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**SUBMITTAL TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE, STATE OF CALIFORNIA**



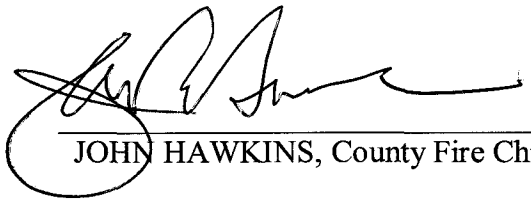
**FROM:** Riverside County Fire Department **SUBMITTAL DATE:** May 22, 2009  
**SUBJECT:** Introduction and Adoption of Ordinance No. 695.4, An Ordinance Requiring the Abatement of Hazardous Vegetation

**RECOMMENDED MOTION:** That the Board 1. Introduce and Adopt Ordinance No. 695.4 on Successive Weeks; and 2. Adopt the Mitigated Negative Declaration for Environmental Assessment No. 42117.

**JUSTIFICATION:** In an effort to settle litigation filed by the Endangered Habitats League in connection with the Board's adoption of Ordinance No. 695.3 in 2007, the Department proposes that Ordinance No. 695 be amended to require weed abatement notices and any necessary clearance to conform to certain guidelines issued by the County Fire Chief. Attachment 4 contains draft guidelines that will be issued by the County Fire Chief upon adoption of Ordinance No. 695.4.

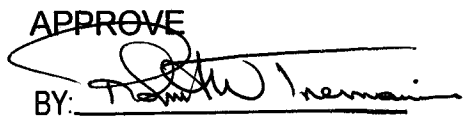
(Continued on page 2)

FORM APPROVED COUNTY COUNSEL  
BY: KATHERINE A. LIND 05/22/09 DATE

  
JOHN HAWKINS, County Fire Chief

**C.E.O. RECOMMENDATION:**

- Policy
- Policy
- Consent
- Consent

APPROVE  
BY:   
Robert Tremaine

County Executive Office Signature

Department Recommendation:  
Per Executive Office:

Prev. Agn. ref.

Dist.

AGENDA NO.

3.50

Subject: Introduction and Adoption of Ordinance No. 695.4, An Ordinance Requiring the Abatement of Hazardous Vegetation

These guidelines incorporate provisions concerning: 1. the types of abatement that may occur ie. disking, mowing, handclearing; 2. additional direction as to where and how abatement should occur; and 3. guidance for coordination of weed abatement activities with various reserve managers throughout western Riverside County. These guidelines are intended to supplement the requirements of Ordinance No. 695 and to provide specific additional direction to Fire Department staff.

County Counsel has also identified the need to amend Ordinance No. 695.4 to incorporate more detailed procedures concerning abatement proceedings, ie. the manner of giving notice, requests for hearing, hearing process, and abatement cost recovery including lien procedures. Section 7.A. of the Ordinance also allows the Board to delegate its authority to conduct the administrative abatement proceedings to a County hearing officer.



1 E. Of paramount importance to the Board of Supervisors and the  
2 citizens of Riverside County is the protection of lives and property  
3 from the threat of fire and the safety of fire and law enforcement  
4 personnel during wildfires; and

5 F. It is the purpose of this ordinance to establish a hazardous vegetation  
6 abatement program that protects the lives and property of the  
7 citizens of Riverside County while at the same time protecting rare  
8 and sensitive plant and animal species and the environment.

9 G. The Board of Supervisors finds that hazardous vegetation or  
10 combustible material poses a danger to the health, safety and welfare  
11 of the residents in the vicinity of any real property located  
12 throughout the territory of the County of Riverside for the reasons  
13 set forth above. Therefore, all hazardous vegetation or combustible  
14 material located on real property within the territory of the County  
15 of Riverside is deemed a public nuisance and poses a hazard to the  
16 safety of the landowners, residents in the vicinity, users of public  
17 highways and to the public generally.

18 Section 2. DEFINITIONS.

19 A. Abate and/or Abatement. An act used to remove, destroy, eliminate,  
20 seize, impound, or any action taken to mitigate a public nuisance.

21 B. Abatement Costs. Any and all costs incurred by the County of  
22 Riverside to abate the hazardous weeds or combustible material on  
23 any property pursuant to this ordinance, including physical  
24 abatement costs, administration fees and any additional actual costs  
25 incurred by the Riverside County Fire Department for the abatement  
26 proceeding, including attorneys fees, if applicable.

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- C. Combustible Material. Rubbish, litter or material of any kind other than hazardous vegetation that is flammable and endangers the public safety by creating a fire hazard.
  
- D. County Fire Chief. The Fire Chief of the County of Riverside or his designated representative, including:
  - 1) Chiefs or Chief Engineers of all Fire Protection Districts within the territory of the political subdivision with the County where he serves, and their deputies;
  - 2) All employees of the Riverside County Fire Department Hazard Reduction Office; and
  - 3) Such other officers as are designated by the Board of Supervisors or the County Fire Chief.
  
- E. Hazardous Vegetation. Vegetation that is flammable and endangers the public safety by creating a fire hazard including but not limited to seasonal and recurrent weeds, stubble, brush, dry leaves, tumbleweeds.
  
- F. Improved Parcel. A portion of land of any size, the area of which is determined by the Assessor's maps and records and may be identified by an Assessor's Parcel Number upon which a structure is located.
  
- G. Person. Natural person or corporation.
  
- H. Structure. Any dwelling, house, building or other type of flammable construction including but not limited to a wood fence attached to or near any other structure.

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1 I. Unimproved Parcel. A portion of land of any size, the area of which  
2 is determined by the Assessor's maps and records and may be  
3 identified by an Assessor's Parcel Number upon which no structure  
4 is located.

5 Section 3. DUTY TO ABATE HAZARDOUS VEGETATION. Upon receipt  
6 of a Notice of Violation and Order to Abate, it shall be the duty of every owner, occupant,  
7 and person in control of any unimproved parcel of land or interest therein, which is located  
8 in the unincorporated territory of the County of Riverside as that territory is determined  
9 and classified by the Board of Supervisors to abate there from, and from all sidewalks and  
10 parkways, except for those roads accepted into the County Maintained System, all  
11 combustible material and hazardous vegetation, that constitutes a fire hazard which may  
12 endanger or damage neighboring property pursuant to the requirements of the Notice of  
13 Violation and Order to Abate received. No owner, occupant or person in control of any  
14 such unimproved parcel of land or interest therein shall be authorized to abate hazardous  
15 vegetation unless the owner, occupant or person has received a Notice of Violation and  
16 Order to Abate or alternatively has been issued a grading permit pursuant to the  
17 requirements of Ordinance No. 457. The removal of vegetation pursuant to this ordinance  
18 shall not exceed that set forth in the Notice of Violation and Order to Abate or grading  
19 permit. The Notice of Violation and Order to Abate and any clearance shall conform to  
20 Guidelines issued by the County Fire Chief implementing this ordinance, and which the  
21 Fire Chief may amend periodically.

22 A. The requirements of this section shall be satisfied if there is cleared  
23 pursuant to the requirements set forth in a Notice of Violation and  
24 Order to Abate by the method described in said Notice:

- 25 (1) a one hundred (100) foot wide strip of land at the boundary  
26 of an unimproved parcel adjacent to a roadway; and/or  
27 (2) a one hundred (100) foot wide strip of land around  
28 structure(s) located on an adjacent improved parcel (some or

1 all of this clearance may be required on the unimproved  
2 parcel depending upon the location of the structure on the  
3 improved parcel).

4 The County Fire Chief or his or her designee may require  
5 more than a one hundred (100) foot width or less than a one hundred  
6 (100) foot width for the protection of public health, safety or welfare  
7 or the environment.

8 The determination for appropriate clearance distances will be  
9 made based upon a visual inspection of the parcel and shall consider  
10 all factors that place the property or adjoining structure(s) at risk  
11 from an approaching fire. These factors shall include local weather  
12 conditions, fuel type(s), topography, and the environment where the  
13 property or adjoining structure(s) is located. Examples of the  
14 clearance requirements above are attached hereto as Exhibit "A" for  
15 informational purposes only.

- 16 B. Where the parcel's terrain is such that it cannot be disked or mowed,  
17 the County Fire Chief may require, or authorize, that other means of  
18 removal be used.

19 Section 4. ENFORCEMENT, INSPECTION AND AUTHORITY TO ENTER  
20 PROPERTY.

- 21 A. For the purpose of enforcing this ordinance, the County Fire Chief  
22 may designate any person or persons as his/her deputy in the  
23 performance of the duties enjoined upon him/her by this  
24 ordinance, in addition to those named in Section 2.D. of this  
25 ordinance.
- 26 B. For the purpose of enforcing or administering this ordinance, the  
27 County Fire Chief may enter any real property for the purpose of  
28 inspecting the property or for summary abatement proceedings

1 whenever the County Fire Chief is informed or has reasonable cause  
2 to believe that hazardous vegetation or combustible material exists,  
3 constituting a condition dangerous or injurious to the health or  
4 welfare of persons or to the public, including the environment, is a  
5 public nuisance or is otherwise in violation of this ordinance.

6 C. No person shall interfere with the entry of the County Fire Chief  
7 acting in the official course and scope of his duty.

8 Section 5. SUMMARY ABATEMENT PROCEEDINGS. In addition to the  
9 authority granted by law to the County Fire Chief in exigent situations, and pursuant to  
10 California Health and Safety Code §14930 and Government Code §25845, as amended, the  
11 County Fire Chief is authorized to enter real property and summarily abate any public  
12 nuisance determined by the County Fire Chief to constitute an immediate threat to public  
13 health or safety without prior notice or hearing.

14 Section 6. ABATEMENT PROCEEDINGS.

15 A. Notice of Violation and Order to Abate. If the County Fire Chief  
16 determines that any real property is being maintained or permitted to  
17 exist in a manner prohibited by this ordinance, the County Fire  
18 Chief shall issue a written notice to the property owner and any  
19 known person in possession of the property, of the violation and  
20 order the hazardous vegetation or combustible material to be  
21 immediately abated. The notice of violation and order to abate  
22 (“Notice/Order”) shall specify the corrective actions required to be  
23 taken and order the property owners and persons in possession to  
24 abate the hazardous vegetation or combustible material within thirty  
25 (30) days and state that the failure to bring the real property into  
26 compliance with this ordinance could subject the owner or persons  
27 in possession to civil, administrative and criminal penalties.  
28 Furthermore, the Notice/Order shall provide the property owner and

1 person in possession of the opportunity to appear before the  
2 Riverside County Board of Supervisors and be heard prior to the  
3 abatement by the County. The failure of the notice to set forth all  
4 required contents shall not affect the validity of the abatement  
5 proceedings.

6 B. Manner of Giving Notice. The County Fire Chief shall cause a copy  
7 of the Notice/Order to be mailed or otherwise delivered to all known  
8 persons to be in possession and to the property owner as such  
9 person's name and address appears on the last county equalized  
10 assessment roll. If the address is unknown, that fact shall be so  
11 stated and the notice shall be addressed to the person at the county  
12 seat. Service by mail shall be deemed complete at the time of  
13 deposit in the US mail. The failure of any person in possession or  
14 owner of the property to receive such notice shall not affect the  
15 validity of these proceedings.

16 C. Hearing.

17 (1) Request for Hearing. Any person who is adversely affected  
18 by the Notice/Order may appeal the Notice/Order by filing a  
19 written request for a hearing with the Riverside County  
20 Hazard Reduction Office within fifteen (15) calendar days.  
21 The request shall be postmarked within fifteen (15) calendar  
22 days of the postmark on the Notice/Order. Timely appeal  
23 shall stay any further action for abatement until the date set  
24 for hearing.

25 If no request for a hearing is timely made, the  
26 Riverside County Board of Supervisors herein declares that  
27 abatement of the hazardous weeds or combustible material  
28

1 shall have been deemed ordered by the Board of Supervisors  
2 as of the date of the postmark of the Notice/Order.

- 3 (2) Hearing. Upon timely written request by the recipient of the  
4 Notice/Order, a hearing shall be scheduled with the  
5 Riverside County Board of Supervisors or its designee  
6 (hereinafter "Board") with notice thereof mailed or otherwise  
7 delivered to the requesting person at least fourteen (14)  
8 calendar days before the scheduled hearing. The failure of  
9 any owner or occupant to receive such notice shall not affect  
10 the validity of the proceedings.

11 At the time fixed in the notice of hearing, the Board  
12 shall receive evidence from the County Fire Chief and the  
13 owner or person in possession of the real property in  
14 violation, or their representatives and any other concerned  
15 persons who may desire to present oral or documentary  
16 evidence regarding the conditions of the real property or  
17 other relevant matter, if such persons are present at the  
18 hearing. In conducting the hearing, the Board shall not be  
19 limited by the technical rules of evidence. Failure of the  
20 owner or person in possession to appear shall not affect the  
21 validity of the proceedings or order issued thereon.

22 Upon conclusion of the hearing, the Board shall make  
23 its decision and in the event it so concludes, may declare the  
24 conditions on the real property to be in violation of this  
25 ordinance and to constitute a public nuisance. The Board  
26 may direct the owner or person in possession to abate the  
27 hazardous vegetation or combustible material within ten (10)  
28 days after mailing and posting of the Board's decision. The

1 order shall include notice that if the hazardous vegetation is  
2 not abated as directed and within ten (10) days, the County  
3 Fire Chief may abate the hazardous vegetation and the  
4 abatement costs shall be a lien and an assessment against the  
5 real property.

6 The Board may grant any extension of time to abate  
7 such conditions that it may deem justifiable upon good cause  
8 being shown.

9 D. Abatement of Hazardous Vegetation or Combustible Material by  
10 County Fire Chief. If, at the end of the time allowed for compliance  
11 in the original Notice/Order issued pursuant to Section 6.A. above,  
12 or as set forth in an order issued by the Board after a timely request  
13 for a hearing, and compliance has not been accomplished as  
14 directed, the County Fire Chief may order the hazardous vegetation  
15 or other combustible material to be removed by County fire officials  
16 or employees, or may cause the removal to be carried out by a  
17 private contractor selected by the County Purchasing Agent in  
18 accordance with applicable statutes and in the manner and under the  
19 terms specified by the Board of Supervisors.

20 E. Abatement Cost Recovery. As set forth in Government Code  
21 Section 25845, the owner and any person in possession of the real  
22 property upon which the hazardous vegetation or combustible  
23 material is found to exist shall be jointly and severally liable for all  
24 abatement costs incurred by the County without any further hearing.

25 F. Notice of Abatement Costs. At the conclusion of the abatement by  
26 the County Fire Chief or designee, the County Fire Chief shall issue  
27 a bill setting forth the abatement costs to the owner and person in  
28 possession of the real property. The bill shall demand payment to

1 the County of Riverside the total abatement costs and administration  
2 costs, plus attorneys' fees, if relevant, within fifteen (15) calendar  
3 days of its mailing.

4 G. Abatement Costs Specially Assessed Against the Parcel. If the  
5 amount set forth in the Notice of Abatement Costs is not paid upon  
6 demand by the County, the abatement costs, including attorneys'  
7 fees, if applicable, shall be specially assessed against the real  
8 property pursuant to Government Code Section 22845, or by any  
9 other means provided by law. The assessment may be collected at  
10 the same time and in the same manner as ordinary County taxes are  
11 collected, and shall be subject to the same penalties and the same  
12 procedure of sale in case of delinquency as are ordinary County  
13 taxes.

14 H. Notice of Abatement Lien. A Notice of Abatement Lien may be  
15 recorded against the real property subject to this abatement  
16 proceeding, setting forth the date upon which abatement of the  
17 nuisance was ordered either by notice issued by the County Fire  
18 Chief or by the Board of Supervisors after a hearing, the date the  
19 abatement was complete and the amount of abatement costs.  
20 Furthermore, the notice shall identify the parcel address, the record  
21 owner, the possessor of the property, if known and applicable,  
22 together with the last known address of the record owner or  
23 possessor. The abatement lien shall have the same effect as  
24 recordation of an abstract of a money judgment pursuant to Article 2  
25 of Chapter 2 of Division 2 of Title 9 of Part 2 of the California Code  
26 of Civil Procedure (commencing with § 697.310, as amended). The  
27 lien has the same priority as a judgment lien on real property and  
28 continues in effect until released.

1 I. Attorneys Fees. Reasonable attorneys' fees may be recovered by the  
2 prevailing party in any civil action, administrative proceeding or  
3 special proceeding established by this ordinance. In the event a  
4 hearing is requested pursuant to the notice described above in  
5 Section 6 and the Board of Supervisors deems the real property to be  
6 a public nuisance and orders the County Fire Chief to abate the  
7 hazardous vegetation or combustible material, the County shall be  
8 deemed the prevailing party.

9 Section 7. HEARING OFFICIAL.

10 A. Delegation of Authority. The Riverside County Board of  
11 Supervisors may delegate its authority to conduct the administrative  
12 abatement proceedings set forth in Section 6, above, to either of the  
13 following:

14 (1) The County hearing officer appointed by the Board of  
15 Supervisors pursuant to Riverside County Ordinance No.  
16 643 and Government Code Section 27720, as amended. The  
17 hearing officer shall have full authority and duty to preside  
18 over hearings in the manner set forth in Riverside County  
19 Ordinance No. 643, as amended.

20 (2) A Weed Abatement Hearing Board (WAHB) designated  
21 pursuant to Government Code Section 25845, as amended.  
22 The WAHB shall have full authority to act and may preside  
23 over hearings with the same authority, power and duties of  
24 the hearing officer. The WAHB shall be comprised of three  
25 (3) persons as follows: one (1) member shall be an officer of  
26 the Riverside County Fire Department selected by the  
27 County Fire Chief, (but not an employee involved in  
28 inspecting or issuing the Notice/Order; and two (2) members

1 shall be selected by the Board of Supervisors. Members  
2 shall serve at the pleasure of the appointing entity.

3 B. Recommended Action. At the conclusion of a hearing by either the  
4 hearing officer or WAHB, a recommended decision shall be issued  
5 to the owner or person in possession of the real property subject to  
6 the hearing, and to any other interested person previously requesting  
7 notice. The hearing officer or WAHB shall also file the  
8 recommended decision with the Board of Supervisors. The  
9 recommended decision may alter the Notice/Order in any fashion  
10 and may include an order to the owner or person in possession of the  
11 real property to abate the hazardous weeds or combustible material  
12 within ten (10) calendar days of issuance of the order.

13 C. No Further Appeal. Upon receiving the recommended decision  
14 from either the hearing officer or WAHB, the Board of Supervisors  
15 may adopt the decision as recommended on the consent agenda at its  
16 next regularly scheduled public Board meeting without further  
17 notice or hearing, or may set the matter for a de novo hearing before  
18 the Board of Supervisors

19 Section 8. OTHER REMEDIES. The provisions of this ordinance are to be  
20 construed as an added remedy of abatement and not in derogation of any other civil or  
21 criminal actions or proceedings or remedies otherwise provided by law.

