Los Angeles Unified School District

Office of Environmental Health and Safety

ALBERTO M. CARVALHO
Superintendent of Schools

CARLOS A. TORRES
Director, Environmental Health and Safety

JENNIFER FLORES
Deputy Director, Environmental Health and Safety

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

THIS NOTICE WAS POSTED

ON November 25 2025

UNTIL December 26 2025

REGISTRAR – RECORDER/COUNTY CLERK

2025 264624

FILED
Nov 25 2025

Dean C. Logan, Registrar – Recorder/County Clerk

Electronically signed by CARINA CHEN

To:
County Clerk and Registrar-Recorder
County of Los Angeles
12400 Imperial Highway
Norwalk, CA 90650

From:
LAUSD OEHS
333 S. Beaudry Avenue
21st Floor
Los Angeles, CA 90017

Project Title:

Canyon Creek Outdoor Education Center Site Improvements & Repairs

Project Location – Specific:

The Canyon Creek Outdoor Education Center Outdoor Site Improvements & Repairs Project (Project) will be located on the 81-acre Canyon Creek Outdoor Education Center (OEC), which is located at 46100 Lake Hughes Road in the unincorporated community of Lake Hughes in the County of Los Angeles. The OEC is surrounded by undeveloped Angeles National Forest land and located in a rural area primarily consisting of open space.

Project Location – City:
N/A

Project Location – County:
Unincorporated Los Angeles County

Description of Nature, Purpose, and Beneficiaries of Project:

The Project will provide necessary improvements and repairs to an existing outdoor education center facility that was acquired by the District. As part of the Project, existing structures will be renovated, including repair and replacement of deteriorated roofs, walls, electrical systems, and plumbing systems. Kitchen and dining hall equipment will be repaired and replaced. Outdoor learning amenities, including the pool and athletic fields will be repaired and a new ropes course will be constructed. Site-wide improvements include repairs and upgrades to the irrigation systems and asphalt. Code compliance upgrades required by the Fire Department and Health Department will be made, including repair and replacement of the site-wide fire suppression system and dredging of the pond to increase water capacity. The Board of Education approved of the Project's budget of $39.6 million on May 7, 2024.

The Project will be implemented per all applicable State, federal, and local regulations, such as those provided in the updated Standard Conditions of Approval for District Construction, Upgrade, and Improvements Projects (SCs) as adopted

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by the Board of Education in December 2023.[1] LAUSD's SCs, design guidelines, and best management practices are designed to be incorporated into the Project design in order to avoid or limit potential adverse impacts associated with the District's projects.

The beneficiaries of this Project are users of the Canyon Creek OEC, including students, faculty, staff, families, school supporters, and the community at large who may request access to the facilities and grounds of the OEC pursuant to the Civic Center Act (CA Ed. Code Sections 38130 - 38139).

Name of Public Agency Approving the Project:
Los Angeles Unified School District

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project:
Los Angeles Unified School District

Exempt Status: (check one below)

- ☐ Ministerial [Public Resources Code (PRC) Section 21080(b)(1); CEQA Guidelines Section 15268[2]]:
- ☐ Declared Emergency [PRC Section 21080(b)(3); CEQA Guidelines Section 15269(a)]:
- ☐ Emergency Project [PRC Section 21080(b)(4); CEQA Guidelines Section 15269(b)(c)]:
- ☒ Categorical Exemption (PRC Section 21084; CEQA Guidelines Sections 15300 -15333):
  - *CEQA Guidelines Section 15301 – Existing Facilities*
  - *CEQA Guidelines Section 15303 – New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures*
  - *CEQA Guidelines Section 15304 – Minor Alterations to Land*
- ☐ Statutory Exemption:

Reasons why project is exempt:

Section 15301 Existing Facilities
Class 1 consists of the operation, repair, maintenance, permitting, leasing, licensing, or minor alteration of existing public or private structures, facilities, mechanical equipment, or topographical features, involving negligible or no expansion of use beyond that existing at the time of the lead agency's determination.

The Project will provide necessary improvements and repairs to an existing outdoor education center facility. As part of the Project, existing structures will be renovated, including repair and replacement of deteriorated roofs, walls, electrical systems, and plumbing systems. Kitchen and dining hall equipment will be repaired and replaced. Outdoor learning amenities, including the pool and athletic fields will be repaired and a new ropes course will be constructed. Site-wide improvements include repairs and upgrades to the irrigation systems and asphalt. Code compliance upgrades required by the Fire Department and Health Department will be made, including repair and replacement of the site-wide fire suppression system and dredging of the pond to increase water capacity. No expansion of use beyond what exists will be included as part of the Project. Therefore, the Project constitutes minor alterations to an existing outdoor education center that result in no expansion of use and meets the requirements of CEQA Guidelines Section 15301.

