

Climate Resilient Monterey Bay



NORTH MONTEREY COUNTY EUCALYPTUS TREATMENT AND WILDFIRE PREVENTION

SUMMARY

The Resource Conservation District of Monterey County (RCDMC), in partnership with the Elkhorn Slough Foundation (ESF) is leading two coordinated wildfire-risk reduction efforts in northern Monterey County. The work is targeting highly flammable blue gum eucalyptus in the wildland-urban intermix surrounding the Elkhorn Slough, while also planning long-term fire management on a nearby 428-acre preserve. By treating fuels, improving access routes, and developing formal management plans, the project is reducing wildfire danger to the communities of Las Lomas, Elkhorn, and Prunedale, which are located in CAL FIRE-mapped High and Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones. More than 700 adjacent habitable structures, public institutions, and critical electrical and telecommunications infrastructure are being safeguarded through this effort.

PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The project is removing approximately 40 acres of invasive blue gum eucalyptus to reduce the likelihood of crown fires, ember cast, and long-range spotting into nearby neighborhoods. It is creating a Forest Management Plan for a 428-acre preserve to guide future wildfire-prevention actions and to enhance emergency vehicle access. The work is also strengthening community preparedness by implementing public outreach and by aligning fuels treatments with long-term climate adaptation, habitat restoration, and fire-safe access goals. Through these combined efforts, the project is protecting life, property, and sensitive ecosystems while transitioning away from fire-amplifying invasive tree cover toward a more resilient fire regime.

PROJECT ACTIVITIES

RCDMC is administering and coordinating all tasks, overseeing partner implementation, assisting with permitting and environmental compliance, reporting project performance, and conducting community outreach on the benefits and safety of fuel management and prescribed fire. ESF is carrying out field implementation by felling approximately 40 acres of blue gum eucalyptus across four preserves, cutting and staging the wood for processing, treating stumps to prevent regrowth, and converting the resulting biomass into biochar to permanently sequester carbon and support future restoration.

ADAPTATION STRATEGY

Wildfire Risk
Reduction



PARTNERS



Resource Conservation
District of Monterey
County



Elkhorn Slough
Foundation



This work is part of Climate Resilient Monterey Bay (CRMB), an initiative through the California Marine Sanctuary Foundation. CRMB is Federally funded as part of the Climate Resilience Regional Challenge through the Inflation Reduction Act and administered by the Office for Coastal Management, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.



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Concurrently, the team is working with CAL FIRE and a Registered Professional Forester to develop a Forest Management Plan for the 428-acre Long Valley Preserve that identifies fuel-reduction priorities and emergency access needs, and includes engagement with adjacent residents. Monitoring and coordination are ongoing to ensure compliance, treatment effectiveness, and alignment with regional wildfire-resilience goals.

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