22 A. Civil Actions.

23 (1) Injunctive Relief and Abatement. Whenever, in the judgment  
24 of the County Fire Chief, any person is engaged in or about  
25 to engage in any act or practice which constitutes or will  
26 constitute a violation of any provision of this ordinance or  
27 notice or order issued pursuant hereto, the County Fire Chief  
28 may request the County Counsel or District Attorney to

1 commence proceedings for the abatement, removal,  
2 correction and enjoinder thereof, and requiring the violator  
3 to pay civil penalties and/or abatement costs or in addition,  
4 be subject to criminal prosecution.

- 5 (2) Civil Remedies and Penalties. Any owner or person in  
6 possession of real property who willfully violates the  
7 provisions of this ordinance or any notice or order issued  
8 pursuant hereto shall be liable for a civil penalty not to  
9 exceed \$1,000.00 for each day or portion thereof that the  
10 violation continues to exist. In determining the amount of the  
11 civil penalty to impose, the court shall consider all relevant  
12 circumstances, including, but not limited to, the extent of the  
13 harm caused by the conduct constituting a violation, the  
14 nature and persistence of such conduct, the length of time  
15 over which the conduct occurred, the assets, liabilities, and  
16 net worth of the violator, whether corporate or individual,  
17 and any corrective action taken by the violator.

18 **B. Criminal Actions.**

- 19 (1) It shall be unlawful for any person to violate any provision of  
20 this ordinance. Any person violating any provision of this  
21 ordinance shall be deemed guilty of an infraction or  
22 misdemeanor as hereinafter specified. Such person shall be  
23 deemed guilty of a separate offense for each and every day  
24 or portion thereof during which any violation of any  
25 provision of this ordinance is committed, continued or  
26 permitted.

- 27 (2) Any person so convicted shall be guilty of an infraction  
28 offense and punished by a fine not exceeding one hundred

1 dollars (\$100) for a first violation; guilty of an infraction  
2 offense and punished by a fine not exceeding two hundred  
3 dollars (\$200) for a second violation on the same site and  
4 perpetrated by the same person. The third and any additional  
5 violations on the same site and perpetrated by the same  
6 person shall constitute a misdemeanor offense and shall be  
7 punishable by a fine not exceeding one thousand dollars  
8 (\$1,000) or six months in jail, or both. Payment of any  
9 penalty herein shall not relieve a person from the  
10 responsibility for correcting the violation. Notwithstanding  
11 the above, a first or second offense may be charged as a  
12 misdemeanor.

13 C. Treble Damages. Upon a second or subsequent civil or criminal  
14 judgment for a violation of this ordinance within a two year period  
15 the violator shall be liable to the County of Riverside for treble the  
16 abatement costs, in accordance with Government Code § 25845.5.

17 D. Notice of Noncompliance. Whenever a Notice/Order has been  
18 issued, the County Fire Chief may record a Notice of  
19 Noncompliance with the Office of the County Recorder of Riverside  
20 County and shall notify the owner of the property of such action.  
21 The Notice of Noncompliance shall describe the property, shall set  
22 forth the noncomplying conditions, and shall state that any  
23 abatement costs incurred by the County as a result of the violation of  
24 this ordinance may be specially assessed as a lien on the property  
25 and that the owner has been so notified

26 Section 9. SEVERABILITY. This ordinance and the various parts, sections  
27 and clauses thereof are hereby declared to be severable. If any part, sentence, paragraph,  
28

1 section or clause is adjudged unconstitutional or invalid, the remainder of this ordinance  
2 shall not be affected thereby.

3 The County Board of Supervisors hereby declares that it would have passed  
4 this ordinance and each part thereof, regardless of the fact that one or more parts thereof be  
5 declared unconstitutional or invalid.”

6 Section 2. EFFECTIVE DATE. This amendment shall become effective 30 days after  
7 adoption.

8 BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE COUNTY  
9 OF RIVERSIDE, STATE OF CALIFORNIA

10 By: \_\_\_\_\_  
11 Chairman

11 ATTEST:

12 CLERK OF THE BOARD

13  
14  
15 By: \_\_\_\_\_  
16 Deputy

17 (SEAL)

18  
19 APPROVED AS TO FORM

20 May 22, 2009

21  
22 By: Katherine A. Lind  
23 KATHERINE A. LIND  
24 Principal Deputy County Counsel

25  
26  
27 KWB:mdk  
28 05/21/09  
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2 E. Of paramount importance to the Board of Supervisors and the  
3 citizens of Riverside County is the protection of lives and property  
4 from the threat of fire and the safety of fire and law enforcement  
5 personnel during wildfires; and

6 F. It is the purpose of this ordinance to establish a hazardous vegetation  
7 abatement program that protects the lives and property of the  
8 citizens of Riverside County while at the same time protecting rare  
9 and sensitive plant and animal species and the environment.

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14 set forth above. Therefore, all hazardous vegetation or combustible  
15 material located on real property within the territory of the County  
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18 highways and to the public generally.

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2 of an unimproved parcel adjacent to a roadway; and/or  
3 (2) a one hundred (100) foot wide strip of land around  
4 structure(s) located on an adjacent improved parcel (some or  
5 all of this clearance may be required on the unimproved  
6 parcel depending upon the location of the structure on the  
7 improved parcel).

8 The County Fire Chief or his or her designee may require  
9 more than a one hundred (100) foot width or less than a one hundred  
10 (100) foot width for the protection of public health, safety or welfare  
11 or the environment.

12 The determination for appropriate clearance distances will be  
13 made based upon a visual inspection of the parcel and shall consider  
14 all factors that place the property or adjoining structure(s) at risk  
15 from an approaching fire. These factors shall include local weather  
16 conditions, fuel type(s), topography, and the environment where the  
17 property or adjoining structure(s) is located. Examples of the  
18 clearance requirements above are attached hereto as Exhibit "A" for  
19 informational purposes only.

- 20 B. Where the parcel's terrain is such that it cannot be disked or mowed,  
21 the County Fire Chief may require, or authorize, that other means of  
22 removal be used.

23 Section 4. ENFORCEMENT, INSPECTION AND AUTHORITY TO ENTER  
24 PROPERTY.

- 25 A. For the purpose of enforcing this ordinance, the County Fire Chief may  
26 designate any person or persons as his/her deputy in the performance of  
27 the duties enjoined upon him/her by this ordinance, in addition to those  
28 named in Section 2.D. of this ordinance. ~~In addition, each of the~~

1 following officers within the County of Riverside is hereby designated  
2 to perform the same duties within the territory of the political  
3 subdivision which he/she serves (and whenever the term "County Fire  
4 Chief" is used hereinafter, the following officers are included in the  
5 meaning of such word, except that the County Fire Chief,  
6 himself/herself, shall coordinate all such officers in the performance of  
7 these duties):

8 A. Chiefs or Chief Engineers of all Fire Protection Districts  
9 within the County, and their deputies; and

10 B. Such other officers as are designated by the Board of  
11 Supervisors or the County Fire Chief.

12 ///

13 B. For the purpose of enforcing or administering this ordinance, the  
14 County Fire Chief may enter any real property for the purpose of  
15 inspecting the property or for summary abatement proceedings  
16 whenever the County Fire Chief is informed or has reasonable cause  
17 to believe that hazardous vegetation or combustible material exists,  
18 constituting a condition dangerous or injurious to the health or  
19 welfare of persons or to the public, including the environment, is a  
20 public nuisance or is otherwise in violation of this ordinance.

21 C. No person shall interfere with the entry of the County Fire Chief  
22 acting in the official course and scope of his duty.

23 Section 5. SUMMARY ABATEMENT PROCEEDINGS. In addition to the  
24 authority granted by law to the County Fire Chief in exigent situations, and pursuant to  
25 California Health and Safety Code §14930 and Government Code §25845, as amended, the  
26 County Fire Chief is authorized to enter real property and summarily abate any public  
27 nuisance determined by the County Fire Chief to constitute an immediate threat to public  
28 health or safety without prior notice or hearing. ~~NOTICE TO ABATE. It shall be the duty~~

1 of the County Fire Chief, or any of his/her deputies, whenever such officer deems it  
2 necessary to enforce the duty set forth in Section 3 hereof, to issue a "Notice to Abate" by  
3 mailing the Notice to the property owner as his or her name appears on the last equalized  
4 assessment roll and to the address as shown in the records of the Assessor. The Notice to  
5 Abate shall be in substantially the form attached hereto as Exhibit "B".

6 Section 6. ABATEMENT PROCEEDINGS.

7 A. Notice of Violation and Order to Abate. If the County Fire Chief  
8 determines that any real property is being maintained or permitted to  
9 exist in a manner prohibited by this ordinance, the County Fire  
10 Chief shall issue a written notice to the property owner and any  
11 known person in possession of the property, of the violation and  
12 order the hazardous vegetation or combustible material to be  
13 immediately abated. The notice of violation and order to abate  
14 ("Notice/Order") shall specify the corrective actions required to be  
15 taken and order the property owners and persons in possession to  
16 abate the hazardous vegetation or combustible material within thirty  
17 (30) days and state that the failure to bring the real property into  
18 compliance with this ordinance could subject the owner or persons  
19 in possession to civil, administrative and criminal penalties.  
20 Furthermore, the Notice/Order shall provide the property owner and  
21 person in possession of the opportunity to appear before the  
22 Riverside County Board of Supervisors and be heard prior to the  
23 abatement by the County. The failure of the notice to set forth all  
24 required contents shall not affect the validity of the abatement  
25 proceedings.

26 B. Manner of Giving Notice. The County Fire Chief shall cause a copy  
27 of the Notice/Order to be mailed or otherwise delivered to all known  
28 persons to be in possession and to the property owner as such

1 person's name and address appears on the last county equalized  
2 assessment roll. If the address is unknown, that fact shall be so  
3 stated and the notice shall be addressed to the person at the county  
4 seat. Service by mail shall be deemed complete at the time of  
5 deposit in the US mail. The failure of any person in possession or  
6 owner of the property to receive such notice shall not affect the  
7 validity of these proceedings.

8 C. Hearing.

9 (1) Request for Hearing. Any person who is adversely affected  
10 by the Notice/Order may appeal the Notice/Order by filing a  
11 written request for a hearing with the Riverside County  
12 Hazard Reduction Office within fifteen (15) calendar days.  
13 The request shall be postmarked within fifteen (15) calendar  
14 days of the postmark on the Notice/Order. Timely appeal  
15 shall stay any further action for abatement until the date set  
16 for hearing.

17 ///

18 If no request for a hearing is timely made, the  
19 Riverside County Board of Supervisors herein declares that  
20 abatement of the hazardous weeds or combustible material  
21 shall have been deemed ordered by the Board of Supervisors  
22 as of the date of the postmark of the Notice/Order.

23 (2) Hearing. Upon timely written request by the recipient of the  
24 Notice/Order, a hearing shall be scheduled with the  
25 Riverside County Board of Supervisors or its designee  
26 (hereinafter "Board") with notice thereof mailed or otherwise  
27 delivered to the requesting person at least fourteen (14)  
28 calendar days before the scheduled hearing. The failure of

1 any owner or occupant to receive such notice shall not affect  
2 the validity of the proceedings.

3 At the time fixed in the notice of hearing, the Board  
4 shall receive evidence from the County Fire Chief and the  
5 owner or person in possession of the real property in  
6 violation, or their representatives and any other concerned  
7 persons who may desire to present oral or documentary  
8 evidence regarding the conditions of the real property or  
9 other relevant matter, if such persons are present at the  
10 hearing. In conducting the hearing, the Board shall not be  
11 limited by the technical rules of evidence. Failure of the  
12 owner or person in possession to appear shall not affect the  
13 validity of the proceedings or order issued thereon.

14 Upon conclusion of the hearing, the Board shall make  
15 its decision and in the event it so concludes, may declare the  
16 conditions on the real property to be in violation of this  
17 ordinance and to constitute a public nuisance. The Board  
18 may direct the owner or person in possession to abate the  
19 hazardous vegetation or combustible material within ten (10)  
20 days after mailing and posting of the Board's decision. The  
21 order shall include notice that if the hazardous vegetation is  
22 not abated as directed and within ten (10) days, the County  
23 Fire Chief may abate the hazardous vegetation and the  
24 abatement costs shall be a lien and an assessment against the  
25 real property.

26 The Board may grant any extension of time to abate  
27 such conditions that it may deem justifiable upon good cause  
28 being shown.

1 D. Abatement of Hazardous Vegetation or Combustible Material by  
2 County Fire Chief. If, at the end of the time allowed for compliance  
3 in the original Notice/Order issued pursuant to Section 6.A. above,  
4 or as set forth in an order issued by the Board after a timely request  
5 for a hearing, and compliance has not been accomplished as  
6 directed, the County Fire Chief may order the hazardous vegetation  
7 or other combustible material to be removed by County fire officials  
8 or employees, or may cause the removal to be carried out by a  
9 private contractor selected by the County Purchasing Agent in  
10 accordance with applicable statutes and in the manner and under the  
11 terms specified by the Board of Supervisors.

12 E. Abatement Cost Recovery. As set forth in Government Code  
13 Section 25845, the owner and any person in possession of the real  
14 property upon which the hazardous vegetation or combustible  
15 material is found to exist shall be jointly and severally liable for all  
16 abatement costs incurred by the County without any further hearing.

17 F. Notice of Abatement Costs. At the conclusion of the abatement by  
18 the County Fire Chief or designee, the County Fire Chief shall issue  
19 a bill setting forth the abatement costs to the owner and person in  
20 possession of the real property. The bill shall demand payment to  
21 the County of Riverside the total abatement costs and administration  
22 costs, plus attorneys' fees, if relevant, within fifteen (15) calendar  
23 days of its mailing.

24 G. Abatement Costs Specially Assessed Against the Parcel. If the  
25 amount set forth in the Notice of Abatement Costs is not paid upon  
26 demand by the County, the abatement costs, including attorneys'  
27 fees, if applicable, shall be specially assessed against the real  
28 property pursuant to Government Code Section 22845, or by any

1 other means provided by law. The assessment may be collected at  
2 the same time and in the same manner as ordinary County taxes are  
3 collected, and shall be subject to the same penalties and the same  
4 procedure of sale in case of delinquency as are ordinary County  
5 taxes.

6 H. Notice of Abatement Lien. A Notice of Abatement Lien may be  
7 recorded against the real property subject to this abatement  
8 proceeding, setting forth the date upon which abatement of the  
9 nuisance was ordered either by notice issued by the County Fire  
10 Chief or by the Board of Supervisors after a hearing, the date the  
11 abatement was complete and the amount of abatement costs.  
12 Furthermore, the notice shall identify the parcel address, the record  
13 owner, the possessor of the property, if known and applicable,  
14 together with the last known address of the record owner or  
15 possessor. The abatement lien shall have the same effect as  
16 recordation of an abstract of a money judgment pursuant to Article 2  
17 of Chapter 2 of Division 2 of Title 9 of Part 2 of the California Code  
18 of Civil Procedure (commencing with § 697.310, as amended). The  
19 lien has the same priority as a judgment lien on real property and  
20 continues in effect until released.

21 I. Attorneys Fees. Reasonable attorneys' fees may be recovered by the  
22 prevailing party in any civil action, administrative proceeding or  
23 special proceeding established by this ordinance. In the event a  
24 hearing is requested pursuant to the notice described above in  
25 Section 6 and the Board of Supervisors deems the real property to be  
26 a public nuisance and orders the County Fire Chief to abate the  
27 hazardous vegetation or combustible material, the County shall be  
28 deemed the prevailing party. ~~APPEALS. A. Appeals Procedure.~~

1 Any person who is adversely affected by the Notice set forth in  
2 section 5, may appeal to the Board of Appeals within the twenty  
3 (20) calendar days of the postmark on the Notice to Abate by filing a  
4 written appeal with the Hazard Reduction Officer. Timely appeal  
5 shall stay any further action for removal or abatement until the date  
6 set for hearing. The Hazard Reduction Officer shall set the matter  
7 for hearing before the Board of Appeals and shall notify the  
8 Appellant by mail of the date set for such hearing, at least fifteen  
9 (15) days prior to said date. If the Appellant resides outside the  
10 County, the above period of notice by mail before the hearing shall  
11 be at least twenty five (25) days. The appellant shall have the right  
12 to appear in person or by agent, designated in writing, at the hearing,  
13 and present oral, written, and/or photographic evidence. The Board  
14 of Appeals shall decide the appeal and shall issue its decision, which  
15 shall be in writing. B. Appeals board. The Board of Appeals shall  
16 be comprised of three (3) persons as follows: one (1) member shall  
17 be an officer of the department of the issuing officer selected by the  
18 Department Head, but not the issuing officer; two (2) members shall  
19 be selected by the Board of Supervisors. Members shall serve at the  
20 pleasure of the appointing authority.

21 Section 7. HEARING OFFICIAL.

22 A. Delegation of Authority. The Riverside County Board of  
23 Supervisors may delegate its authority to conduct the administrative  
24 abatement proceedings set forth in Section 6, above, to either of the  
25 following:

- 26 (1) The County hearing officer appointed by the Board of  
27 Supervisors pursuant to Riverside County Ordinance No.  
28 643 and Government Code Section 27720, as amended. The

1 hearing officer shall have full authority and duty to preside  
2 over hearings in the manner set forth in Riverside County  
3 Ordinance No. 643, as amended.

4 (2) A Weed Abatement Hearing Board (WAHB) designated  
5 pursuant to Government Code Section 25845, as amended.  
6 The WAHB shall have full authority to act and may preside  
7 over hearings with the same authority, power and duties of  
8 the hearing officer. The WAHB shall be comprised of three  
9 (3) persons as follows: one (1) member shall be an officer of  
10 the Riverside County Fire Department selected by the  
11 County Fire Chief, (but not an employee involved in  
12 inspecting or issuing the Notice/Order; and two (2) members  
13 shall be selected by the Board of Supervisors. Members  
14 shall serve at the pleasure of the appointing entity.

15 B. Recommended Action. At the conclusion of a hearing by either the  
16 hearing officer or WAHB, a recommended decision shall be issued  
17 to the owner or person in possession of the real property subject to  
18 the hearing, and to any other interested person previously requesting  
19 notice. The hearing officer or WAHB shall also file the  
20 recommended decision with the Board of Supervisors. The  
21 recommended decision may alter the Notice/Order in any fashion  
22 and may include an order to the owner or person in possession of the  
23 real property to abate the hazardous weeds or combustible material  
24 within ten (10) calendar days of issuance of the order.

