

ORDINANCE NO. 5437

**AN ORDINANCE OF THE COUNTY OF MONTEREY, STATE OF CALIFORNIA,
DESIGNATING FIRE HAZARD SEVERITY ZONES**

County Counsel Summary

The Office of the State Fire Marshal ("OSFM") has released updated 2025 Fire Hazard Severity Zone maps for Local Responsibility Areas across the state. California Government Code section 51178 requires the State Fire Marshal to identify areas in the state as moderate, high and very high severity fire zones based on consistent statewide criteria. This ordinance designates the Fire Hazard Severity Zones for unincorporated Monterey County as recommended by the Office of the State Fire Marshal.

The Board of Supervisors of the County of Monterey ordains as follows:

SECTION 1. Findings and Declarations:

- A. Pursuant to Article XI of the California Constitution, the County of Monterey ("County") may adopt and enforce ordinances and regulations to protect and promote the public health, safety, and welfare of its citizens.
- B. California Government Code section 51178 requires the State Fire Marshal to identify areas in the state as moderate, high, and very high fire hazard severity zones based on consistent statewide criteria and based on the severity of fire hazard that is expected to prevail in those areas.
- C. The Office of the State Fire Marshal has released updated 2025 Fire Hazard Severity Zone maps for Local Responsibility Areas across the state, including recommendations for unincorporated Monterey County.
- D. Government Code sections 51178.5 and 51179 require that local agencies make fire hazard severity zones available for public review and comment in a format understandable and accessible to the general public, including but not limited to maps, and that a local agency by ordinance designate fire severity zones in its jurisdiction.
- E. The maps are currently posted on the County website and social media for public view and comment, and specifically are located at:
<https://www.countyofmonterey.gov/government/departments-a-h/housing-community-development/planning-services/current-planning/general-info/local-responsibility-areas-lra-2025>
- F. Under the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA"), this ordinance is not considered a "Project" under CEQA because it does not have the potential for resulting in either a direct physical change in the environment, or a reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment (CEQA Guidelines sections 15060(c)(2) and 15060(c)(3)).

SECTION 2. The County of Monterey hereby designates and adopts the Fire Hazard Severity Zones as recommended by the State Fire Marshal pursuant to Government Code section 51178.

SECTION 3. The map approved by the County of Monterey, for "Monterey County Unincorporated LRA", entitled "Local Responsibility Area Fire Hazard Severity Zones", is attached as **Exhibit A** to this ordinance and is incorporated herein by reference.

SECTION 4. SEVERABILITY. If any section, subsection, sentence, clause, or phrase of this ordinance is for any reason held to be invalid, such decision shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions of this ordinance. The Board of Supervisors hereby declares that it would have passed this ordinance and each section, subsection, sentence, clause and phrase thereof, irrespective of the fact that any one or more sections, subsections, sentences, clauses, or phrases be declared invalid.

SECTION 5. EFFECTIVE DATE. This ordinance shall become effective on the thirty-first day following its adoption by the County, provided that the Board of Forestry and Fire Protection has reviewed it and found it to be in substantial conformance with State requirements.

PASSED AND ADOPTED on this 19th day of August 2025 by the following vote:

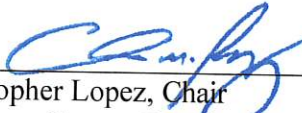
AYES Supervisors Church, Lopez, Root Askew, and Daniels