[1] LAUSD OEHS, "Standard Conditions of Approval for District Construction, Upgrade, and Improvements Projects" *http://achieve.lausd.net/ceqa*, Adopted by the Board of Education on December 12, 2023.
[2] CEQA Guidelines can be found at California Code of Regulations Title 14, Chapter 3, Section 15000 - Section 15387.

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Section 15303 New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures
Class 3 consists of construction and location of limited numbers of new, small facilities or structures; installation of small new equipment and facilities in small structures; and the conversion of existing small structures from one use to another where only minor modifications are made to the structure.

The Project will provide necessary improvements and repairs to an existing outdoor education center facility. As part of the Project, existing structures will be renovated, including repair and replacement of deteriorated roofs, walls, electrical systems, and plumbing systems. Kitchen and dining hall equipment will be repaired and replaced. Outdoor learning amenities, including the pool and athletic fields will be repaired and a new ropes course will be constructed. Site-wide improvements include repairs and upgrades to the irrigation systems and asphalt. Code compliance upgrades required by the Fire Department and Health Department will be made, including repair and replacement of the site-wide fire suppression system and dredging of the pond to increase water capacity. The Project would constitute operation, repair, maintenance and minor alteration of an existing facility involving no expansion in enrollment or of the facilities' use. Therefore, the Project satisfies the requirements of CEQA Guidelines Section 15303.

Section 15304 – Minor Alterations to Land
Class 4 consists of minor public or private alterations in the condition of land, water, and/or vegetation which do not involve removal of healthy, mature, scenic trees except for forestry or agricultural purposes.

The Project includes dredging of the existing pond to increase water capacity for its role in storing water for fire suppression as required by the Los Angeles County Fire Department. The dredged material will be relocated onsite. The Project will not remove healthy, mature, or scenic trees. Therefore, the Project fulfills the requirements of CEQA Guidelines Section 15304.

Section 15300.2 – Exceptions
Section 15300.2 of the CEQA Guidelines, Exceptions, provides conditions under which categorical exemptions are inapplicable. Review of the Project indicates that they would not violate any of the exceptions, as described below.

1. *The project would occur in certain specified sensitive environments or locations;*

   The Project site is not designated as a biologically sensitive site or location. While there are open space and sensitive habitat areas within the 81-acre OEC site, including an ephemeral stream, Project-related activities would largely be confined to existing structures and developed portions of the OEC. A biological survey of the pond was conducted to determine if any sensitive species would be impacted by the dredging activities. The survey found that no species of special concern were present in the pond.[3] The California Department of Fish & Wildlife (CDFW) also determined that a Lake or Streambed Alternation Agreement is not necessary for dredging and related activities.[4] As such, the Project will not impact sensitive environments or locations.

2. *Cumulative impacts would be considerable because successive projects of the same type would occur at the same place over time;*

[3]

[4] Gibson, Steve. California Department of Fish & Wildlife. Determination Letter to Edward Paek. "No Lake or Streambed Alteration Agreement Needed, EPIMS-LAN-60478-R5, Canyon Creek Project," July 15, 2025.

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The OEC is an active site and there will likely be ongoing maintenance activities and minor projects at the OEC to keep it operational. As the Project will not result in any lasting adverse impacts once construction of the Project is complete, the Project would not contribute to cumulative impacts when considered with expected successive projects.

3. *There is a reasonable possibility that the activity would have a significant effect on the environment due to unusual circumstances.*

There are no known unusual circumstances that would have a significant effect on the environment. The removal of trees is not anticipated as part of the proposed scope of work. However, should the Project be altered to include the removal of trees, LAUSD's Office of Environmental Health & Safety (OEHS) must be notified immediately. District policy requires consultation with an arborist to determine if the trees are a protected native species. Additionally, written approval from the Director of Beyond the Bell will be required before any trees can be removed. If tree removal is scheduled to occur between February 1 and August 31, a nesting bird survey would be performed prior to removal activities, per Standard Condition of Approval (SC) SC-BIO-3 of the Subsequent Program Environmental Impact Report (SPEIR).[5,6] If sensitive or species of special concern are encountered during the course of construction activities, the Project would comply with SC-BIO-1 to follow protocol required by the United States Fish & Wildlife Service, CDFW, or other regulatory agencies.

