



## Administrative Permit

Legistar File Number: AP 26-034

April 01, 2026

**Introduced:** 3/27/2026

**Current Status:** Agenda Ready

**Version:** 1

**Matter Type:** Administrative Permit

### **PLN250294 - ESALEN INSTITUTE**

Administrative hearing to consider action on the installation of a test well within 750 feet of a known archaeological resource.

**Project Location:** 54105 Highway 1, Big Sur, CA 93920

**Proposed CEQA action:** Find the project Categorical Exempt pursuant to CEQA Guidelines section 15303, and there are no exceptions pursuant to Section 15300.2

### RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the County of Monterey Chief of Planning adopt a resolution to:

1. Find the project exempt from CEQA pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15303, new construction, and there are no exceptions pursuant to Section 15300.2; and
2. Approve a Coastal Administrative Permit to allow construction of a test well for irrigation and Coastal Administrative Permit to allow development within 750 feet of a known archaeological resource.

The attached draft resolution includes findings and evidence for consideration (**Exhibit A.1**). Staff recommends approval subject to 6 conditions of approval.

### PROJECT INFORMATION

**Agent:** Laura Lawrence

**Property Owner:** Esalen Institute

**APN:** 421-011-018-000

**Parcel Size:** 15.67 acres

**Zoning:** Watershed Scenic Conservation with a maximum gross density of forty (40) acres per unit and a Design Control Overlay in the Coastal Zone or "WSC/40-D(CZ)"

**Plan Area:** Big Sur Land Use Plan

**Flagged and Staked:** No

**Project Planner:** Jade Mason, Assistant Planner, (831) 755-3759, masonj@countyofmonterey.gov

### SUMMARY

Staff is recommending approval of a Coastal Administrative Permit and subject to the findings and evidence in the attached Resolution (see **Exhibit A**), and subject to the conditions of approval attached to the Resolution. Please read these carefully and contact the planner if you have any questions. Unless otherwise noted in the conditions, the applicant will be required to satisfy all permit conditions prior to the issuance of a building/grading permits and/or commencement of the approved use.

On April 1, 2026, an administrative decision will be made. A public notice has been distributed for this project. The deadline for submittal of written comments in opposition to the project, its findings, or conditions, based on a substantive issue, is 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, March 31, 2026. The permit will be administratively approved the following day if we do not receive any written comments by the deadline. You will receive a copy of your approved permit in the mail. We will notify you as soon as possible in the event that we receive correspondence in opposition to your project or if the application is referred to a public hearing.

Note: This project will be referred to the County of Monterey County Zoning Administrator if a public hearing is necessary. The decision on this project is appealable to the Planning Commission/Board of Supervisors and the California Coastal Commission.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT

The following agencies have reviewed the project, have comments, and/or have recommended conditions:

HCD-Engineering Services  
Environmental Health Bureau  
HCD-Environmental Services  
Big Sur Volunteer Fire Brigade

Prepared by: Jade Mason, Assistant Planner

Reviewed and Approved by: Jacquelyn M. Nickerson, Principal Planner

The following attachments are on file with HCD:

Exhibit A - Draft Resolution including:

- Recommended Conditions of Approval
- Site Plans

Exhibit B - Vicinity Map

cc: Front Counter Copy; Big Sur Volunteer Fire Brigade; HCD-Environmental Services; HCD-Engineering Services; Environmental Health Bureau; Jade Mason, Assistant Planner; Jacquelyn M. Nickerson, Principal Planner; Esalen Institute, Property Owners; Laura Lawrence Director); Lozeau Drury LLP; Christina McGinnis, Keep Big Sur Wild; Planning File PLN250294.