NOES None

ABSENT None

ASTAIN Supervisor Alejo

Motion Passed 4 to 0



Christopher Lopez, Chair
Monterey County Board of Supervisors

ATTEST:
VALERIE RALPH
Clerk of the Board

By: 
Deputy

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

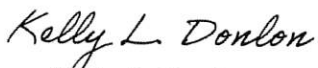
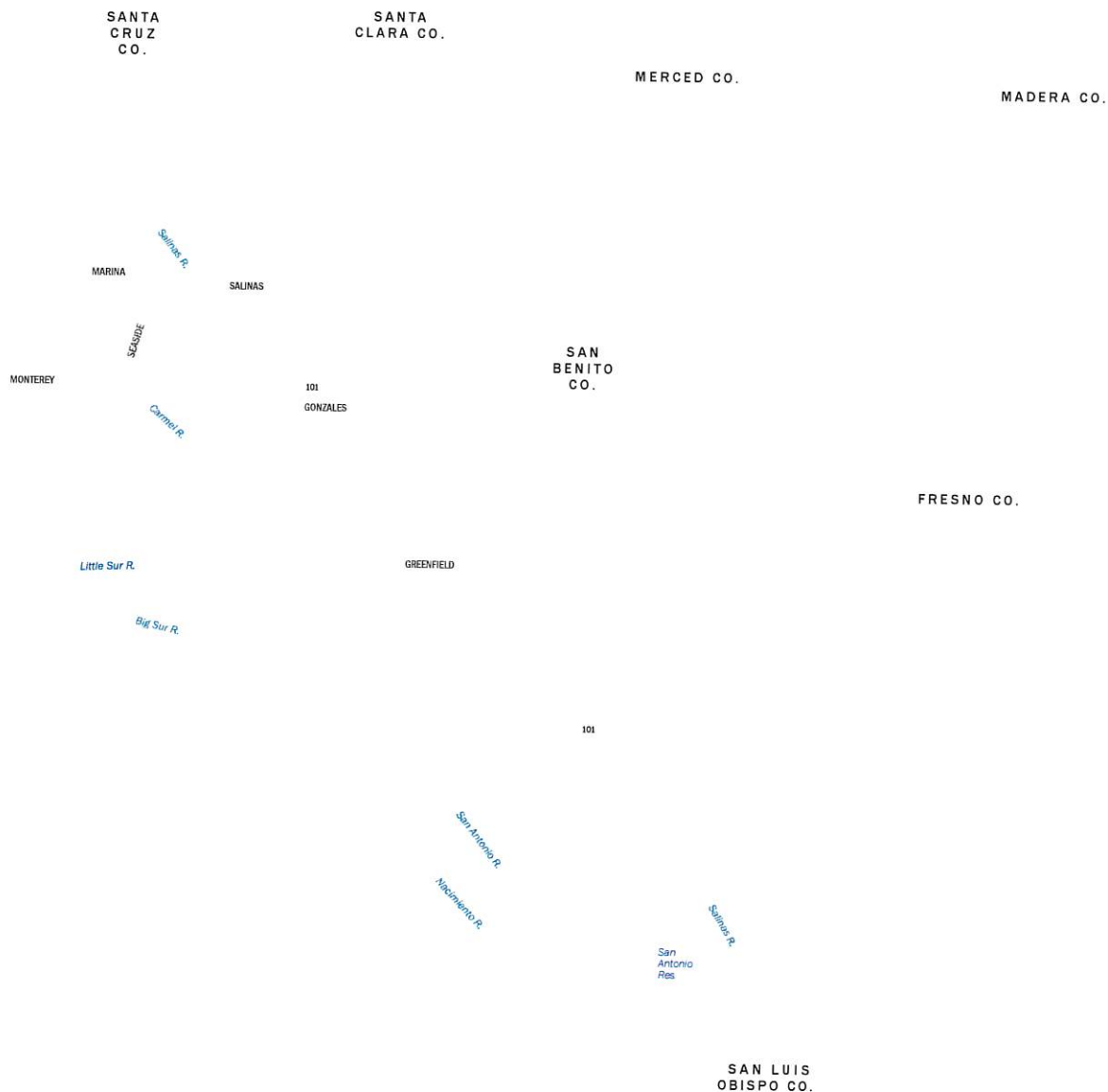
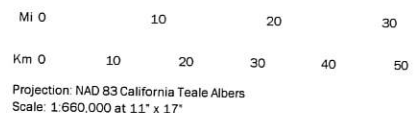

Kelly L. Donlon
Chief Assistant County Counsel

Exhibit A



Fire Hazard Severity Zones (FHSZ) In Local Responsibility Area (LRA), as Identified by the State Fire Marshal

Very High High Moderate



Fire Hazard Severity Zones In State Responsibility Area (SRA), Effective April 1, 2024

Very High High Moderate

Incorporated City Waterbody
Unzoned LRA Federal Responsibility Area (FRA)

Government Code section 51178 requires the State Fire Marshal to identify areas in the state as moderate, high, and very high fire hazard severity zones based on consistent

statewide criteria and based on the severity of fire hazard that is expected to prevail in those areas. Moderate, high, and very high fire hazard severity zones shall be based on fuel loading, slope, fire weather,

and other relevant factors including areas where winds have been identified by the Office of the State Fire Marshal as a major cause of wildfire spread.



The State of California and the Department of Forestry and Fire Protection make no representations or warranties regarding the accuracy of data or maps. Neither the State nor the Department shall be liable under any circumstances for any direct, special, incidental, or consequential damages with respect to any claim by any user or third party on account of, or arising from, the use of data or maps.

Gavin Newsom, Governor, State of California
Wade Crowfoot, Secretary for Natural Resources, CA Natural Resources Agency
Joe Tyler, Director/Fire Chief, CA Department of Forestry and Fire Protection
Daniel Berlant, State Fire Marshal, CA Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

Data Sources:
CAL FIRE Fire Hazard Severity Zones (FHSZ5RA23_3, FHSZLRA_25_1)
CAL FIRE State Responsibility Areas (SRA25_1)
City and County boundaries as of 10/22/24 (CA Board of Equalization)