25 C. No Further Appeal. Upon receiving the recommended decision  
26 from either the hearing officer or WAHB, the Board of Supervisors  
27 may adopt the decision as recommended on the consent agenda at its  
28 next regularly scheduled public Board meeting without further

1 notice or hearing, or may set the matter for a de novo hearing before  
2 the Board of Supervisors. ~~REMOVAL OF HAZARDOUS~~  
3 ~~VEGETATION BY PUBLIC OFFICER OR BY PRIVATE~~  
4 ~~CONTRACTOR AND ESTABLISHMENT OF COSTS AND~~  
5 ~~ADMINISTRATIVE FEE.~~ If at the end of the time allowed for  
6 compliance in the original notice, or as extended in cases of appeal,  
7 or as specified by the Board of Appeals, compliance has not been  
8 accomplished, the officer issuing the Notice or the agency of which  
9 he is an officer, may order hazardous vegetation or other  
10 combustible material, to be removed by public officers or by  
11 employees of said agency, or may cause the removal to be carried  
12 out by a private contractor selected by the County Purchasing Agent  
13 in accordance with applicable statutes and in the manner and under  
14 the terms specified by the Board of Supervisors. The cost of such  
15 removal accompanied by a reasonable administrative charge may be  
16 imposed as a Special Assessment upon the property, and such  
17 property shall be subject to a Special Assessment Lien for said  
18 purpose. The costs so assessed shall be limited to the actual costs  
19 incurred by the County of Riverside in enforcing abatement upon  
20 the parcels, including payment to the contractor, costs of  
21 investigation, boundary determination, measurement, clerical,  
22 personnel, consultant, and an administrative cost to be set by  
23 Resolution adopted by the Board of Supervisors on those parcels  
24 where such weeds have not been removed by the property owner at  
25 his or her own expense.

26 Section 8. OTHER REMEDIES. The provisions of this ordinance are to be  
27 construed as an added remedy of abatement and not in derogation of any other civil or  
28 criminal actions or proceedings or remedies otherwise provided by law.

1                   A.     Civil Actions.

2                   (1)     Injunctive Relief and Abatement. Whenever, in the judgment  
3                   of the County Fire Chief, any person is engaged in or about  
4                   to engage in any act or practice which constitutes or will  
5                   constitute a violation of any provision of this ordinance or  
6                   notice or order issued pursuant hereto, the County Fire Chief  
7                   may request the County Counsel or District Attorney to  
8                   commence proceedings for the abatement, removal,  
9                   correction and enjoinder thereof, and requiring the violator  
10                  to pay civil penalties and/or abatement costs or in addition,  
11                  be subject to criminal prosecution.

12                 (2)     Civil Remedies and Penalties. Any owner or person in  
13                   possession of real property who willfully violates the  
14                   provisions of this ordinance or any notice or order issued  
15                   pursuant hereto shall be liable for a civil penalty not to  
16                   exceed \$1,000.00 for each day or portion thereof that the  
17                   violation continues to exist. In determining the amount of the  
18                   civil penalty to impose, the court shall consider all relevant  
19                   circumstances, including, but not limited to, the extent of the  
20                   harm caused by the conduct constituting a violation, the  
21                   nature and persistence of such conduct, the length of time  
22                   over which the conduct occurred, the assets, liabilities, and  
23                   net worth of the violator, whether corporate or individual,  
24                   and any corrective action taken by the violator.

25                   B.     Criminal Actions.

26                   (1)     It shall be unlawful for any person to violate any provision of  
27                   this ordinance. Any person violating any provision of this  
28                   ordinance shall be deemed guilty of an infraction or



1                   forth the noncomplying conditions, and shall state that any  
2                   abatement costs incurred by the County as a result of the violation of  
3                   this ordinance may be specially assessed as a lien on the property  
4                   and that the owner has been so notified. ~~PAYMENT FOR~~  
5                   ~~ABATEMENT. A. Procedure for Payment. When said abatement~~  
6                   ~~has been completed, the agency or officer so causing the same to be~~  
7                   ~~accomplished shall render to the County Auditor-controller, an~~  
8                   ~~itemized statement covering the costs of the work necessary for such~~  
9                   ~~abatement. The County Auditor-Controller shall pay the same from~~  
10                  ~~the funds of the agency or officer causing said work to be done. The~~  
11                  ~~Auditor-Controller shall thereafter cause the charged amount to be~~  
12                  ~~entered upon the property from which abatement was accomplished~~  
13                  ~~as a Special Assessment which shall be included in the next~~  
14                  ~~succeeding tax statement. Thereafter, the amounts of the assessment~~  
15                  ~~shall be collected at the same time, and in the same manner, as~~  
16                  ~~County taxes are collected, and shall be subject to the same penalties~~  
17                  ~~and the same procedure for sale, and in the case of delinquency, as~~  
18                  ~~provided for ordinary County taxes, except that if any real property~~  
19                  ~~to which such lien would attach has been transferred or conveyed to~~  
20                  ~~a bona fide purchaser for value, or if a lien of a bona fide~~  
21                  ~~encumbrancer for value has been created and attached thereon, prior~~  
22                  ~~to the date on which the first installment of such taxes would~~  
23                  ~~become delinquent, then the lien, which would otherwise be~~  
24                  ~~imposed by this section, will not attach to such real property and the~~  
25                  ~~costs of abatement, shall be transferred to the unsecured roll for~~  
26                  ~~collection. B. Appeals. A person may appeal the assessed charges~~  
27                  ~~to the Board of Appeals, by following the appeal procedure provided~~  
28                  ~~in Section 6 and thereafter, to the Board of Supervisors. Any appeal~~

1 to the Board of Supervisors from the decision of the Board of  
2 Appeals, must be filed with the clerk of the Board of Supervisors  
3 within fifteen (15) days from the date of postmark of the mailed  
4 decision of the Board of Appeals. Such appeal must be in writing  
5 and must specify wherein the Appeals Board erred. C. Cancellation  
6 of Claim. All or any portion of any such Special Assessment,  
7 penalty or costs heretofore entered, shall, on order of the Board of  
8 Appeals or the Board of Supervisors, be canceled by the County  
9 Auditor-Controller if uncollected, or, except in the case provided for  
10 in Section 7, refunded by the County Treasurer-Tax Collector, if  
11 collected, if the charges were charged or paid: (1) More than once;  
12 (2) Through clerical error; (3) Through the error or mistake of the  
13 Board of Appeals, or of the officer, Board or Commission  
14 designated by them to give notice, in respect to any material fact,  
15 including the case where the cost report rendered and confirmed, as  
16 hereinbefore provided, shows the County abated the weeds but such  
17 is not the actual fact; (4) Illegally; or (5) On property acquired after  
18 the lien date by the State of California, or by any county, city,  
19 school district, special district, or other political subdivision, and  
20 because of this public ownership, is not subject to sale for  
21 delinquent taxes. The Fire Chief or his/her designee shall have the  
22 authority to execute any document that may be required to release or  
23 extinguish an assessment or charge that has been recorded against a  
24 parcel. D. Procedure for Refund of Payment. No order for a  
25 refund under the foregoing section shall be made except on a written  
26 claim: (1) Verified by the person who paid the Special Assessment,  
27 his/her guardian, conservator, executor or administrator; and (2)  
28 Filed within one (1) year after making the payment sought to be



BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE COUNTY  
OF RIVERSIDE, STATE OF CALIFORNIA

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Chairman

ATTEST:

CLERK OF THE BOARD:

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Deputy

(SEAL)

PJW:ay  
01/26/09  
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## NOTICE OF INTENT TO ADOPT A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION FOR ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT NO. 42117

The Riverside County Planning Department has determined that the proposed amendment to Ordinance No. 695 (Ordinance Amendment No. 695.4) and incorporation and implementation of current abatement practices as prescribed in the Field Training Manual Decision Making Guidelines will not have a significant effect on the environment, as determined through Environmental Assessment (EA) No. 42117, and recommends that a Mitigated Negative Declaration be adopted.

EA No. 42117 and the proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration are available for public review at the Riverside County Planning Department, located at 4080 Lemon Street on the 9<sup>th</sup> Floor in Riverside, California from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.

Any comments on the determination to adopt a Mitigated Negative Declaration and/or Environmental Assessment No. 42117 should be directed to the following address:

Riverside County Planning Department  
4080 Lemon Street, 9<sup>th</sup> Floor  
P. O. Box 1409  
Riverside, CA 92502-1409  
Attention: Kathleen Browne  
(951) 955-4949

Written comments must be received at the above address by 5:00 p.m. on May 21, 2009. Any comments received will be forwarded to the appropriate public official or body and will be considered by that official or body before taking action on the Mitigated Negative Declaration for the project. The public official or body may take such action after May 21, 2009. The final decision will be mailed to anyone requesting notification.

**Project Location:** The properties affected are unimproved lands throughout the unincorporated areas of Riverside County, including areas designated as State Responsibility Areas, municipalities and other incorporated areas or service districts that contract with the County for fire services.

**Project Description:** The Hazardous Reduction Office conducts annual field inspections of unimproved lands throughout the County territory to identify hazardous vegetation or combustible material on properties which pose a hazard or potential hazard to the safety of the landowners, residents in the vicinity, users of public highways and to the public in general. As a result of these site specific inspections, property owners of targeted parcels will receive a Notice to Abate which will indicate the method and amount of clearance required for compliance.

The abatement program specifically deals with the removal of rubbish, litter or combustible material of any kind as well as clearance of seasonal and recurrent weeds, stubble, brush, dry leaves, tumbleweeds or other rank growth which is flammable and endangers the public safety by creating a fire hazard and is, therefore, deemed a public nuisance. Clearance of said vegetation or material should be limited as to what is considered necessary to establish sufficient defensible space, 100 feet from structures on adjoining properties pursuant to State law, whereby local residents can evacuate their homes and allow fire equipment to safely access an area and provide fire protection to a community. Both the County's authority to require abatement of a public nuisance as well as to establish administrative abatement proceedings is pursuant to California Government Code Section 25845 and California Health and Safety Code Section 14930.

### **Anticipated Environmental Effects:**

The environmental assessment finds that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, there will not be a significant effect in this case because revisions in abatement practices, described in this document, have been made or agreed to by the project proponent.

# COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE

## ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT FORM: INITIAL STUDY

**Environmental Assessment (E.A.) Number:** EA 42117  
**Project Case Type (s) and Number(s):** Ordinance Amendment No. 695.4  
**Lead Agency Name:** Riverside County Fire Department  
**Address:** 88 East Rider Street, Perris, CA 92571  
**Contact Person:** Jackie Williams, Fire Captain Specialist  
**Telephone Number:** (951) 238-3602  
**Applicant's Name:** Riverside County Fire Department  
**Applicant's Address:** 88 East Rider Street, Perris, CA 92571

### I. PROJECT INFORMATION

**Project Description:** The project is an amendment to Riverside County's Ordinance No. 695 (Ordinance Amendment No. 695.4) requiring the abatement of hazardous vegetation to set forth the authority of the Fire Chief of the County of Riverside and to clarify the procedural steps of the abatement process and failure to comply. The project also incorporates current abatement practices through development of a Field Training Manual Decision Making Guidelines (see attached Appendix A) to assist Riverside County Fire Department, Hazardous Reduction Office staff when conducting abatement pursuant to Ordinance No. 695.

The Hazardous Reduction Office conducts annual field inspections of unimproved lands throughout the unincorporated areas of the County, including areas designated as State Responsibility Areas, municipalities and other incorporated areas or service districts that contract with the County for fire services (hereafter "County territory"). The purpose of the annual inspection is to identify hazardous vegetation or combustible material on properties which pose a hazard or potential hazard to the safety of the landowners, residents in the vicinity, users of public highways and to the public in general. As a result of these site specific inspections, property owners of targeted parcels will receive a Notice to Abate (see Appendix B) which will indicate the method and amount of clearance required for compliance.

The abatement program specifically deals with the removal of rubbish, litter or combustible material of any kind, as well as clearance of seasonal and recurrent weeds, stubble, brush, dry leaves, tumbleweeds or other rank growth which is flammable and endangers the public safety by creating a fire hazard and is, therefore, deemed a public nuisance. Clearance of said vegetation or material should be limited as to what is considered necessary to establish sufficient defensible space<sup>1</sup>, 100 feet from structures on adjoining properties pursuant to State law, whereby local residents can evacuate their homes and allow fire equipment to safely access an area and provide fire protection to a community. Both the County's authority to require abatement of a public nuisance as well as to establish administrative abatement proceedings is pursuant to California Government Code Section 25845 and California Health and Safety Code Section 14930.

All abatement activities are directed by the Hazardous Reduction Office on a site specific basis with recognition of reserve areas or areas located within a Western Riverside Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan<sup>2</sup> (WRMSHCP) Criteria Cell or Coachella Valley Multiple Species

<sup>1</sup> "Defensible Space" may include roadways, road shoulders, ornamental landscape, lawn, or thinned/sparse vegetation.

<sup>2</sup> Adopted by the County of Riverside Board of Supervisors 6/17/03.

Habitat Conservation Plan<sup>3</sup> (CVMSHCP) conservation area which may support rare, threatened, and endangered species and other environmentally sensitive habitats. No owner, occupant or person in control of any said unimproved parcel shall be authorized to abate hazardous vegetation unless the owner, occupant or person has received a Notice to Abate (see attached Exhibit A) or alternatively has been issued a grading permit pursuant to the requirements of Ordinance No. 457. All abatement activities shall comply with the Fugitive Dust Rule as set forth in South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) and Mojave Desert Air Quality Management District (MDAQMD) Rule 403, as amended, and disposal of hazardous vegetation or combustible material shall be in a lawful manner.

The Riverside County Fire Department, Hazardous Reduction Office, has developed a website at [http://www.fire.ca.gov/communications/communications\\_firesafety\\_100feet.php](http://www.fire.ca.gov/communications/communications_firesafety_100feet.php) to assist the individual property owner in complying with an abatement notice while employing environmentally sound management practices.

**Background:** Ordinance No. 695 merely encapsulates powers and procedures given to local governments pursuant to State and federal laws and adopts them as County ordinance. Both, the ordinance and the associated Negative Declaration for Environmental Assessment No. 35435, were originally adopted by the Board of Supervisors on October 16, 1990, following a public hearing. This amendment and the Field Training Manual Decision Making Guidelines are intended to provide greater clarification of current abatement practices with respect to properties which may support rare, threatened, and endangered species and other environmentally sensitive habitats. Implementing abatement in the manner prescribed in the Field Training Manual will facilitate compliance with the provisions of the adopted WRMSHCP, CVMSHCP, Implementing Agreement by which Riverside County was issued take permits by the affected trustee agencies as well as compliance with other Habitat Conservation Plans (HCPs) adopted by the County.

**A. Type of Project:** Site Specific ; Countywide ; Community ; Ordinance .

**B. Total Project Area:** Countywide

|                           |              |                               |                                    |
|---------------------------|--------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <b>Residential Acres:</b> | <b>Lots:</b> | <b>Units:</b>                 | <b>Projected No. of Residents:</b> |
| <b>Commercial Acres:</b>  | <b>Lots:</b> | <b>Sq. Ft. of Bldg. Area:</b> | <b>Est. No. of Employees:</b>      |
| <b>Industrial Acres:</b>  | <b>Lots:</b> | <b>Sq. Ft. of Bldg. Area:</b> | <b>Est. No. of Employees:</b>      |
| <b>Other:</b> Countywide  |              |                               |                                    |

**C. Assessor's Parcel No(s):** Countywide

**D. Street References:** Countywide

**E. Section, Township & Range Description or reference/attach a Legal Description:**  
Various

**F. Brief description of the existing environmental setting of the project site and its surroundings:** Typical to many areas of Southern California, the climate in Riverside County is generally arid with periodic Santa Ana wind events. The diverse and complex landscape, which includes deserts, mountains and other brush covered wildlands, creates habitats for a wide variety of animals and plants, including many that are rare or endemic to Southern California. Many of the County's native and non-native plant species can be highly flammable

<sup>3</sup> Adopted by the County of Riverside Board of Supervisors 10/2/07.

during normal dry periods and have contributed to significant wildfires within the County. The danger of wildfire is further exacerbated during Santa Ana wind events and has resulted in catastrophic fire losses to life, property and the environment. Further information on vegetative communities and plant and animal species which may be found in Riverside County can be viewed at <http://calphotos.berkeley.edu/landscape/>, <http://www.rctlma.org/mshcp/>, and <http://www.cvmshcp.org/>.

## **II. APPLICABLE GENERAL PLAN AND ZONING REGULATIONS**

### **A. General Plan Elements/Policies:**

- 1. Land Use:** Various
- 2. Circulation:** Various
- 3. Multipurpose Open Space:** Various
- 4. Safety:** Various
- 5. Noise:** Various
- 6. Housing:** Various
- 7. Air Quality:** Various

**B. General Plan Area Plan(s):** Countywide

**C. Foundation Component(s):** Countywide

**D. Land Use Designation(s):** Countywide

**E. Overlay(s), if any:** N/A

**F. Policy Area(s), if any:** N/A

**G. Adjacent and Surrounding Area Plan(s), Foundation Component(s), Land Use Designation(s), and Overlay(s) and Policy Area(s), if any:** N/A

### **H. Adopted Specific Plan Information**

- 1. Name and Number of Specific Plan, if any:** N/A
- 2. Specific Plan Planning Area, and Policies, if any:** N/A

**I. Existing Zoning:** Countywide

**J. Proposed Zoning, if any:** None

**K. Adjacent and Surrounding Zoning:** N/A

### III. ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED

The environmental factors checked below ( x ) would be potentially affected by this project, involving at least one impact that is a "Potentially Significant Impact" or "Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated" as indicated by the checklist on the following pages.

|  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aesthetics                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Hazards & Hazardous Materials | <input type="checkbox"/> Public Services                               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture Resources           | <input type="checkbox"/> Hydrology/Water Quality       | <input type="checkbox"/> Recreation                                    |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Air Quality          | <input type="checkbox"/> Land Use/Planning             | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation/Traffic                        |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Biological Resources | <input type="checkbox"/> Mineral Resources             | <input type="checkbox"/> Utilities/Service Systems                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cultural Resources              | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Noise              | <input type="checkbox"/> Other   |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Geology/Soils        | <input type="checkbox"/> Population/Housing            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mandatory Findings of Significance |

### IV. DETERMINATION

On the basis of this initial evaluation:

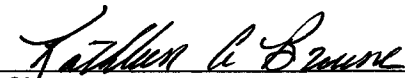
#### A PREVIOUS ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT/NEGATIVE DECLARATION WAS NOT PREPARED

- I find that the proposed project **COULD NOT** have a significant effect on the environment, and a **NEGATIVE DECLARATION** will be prepared.
- I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, there will not be a significant effect in this case because revisions in the project, described in this document, have been made or agreed to by the project proponent. **A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION** will be prepared.
- I find that the proposed project **MAY** have a significant effect on the environment, and an **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT** is required.

