

CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION

SOUTH CENTRAL COAST AREA
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VENTURA, CA 93001
(805) 585-1800



W10a

NOTICE OF IMPENDING DEVELOPMENT DE MINIMIS: CONSENT CALENDAR

DATE: February 15, 2008

TO: All Interested Parties

SUBJECT: Notice of Impending Development (NOID); **NOID 4-07**

Based on project plans and information submitted by the applicant regarding the development described below, the Executive Director of the Coastal Commission believes the proposed development is de minimis with respect to the purposes and provisions of the certified LRDP and therefore shall be reviewed by the Commission on its Consent Calendar, pursuant to Section 13550(c) of the Commission's Regulations (California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Division 5.5).

Applicant: University of California, Santa Barbara

Location: Within the Coal Oil Point Reserve, west of Devereux Slough and southeast of Devereux Slough nears Sands Beach

Description: Restoration of exotic grasslands to native coastal scrub and grassland habitat. Restoration of approximately 5 acres of phased non-native tree and shrub removal including: (1) the removal of non-native trees and shrubs below 20 feet in height; (2) limb removal of trees over 20 feet tall (limbs shall only be removed up to 6 feet from the ground); and (3) removal of non-native trees over 20 feet tall once they die of natural causes. The 22 non-native trees that will be removed are dispersed along the western and southeastern portion of Devereux Slough, generally within 300 meters of snowy plover habitat on Sands Beach. Immediately after non-native trees are removed, native vegetation, including coastal scrub, shrubs, and grasses, will be planted in areas within 300 meters of Snowy Plovers and Least Terns nesting on the beach. Trees removed farther than 300 meters from the beach will be replanted with native coast live oaks at a ratio of 1:1. The restoration also includes removal of exotic grasses using manual methods including hand weeding and solarization and replanting with native species over a 45 acre area. No heavy equipment shall be used for this project.

Rationale: There are no individual or cumulative adverse impacts on coastal resources associated with this project and the project is consistent with UCSB's certified 1990 Long Range Development Plan (LRDP). The LRDP identifies the Coal Oil Point Natural Reserve as ESHA and natural open space. Permitted uses at Coal Oil Point Natural Reserve, as described in the LRDP, include habitat creation and restoration such as the proposed project. The proposed restoration will involve the phased removal of non-

native trees and shrubs, removal of exotic grasses, and replanting of native species. Initial tree removal will be limited to 22 non-native trees below 20 feet in height and will not result in any adverse impacts to raptors or raptor habitat. Non-native trees 20 feet high and above will be limbed (limbs will be removed up to 6 feet from the ground surface) and will be allowed to die of natural causes before being removed. Shrubs will be cut at the base and applied with herbicide (Glyphosate Aquamaster) to kill the roots so they will not continue to sprout. Exotic grasses will be removed, 2 to 7 acres per year, through hand weeding or solarization, which involves the placement of black plastic over the non-native grasses for approximately 2 months and subsequent planting with coastal scrub and grassland species grown from genetic stock on the UCSB campus. Mechanized equipment consisting only of a wood chipper will be placed on an existing road and will not impact any sensitive habitat or vegetation.

The purpose of the proposed project is to improve the condition of the ESHA on the site by removing non-native plant species and replacing them with natives. Only 22 specified non-native live trees below 20 feet in height will be removed and replanted with native trees, coastal scrub, and grasses. The removal of non-native trees at the project site is not expected to result in any adverse impacts on raptors, as trees above 20 feet in height that currently serve as raptor perching and potential nesting habitat will not be removed until they are allowed to die naturally. Gradual loss of tall, non-native trees will allow raptors to adapt to the change in habitat and find alternative perching and nesting trees. Gradual loss of these trees will also serve to benefit the recovery of the threatened Snowy Plover and the endangered Least Tern, as these species are currently being predated upon by raptors, crows and owls utilizing the non-native trees. In order to protect nesting birds, all tree removal will occur between February 15 – August 31, outside of nesting season. Further, in order to protect water quality, ESHA, and associated wildlife species, no use of herbicide shall occur within the rainy season between November 1 – March 31st or at any time when winds speeds are greater than 5 mph or 48 hours prior to predicted rain. Prior to any vegetation removal or solarization, a qualified biologist or environmental resource specialist shall conduct a survey to determine the presence of any sensitive species. The biologist or resource specialist shall be present during all vegetation eradication and removal activities and shall require the applicant to cease work in the event that sensitive wildlife species displaying reproductive or nesting behavior are discovered or any unforeseen sensitive habitat issues arise. The implementation of work windows, phased removal, and biological monitors will serve to protect existing ESHA and associated wildlife throughout the restoration project, which is anticipated to take between 10 to 20 years to complete.

A public access trail exists along the eastern portion of the restoration area. The restoration project will not impact the public access trail onsite or trails in adjacent areas of the UCSB campus and will not result in an intensification of use at the site.

IMPORTANT: This NOID is not valid unless the project site has been posted and until the NOID has been reported to the Coastal Commission. This NOID is proposed to be reported to the Commission at the meeting of March 6, 2008. If four Commissioners request that this NOID

be scheduled for a public hearing on the regular permit calendar, this NOID shall be removed from the consent calendar, pursuant to Section 13103 of the Commission's Regulations.

Persons wishing to object to or having questions regarding this NOID should contact the Commission office at the above address or phone number prior to the Commission meeting date.

Sincerely,

PETER M. DOUGLAS
Executive Director

By: Jenn Feinberg
Title: Coastal Program Analyst