

**CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION**

SOUTH CENTRAL COAST DISTRICT OFFICE  
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August 21, 2025

Leigh Adams Croley  
Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority  
26800 Mulholland Hwy  
Calabasas, CA 91302

*Sent electronically: leigh.croley@mrca.ca.gov*

**Subject: MRCA 2025 Strategic Hazardous Fuel Mitigation Treatment Projects –  
Suspension Request**

Dear Leigh,

We are in receipt of the Fuels Reduction Suspension Request you submitted for enhancing defensible space and establishing and maintaining fuel breaks pursuant to Governor Newsom's March 1, 2025 State of Emergency Proclamation (SOE), in the Santa Monica Mountains in Los Angeles County. This letter does not serve as authorization of the Request, but describes the measures needed to carry out the project consistent with the Statewide Fuels Reduction Environmental Protection Plan (EPP) as it relates to coastal resource protection.

The fuel reduction work proposed within the coastal zone consists of fuel break creation and maintenance using mastication to shred and grind trees and shrubs up to 30 feet in width and clear vegetation from existing access roads. The project will target retention of 10-20 percent vegetation cover per linear mile to maintain habitat quality where feasible and consistent with wildfire risk reduction goals. Oak trees greater than 8-inch diameter at breast height (DBH) will be retained. Pile burning in the coastal zone will be limited to APNs: 4455-023-900, 4455-023-901, and 4453-037-002. No broadcast burning is proposed within the coastal zone. Prescribed herbivory is also proposed at APNs: 4448-011-900, 4448-030-902, and 4448-030-903 and will be excluded from sensitive plant communities and oak restoration areas. Evan Conklin, Deputy Forester with the Los Angeles County Fire Department will oversee implementation of the project. As we discussed on August 8 and August 14, 2025, we recommend the following measures to ensure that the requested work adequately protects coastal resources, most notably riparian, creeks, and streams, oak woodland, rock outcrops, unfragmented coastal sage scrub, chaparral, and native grassland that is identified as H1 and H2 habitat (equal to environmentally sensitive habitat area or ESHA) in the Los Angeles County Santa Monica Mountains Local Coastal Program and that is designated as ESHA in the City of Malibu Local Coastal Program (for the area shown on Map Panel 45). These measures are needed to comply with the EPP requirements related to coastal resources, and shall be carried out in addition to any other requirements of the EPP:

- Prescribed herbivory (goats and sheep) is proposed on the slopes surrounding the Big Rock community (depicted on Map Panels 43 and 45). As you described on August 8, 2025, grazing animals will be actively managed at all times by a shepherd and using pens to control animal access. The vegetation on the slopes in these areas is coastal sage scrub and chaparral ESHA. In addition, review of aerial imagery suggests that the vegetation is sparse in these locations. A biologist should be present onsite during all grazing activities to ensure that animals are removed as soon as vegetation removal targets are met in order to avoid type conversion and erosion impacts consistent with EPP Measures 3.d., 5.c., 5.d., 7, and 8.a.
- Mastication within or adjacent to creeks, streams or associated riparian habitat for fuel break creation or maintenance (depicted on Map Panels 27, 28, & 35) should be designed to avoid impacts to riparian and aquatic function consistent with EPP Measure 4.e. Compliance with the requirements of EPP Measures 4 and 5 should minimize impacts to sensitive resources.
- Chipped material, not to exceed six inches in depth, should be limited to the width of the identified mastication zones to the greatest extent possible and should avoid being placed in areas where they could enter creeks and streams or associated riparian habitat, consistent with EPP Measure 5.b.
- The request describes ongoing maintenance of the treatment areas. Please be advised that the suspension request does not authorize maintenance work in the future beyond the approval period specified by the suspension. Further authorizations will be required for work performed in the future.
- In addition to documentation requirements provided in the authorization letter you receive, the California Coastal Commission requests that photo documentation of treatment areas before and after treatment, as well as a final description of treatments completed, be submitted at the conclusion of the project. Reports and photos should be sent to [SouthCentralCoast@coastal.ca.gov](mailto:SouthCentralCoast@coastal.ca.gov).

Additionally, current guidance for the SOE requires work to be completed within 2 years of initiation. Continuation of this work beyond that timeline may require a coastal development permit. Correspondence with California Coastal Commission or Los Angeles County staff can help provide further details in the future. Please let me know if you have any questions. I can be reached at [erin.prahler@coastal.ca.gov](mailto:erin.prahler@coastal.ca.gov) and (619) 324-8414.

Sincerely,

*Erin Prahler*

Erin Prahler  
 Statewide Planning Manager  
 California Coastal Commission