#### A PREVIOUS ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT/NEGATIVE DECLARATION WAS PREPARED

- I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment **NOTHING FURTHER IS REQUIRED** because all potentially significant effects (a) have been adequately analyzed in an earlier EIR or Negative Declaration pursuant to applicable legal standards and (b) have been avoided or mitigated pursuant to that earlier EIR or Negative Declaration, including revisions or mitigation measures that are imposed upon the proposed project.
- I find that although all potentially significant effects have been adequately analyzed in an earlier EIR or Negative Declaration pursuant to applicable legal standards, some changes or additions are necessary but none of the conditions described in California Code of Regulations, Section 15162 exist. An **ADDENDUM** to a previously-certified EIR or Negative Declaration has been prepared and will be considered by the approving body or bodies.
- I find that at least one of the conditions described in California Code of Regulations, Section 15162 exist, but I further find that only minor additions or changes are necessary to make the previous EIR adequately apply to the project in the changed situation; therefore a **SUPPLEMENT TO THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT** is required that need only contain the information necessary to make the previous EIR adequate for the project as revised.
- I find that at least one of the following conditions described in California Code of Regulations, Section 15162, exist and a **SUBSEQUENT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT** is required: (1) Substantial changes are proposed in the project which will require major revisions of the previous EIR or negative declaration due to the involvement of new significant environmental effects or a substantial increase in the severity of previously identified significant effects; (2) Substantial changes have

occurred with respect to the circumstances under which the project is undertaken which will require major revisions of the previous EIR or negative declaration due to the involvement of new significant environmental effects or a substantial increase in the severity of previously identified significant effects; or (3) New information of substantial importance, which was not known and could not have been known with the exercise of reasonable diligence at the time the previous EIR was certified as complete or the negative declaration was adopted, shows any the following:(A) The project will have one or more significant effects not discussed in the previous EIR or negative declaration;(B) Significant effects previously examined will be substantially more severe than shown in the previous EIR or negative declaration;(C) Mitigation measures or alternatives previously found not to be feasible would in fact be feasible, and would substantially reduce one or more significant effects of the project, but the project proponents decline to adopt the mitigation measures or alternatives; or,(D) Mitigation measures or alternatives which are considerably different from those analyzed in the previous EIR or negative declaration would substantially reduce one or more significant effects of the project on the environment, but the project proponents decline to adopt the mitigation measures or alternatives.

  
Signature

April 17, 2009  
Date

Kathleen Browne, Project Planner  
Printed Name

For Ron Goldman, Planning Director

## ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES ASSESSMENT

In accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (Public Resources Code Section 21000-21178.1), this Initial Study has been prepared to analyze the proposed project to determine any potential significant impacts upon the environment that would result from construction and implementation of the project. In accordance with California Code of Regulations, Section 15063, this Initial Study is a preliminary analysis prepared by the Lead Agency, the County of Riverside, in consultation with other jurisdictional agencies, to determine whether a Negative Declaration, Mitigated Negative Declaration, or an Environmental Impact Report is required for the proposed project. The purpose of this Initial Study is to inform the decision-makers, affected agencies, and the public of potential environmental impacts associated with the implementation of the proposed project.

|  | Potentially Significant Impact | Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated | Less Than Significant Impact        | No Impact                |
|--|--------------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| <b>AESTHETICS</b> Would the project  |                                |  |                                     |                          |
| <b>1. Scenic Resources</b>   | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| a) Have a substantial effect upon a scenic highway corridor within which it is located?  | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings and unique or landmark features; obstruct any prominent scenic vista or view open to the public; or result in the creation of an aesthetically offensive site open to public view? | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

**Source:** RCIP Figure C-9 "Scenic Highways," Ord. No. 695.4 and Field Training Manual Decision Making Guidelines

**Findings of Fact:** Riverside County is host to a number of scenic resources which not only characterize the local communities but help sustain a quality of life for its residents by enhancing the visual and aesthetic values of areas where people work and live. Scenic vistas can be found throughout the County and include rock outcropping, hills, mountains, lakes and rivers. Numerous scenic highways which are State designated Scenic Highways, State Eligible for designation as State Scenic Highways and County Eligible for designation as Scenic Highways are also located throughout the County.

The primary objective of Ordinance No. 695 is to protect the lives and property of County residents by requiring the abatement of hazardous vegetation to lessen potential fire hazards which might endanger or injure persons and/or properties. This amendment to the ordinance clarifies the procedural steps of the abatement process and failure to comply with the ordinance. In concert with this amendment, the Hazardous Reduction Office has developed a Field Training Manual in coordination with the Endangered Habitat League which prescribes the factors which must be considered when determining the amount and area necessary to abate to establish the required defensible space while recognizing areas which may support rare, threatened, and endangered species and other environmentally sensitive habitats. Reducing the number and extent of potential wildfires will reduce impacts to scenic resources resulting from wildfire. Compliance with Ordinance Amendment No. 695.4 and abatement practices consistent with the Field Training Manual when implementing abatement will ensure potential impacts to scenic resources are kept to a less than significant level.

Mitigation: No additional mitigation is required.

Monitoring: No monitoring is required.

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**2. Mt. Palomar Observatory**

a) Interfere with the nighttime use of the Mt. Palomar Observatory, as protected through Riverside County Ordinance No. 655?

Source: Ord. No. 655, Ord. No. 695.4 and Field Training Manual Decision Making Guidelines

Findings of Fact: This amendment to Ordinance No. 695 and incorporation of the abatement practices as prescribed in the Field Training Manual do not involve the creation of any new lighting sources and, therefore, will not have an impact on the Mt. Palomar Observatory. Reducing the number and extent of potential wildfires will reduce impacts on the Mt. Palomar Observatory by eliminating airborne smoke and ash due to wildfire.

Mitigation: No mitigation is required.

Monitoring: No monitoring is required.

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**3. Other Lighting Issues**

a) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?

b) Expose residential property to unacceptable light levels?

Source: Ord. No. 695.4 and Field Training Manual Decision Making Guidelines

Findings of Fact: This amendment to Ordinance No. 695 and incorporation of the abatement practices as prescribed in the Field Training Manual do not involve the creation of any new lighting sources and, therefore, will not expose residential property to unacceptable light levels. Therefore, there will be no impacts involving lighting.

Mitigation: No mitigation is required.

Monitoring: No monitoring is required.

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**AGRICULTURE RESOURCES** Would the project

**4. Agriculture**

a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland) as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?

b) Conflict with existing agricultural use, or a Williamson Act (agricultural preserve) contract (Riv. Co.

|   | Potentially Significant Impact | Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact                           |
|---|--------------------------------|--|------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Agricultural Land Conservation Contract Maps)?  |                                |  |                              |                                     |
| c) Cause development of non-agricultural uses within 300 feet of agriculturally zoned property (Ordinance No. 625 "Right-to-Farm")?                           | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | <input type="checkbox"/>     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| d) Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use? | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | <input type="checkbox"/>     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

Source: RCIP Figure OS-2 "Agricultural Resources," Ord. No. 695.4 and Field Training Manual Decision Making Guidelines

Findings of Fact: This amendment to Ordinance No. 695 and incorporation of the abatement practices as prescribed in the Field Training Manual does not propose development of any kind and, therefore, will not: convert farmland of any type to non-agricultural uses; conflict with existing agricultural uses or land under a Williamson Act contract; or establish non-agricultural uses adjacent to property zoned for agriculture. The above findings indicate that there will be no impacts on agricultural lands and/or uses.

Mitigation: No mitigation is required.

Monitoring: No monitoring is required.

| <b>AIR QUALITY</b> Would the project  |                          |                                     |                                     |                                     |
|---|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <b>5. Air Quality Impacts</b>   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation?  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| c) Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard (including releasing emissions which exceed quantitative thresholds for ozone precursors)? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| d) Expose sensitive receptors which are located within 1 mile of the project site to project substantial point source emissions?  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| e) Involve the construction of a sensitive receptor located within one mile of an existing substantial point source emitter?  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| f) Create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people?   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            |

Source: SCAQMD and MDAQMD Rule 403, Ord. No. 695.4 and Field Training Manual Decision Making Guidelines

Findings of Fact: This amendment to Ordinance No. 695 and the incorporation and implementation of the abatement practices as prescribed in the Field Training Manual has the potential to result in the

| Potentially Significant Impact | Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact |
|--------------------------------|--|------------------------------|-----------|
|--------------------------------|--|------------------------------|-----------|

temporary creation of fugitive dust. However, abatement practices that remove vegetation without disturbing the soil surface generally do not create significant sources of airborne particulates. Incorporation of standard dust control measures (e.g., SCAQMD and MDAQMD Rule 403, as amended, and watering prior to abatement) for abatement practices in which soil is disturbed, such as disking, scraping, etc., will be sufficient to ensure no significant particular pollution occurs. The Hazardous Reduction Office requires that abatement contractors obtain all necessary permits from the affected air district. Compliance with these existing regulations and permit requirements will ensure that impacts to air quality are less than significant.

**Mitigation:** No additional mitigation is required.

**Monitoring:** No monitoring is required.

**BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES** Would the project

**6. Wildlife & Vegetation**

a) Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Conservation Community Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state conservation plan?

b) Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any endangered, or threatened species, as listed in Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations (Sections 670.2 or 670.5) or in Title 50, Code of Federal Regulations (Sections 17.11 or 17.12)?

c) Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U. S. Wildlife Service?

d) Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?

e) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service?

f) Have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?

g) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?

| Potentially Significant Impact | Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact |
|--------------------------------|--|------------------------------|-----------|
|--------------------------------|--|------------------------------|-----------|

Source: CVMSHCP, WRMSHCP, GIS database, Ord. No. 695.4 and Field Training Manual Decision Making Guidelines

Findings of Fact: Adoption of the WRMSHCP and CVMSHCP, in addition to the existing adopted HCPs, further recognizes the need to protect and preserve environmentally sensitive habitats located throughout the County. However, the HCPs also recognize the need to protect the lives and property of County residents and provide authorization for all owners of improved and vacant properties to perform clearance activities as deemed necessary to establish defensible space.

Hazardous Reduction Office staff employ environmentally sound management practices when conducting abatement pursuant to Ordinance No. 695. This amendment to Ordinance No. 695 and the incorporation and implementation of the abatement practices as prescribed in the Field Training Manual, which was developed in coordination with the Endangered Habitat League, will not conflict with an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Conservation Community Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state conservation plan. Additionally, no abatement activities are allowed within waters or wetlands of the United States as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act. Compliance with mitigation measures required or pursuant to abatement permits and/or adopted HCPs will ensure activities pursuant to the amended ordinance do not have a substantial adverse effect on any endangered, or threatened species as a result of habitat modification; have a substantial adverse effect on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species; substantially interfere with the movement of a native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident migratory wildlife corridors.

Furthermore, abatement activities conducted pursuant to Ordinance 695.4 shall also comply with applicable mitigatory measures as outlined in Appendix A (see attached Appendix A). These mitigatory measures shall also be made a condition of any abatement permit or contract. Therefore, impacts resulting from abatement activities are less than significant.

Mitigation: No additional mitigation is required.

Monitoring: No monitoring is required.

**CULTURAL RESOURCES** Would the project

|   | Potentially Significant Impact | Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated | Less Than Significant Impact        | No Impact                |
|---|--------------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| <b>7. Historic Resources</b>  | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| a) Alter or destroy an historic site?   | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in California Code of Regulations, Section 15064.5? | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Source: RCIP Figure OS-7 "Historic Resources," Ord. No. 695.4 and Field Training Manual Decision Making Guidelines

Findings of Fact: This amendment to Ordinance No. 695 and the incorporation and implementation of the abatement practices as prescribed in the Field Training Manual (e.g., the selective clearing of hazardous vegetation) will reduce potential impacts to historic resources from fire damage. Therefore, no adverse impacts to cultural resources will occur as a result of abatement activities.

| Potentially Significant Impact | Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact |
|--------------------------------|--|------------------------------|-----------|
|--------------------------------|--|------------------------------|-----------|

**Mitigation:** No mitigation is required.

**Monitoring:** No monitoring is required.

**8. Archaeological Resources**

|  |                          |                          |                                     |                                     |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| a) Alter or destroy an archaeological site.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to California Code of Regulations, Section 15064.5? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| c) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| d) Restrict existing religious or sacred uses within the potential impact area?  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

**Source:** RCIP Figure OS-6 "Relative Archaeological Sensitivity of Diverse Landscapes," Ord. No. 695.4 and Field Training Manual Decision Making Guidelines

**Findings of Fact:** This amendment to Ordinance No. 695 and the incorporation and implementation of the abatement practices as prescribed in the Field Training Manual (e.g., such as disking, scraping, etc.) will only disturb the top four inches soil to remove hazardous vegetation. Surface artifacts are of limited or reduced scientific value due to their exposed and disturbed nature. Therefore, the shallow surface disturbances associated with abatement activities will not significantly degrade such sites. Subsurface resources will not be affected by this ordinance amendment. Additionally, abatement activities will in no way restrict existing religious or sacred uses of any of the properties subject to a Notice to Abate. No impacts to archeological resources will result from abatement activities pursuant to Ordinance No. 695 and practices prescribed in the Field Training Manual.

**Mitigation:** No mitigation is required.

**Monitoring:** No monitoring is required.

**9. Paleontological Resources**

|   |                          |                          |                          |                                     |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| a) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource, or site, or unique geologic feature? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|

**Source:** RCIP Figure OS-8 "Paleontological Sensitivity," Ord. No. 695.4 and Field Training Manual Decision Making Guidelines

**Findings of Fact:** This amendment to Ordinance No. 695 and the incorporation and implementation of the abatement practices as prescribed in the Field Training Manual (e.g., the selective clearing of hazardous vegetation by hand or by use of light mechanical equipment) will not directly or indirectly destroy a unique land forms or geologic formations. Paleontological resources are of limited or reduced scientific value due to their exposed and disturbed nature. Therefore, the shallow surface disturbances associated with abatement activities will not significantly degrade such resources. Subsurface resources will not be affected by this ordinance amendment.

| Potentially Significant Impact | Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact |
|--------------------------------|--|------------------------------|-----------|
|--------------------------------|--|------------------------------|-----------|

Mitigation: No mitigation is required.

Monitoring: No monitoring is required.

**GEOLOGY AND SOILS** Would the project

|   |                          |                          |                          |                                     |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <b>10. Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone or County Fault Hazard Zones</b>  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| a) Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death?  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Be subject to rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

Source: RCIP Table S-1 "Multi-Hazard Safety Actions," Figure S-1 "Mapped Faulting in Riverside County," Figure S-2 "Earthquake Fault Study Zones," GIS database, Ord. No. 695.4 and Field Training Manual Decision Making Guidelines

Findings of Fact: This amendment to Ordinance No. 695 and the incorporation and implementation of the abatement practices as prescribed in the Field Training Manual do not involve the construction of any new structures, only the temporary clearing of hazardous vegetation. Therefore, no change in the exposure of people or property to fault hazards will occur. Furthermore, abatement activities are consistent with the Riverside County General Plan Safety Element. Abatement activities will reduce potential fire hazards which might result in the risk of loss, injury or death.

Mitigation: No mitigation is required.

Monitoring: No monitoring is required.

|  |                          |                          |                          |                                     |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <b>11. Liquefaction Potential Zone</b>                                   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| a) Be subject to seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

Source: RCIP Figure S-3 "Generalized Liquefaction," GIS database, Ord. No. 695.4 and Field Training Manual Decision Making Guidelines

Findings of Fact: This amendment to Ordinance No. 695 and the incorporation and implementation of the abatement practices as prescribed in the Field Training Manual do not involve the construction of any new structures. Therefore, no change in the exposure of people or property to seismic-related ground failure including liquefaction will occur.

Mitigation: No mitigation is required.

Monitoring: No monitoring is required.

|  | Potentially Significant Impact | Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact |
|--|--------------------------------|--|------------------------------|-----------|
|--|--------------------------------|--|------------------------------|-----------|

**12. Ground-shaking Zone**      
 Be subject to strong seismic ground shaking?

Source: RCIP Figure S-4 "Earthquake-Induced Slope Instability," Ord. No. 695.4 and Field Training Manual Decision Making Guidelines

Findings of Fact: This amendment to Ordinance No. 695 and the incorporation and implementation of the abatement practices as prescribed in the Field Training Manual do not involve the construction of any new structures. Therefore, no change in the exposure of people or property to seismic ground shaking will occur.

Mitigation: No mitigation is required.

Monitoring: No monitoring is required.

**13. Landslide Risk**      
 a) Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, collapse, or rockfall hazards?

Source: RCIP Figure S-5 "Regions Underlain by Steep Slope," Figure S-6 "Engineering Geologic Materials Map," Ord. No. 695.4 and Field Training Manual Decision Making Guidelines

Findings of Fact: This amendment to Ordinance No. 695 and the incorporation and implementation of the abatement practices as prescribed in the Field Training Manual do not involve the construction of any new structures. No impacts precipitating landslides, lateral spreading, collapse or rockfall hazards will result by the selective clearing of hazardous vegetation by hand or by use of light mechanical equipment.

Mitigation: No mitigation is required.

Monitoring: No monitoring is required.

**14. Ground Subsidence**      
 a) Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in ground subsidence?

Source: RCIP Figure S-7 "Documented Subsidence Areas," Resolution No. 94-125, Ord. No. 695.4 and Field Training Manual Decision Making Guidelines

Findings of Fact: This amendment to Ordinance No. 695 and the incorporation and implementation of the abatement practices as prescribed in the Field Training Manual do not involve the construction of any new structures. Therefore, no change in the exposure of people or property to ground subsidence will occur.

| Potentially Significant Impact | Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact |
|--------------------------------|--|------------------------------|-----------|
|--------------------------------|--|------------------------------|-----------|

**Mitigation:** No mitigation is required.

**Monitoring:** No monitoring is required.

**15. Other Geologic Hazards**

a) Be subject to geologic hazards, such as seiche, mudflow, or volcanic hazard?

**Source:** RCIP Figures S-1 through S-7, Ord. No. 695.4 and Field Training Manual Decision Making Guidelines

**Findings of Fact:** This amendment to Ordinance No. 695 and the incorporation and implementation of the abatement practices as prescribed in the Field Training Manual do not involve the construction of any new structures. Therefore, no change resulting in the exposure of people or property to seiche, mudflow or volcanic hazards will occur.

**Mitigation:** No mitigation is required.

**Monitoring:** No monitoring is required.

**16. Slopes**

a) Change topography or ground surface relief features?

b) Create cut or fill slopes greater than 2:1 or higher than 10 feet?

c) Result in grading that affects or negates subsurface sewage disposal systems?

