

074-26



County of Santa Cruz

PLANNING DEPARTMENT

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RECEIVED
CLERK OF THE BOARD

AUG 20 2026

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ

DS



NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

To: Clerk of the Board
Attn: Juliette Rezatto
701 Ocean Street, Room 500
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

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Approved 8/11/2026
Board of Supervisors
DOC-2026-626

Project Name: Moran Lake Monarch Habitat Management Plan

Project Location: Moran Lake County Park and portions of adjacent Sanitation District Property in the unincorporated Live Oak area of Santa Cruz County

Assessor Parcel No.: 028-291-21, 028-291-57, 028-451-01, 028-291-49, 028-281-37, 028-281-32, 028-481-01, 028-481-06, and 028-481-02

Project Applicant: Santa Cruz County Parks

Project Description:

The proposed project involves the adoption and implementation of the Moran Lake Monarch Butterfly Habitat Management Plan (HMP) within Moran Lake County Park. The HMP provides updated management recommendations based on monarch butterfly overwintering observations and existing habitat conditions to aid in the restoration, preservation, and future enhancement of monarch overwintering habitat at Moran Lake.

Implementation of the HMP includes routine tree risk assessments, maintenance pruning, and removal of hazardous or failing trees and limbs, as well as selective vegetation management, invasive species removal, tree and shrub planting, and minor drainage improvements to support habitat function and tree health. These activities will occur on an as-needed, ongoing basis and will be conducted under the direction of qualified professionals, including certified arborists and monarch butterfly specialists.

Ground disturbance would be limited and primarily associated with tree removal and planting activities, generally not exceeding approximately two feet in depth. All work will incorporate best management practices and seasonal restrictions to avoid and minimize impacts to biological resources.

The project is intended to maintain and enhance the structure and function of the existing habitat to support monarch butterfly overwintering, while also addressing public safety through proactive tree management.

CEQA Exemption:

This project is categorically exempt from CEQA pursuant to:

- **Class 4 (Minor Alterations to Land, CEQA Guidelines §15304):** The project involves minor alterations to land and vegetation associated with implementation of the HMP for the purposes of habitat maintenance, restoration, and enhancement, as well as public safety. Although trees may be removed as part of HMP implementation, such removals are limited to hazardous or failing trees identified and recommended by an ISA-certified arborist and are conducted for habitat management and safety purposes.
- **Class 7 (Protection of Natural Resources, CEQA Guidelines §15307):** The project involves actions undertaken by a public agency to maintain, restore, and enhance natural resources through implementation of the HMP, specifically to support and improve monarch butterfly overwintering habitat.

Revised 7/13/2026

THIS NOTICE HAS BEEN POSTED AT THE CLERK
OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OFFICE FOR A
PERIOD COMMENCING 8/20/2026
AND ENDING 9/24/2026

Reasons Why Project is Exempt:

The project consists of the implementation of a habitat management plan involving minor, ongoing activities to maintain, restore, and enhance monarch butterfly overwintering habitat within an existing County park. Project activities are limited to routine tree maintenance, removal of hazardous or failing trees, selective vegetation management, planting, and minor drainage improvements, all of which are small in scale and conducted in a controlled manner.

Tree removal is limited to hazardous or failing trees identified by an ISA-certified arborist and does not involve the removal of healthy, mature, scenic trees except where necessary for public safety or habitat management purposes. All activities will be conducted under the direction of qualified professionals and incorporate best management practices and seasonal restrictions to avoid and minimize impacts to biological resources.

The project would not result in significant environmental effects, and none of the exceptions to categorical exemptions identified in CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2 apply.

Agency Approving Project: County of Santa Cruz

County Contact: Robert Tidmore

Telephone No.: (831) 454-7947

Date Completed: 08/11/2026

This is to advise that the County of Santa Cruz has approved the above-described project on 08/11/2026 and found the project to be exempt from CEQA under the following criteria:

Exempt status: (*check one*)

- ☐ The proposed activity is not a project under CEQA Guidelines Section 15378.
- ☐ The proposed activity is not subject to CEQA as specified under CEQA Guidelines Section 15060 (c).
- ☐ The proposed activity is exempt from CEQA as specified under CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3).
- ☐ **Ministerial Project** involving only the use of fixed standards or objective measurements without personal judgment.
- ☐ **Statutory Exemption** other than a Ministerial Project (CEQA Guidelines Section 15260 to 15285).

Specify type:

☒ **Categorical Exemption**

Class 4 & 7

DocuSigned by:

Signature: A5BA09C8E8C3490 Date: 8/11/2026 Titled: Environmental Coordinator