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744 La Guardia Street, Building A, Salinas, CA 93905

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## NOTICE OF INTENT TO ADOPT MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION

For the Los Padres Strategic Community Fuelbreak Collaborative Project: East Pico Blanco Fuelbreak

This notice is to inform the public and interested agencies that in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the Resource Conservation District of Monterey County is circulating an Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) for the East Pico Blanco Fuelbreak for public comment.

Project/Location: The Los Padres Strategic Community Fuelbreak Collaborative Project: East Pico Blanco Fuelbreak legal location is in Township 18S, Range 02E(M), sections 30 and 31, Township 19S, Range 01E (M), Section 1. The USGS quadrangles for the project are Big Sur.

Project Description: The proposed project will cover approximately 30 acres east of Pico Blanco Mountain and will create a new shaded fuelbreak that will serve to connect two Forest Service fuelbreaks- the Skinner Ridge Fuelbreak to the north and the Post Summit to Little Sur Fuelbreak to the south. This fuelbreak will be approximately 300 feet wide and will run an estimated 6,200 feet (1.17 miles) from the Little Sur River south to the northern terminus of the Post Summit to Little Sur Fuelbreak. The majority of the fuelbreak will follow a ridgeline between the two end points but will have segments that follow smaller ridges or geographical features. This area is remote and cannot be accessed by vehicles or machinery, therefore the treatments for this fuelbreak will be done only with tools that can be carried by hand (loppers, chainsaws, other hand tools).

Within the boundaries of the 300' by 6200' shaded fuelbreak, trees will be limbed/pruned to a height of ten feet from the highest ground level whenever possible using chainsaws or loppers. Other non-tree woody vegetation will be lopped or cut to achieve a horizontal mosaic pattern of no more than 25% cover of woody vegetation within a given acre (excluding trees). Pruned limbs and cut vegetation will be lopped and scattered to a depth of not to exceed eighteen inches. Trees will not be removed unless they are less than twelve inches in diameter, act as a ladder fuel to the overstory and do not have identified wildlife nesting or roosting in the tree. Forbs and other vegetation will not be removed or cut unless they act as ladder fuels or aid the horizontal spread of fire on the ground. Trees of cultural significance and State and Federally listed plant species and habitats will be flagged and avoided. The end objective is to have a treatment with modified fuel characteristics that decrease fire rate of spread significantly, do not allow crown fire spread in the mature canopy, maintain or not significantly decrease the existing canopy cover, and diminish the intensity of a potential wildfire long enough to allow time for other firefighting tactics to be used in adjacent areas.

Document Availability: The Initial Study/MND will be available for review at the following locations beginning on Wednesday, October 13<sup>th</sup>, 2021:

- Resource Conservation District of Monterey County office: 744-A LaGuardia St, Salinas, CA 93905
- Resource Conservation District of Monterey County website: [www.rcdmonterey.org](http://www.rcdmonterey.org)

**Public Review Period:** The 30-day public review period for the IS/MND is from Wednesday, October 13<sup>th</sup>, 2021 to Saturday, November 13<sup>th</sup>, 2021.

**Comments:** Any person who wishes to comment on the RCDMC's intent to adopt the MND must submit written comments no later than 5:00 p.m. on Saturday, November 13, 2021. Written comments may be sent by e-mail to [jtlewis@rcdmonterey.org](mailto:jtlewis@rcdmonterey.org) or by mail to: Jamie Tuitele-Lewis, Resource Conservation District of Monterey County, 744-A LaGuardia St, Salinas, CA 93905.

**Project Impacts:** Based on the findings of the Initial Study, it has been determined that the East Pico Blanco Fuelbreak project will not have a significant effect upon the environment based on mitigating measures, which will be attached to the project as conditions of approval.

**Public Hearing:** A virtual public hearing will be held on October 28<sup>th</sup>, at 5:00 pm. Public comments will be heard during this session.

Link:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84551866054?pwd=dzd6WDIESVIQTIXIEZDJOR25aei9FZz09>