**Source:** Riv. Co. 800 Scale Slope Maps and Project application materials

**Findings of Fact:** This amendment to Ordinance No. 695 and the incorporation and implementation of the abatement practices as prescribed in the Field Training Manual do not involve the construction of any new structures and only minimal surface ground disturbance will occur. Therefore, there will be no change to topography or ground surface relief features. Implementation of abatement will not involve any cut and fill slopes, or grading that might affect or negate subsurface sewage disposal systems.

**Mitigation:** No mitigation is required.

**Monitoring:** No monitoring is required.

**17. Soils**

a) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?

b) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table

| Potentially Significant Impact | Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact |
|--------------------------------|--|------------------------------|-----------|
|--------------------------------|--|------------------------------|-----------|

18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial risks to life or property?

Source: U.S.D.A. Soil Conservation Service Soil Surveys, Ord. No. 695.4 and Field Training Manual Decision Making Guidelines

Findings of Fact: This amendment to Ordinance No. 695 and the incorporation and implementation of the abatement practices as prescribed in the Field Training Manual do not involve the construction of any new structures and only minimal surface ground disturbance will result from abatement. Mowing or hand removal of hazardous vegetation will not result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil. Disking will break up the soil to a depth of approximately four inches and into clods which are not easily eroded by wind. Furthermore, because disking occurs on relatively flat surfaces, disking does not result in significant water erosion. On steeper slopes, current abatement practices utilize hand removal methods to abate hazardous vegetation which help prevent soil erosion. Incorporation of standard dust control measures (e.g., SCAQMD and MDAQMD Rule 403, as amended, and watering prior to abatement) for abatement practices in which soil is disturbed, such as disking, scraping, etc., will be sufficient to ensure no substantial soil loss occurs. The Hazardous Reduction Office requires that contractors obtain all necessary permits from the affected air districts. Compliance with existing air quality regulations and County ordinances will ensure potential erosion impacts are less than significant.

By reducing the number and magnitude of potential wildfires, abatement will prevent or limit the destruction of vegetation and their root systems which help check soil erosion. Abatement also prevents or limits the creation of hydrophobic soils (as a direct result of exposure of soils to high temperatures from fires) which increase runoff and contribute to soil erosion. Such fires are much more likely if the vegetation management is not conducted pursuant to Ordinance No. 695. Therefore, soils will not be adversely affected and impacts on earth resources are found to be less than significant.

Mitigation: No additional mitigation is required.

Monitoring: No monitoring is required.

|  |                          |                          |                                     |                          |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| <b>18. Erosion</b>   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| a) Change deposition, siltation, or erosion that may modify the channel of a river or stream or the bed of a lake? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Result in any increase in water erosion either on or off site?  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Source: U.S.D.A. Soil Conservation Service Soil Surveys, Ord. No. 695.4 and Field Training Manual Decision Making Guidelines

Findings of Fact: This amendment to Ordinance No. 695 and the incorporation and implementation of the abatement practices as prescribed in the Field Training Manual do not involve the construction of any new structures and only minimal surface ground disturbance will result from abatement. Disking will break up the soil to a depth of approximately four inches and into clods which are not easily eroded by wind. Furthermore, because disking occurs on relatively flat surfaces, disking does not result in

| Potentially Significant Impact | Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact |
|--------------------------------|--|------------------------------|-----------|
|--------------------------------|--|------------------------------|-----------|

significant water erosion. On steeper slopes or areas adjacent to wetlands or riparian vegetation, current abatement practices utilize hand removal methods to abate hazardous vegetation which helps prevent water erosion. Generally, abatement is prohibited in State or federally designated wetlands. Riparian vegetation located in environmentally sensitive areas is also protected from abatement. Therefore, there will not be any significant changes in deposition, siltation, or erosion which might modify a stream or river channel or the bed of a lake.

Mitigation: No additional mitigation is required.

Monitoring: No monitoring is required.

**19. Wind Erosion and Blowsand from project either on or off site.**

a) Be impacted by or result in an increase in wind erosion and blowsand, either on or off site?

Source: RCIP Figure S-8 "Wind Erosion Susceptibility Map," Ord. No. 460, Sec. 14.2, Ord. No. 484, Ord. No. 695.4 and Field Training Manual Decision Making Guidelines

Findings of Fact: This amendment to Ordinance No. 695 and the incorporation and implementation of the abatement practices as prescribed in the Field Training Manual do not involve the construction of any new structures and only minimal surface ground disturbance will result from abatement. Additionally, abatement activities are required to comply with SCAQMD and MDAQMD Rule 403, as amended, and incorporate ground stabilizing techniques. Therefore, compliance with existing air quality regulations and County ordinances will ensure impacts by or increases in wind erosion and blowsand, either on or off site, are less than significant.

Mitigation: No additional mitigation is required.

Monitoring: No monitoring is required.

**HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS** Would the project

**20. Hazards and Hazardous Materials**

a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?

b) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?

c) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or an emergency evacuation plan?

d) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?

|  | Potentially Significant Impact | Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated | Less Than Significant Impact        | No Impact                |
|--|--------------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| e) Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment? | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

**Source:** RCIP Figure S-18 "Inventory of Facilities Storing Hazardous Materials," Figure S-14 "Inventory of School Locations," Ord. No. 695.4 and Field Training Manual Decision Making Guidelines

**Findings of Fact:** This amendment to Ordinance No. 695 and the incorporation and implementation of the abatement practices as prescribed in the Field Training Manual do not involve the routine transport, use or disposal of hazardous waste. Abatement will reduce the number and extent of potential wildfires in hazardous fire areas and health hazards associated with fires. Abatement will also reduce the risk of explosion due to fires or the release of hazardous substances caused by fire damage to facilities storing hazardous substances. Moreover, abatement will facilitate safe emergency response by protecting emergency evacuation routes.

Although abatement activities generally occur only along the perimeter of roadways, property boundaries and structures, in the event that illegal dumping of questionable materials is found, abatement contractors are directed to immediately contact the Riverside County Department of Environmental Health – Hazardous Materials Management Division for assessment and removal action in accordance with State law.

The above findings indicate that the Project will not have an impact on hazardous materials or conditions.

**Mitigation:** No mitigation is required.

**Monitoring:** No monitoring is required.

|  |                          |                          |                          |                                     |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <b>21. Airports</b>  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| a) Result in an inconsistency with an Airport Master Plan?   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Require review by the Airport Land Use Commission?  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| c) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| d) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, or heliport, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

**Source:** RCIP Figure S-19 "Airport Locations," Ord. No. 695.4 and Field Training Manual Decision Making Guidelines

| Potentially Significant Impact | Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact |
|--------------------------------|--|------------------------------|-----------|
|--------------------------------|--|------------------------------|-----------|

**Findings of Fact:** This amendment to Ordinance No. 695 and the incorporation and implementation of the abatement practices as prescribed in the Field Training Manual do not involve the construction of any structures in or near airport activities. It will not create any airport or air-travel related safety hazards.

**Mitigation:** No mitigation is required.

**Monitoring:** No monitoring is required.

**22. Hazardous Fire Area**

a) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires, including where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas or where residences are intermixed with wildlands?

**Source:** RCIP Figure S-11 "Wildfire Susceptibility," Ord. No. 695.4 and Field Training Manual Decision Making Guidelines

**Findings of Fact:** Large areas of western Riverside County are located in high hazardous fire areas. This amendment to Ordinance No. 695 and the incorporation and implementation of the abatement practices as prescribed in the Field Training Manual are consistent with the objective included in the fire section of the Riverside County General Plan Safety Element, which is to reduce fire hazards and loss from fire through the promotion of public awareness and enforcement of fire prevention regulations and standards. Abatement of hazardous vegetation will be conducted in accordance with Ordinance No. 695 and as prescribed in the Field Training Manual. The removal of hazardous vegetation will reduce potential exposure of people or structures to risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires and is considered to be beneficial. Therefore, no adverse impacts will result from abatement activities.

**Mitigation:** No mitigation is required.

**Monitoring:** No monitoring is required.

**HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY** Would the project

**23. Water Quality Impacts**

a) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including the alteration of the course of a stream or river, in a manner that would result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site?

b) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements?

c) Substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that there would be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater table level (e.g., the production rate of pre-existing nearby wells would drop to a level which

|   | Potentially Significant Impact | Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated | Less Than Significant Impact        | No Impact                           |
|---|--------------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| would not support existing land uses or planned uses for which permits have been granted)?  |                                |  |                                     |                                     |
| d) Create or contribute runoff water that would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff?  | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| e) Place housing within a 100-year flood hazard area, as mapped on a federal Flood Hazard Boundary or Flood Insurance Rate Map or other flood hazard delineation map?   | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| f) Place within a 100-year flood hazard area structures which would impede or redirect flood flows?   | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| g) Otherwise substantially degrade water quality?   | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| h) Include new or retrofitted stormwater Treatment Control Best Management Practices (BMPs) (e.g. water quality treatment basins, constructed treatment wetlands), the operation of which could result in significant environmental effects (e.g. increased vectors and odors)? | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

Source: RCIP Figure S-9 "100- and 500-Year Flood Hazard Zones," Riverside County Flood Control District Flood Hazard Report, Ord. No. 695.4 and Field Training Manual Decision Making Guidelines

Findings of Fact: Since wetlands and riparian vegetation are not subject to weed abatement and soil disturbance will be minimal, significant alteration of drainage patterns will not occur. Light mechanical methods of flammable vegetation removal will only result in isolated short-term disturbances to the above-ground environment, while disking will only break up the soil to a depth of approximately four inches. Disking on relatively flat surfaces does not result in significant water erosion. On steeper slopes, mowing or hand removal of hazardous vegetation will prevent soil erosion. This amendment to Ordinance No. 695 and the incorporation and implementation of the abatement practices as prescribed in the Field Training Manual will limit the amount of vegetation removal and soil binding vegetation would remain following treatment. Targeting grasses for removal and retaining other vegetation will limit the amount of erosion and sedimentation that may occur following storms to insignificant amounts. Therefore, abatement is not expected to violate any water quality standards or discharge requirements nor will it adversely affect groundwater quality or supply, because no withdrawals or discharges to groundwater will occur.

This amendment to Ordinance No. 695 and the incorporation and implementation of the abatement practices as prescribed in the Field Training Manual do not involve the construction of any new structures and, therefore, will not place housing within a 100-year flood hazard area nor impede or redirect flood flows. The above findings indicate that abatement activities will have a less than significant impact on water quality.

Mitigation: No mitigation is required.

Monitoring: No monitoring is required.

| Potentially Significant Impact | Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact |
|--------------------------------|--|------------------------------|-----------|
|--------------------------------|--|------------------------------|-----------|

**24. Floodplains**

Degree of Suitability in 100-Year Floodplains. As indicated below, the appropriate Degree of Suitability has been checked.

| NA - Not Applicable <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>  | U - Generally Unsuitable <input type="checkbox"/> | R - Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> |                                     |                                     |
|--|---|---|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| a) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner that would result in flooding on- or off-site? | <input type="checkbox"/>                          | <input type="checkbox"/>                | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| b) Changes in absorption rates or the rate and amount of surface runoff?   | <input type="checkbox"/>                          | <input type="checkbox"/>                | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| c) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving flooding, including flooding as a result of the failure of a levee or dam (Dam Inundation Area)?   | <input type="checkbox"/>                          | <input type="checkbox"/>                | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| d) Changes in the amount of surface water in any water body?   | <input type="checkbox"/>                          | <input type="checkbox"/>                | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

Source: RCIP Figure S-9 "100- and 500-Year Flood Hazard Zones," Figure S-10 "Dam Failure Inundation Zone," Riverside County Flood Control District Flood Hazard Report, Ord. No. 695.4 and Field Training Manual Decision Making Guidelines

Findings of Fact: Abatement practices as prescribed in the Field Training Manual identify wetlands and riparian vegetation as environmentally sensitive areas and will be avoided. Since soil disturbance will be minimal, significant alteration of drainage patterns will not occur. By reducing the number and extent of potential wildfires, the proposed project will prevent or limit the destruction of vegetation and their root systems which slow runoff and increase absorption. Abatement also prevents or limits the creation of hydrophobic soils which increase runoff and contribute to flooding, which are a direct result of exposure of soils to high temperatures from fires.

This amendment to Ordinance No. 695 and the incorporation and implementation of the abatement practices as prescribed in the Field Training Manual do not involve the construction of any new structures and, therefore, will not result in adverse affects upon floodplain values or uses. The above conditions, along with compliance with Ordinance No. 695.4, as well as the County Flood Control District National Pollution Discharge Elimination System requirements will ensure that abatement activities will not have significant adverse impacts on the existing drainage patterns nor substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff.

Mitigation: No additional mitigation is required.

Monitoring: No monitoring is required.

**LAND USE/PLANNING** Would the project

| 25. Land Use   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| a) Result in a substantial alteration of the present or planned land use of an area? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Affect land use within a city sphere of influence                                 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

| Potentially Significant Impact | Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact |
|--------------------------------|--|------------------------------|-----------|
|--------------------------------|--|------------------------------|-----------|

and/or within adjacent city or county boundaries?

Source: RCIP Figure LU-1 "Riverside County General Plan Land Use," Figure LU-4 "Riverside County Area Plan Boundaries," Ord. No. 695.4 and Field Training Manual Decision Making Guidelines

Findings of Fact: This amendment to Ordinance No. 695 and the incorporation and implementation of the abatement practices as prescribed in the Field Training Manual do not involve the construction of any new structures precluding impacts on land use or spheres of influence. No adverse impacts will occur as a result of abatement activities.

Mitigation: No mitigation is required.

Monitoring: No monitoring is required.

|   |                          |                          |                          |                                     |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <b>26. Planning</b>   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| a) Be consistent with the site's existing or proposed zoning?   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Be compatible with existing surrounding zoning?  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| c) Be compatible with existing and planned surrounding land uses?   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| d) Be consistent with the land use designations and policies of the Comprehensive General Plan (including those of any applicable Specific Plan)? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| e) Disrupt or divide the physical arrangement of an established community (including a low-income or minority community)?                         | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

Source: RCIP Figure LU-1 "Riverside County General Plan Land Use," Figure LU-4 "Riverside County Area Plan Boundaries," Ord. No. 695.4 and Field Training Manual Decision Making Guidelines

Findings of Fact: This amendment to Ordinance No. 695 and the incorporation and implementation of the abatement practices have no affect on zoning or land use compatibility. Property maintenance of this kind is consistent with any zoning or land use as well as any surrounding zoning or land use. This amendment and abatement are consistent with the objectives included in the Riverside County General Plan Safety Element which are to reduce fire hazards and loss from fire through the promotion of public awareness and enforcement of fire prevention regulations and standards. Weed abatement activities will in no way disrupt or divide the physical arrangement of an established community.

Mitigation: No mitigation is required.

Monitoring: No monitoring is required.

**MINERAL RESOURCES** Would the project

|  |                          |                          |                          |                                     |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <b>27. Mineral Resources</b>                             | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| a) Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

|   | Potentially Significant Impact | Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact                           |
|---|--------------------------------|--|------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| resource in an area classified or designated by the State that would be of value to the region or the residents of the State?   |                                |  |                              |                                     |
| b) Result in the loss of availability of a locally-important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan or other land use plan? | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | <input type="checkbox"/>     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| c) Be an incompatible land use located adjacent to a State classified or designated area or existing surface mine?  | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | <input type="checkbox"/>     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| d) Expose people or property to hazards from proposed, existing or abandoned quarries or mines?   | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | <input type="checkbox"/>     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

Source: RCIP Figure OS-5 "Mineral Resources"

Findings of Fact: This amendment to Ordinance No. 695 and the incorporation and implementation of the abatement practices as prescribed in the Field Training Manual will not hamper or preclude mineral resource extraction in State Classified or Designated MRZ-2 Zones or expose people or property to hazards from proposed, existing, or abandoned quarries or mines as it does not involve covering over or extracting such mineral resources. The above findings indicate that there will be no impacts on mineral resources or mineral resource extraction.

Mitigation: No mitigation is required.

Monitoring: No monitoring is required.

**NOISE** Would the project result in

**Definitions for Noise Acceptability Ratings**

Where indicated below, the appropriate Noise Acceptability Rating(s) has been checked.

NA - Not Applicable

A - Generally Acceptable

B - Conditionally Acceptable

C - Generally Unacceptable

D - Land Use Discouraged

**28. Airport Noise**

a) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?

NA  A  B  C  D

b) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?

NA  A  B  C  D

Source: RCIP Figure S-19 "Airport Locations" and County of Riverside Airport Facilities Map

Findings of Fact: There are both public and private airports located throughout the County territory. However, the presence of these airports and the removal of hazardous vegetation will not increase

| Potentially Significant Impact | Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact |
|--------------------------------|--|------------------------------|-----------|
|--------------------------------|--|------------------------------|-----------|

people's exposure to increased noise beyond levels now experienced by those living and working outdoors in these areas. Potential impacts are considered insignificant.

Mitigation: No mitigation is required.

Monitoring: No monitoring is required.

**29. Railroad Noise**

NA  A  B  C  D

Source: RCIP Figure C-1 "Circulation Plan," Figure S-21 "Rail Facilities, Available Water, Oil and Natural Gas Pipelines Inventory Data," Ord. No. 695.4 and Field Training Manual Decision Making Guidelines

Findings of Fact: Railroads are located throughout the County territory. However, the presence of these railroads the removal of hazardous vegetation will not increase people's exposure to increased noise beyond levels now experienced by those living and working outdoors in these areas. Potential impacts are considered to be insignificant.

Mitigation: No mitigation is required.

Monitoring: No monitoring is required.

**30. Highway Noise**

NA  A  B  C  D

Source: RCIP Figure C-1 "Circulation Plan," Ord. No. 695.4 and Field Training Manual Decision Making Guidelines

Findings of Fact: There are numerous highways throughout the County. However, the presence of these highways and the removal of hazardous vegetation will not increase people's exposure to noise beyond levels now experienced by those living and working outdoors in these areas. Potential impacts are considered to be insignificant.

Mitigation: No mitigation is required.

Monitoring: No monitoring is required.

**31. Other Noise**

NA  A  B  C  D

Source: Ord. No. 695.4 and Field Training Manual Decision Making Guidelines

Findings of Fact: Any noise emanating from abatement activities will be of a limited duration and intensity and is considered to be insignificant. This amendment to Ordinance No. 695 and the

| Potentially Significant Impact | Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact |
|--------------------------------|--|------------------------------|-----------|
|--------------------------------|--|------------------------------|-----------|

incorporation and implementation of the abatement practices as prescribed in the Field Training Manual do not involve any other noise sources or receptors than those discussed elsewhere in this document.

Mitigation: No mitigation is required.