The Project may include minor ground-disturbing activities. These activities are not considered unusual circumstances for the classes of projects under which an exemption is claimed. Nevertheless, consideration must be given to the management of pavement removal and excavated soils associated with earthwork activities for the Project. As the Project involves the removal of pavement, soil sampling and testing for characterization is required prior to demolition and removal of the paving materials. If construction or earthmoving activities require import or export of soils and materials, OEHS must be notified to provide oversight to ensure that these activities are conducted in compliance with the requirements of District Specification 01 4524, relevant provisions of South Coast Air Quality Management District Rule 1466, and other applicable environmental agency rules and requirements.[7] Furthermore, as set forth in SC-CUL-6, SC-CUL-7, SC-CUL-9, SC-CUL-10, and SC-GEO-2 of the SPEIR, construction activities must be stopped immediately and OEHS notified upon discovery of subsurface features, such as buried resources (i.e., paleontological resources, archaeological resources), tanks or seepage pits, or stained/odoriferous soils.[8] Lastly, any construction and demolition waste shall be recycled to the maximum extent feasible per SC-USS-1 of the Program EIR.[9] Therefore, the Project will not have a significant effect on the environment due to unusual circumstances.

4. *The project may result in damage to scenic resources, including but not limited to trees, historic buildings, rock outcroppings, or similar resources within a highway officially designated as a state scenic highway;*

[5] LAUSD OEHS, "Standard Conditions of Approval for District Construction, Upgrade, and Improvements Projects," Adopted by the Board of Education on December 12, 2023.
[6] LAUSD OEHS, "Tree Trimming and Removal Procedure", *http://achieve.lausd.net/ceqa*.
[7] LAUSD OEHS, "Section 01 4524 Environmental Import/Export Materials Testing", http://www.laschools.org/documents/file?file_id=219798234&show_all_versions_p=t
[8] LAUSD OEHS, "School Upgrade Program Final Subsequent Environmental Impact Report," *http://www.lausd.org/ceqa*, Adopted by the Board of Education on December 12,2023
[9] *Ibid.*

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The closest designated state scenic highway to the Project site is State Route 2 (SR 2), which is located approximately 36 miles southeast of Canyon Creek OEC.[10] The Project will not be visible from SR 2. Therefore, the Project would not result in damage to scenic resources or similar resources within a highway officially designated as a State scenic highway.

5. *The project is located on a site which is included on any list compiled pursuant to Section 65962.5 of the Government Code; or*

The Project is not located on a site included on any list compiled pursuant to Section 65962.5 of the Government Code.[11] Therefore, the Project will have no impacts related to being located on a hazardous waste site.

6. *The project may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource.*

Canyon Creek OEC is over 45 years old, meeting LAUSD's threshold for review as a potential historic resource and requiring evaluation for historic eligibility. However, LAUSD 's Historic Resource Specialist determined that Canyon Creek OEC is ineligible as a historic resource.[12] Prior to acquisition by LAUSD, the OEC site was originally developed and used as a retreat center for a Baptist church. The architect is not notable and the original property owners do not appear to be associated with historical events or personages significant to national, state, or local history. Therefore, the Project will not cause substantial adverse change in the significance of a historic resource.

Prepared By:

Edward Paek
CEQA Senior Project Manager/Contract Professional

Phone and Email:

(213) 241-4676
edward.paek@LAUSD.net

Signed by:

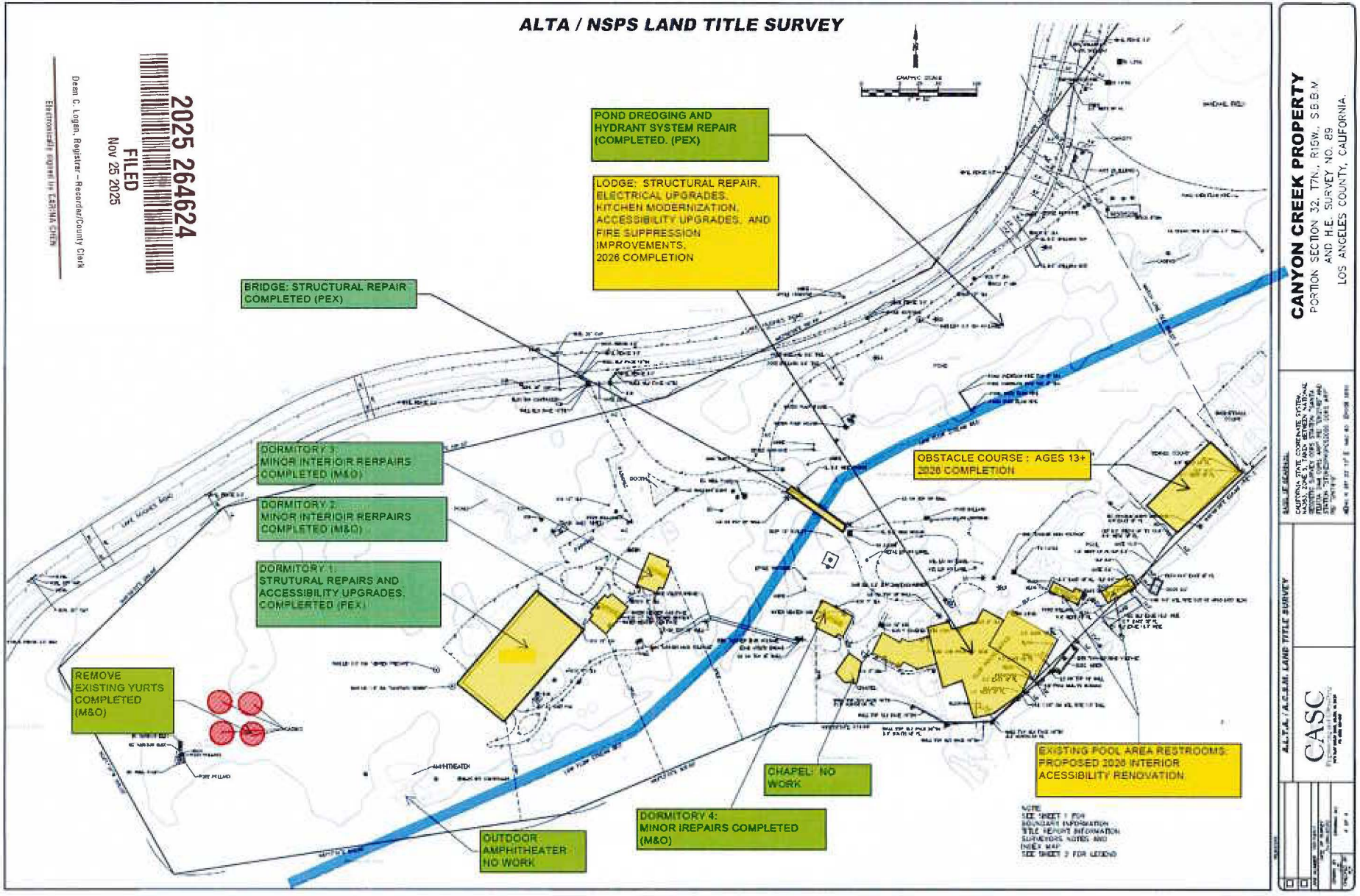
Carlos A. Torres
CEQA Officer of the Los Angeles Unified School District

Date:

11/14/2025

[10] California Department of Transportation, State Scenic Highway Map, https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/47e2009986264718a5a13a2c81382774, accessed October 2025.
[11] https://calepa.ca.gov/sitecleanup/corteselist/, accessed October 2025.
[12] LAUSD OEHS. 2025. LAUSD Historic Resource Inventory Database.

Figure 1. Site Plan



State of California—Department of Fish and Wildlife

2025 ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENT FILING FEE CASH RECEIPT

DFW 753.5a (REV. 01/01/25) Previously DFG 753.5a

RECEIPT Number:
19 — 11/25/2025 — 202511250510006

STATE CLEARING HOUSE # *(If applicable)*

SEE INSTRUCTIONS ON REVERSE. TYPE OR PRINT CLEARLY.

LEAD AGENCY	LEAD AGENCY EMAIL	DATE
LOS ANGELES UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT		11/25/2025

COUNTY/STATE AGENCY OF FILING	DOCUMENT NUMBER
LA	2025264624

PROJECT TITLE

CANYON CREEK OUTDOOR EDUCATION CENTER SITE IMPROVEMENTS & REPAIRS

PROJECT APPLICANT NAME	PROJECT APPLICANT EMAIL	PHONE NUMBER
CARLOS TORRES		(213)241-4676

PROJECT APPLICANT ADDRESS	CITY	STATE	ZIP CODE
333 S. BEAUDRY AVE 21ST FLR.	LA	CA	90017

PROJECT APPLICANT *(Check appropriate box):*

☐ Local Public Agency ☑ School District ☐ Other Special District ☐ State Agency ☐ Private Entity

CHECK APPLICABLE FEES:

☐	Environmental Impact Report (EIR)	$4,123.50	$ 0.00
☐	Mitigated/Negative Declaration (MND)(ND)	$2,968.75	$ 0.00
☐	Certified Regulatory Program (CRP) document - payment due directly to CDFW	$1,401.75	$ 0.00
☑	Exempt from fee		
	☑ Notice of Exemption (attach)		
	☐ CDFW No Effect Determination (attach)		
☐	Fee previously paid (attach previously issued cash receipt copy)		
☐	Water Right Application or Petition Fee (State Water Resources Control Board only)	$850.00	$ 0.00
☑	County documentary handling fee		$ 75.00
☐	Other		$ 0.00

PAYMENT METHOD:

☐ Cash ☐ Credit ☑ Check ☐ Other

TOTAL RECEIVED $ 75.00

SIGNATURE	AGENCY OF FILING PRINTED NAME AND TITLE
X	ITC

ORIGINAL - PROJECT APPLICANT COPY - CDFW/ASB COPY - LEAD AGENCY COPY - COUNTY CLERK DFW 753.5a (Rev. 01/01/2025)