, these three restoration activities are expected to increase water retention and water quality, improve riparian and grassland habitat, enhance resilience to future floods and fires, and sequester additional carbon. The first project would utilize process-based restoration techniques including beaver-dam analogs to rehydrate and stabilize in-stream habitat damaged by recent storms. 30 small in-stream installations of natural materials, known as beaver-dam analog structures, will provide erosion control and bank stabilization benefits to Dry Creek. The structures would be installed using hand crews using materials harvested on site. The second task is planting 300 native trees and shrubs to stabilize the new in-stream structures and shade the corridor. The third task is restoring approximately one acre of native grasslands in the floodplains adjacent to the riparian corridor through traditional indigenous practices led by the yak yak titvu titvu yak tihini Northern Chumash Tribe, including hand tending, harvesting, and seed sowing. The three restoration practices will impact a total 225 linear feet of in-stream habitat, and the total project area is 2.29 acres.

Name of Public Agency Approving the Project: City of San Luis Obispo

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out the Project: Robert A. Hill, Natural Resources Manager

Exempt Status (check one):

- Ministerial (Section 21080(b)(1); 15268;
- Declared Emergency (Sec. 21080(b)(3); 15269(a));
- Emergency Project (Sec. 21080(b)(4); 15269(b)(c))
- ✓ **Categorical Exemption. State type and section number: Title 14 §15333, Small Habitat Restoration Projects**
- Statutory Exemptions. State code number:

Reasons why project is exempt: The project consists of a small habitat restoration project not exceeding a total of 5 acres in size or 500 linear feet of in-stream habitat. The project will not have a significant adverse impact to special status species because:

- A. Beaver-dam analogs consisting of natural vegetative materials will be installed by hand to rehydrate and stabilize in-stream habitat damaged by recent storms. These small in-stream structures located in the wetted portion of the channel will be constructed starting at the bottom of the drainage and working up. By starting with the structure furthest downstream, each progressive installation will create an additional natural sediment filter. This will ensure that disturbed creekbed sediment mobilized during installation is mitigated by the downstream structures before exiting the project area. A potential small pulse of sediment from the construction of the bottom structure will be filtered through straw waddles before exiting the project area. To prevent harm to any aquatic species during

installation, the work will be scheduled outside of January through April (critical spawning and migration periods in salmonid life cycles). Additionally, during in-channel installation days there will be a biologist and/or trained professional onsite to inspect the area and monitor for wildlife. The planting of 300 native trees and shrubs will stabilize the new in-stream structures and shade the corridor. Restoration of approximately one acre of native grasslands adjacent to the riparian corridor will also provide ecological benefits to wildlife and plant species within the restoration area.

- B. There are no hazardous materials at or around the project site.
- C. The project will not result in any significant project specific impacts or cumulative impacts when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects because the project is limited to habitat restoration and will be implemented outside of the rainy season and using hand crews. When implemented, the project will result in beneficial effects to the riparian corridor including habitat enhancement for plants and wildlife species and erosion and sedimentation control.

Lead Agency

Contact Person: Shawna Scott **Area Code/Telephone/Ext.** 805.781.7176 **email:** sscott@slocity.org

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: Shawna Scott Date: 11/21/23

By: Shawna Scott, Special Projects Manager, Public Utilities