Monitoring: No monitoring is required.

**32. Noise Effects on or by the Project**

a) A substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?

b) A substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?

c) Exposure of persons to or generation of noise levels in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?

d) Exposure of persons to or generation of excessive ground-borne vibration or ground-borne noise levels?

Source: RCIP Figure N-1 "Common Noise Sources and Noise Levels," Table N-1 "Land Use Compatibility for Community Noise Exposure," Table N-2 "Stationary Source Land Use Noise Standards," Table N-3 "Human Reaction to Typical Vibration Levels," Ord. No. 695.4 and Field Training Manual Decision Making Guidelines

Findings of Fact: Abatement activities may involve the use of equipment with gasoline or diesel powered engines which has the potential to cause short-term noise impacts on nearby land uses. However, the duration of these higher noise levels will be short and of low intensity. Abatement contractors are required to maintain proper mufflers on their equipment. Adherence to Ordinance No. 847 regulating noise in the County will ensure that no significant noise impacts will occur.

Mitigation: No additional mitigation is required.

Monitoring: No monitoring is required.

**POPULATION AND HOUSING** Would the project

**33. Housing**

a) Displace substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?

b) Create a demand for additional housing, particularly housing affordable to households earning 80% or less of the County's median income?

c) Displace substantial numbers of people,

|   | Potentially Significant Impact | Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact                           |
|---|--------------------------------|--|------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?  |                                |  |                              |                                     |
| d) Affect a County Redevelopment Project Area?  | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | <input type="checkbox"/>     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| e) Cumulatively exceed official regional or local population projections?   | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | <input type="checkbox"/>     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| f) Induce substantial population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)? | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | <input type="checkbox"/>     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

Source: Ord. No. 695.4 and Field Training Manual Decision Making Guidelines

Findings of Fact: This amendment to Ordinance No. 695 and the incorporation and implementation of the abatement practices as prescribed in the Field Training Manual do not involve the construction of new structures. Abatement will reduce the number and extent of potential wildfires, and thereby reduce potential injuries and loss to homeowners as well as limit the need to repair and/or replace structures damaged by fire. Additionally, abatement will protect the existing housing stock including any affordable housing from fire damage. This ordinance amendment and abatement activities will not have an adverse impact on housing.

Mitigation: No mitigation is required.

Monitoring: No monitoring is required.

**PUBLIC SERVICES** Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered government facilities or the need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services:

|                          |                          |                          |                          |                                     |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <b>34. Fire Services</b> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|

Source: RCIP Figure S-13 "Inventory of Emergency Safety Element Response Facilities," Ord. No. 695.4 and Field Training Manual Decision Making Guidelines

Findings of Fact: This amendment to Ordinance No. 695 and the incorporation and implementation of the abatement practices will not result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered government facilities or the need for new or physically altered governmental facilities. This amendment and abatement are consistent with the objectives included in the Riverside County General Plan Safety Element, which are to reduce fire hazards and loss from fire through the promotion of public awareness and enforcement of fire prevention regulations and standards. Weed abatement activities will reduce the demand on existing facilities by reducing the threat of wildfires resulting from buildup of hazardous vegetation. No impacts to fire services will occur.

Mitigation: No mitigation is required.

Monitoring: No monitoring is required.

| Potentially Significant Impact | Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact |
|--------------------------------|--|------------------------------|-----------|
|--------------------------------|--|------------------------------|-----------|

**35. Sheriff Services**

Source: RCIP Figure S-13 "Inventory of Emergency Safety Element Response Facilities," Ord. No. 695.4 and Field Training Manual Decision Making Guidelines

Findings of Fact: This amendment to Ordinance No. 695 and the incorporation and implementation of the abatement practices as prescribed in the Field Training Manual will not result in impacts on sheriff services. By reducing fire hazards, abatement activities will reduce the number and extent of potential wildfires; thereby lessening the demand which might otherwise be placed on sheriff services at the scene of such fires.

Mitigation: No mitigation is required.

Monitoring: No monitoring is required.

**36. Schools**

Source: RCIP S-14 "Inventory of School Locations," Ord. No. 695.4 and Field Training Manual Decision Making Guidelines

Findings of Fact: This amendment to Ordinance No. 695 and the incorporation and implementation of the abatement practices as prescribed in the Field Training Manual will not result in impacts on schools, other than the potentially positive one of providing greater fire protection. By reducing fire hazards, abatement activities will reduce the number and extent of potential wildfires; thereby reducing potential injuries and loss of school property as well as limit the need to repair and/or replace burned out structures.

Mitigation: No mitigation is required.

Monitoring: No monitoring is required.

**37. Libraries**

Source: Ord. No. 695.4 and Field Training Manual Decision Making Guidelines

Findings of Fact: Compliance with Ordinance No. 695 and abatement as prescribed in the Field Training Manual will reduce fire hazards and the number and extent of potential wildfires; thereby reducing potential injuries and loss of library property as well as limit the need to repair and/or replace burned out structures. Therefore, no impact on libraries will result from this ordinance amendment or implementation of abatement in accordance with the methods prescribed in the Field Training Manual.

Mitigation: No mitigation is required.

Monitoring: No monitoring is required.

|                            | Potentially Significant Impact | Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact                           |
|----------------------------|--------------------------------|--|------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <b>38. Health Services</b> | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | <input type="checkbox"/>     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

Source: Ord. No. 695.4 and Field Training Manual Decision Making Guidelines

Findings of Fact: This amendment to Ordinance No. 695 and the incorporation and implementation of the abatement practices will not result in impacts on health services. By reducing fire hazards, abatement activities will reduce the number and extent of potential wildfires and, thereby, reduce potential injuries and lessen the demand which might otherwise be placed on health services from victims of fire events.

Mitigation: No mitigation is required.

Monitoring: No monitoring is required.

**RECREATION**

|  |                          |                          |                          |                                     |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <b>39. Parks and Recreation</b>  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| a) Would the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?                     | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Would the project include the use of existing neighborhood or regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| c) Is the project located within a C.S.A. or recreation and park district with a Community Parks and Recreation Plan (Quimby fees)?  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

Source: Ord. No. 695.4 and Field Training Manual Decision Making Guidelines

Findings of Fact: This amendment to Ordinance No. 695 and the incorporation and implementation of the abatement practices as prescribed in the Field Training Manual does not include the construction of new structures precluding potential impacts on recreational facilities.

Mitigation: No mitigation is required.

Monitoring: No monitoring is required.

|                                |                          |                          |                          |                                     |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <b>40. Recreational Trails</b> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|

Source: RCIP Figure C-7 "Riverside County Trails and Bikeway System," Riv. Co. 800 Scale Equestrian Trail Maps, Open Space and Conservation Map for Western County trail alignments, Ord. No. 695.4 and Field Training Manual Decision Making Guidelines

Findings of Fact: A variety of community riding and hiking trails exist throughout the County. This amendment to Ordinance No. 695 and the incorporation and implementation of the abatement

| Potentially Significant Impact | Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact |
|--------------------------------|--|------------------------------|-----------|
|--------------------------------|--|------------------------------|-----------|

practices as prescribed in the Field Training Manual will reduce fire hazards and the potential loss of recreational trails and limit the need to repair and/or replace burned out trail structures. Abatement may also aid in reducing potential wildfire risks in recreational areas continuing or adjacent to native vegetation. Impacts on recreational trails and associated recreational opportunities are insignificant.

**Mitigation:** No mitigation is required.

**Monitoring:** No monitoring is required.

**TRANSPORTATION/TRAFFIC** Would the project

|  | Potentially Significant Impact | Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact                           |
|--|--------------------------------|--|------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <b>41. Circulation</b>   | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | <input type="checkbox"/>     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| a) Cause an increase in traffic which is substantial in relation to the existing traffic load and capacity of the street system (i.e., result in a substantial increase in either the number of vehicle trips, the volume to capacity ratio on roads, or congestion at intersections)? | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | <input type="checkbox"/>     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Result in inadequate parking capacity?  | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | <input type="checkbox"/>     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| c) Exceed, either individually or cumulatively, a level of service standard established by the county congestion management agency for designated road or highways?  | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | <input type="checkbox"/>     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| d) Result in a change in air traffic patterns, including either an increase in traffic levels or a change in location that results in substantial safety risks?  | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | <input type="checkbox"/>     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| e) Alter waterborne, rail or air traffic?  | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | <input type="checkbox"/>     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| f) Substantially increase hazards to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g. farm equipment)?  | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | <input type="checkbox"/>     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| g) Cause an effect upon, or a need for new or altered maintenance of roads?  | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | <input type="checkbox"/>     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| h) Cause an effect upon circulation during the project's construction?   | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | <input type="checkbox"/>     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| i) Result in inadequate emergency access or access to nearby uses?   | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | <input type="checkbox"/>     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| j) Conflict with adopted policies supporting alternative transportation (e.g. bus turnouts, bicycle racks)?  | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | <input type="checkbox"/>     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

**Source:** Ord. No. 695.4 and Field Training Manual Decision Making Guidelines

**Findings of Fact:** During the clearing of hazardous vegetation, one or two pieces of equipment may be used at any given time. This equipment may include tractor and disk, mowers, or weed trimmers. By reducing vegetative fuels, this amendment to Ordinance No. 695 and the incorporation and implementation of the abatement practices as prescribed in the Field Training Manual will reduce the potential impact of fire on existing roadways. Smoke from fires which could decrease visibility and increase potential traffic hazards will be reduced by removing potential fuels. No significant adverse impacts on circulation will occur.

**Mitigation:** No mitigation is required.

| Potentially Significant Impact | Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact |
|--------------------------------|--|------------------------------|-----------|
|--------------------------------|--|------------------------------|-----------|

Monitoring: No monitoring is required.

**42. Bike Trails**

|                          |                          |                          |                                     |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|

Source: RCIP Figure C-7 "Riverside County Trails and Bikeway System," Ord. No. 695.4 and Field Training Manual Decision Making Guidelines

Findings of Fact: As with trails, there are various bike routes throughout the County. This amendment to Ordinance No. 695 and the incorporation and implementation of the abatement practices as prescribed in the Field Training Manual will reduce fire hazards. Abatement activities will reduce the potential loss of bike routes by reducing potential fuels. No impacts on bike trails will occur.

Mitigation: No mitigation is required.

Monitoring: No monitoring is required.

**UTILITY AND SERVICE SYSTEMS** Would the project

**43. Water**

|                          |                          |                          |                                     |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|

a) Require or result in the construction of new water treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which would cause significant environmental effects?

|                          |                          |                          |                                     |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|

b) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources, or are new or expanded entitlements needed?

Source: Ord. No. 695.4 and Field Training Manual Decision Making Guidelines

Findings of Fact: The removal of flammable vegetation as required by Ordinance No. 695 and implementation of abatement methods as prescribed in the Field Training Manual will in no way affect or be affected by pipes and other underground water delivery facilities, which are buried too deep. Even surface disking will only break up the top four inches of soil, well above the depth to which pipes are buried. By reducing fire hazards, the demand placed on water delivery facilities for water to fight wildfires will also be reduced. Abatement activities will have no impact on water delivery systems. Use of water during abatement activities (e.g., dust control, spark suppression, etc.) will also be minimal.

Mitigation: No mitigation is required.

Monitoring: No monitoring is required.

|  | Potentially Significant Impact | Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact                           |
|--|--------------------------------|--|------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <b>44. Sewer</b>   | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | <input type="checkbox"/>     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| a) Require or result in the construction of new wastewater treatment facilities, including septic systems, or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which would cause significant environmental effects?           | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | <input type="checkbox"/>     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider that serves or may service the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments? | <input type="checkbox"/>       | <input type="checkbox"/>                           | <input type="checkbox"/>     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

Source: Ord. No. 695.4 and Field Training Manual Decision Making Guidelines

Findings of Fact: This amendment to Ordinance No. 695 and the incorporation and implementation of the abatement practices as prescribed in the Field Training Manual, by its nature, will not create any additional demand for wastewater treatment. Pipes and other underground sewer facilities are buried too deep to affect or be affected by light mechanical methods used for the removal of flammable vegetation. Even surface disking only breaks up the top four inches of soil, well above the depth to which pipes are buried. Abatement activities will have no impact on sewer systems.

Mitigation: No mitigation is required.

Monitoring: No monitoring is required.

|   |                          |                          |                                     |                                     |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <b>45. Solid Waste</b>  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| a) Is the project served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs?                        | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| b) Comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid wastes (including the CIWMP (County Integrated Waste Management Plan)? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

Source: Ord. No. 695.4 and Field Training Manual Decision Making Guidelines

Findings of Fact: This amendment to Ordinance No. 695 and the incorporation and implementation of the abatement practices as prescribed in the Field Training Manual requires that hazardous vegetation be removed by light mechanical methods. These methods will include disking by tractor, use of mowers, and hand trimming. Vegetation will then either be disked into the soil or taken to a local landfill for disposal. Of these methods, disking has no disposal requirements. Mowing and hand removal, on the other hand, require some disposal. However, the amount of green waste generated by mowing and hand removal will be small and this waste will be further reduced through composting and other forms of green waste recycling which have been integrated into the waste disposal process. These findings indicate that abatement activities will have a less than significant impact on solid waste.

Mitigation: No mitigation is required.

| Potentially Significant Impact | Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact |
|--------------------------------|--|------------------------------|-----------|
|--------------------------------|--|------------------------------|-----------|

Monitoring: No monitoring is required.

**46. Utilities**

a) Would the project impact the following facilities requiring or resulting in the construction of new facilities or the expansion of existing facilities; the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?

|   |                          |                          |                          |                                     |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| a) Electricity?                                       | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Natural gas?                                       | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| c) Communications systems?                            | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| d) Storm water drainage?                              | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| e) Street lighting?                                   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| f) Maintenance of public facilities, including roads? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| g) Other governmental services?                       | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| h) Conflict with adopted energy conservation plans?   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

Source: Ord. No. 695.4 and Field Training Manual Decision Making Guidelines

Findings of Fact: This amendment to Ordinance No. 695 and the incorporation and implementation of the abatement practices as prescribed in the Field Training Manual, by its nature, would not create demand for additional utilities. Pipes and other underground utility lines are buried too deep to affect or be affected by light mechanical methods of removing hazardous vegetation. Even surface diking will only break up the top four inches of soil, well above the depth to which pipes are buried. By reducing fire hazards, abatement activities will reduce the number and extent of potential wildfires; thereby, reducing potential loss of above ground utility facilities, and limiting the need to repair and/or replace structures damaged by fire. No impacts on utilities will occur.

Mitigation: No mitigation is required.

Monitoring: No monitoring is required.

**OTHER**

|            |                          |                          |                          |                                     |
|------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 47. Other: | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
|------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|

Source: Ord. No. 695.4 and Field Training Manual Decision Making Guidelines

Findings of Fact: No other significant impacts have been identified.

Mitigation: No mitigation is required.

Monitoring: No monitoring is required.

**MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE**

|  |                          |                                     |                          |                          |
|--|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 48. Does the project have the potential to substantially degrade the quality of the environment, substantially | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|--|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|

| Potentially Significant Impact | Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated | Less Than Significant* | No Impact |
|--------------------------------|--|------------------------|-----------|
|--------------------------------|--|------------------------|-----------|

reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare, or endangered plant or animal to eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?

Source: Preceding analysis

Findings of Fact: This amendment to Ordinance No. 695 and the incorporation and implementation of the abatement practices as prescribed in the Field Training Manual, as well as compliance with the HCPs and other regulations and/or requirements identified in Section 6, will ensure that this amendment and abatement activities does not degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife populations to drop below self sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, or reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal, or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory. The selective removal of flammable vegetation will reduce the potential for wildfires and thus prevent the resulting fire-related loss of habitat which may support rare or endangered plant and animal species. This amendment and abatement as prescribed in the Field Training Manual will have a beneficial effect on the environment.

|   |                          |                          |                                     |                          |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 49. Does the project have the potential to achieve short-term environmental goals, to the disadvantage of long-term environmental goals? (A short-term impact on the environment is one that occurs in a relatively brief, definitive period of time while long-term impacts will endure well into the future.) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|

Source: Preceding analysis

Findings of Fact: The intent of this amendment to Ordinance No. 695 and the incorporation and implementation of the abatement practices as prescribed in the Field Training Manual is to reduce fire hazards associated with the accumulation of flammable vegetation. The short-term impacts associated with the removal of hazardous vegetation are necessary in order to reduce the risk and severity of wildfires; reduction of wildfire risks are a positive, long-term effect on the environment in the County.

|  |                          |                          |                                     |                          |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 50. Does the project have impacts which are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of an individual project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects as defined in California Code of Regulations, Section | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|

| Potentially Significant Impact | Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact |
|--------------------------------|--|------------------------------|-----------|
|--------------------------------|--|------------------------------|-----------|

15130)?

Source: Preceding analysis

Findings of Fact: The intent of this amendment to Ordinance No. 695 and the incorporation and implementation of the abatement practices as prescribed in the Field Training Manual is to reduce fire hazards associated with the accumulation of flammable vegetation. Hazardous vegetation will be selectively cleared in order to lessen the impact of wildfires, reduce the risk and severity of wildfires and will have a positive, long term effect on the environment. This ordinance amendment and abatement activities as prescribed in the Field Training Manual will not result in impacts which are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable.

51. Does the project have environmental effects that will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?

Source: Preceding analysis

Findings of Fact: This amendment to Ordinance No. 695 and the incorporation and implementation of the abatement practices as prescribed in the Field Training Manual will not have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly. By reducing the potential for wildfires and associated loss of life and property, abatement activities will have a positive impact on people living in the County.

**VI. EARLIER ANALYSES**

Earlier analyses may be used where, pursuant to the tiering, program EIR, or other CEQA process, an effect has been adequately analyzed in an earlier EIR or negative declaration as per California Code of Regulations, Section 15063 (c) (3) (D). In this case, a brief discussion should identify the following:

Earlier Analyses Used, if any:

2003 Riverside County General Plan, as amended ("RCIP" herein)

Location Where Earlier Analyses, if used, are available for review:

Location: County of Riverside Planning Department  
4080 Lemon Street, 9th Floor  
Riverside, CA 92505

# **APPENDIX A**

# **RIVERSIDE COUNTY FIRE DEPARTMENT – HAZARDOUS REDUCTION SECTION**

## **Field Training Manual Decision Making Guidelines – When to Clear Vegetation**

### **PURPOSE:**

These guidelines are intended to provide direction to Fire Department staff regarding when and how to clear vegetation pursuant to Riverside County Ordinance No. 695. The guidelines are not regulations and shall be advisory to the Fire Department in connection with their implementation of Ordinance No. 695.

### **GROWTH ON THE PROPERTY:**

The first consideration when determining when to clear vegetation on vacant parcels is does the growth or anticipated growth warrant clearance. Many times our first inspections are completed before there has been complete growth on the property. We must anticipate future growth and unknown conditions, such as late rains when completing our inspections. However, if the vacant parcel(s) has little to no growth or the growth is very sporadic and you do not believe it constitutes a fire hazard then do not require the owner to clear the property. We are not completing inspections for beautification; we are looking for flammable and combustible vegetation that is a fire hazard.

How much clearance does the structure have? This includes clearances and non-flammable vegetation.

### **METHODS OF CLEARANCE**

In general, there are three different methods of clearance – mowing, disking and handwork.

- |          |  |
|----------|--|
| Mowing   | Cutting the vegetation to within 3-6 inches of the ground, similar to cutting your lawn. Used on properties within reserves or habitat sensitive areas. Properties are generally level with mild slopes.   |
| Disking  | The turning under of the vegetation into the ground by using a rotary disk attachment pulled behind a tractor. Properties are generally level with mild slopes.  |
| Handwork | Thinning done by hand mechanized equipment such as: weed eaters, chain saws, handsaws, etc., done in areas when terrain does not allow for disking/mowing due to slope, access, rocks, etc., or in order to protect vegetation in criteria cells or reserve areas. |

# RIVERSIDE COUNTY FIRE DEPARTMENT – HAZARDOUS REDUCTION SECTION

## Field Training Manual Decision Making Guidelines – When to Clear Vegetation

### METHOD OF CLEARANCE ON RESERVES OR WITHIN MULTIPLE SPECIES PLAN CRITERIA CELLS

Reserve areas should be posted with signage to indicate that the property is located within a reserve. If the vacant parcel(s) requiring clearance is located within a reserve, coordinate with reserve managers to have the parcel(s) mowed or handwork done to preserve the property in the best interest of the ecological conditions presented on the parcel.

Areas located within a WRMSHCP criteria cell or CVMSHCP conservation area are not managed independently and do not require this type of coordination. Clearance within reserves or criteria cells generally consist of mowing grasses and thinning shrubs, chaparral and trees. Handwork may also be necessary where topography, slopes and rocks make mowing impractical. Map information on criteria cells or conservation areas may be found on the Riverside County Transportation Land Management Agency website at <http://www3.tlma.co.riverside.ca.us/pa/rcdis/index.html>.

*Remember, the purpose of this ordinance is to establish a hazardous vegetation abatement program that protects the lives and property of County residents while at the same time protecting rare and sensitive plant and animal species and the environment. If it cannot be clearly determined whether a parcel is located within a reserve or criteria cell, mapping and parcel information should be obtained from the Transportation Land Management Agency website to assist in making a decision prior to any physical action being taken.*

### VACANT PROPERTIES WITH AN ADJACENT STRUCTURED PARCEL(S):

#### Amount of clearance

(Below is an excerpt from Ordinance No. 695.3)

*“The County Fire Chief or his or her designee may require more than or less than a 100 foot width for the protection of public health, safety or welfare or the environment. The determination for appropriate clearance distances shall be made based upon a visual inspection of the parcel and shall consider all factors that place the property or adjoining structure(s) at risk from an approaching fire. These factors shall include local weather conditions, fuel type(s), topography, and the environment where the property or adjoining structure(s) is located.”*

Many of the vacant properties we inspect have adjacent parcels with structures built on them. Determining the amount of clearance the

# RIVERSIDE COUNTY FIRE DEPARTMENT – HAZARDOUS REDUCTION SECTION

## Field Training Manual Decision Making Guidelines – When to Clear Vegetation

structure(s) currently has will assist in determining how much clearance will be required on the adjacent vacant parcel(s).

**FOR EXAMPLE:** If the structured parcel has 50 feet of clearance then the vacant parcel may need to be cleared for an additional 50 feet to equal 100 feet of clearance. Remember what is considered defensible space for the structure(s). You can have ornamental landscape, lawn or thinned/sparse vegetation on the structured parcel, this will be considered clearance (see attached Exhibit A).

*Remember, the primary objective of the abatement program is the protection of lives and property of County residents while at the same time protecting rare and sensitive plant and animal species and the environment.*

### **Increasing the amount of clearance**

In most cases 100 feet or less of clearance is sufficient for the circumstances we inspect. However, there are rare circumstances when increasing clearance may be necessary.

**FOR EXAMPLE:** If the structured parcel is on a **slope** and has 50 feet of clearance and the vacant parcel(s) is below the structured parcel. Under normal conditions, 50 feet of clearance on the vacant parcel(s) would equal the 100 feet of clearance. Given that a fire will burn faster and more intense burning **upslope**, consider increasing the distance to be cleared greater than 50 feet. Additional clearance should first be applied on the structured parcel if topographic conditions permit (see attached Exhibit B).

The Steepness of the Slope<sup>1</sup>:

1. Directly affects the rate at which fire spreads and its intensity.
2. Fires moving upslope will move faster the steeper the slope.
3. The steeper the slope the more likely there will be rolling material that can ignite fire below the main fire.

*Remember, the purpose of the clearance is to reduce the amount of combustible and flammable vegetation that is a fire hazard. By reducing this type of vegetation, the structured parcel property owner is given a better*

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<sup>1</sup> Fire Protection Training Manual Section 4320.5, Page 6

## RIVERSIDE COUNTY FIRE DEPARTMENT – HAZARDOUS REDUCTION SECTION

### Field Training Manual Decision Making Guidelines – When to Clear Vegetation

*chance of survival of the structure(s), more time to evacuate the house, allow firefighters a better chance at saving the property safely and, if a fire which starts in the structure(s), prevents spreading the fire to wildland areas adjacent to the property.*

#### **Area to be cleared**

Once the appropriate amount of clearance on the vacant parcel(s) is determined, the next step is to determine the area to be cleared. Depending on the size of the vacant parcel(s) relative to the necessary clearing radius around the adjacent structure(s), it may or may not be necessary to clear the entire length of the vacant parcel(s). In accordance with the necessary distance from the structure(s), a half-moon shape to protect the area where the structure(s) is located on the on the adjacent parcel(s) may suffice.

#### **VACANT PARCELS ADJACENT TO ROADWAYS:**

There are multiple factors to consider when determining vegetation abatement next to a roadway. Also, remember the roadway may or may not require clearance on both sides (see attached Exhibit C).

(Below is an excerpt from Ordinance No. 695.3)

*“The County Fire Chief or his or her designee may require more than or less than a 100 foot width for the protection of public health, safety or welfare or the environment. The determination for appropriate clearance distances shall be based upon a visual inspection of the parcel(s) and shall consider all factors that place the property or adjoining structure(s) at risk from an approaching fire. These factors shall include local weather conditions, fuel type(s), topography, and the environment where the property or adjoining structure(s) is located.”*

As a general rule, 30 feet along both sides of the roadway requires fuel modification. Ordinance No. 695 allows for an increase to 100 feet or more but this would be in rare circumstances. The following considerations will further assist in determining clearance amounts. As with any parcels we are looking to abate, the totality of the circumstances should be taken into account. Road shoulders “count” toward the amount of necessary clearance.

# RIVERSIDE COUNTY FIRE DEPARTMENT – HAZARDOUS REDUCTION SECTION

## Field Training Manual Decision Making Guidelines – When to Clear Vegetation

### Egress potential

If a roadway is the only means of egress for a house or community, then the property needs to be considered for clearing. However, the totality of the circumstances should be taken into account prior to finalizing your decision of the amount of clearance, such as road conditions, fuel loading and slope. We need to allow for homeowners to leave their homes safely and allow firefighting crews to gain access safely while evacuations are taking place.

*Remember, the purpose of the ordinance is to reduce the amount of combustible and flammable vegetation that is a fire hazard. By reducing this type of vegetation, the property owner is given a better chance of survival of the structure(s), local residents are provided more time to evacuate their homes and firefighters and fire equipment are allowed to safely access an area and provide fire protection to a community.*

### Road conditions

*Paved or dirt* – The type of cover on a roadway makes a difference on its ability to move residents out of the area quickly. A paved road is a better egress roadway than an unpaved road. A paved road would require *less* clearance than an unpaved roadway. However, the width of the road and its use must still be taken into consideration.

*Width of the roadway* – The width of the roadway will assist in determining the appropriate amount of clearance required. The larger the width of the roadway *lessens* the required amount of clearance, if any. Therefore, the reverse is then true. The smaller the width of the roadway *increases* the amount of clearance that may be required. Generally, a paved road is approximately 24 feet in width, with the clearance requirement of 30 feet along both sides. However, again, consider the use of the roadway and whether or not it is an egress.

*Vegetation fuel type* – We do not want to type convert vegetation. Type converting means clearing chaparral and other medium to heavy type vegetation fuels and replacing it with light grass. *A fire will start quicker in light grass and carry into the heavier fuels.* We do not want to get into this type of practice. Instead of clearing to bare soil in areas with heavier fuel types, consider selective fuel modifications such as thinning or limbing the fuels so that a fire will not have a consistent fuel loading and we are not allowing a light grass crop to grow in its place. Often, along a roadway, there is existing disturbance of the fuel due to roadway grading or from

# RIVERSIDE COUNTY FIRE DEPARTMENT – HAZARDOUS REDUCTION SECTION

## Field Training Manual Decision Making Guidelines – When to Clear Vegetation

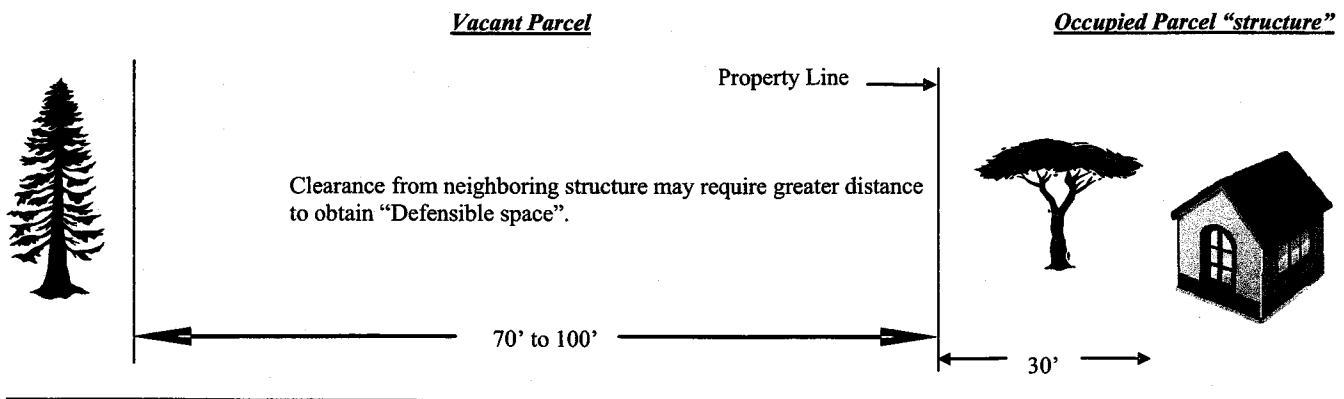
vehicle traffic. In these instances, type converting fuels are not as great a concern.

*Fire threat* – The intent of Ordinance No. 695 is not to clear 100 feet on either side of every roadway located within County territory. The intent of the ordinance is to clear the flammable and combustible vegetation in fire hazard areas to slow down the spread of the fire, eliminate the spread of unwanted fires which start adjacent to a roadway, such as a vehicle fire, and to eliminate fires caused by burning objects being thrown from the roadway (see attached Exhibit D). But, first and foremost, it is the intent of Ordinance No. 695 to allow local residents to evacuate from their homes and allow firefighters and fire equipment to safely access an area and provide fire protection to a community.

# **EXHIBIT A**

## Vacant parcels, adjacent to parcels with structures.

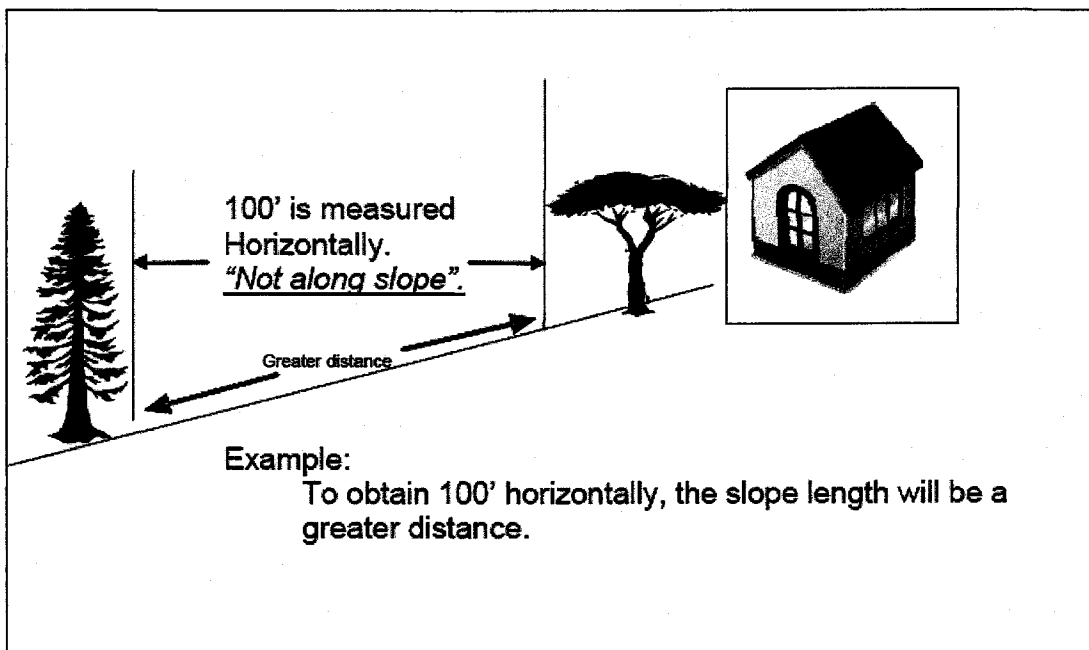
Vacant parcel(s) adjacent to occupied parcels, require 100' of clearance along property lines and, or, from neighboring structures.



# **EXHIBIT B**

# Horizontal Clearance

Vacant parcel(s) with slopes adjacent to occupied parcel(s) and or roadways.



# **EXHIBIT C**

## Vacant parcels, adjacent to Roadways.

Vacant parcel(s) adjacent to roadways, require 100' of clearance along property line(s) adjacent to Roadways and, or, neighboring structures.

Vacant Parcel

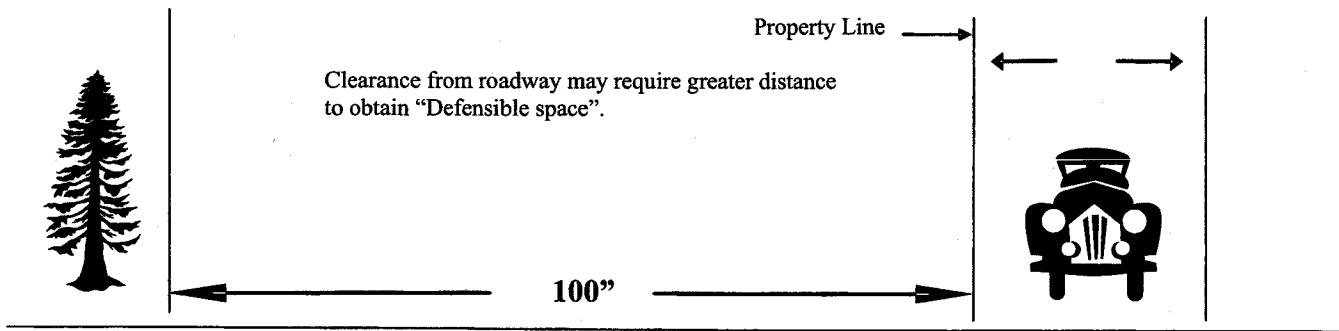
Roadway

Property Line →

Clearance from roadway may require greater distance to obtain "Defensible space".



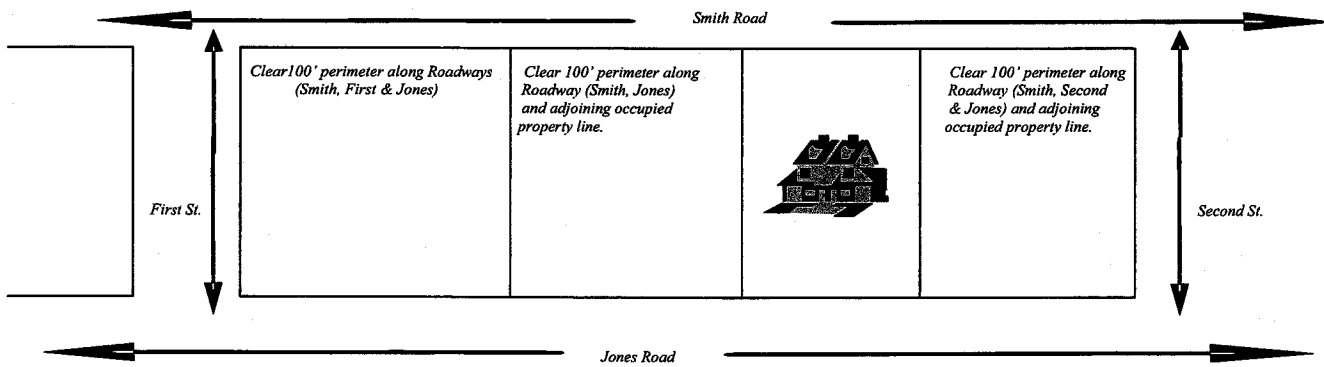
← 100' →





# **EXHIBIT D**

## Vacant parcels Adjacent to Roadways, Structures and other vacant Parcels

- Vacant parcel(s) adjacent to occupied parcels and or roadways may require 100' of clearance along adjoining property line(s).
- Vacant Parcels adjoining vacant parcels may not require clearance.



|   |   |   |                                     |  |   |  |
|---|---|---|-------------------------------------|--|---|--|
| Clear 100' perimeter along Jones Rd and adjoining occupied property line. |  | Clear 100' perimeter along Jones Rd and adjoining occupied property line. | Clear 100' perimeter along Jones Rd | Clear 100' perimeter along Jones Rd and adjoining occupied property line |  |  |
| No clearance.   | Clear 100' perimeter along adjoining occupied property line.                        | No clearance  | No clearance                        | No clearance   | Clear 100' perimeter along adjoining occupied property line.                          |  |

# **APPENDIX B**



Riverside County Fire Department Hazard  
Reduction Office  
P.O. Box 2047  
Perris, Ca 92572-2047  
951-943-0640

**Notice To Abate**

Date:

PARCEL#: 1234567

John Doe

1801 AVE OF THE STARS  
810 LOS ANGELES CA 90067

Pursuant to the provisions of Riverside County Ordinance 695, you are hereby NOTIFIED and REQUIRED to abate the hazardous vegetation as specified below from your property, described as 102203004. The Riverside County Assessor's record lists you as the owner.

If said hazardous vegetation is not removed within Thirty (30) days from the above date, the County Fire Chief, or other duly designated officers may order said vegetation removed by public employees, private contractors, or other persons, and the cost of said removal shall be levied with an added ADMINISTRATION FEE of \$ amt tba per parcel, and assessed against the property as a SPECIAL LIEN.

**APPEALS INFORMATION**

An APPEAL from this order may be taken by presenting a WRITTEN APPEAL to the HAZARD REDUCTION OFFICE at PO Box 2047 Perris, CA 92572-2047 Tel: (951) 943-0640 within FIFTEEN (15) calendar days of the post mark on the NOTICE TO ABATE. The Hazard Reduction Officer shall set the same for hearing before the Board of Appeals, and shall notify the Applicant in writing of the hearing date.

**IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS PLEASE CALL (951) 943-0640.  
Monday -Friday, 8 AM to Noon or 1 PM to 5 PM  
Or visit Riverside County Fire's Web Site at: [www.rvcfire.org](http://www.rvcfire.org)**

Note: If the property subject to this Notice is currently conserved for the benefit of threatened or endangered species or the property is being used for agricultural purposes, please contact the RCA at 951-955-8805

The requirements of this Notice to Abate shall be satisfied by methods as described below:

**Please see the Special Instruction area for any additional information.**

- The County Fire Chief has determined the unimproved parcel adjacent to a roadway requires **Bold** feet of abatement of flammable vegetation adjacent to said roadway, for the protection of public health, safety and welfare of the environment
- The County Fire Chief has determined the unimproved parcel adjacent to a structure requires **Bold** feet of abatement of flammable vegetation adjacent to said structure(s), for the protection of public health, safety and welfare of the environment
- The County Fire Chief has determined that the following clearance method(s) shall be employed for the removal of hazardous vegetation on the parcel:
  - The entire parcel must be cleared.

**Special Instructions:**

**Free text area to describe abatement**

**Note:** No owner, occupant or person in control of any such unimproved parcel of land or interest therein shall be authorized to abate hazardous vegetation unless said owner, occupant or person has received a Notice to Abate or alternatively has been issued a grading permit pursuant to the requirements of Ordinance No. 457. The removal of vegetation pursuant to this ordinance shall not exceed that set forth in the Notice to Abate or grading permit.

Examples of the clearance requirements above are attached hereto as Exhibit "C" for informational purposes only.

Please ensure your property is cleaned and maintained throughout the year pursuant to Health & Safety code 14875-14922

**COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE**  
**TRANSPORTATION AND LAND MANAGEMENT AGENCY**  
*George A. Johnson · Agency Director*  
**Planning Department**  
*Ron Goldman · Planning Director*

**MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION**

Environmental Assessment No.: 42117

Based on the Initial Study, it has been determined that the proposed project, subject to the proposed mitigation measures, will not have a significant effect upon the environment.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION, LOCATION, AND MITIGATION MEASURES REQUIRED TO AVOID POTENTIALLY SIGNIFICANT EFFECTS (see Environmental Assessment).

**COMPLETED/REVIEWED BY:**

By: Kathleen Browne Title: Project Planner Date: April 13, 2009

Applicant/Project Sponsor: Riverside County Fire Department Date Submitted: March 17, 2009

**ADOPTED BY:** Riverside County Board of Supervisors

Person Verifying Adoption: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

The Mitigated Negative Declaration may be examined, along with documents referenced in the initial study, if any, at:

Riverside County Planning Department 4080 Lemon Street, 9th Floor, Riverside, CA 92501

For additional information, please contact Kathleen Browne at 951-955-4949.

C:\Documents and Settings\kbrowne\Desktop\EA41912\Mitigated Negative Declaration.doc

FOR COUNTY CLERK USE ONLY  
Charge deposit fee case ZEA41912 / CFG05260

**COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE**  
**TRANSPORTATION AND LAND MANAGEMENT AGENCY**  
*George A. Johnson · Agency Director*  
**Planning Department**  
*Ron Goldman · Planning Director*

TO:  Office of Planning and Research (OPR)  
P.O. Box 3044  
Sacramento, CA 95812-3044  
 County of Riverside County Clerk

FROM: Riverside County Planning Department  
 4080 Lemon Street, 9th Floor  
P. O. Box 1409  
Riverside, CA 92502-1409

38686 El Cerrito Road  
Palm Desert, California 92211

**SUBJECT: Filing of Notice of Determination in compliance with Section 21152 of the California Public Resources Code.**

Ordinance Amendment No. 695.4 (Requiring the Abatement of Hazardous Vegetation) / Environmental Assessment No. 42117

*Project Title/Case Numbers*

Kathleen Browne  
*County Contact Person*

(951) 955-4949  
*Phone Number*

*State Clearinghouse Number (if submitted to the State Clearinghouse)*

Riverside County Fire Department  
*Project Applicant*

88 East Rider Street, Perris, CA 92571  
*Address*

The properties affected are unimproved lands throughout the unincorporated areas of Riverside County, including areas designated as State Responsibility Areas, municipalities and other incorporated areas or service districts that contract with the County for fire services.

*Project Location*

The project is an amendment to Riverside County's Ordinance No. 695 (Ordinance Amendment No. 695.4) requiring the abatement of hazardous vegetation to set forth the authority of the Fire Chief of the County of Riverside and to clarify the procedural steps of the abatement process and failure to comply. The project also incorporates current abatement practices through development of a Field Training Manual Decision Making Guidelines to assist Riverside County Fire Department, Hazardous Reduction Office staff when conducting abatement pursuant to Ordinance No. 695.

The Hazardous Reduction Office conducts annual field inspections of unimproved lands throughout the unincorporated area of the County, including areas designated as State Responsibility Areas, municipalities and other incorporated areas or service districts that contract with the County for fire services. The purpose of the annual inspections is to identify hazardous vegetation or combustible material on properties which pose a hazard or potential hazard to the safety of the landowners, residents in the vicinity, users of public highways and to the public in general. As a result of these site specific inspections, property owners of targeted parcels will receive a Notice to Abate which will indicate the method and amount of clearance required for compliance.

The abatement program specifically deals with the removal of rubbish, litter or combustible material of any kind as well as clearance of seasonal and recurrent weeds, stubble, brush, dry leaves, tumbleweeds or other rank growth which is flammable and endangers the public safety by creating a fire hazard and is, therefore, deemed a public nuisance. Clearance of said vegetation or material should be limited as to what is considered necessary to establish sufficient defensible space, 100 feet from structures on adjoining properties pursuant to State law, whereby local residents can evacuate their homes and allow fire equipment to safely access an area and provide fire protection to a community. Both the County's authority to require abatement of a public nuisance as well as to establish administrative abatement proceedings is pursuant to California Government Code Section 25845 and California Health and Safety Code Section 14930.

*Project Description*

This is to advise that the Riverside County Board of Supervisors, as the lead agency, has approved the above-referenced project on \_\_\_\_\_, and has made the following determinations regarding that project:

1. The project WILL NOT have a significant effect on the environment.
2. A Mitigated Negative Declaration was prepared for the project pursuant to the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act. (\$1,993.00 plus \$64.00)
3. Mitigation measures WERE NOT made a condition of the approval of the project.
4. A Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Plan/Program WAS NOT adopted.
5. A statement of Overriding Considerations WAS NOT adopted for the project.

This is to certify that the Mitigated Negative Declaration, with comments, responses, and record of project approval is available to the general public at: Riverside County Planning Department, 4080 Lemon Street, 9th Floor, Riverside, CA 92501.

Kathleen C. Browne  
*Signature*

Urban Regional Planner III  
*Title*

4-21-09  
*Date*

Date Received for Filing and Posting at OPR: 4-22-09

C:\Documents and Settings\kbrowne\Desktop\EA42117\NOD.doc

Please charge deposit fee case#: ZEA42117 ZCFG5472 .

**FOR COUNTY CLERK'S USE ONLY**

# RIVERSIDE COUNTY FIRE DEPARTMENT – HAZARDOUS REDUCTION SECTION

## Field Training Manual Decision Making Guidelines – When to Clear Vegetation

### PURPOSE:

These guidelines are intended to provide **direction** to Fire Department staff regarding when and how to clear vegetation pursuant to Riverside County Ordinance No. 695. The guidelines **are not regulations** and shall be **advisory** to the Fire Department in connection with their implementation of Ordinance No. 695.

### GROWTH ON THE PROPERTY:

The first consideration when determining when to clear vegetation on vacant parcels is does the growth or anticipated growth warrant clearance. Many times our first inspections are completed before there has been complete growth on the property. We must anticipate future growth and unknown conditions, such as late rains when completing our inspections. However, if the vacant parcel(s) has little to no growth or the growth is very sporadic and you do not believe it constitutes a fire hazard then do not require the owner to clear the property. We are not completing inspections for beautification; we are looking for flammable and combustible vegetation that is a fire hazard.

How much clearance does the structure have? This includes clearances and non-flammable vegetation.

### METHODS OF CLEARANCE

In general, there are three different methods of clearance – mowing, disking and handwork.

- |          |  |
|----------|--|
| Mowing   | Cutting the vegetation to within 3-6 inches of the ground, similar to cutting your lawn. May be used on parcels within reserves or habitat sensitive areas. Properties are generally level with mild slopes. |
| Disking  | The turning under of the vegetation into the ground by using a rotary disk attachment pulled behind a tractor. Properties are generally level with mild slopes.  |
| Handwork | Thinning done by hand mechanized equipment such as: weed eaters, chain saws, handsaws, etc., done in areas when terrain does not allow for disking/mowing due to slope, access, rocks, etc.                  |

**RIVERSIDE COUNTY FIRE DEPARTMENT – HAZARDOUS REDUCTION  
SECTION**

**Field Training Manual  
Decision Making Guidelines – When to Clear Vegetation**

**UNIMPROVED PARCELS WITH AN ADJACENT IMPROVED  
PARCEL(S):**

**Amount of clearance**

(Below is an excerpt from Ordinance No. 695.43)

*“The County Fire Chief or his or her designee may require more than or less than a 100 foot width for the protection of public health, safety or welfare or the environment. The determination for appropriate clearance distances shall be made based upon a visual inspection of the parcel and shall consider all factors that place the property or adjoining structure(s) at risk from an approaching fire. These factors shall include local weather conditions, fuel type(s), topography, and the environment where the property or adjoining structure(s) is located.”*

Many of the unimproved properties we inspect have adjacent parcels with structures built on them. Determining the amount of clearance the structure(s) currently has will assist in determining how much clearance will be required on the adjacent vacant parcel(s).

FOR EXAMPLE: If the structured parcel has 50 feet of clearance then the vacant parcel may need to be cleared for an additional 50 feet to equal 100 feet of clearance. Remember what is considered defensible space for the structure(s). You can have ornamental landscape, lawn or thinned/sparse vegetation on the structured parcel, this will be considered clearance (see attached Exhibit A).

*Remember, the primary objective of the abatement program is the protection of lives and property of County residents while at the same time protecting rare and sensitive plant and animal species and the environment.*

**Increasing the amount of clearance**

In most cases 100 feet or less of clearance is sufficient for the circumstances we inspect. However, there are rare circumstances when increasing clearance may be necessary.

# RIVERSIDE COUNTY FIRE DEPARTMENT – HAZARDOUS REDUCTION SECTION

## Field Training Manual Decision Making Guidelines – When to Clear Vegetation

FOR EXAMPLE: If the structured parcel is on a **slope** and has 50 feet of clearance and the vacant parcel(s) is below the structured parcel. Under normal conditions, 50 feet of clearance on the vacant parcel(s) would equal the 100 feet of clearance. Given that a fire will burn faster and more intense burning **upslope**, consider increasing the distance to be cleared higher than 50 feet. Additional clearance should first be applied on the structured parcel if topographic conditions permit (see attached Exhibit B).

The Steepness of the Slope<sup>1</sup>:

1. Directly affects the rate at which fire spreads and its intensity.
2. Fires moving upslope will move faster the steeper the slope.
3. The steeper the slope the more likely there will be rolling material that can ignite fire below the main fire.

*Remember, the purpose of the clearance is to reduce the amount of combustible and flammable vegetation that is a fire hazard. By reducing this type of vegetation, the structured parcel property owner is given a better chance of survival of the structure(s), more time to evacuate the house, allow firefighters a better chance at saving the property safely and, if a fire which starts in the structure(s), prevents spreading the fire to wildland areas adjacent to the property.*

### **Area to be cleared**

Once the appropriate amount of clearance on the vacant parcel(s) is determined, the next step is to determine the area to be cleared. Depending on the size of the vacant parcel(s) relative to the necessary clearing radius around the adjacent structure(s), it may or may not be necessary to clear the entire length of the vacant parcel(s). In accordance with the necessary distance from the structure(s), a half-moon shape to protect the area where the structure(s) is located on the on the adjacent parcel(s) may suffice.

### **Method of clearance within reserves and within the Western Riverside County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (WRMSHCP) Criteria Cells or the Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (CVMSHCP) Conservation Areas**

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<sup>1</sup> Fire Protection Training Manual Section 4320.5, Page 6

# RIVERSIDE COUNTY FIRE DEPARTMENT – HAZARDOUS REDUCTION SECTION

## Field Training Manual Decision Making Guidelines – When to Clear Vegetation

Reserve areas may be posted with signage to indicate that the property is located within a reserve. Additionally, many of the reserve managers have provided the Department with a list of Assessor's Parcel Numbers within their reserves. If the unimproved parcel(s) requiring clearance is located within a reserve, coordinate with reserve managers and underlying reserve land owners to have the parcel(s) abated in a manner which takes into consideration the ecological conditions present on the parcel. Appropriate methods of abatement may include but are not limited to mowing or handwork.

Areas located outside of a reserve but within a WRMSHCP Criteria Cell or CVMSHCP Conservation Area are privately owned and may not be managed for the protection of rare and sensitive plant and animal species. Clearance within Criteria Cells or Conservation Areas should generally consist of mowing grasses and thinning shrubs, chapparal and trees. Handwork or disking may also be necessary where topography, slopes and rocks make mowing impractical. Map information on criteria cells or conservation areas may be found on the Riverside County Transportation Land Management Agency website at <http://www3.tlma.co.riverside.ca.us/pa/rcdis/index.html>.

*Remember, the purpose of this ordinance is to establish a hazardous vegetation abatement program that protects the lives and property of County residents while at the same time protecting rare and sensitive plant and animal species and the environment. If it cannot be clearly determined whether a parcel is located within a reserve, Criteria Cell, or Conservation Area mapping and parcel information should be obtained from the Transportation Land Management Agency website to assist in making a decision prior to any physical action being taken.*

### **UNIMPROVED PARCELS ADJACENT TO ROADWAYS:**

There are multiple factors to consider when determining vegetation abatement next to a roadway. Also, remember the roadway may or may not require clearance on both sides (see attached Exhibit C).

(Below is an excerpt from Ordinance No. 695.4)

# RIVERSIDE COUNTY FIRE DEPARTMENT – HAZARDOUS REDUCTION SECTION

## Field Training Manual Decision Making Guidelines – When to Clear Vegetation

*“The County Fire Chief or his or her designee may require more than or less than a 100 foot width for the protection of public health, safety or welfare or the environment. The determination for appropriate clearance distances shall be based upon a visual inspection of the parcel(s) and shall consider all factors that place the property or adjoining structure(s) at risk from an approaching fire. These factors shall include local weather conditions, fuel type(s), topography, and the environment where the property or adjoining structure(s) is located.”*

As a general rule, 30 feet along both sides of the roadway requires fuel modification. Ordinance No. 695 allows for an increase to 100 feet or more but this should be in rare circumstances. The following considerations will further assist in determining clearance amounts. As with any parcels we are looking to abate, the totality of the circumstances should be taken into account. Road shoulders “count” toward the amount of necessary clearance.

### **Egress potential**

If a roadway is the only means of egress for a house or community, then the property needs to be considered for clearing. However, the totality of the circumstances should be taken into account prior to finalizing your decision of the amount of clearance, such as road conditions, fuel loading and slope. We need to allow for homeowners to leave their homes safely and allow firefighting crews to gain access safely while evacuations are taking place.

*Remember, the purpose of the ordinance is to reduce the amount of combustible and flammable vegetation that is a fire hazard. By reducing this type of vegetation, the property owner is given a better chance of survival of the structure(s), local residents are provided more time to evacuate their homes and firefighters and fire equipment are allowed to safely access an area and provide fire protection to a community.*

### **Road conditions**

*Paved or dirt* – The type of cover on a roadway makes a difference on its ability to move residents out of the area quickly. A paved road is a better egress roadway than an unpaved road. A paved road would require *less* clearance than an unpaved roadway. However, the width of the road and its use must still be taken into consideration.

# RIVERSIDE COUNTY FIRE DEPARTMENT – HAZARDOUS REDUCTION SECTION

## Field Training Manual Decision Making Guidelines – When to Clear Vegetation

*Width of the roadway* – The width of the roadway will assist in determining the appropriate amount of clearance required. The larger the width of the roadway *lessens* the required amount of clearance, if any. Therefore, the reverse is then true. The smaller the width of the roadway *increases* the amount of clearance that may be required. Generally, a paved road is approximately 24 feet in width, with the clearance requirement of 30 feet along both sides. However, again, consider the use of the roadway and whether or not it is an egress.

*Vegetation fuel type* – We do not want to type convert vegetation. Type converting means clearing chapparal and other medium to heavy type vegetation fuels and replacing it with light grass. *A fire will start quicker in light grass and carry into the heavier fuels.* We want to avoid this type of practice. Instead of clearing to bare soil in areas with heavier fuel types, consider selective fuel modifications such as thinning or limbing the fuels so that a fire will not have a consistent fuel loading and we are not allowing a light grass crop to grow in its place. Often, along a roadway, there is existing disturbance of the fuel due to roadway grading or from vehicle traffic. In these instances, type converting fuels are not as great a concern.

*Fire threat* – The intent of Ordinance No. 695 is not to clear 100 feet on either side of every roadway located within the unincorporated area of the County. The intent of the ordinance is to clear the flammable and combustible vegetation in fire hazard areas to slow down the spread of the fire, eliminate the spread of unwanted fires which start adjacent to a roadway, such as a vehicle fire, and to eliminate fires caused by burning objects being thrown from the roadway (see attached Exhibit D). But, first and foremost, it is the intent of Ordinance No. 695 to allow local residents to evacuate from their homes and allow firefighters and fire equipment to safely access an area and provide fire protection to a community.