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C-1024

September 3, 2025

San Elijo Hills I HOA
C/o Sandy Punch
630 San Mario Drive
Solana Beach, CA 92075

Re: Large *Eucalyptus* Tree Evaluation - Area A

Dear Ms. Punch,

Summary

On August 26, 2025, I conducted an on-site visit to evaluate the large *Eucalyptus* trees in the western portion of the association, designated as Area A (see enclosed site map). My primary task was to assess the condition of these trees and provide recommendations for appropriate action, such as Pruning, Removal, or determining that No Action is currently recommended. This assessment was based on a walk-by inspection of each tree. Accompanying me during this site walk were yourself, Sharilyn (representing the association), Mario Martinez (landscape contractor), and Albert (tree care contractor). Together, we completed a systematic review and evaluation of the trees in Area A.

In addition to the *Eucalyptus* trees in Area A, we also inspected one specific tree-related concern located in Area B, on the east side of the association. The Area B issue was brought to my attention during the walk, and we collectively assessed its status and discussed potential recommendations. The findings and recommended actions for both Area A (prune 17 trees and remove 4 trees) and Area B (remove one tree) are included in this report for your review and further action.

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NOTE: This report, specifically the color-coded site map, is best viewed in color. Any copies in black and white may make some details difficult to understand. Atlas accepts no responsibility for misunderstandings due to the reading of a black and white copy of this report.

Assessment Process

This assessment is part of an ongoing annual program in which approximately one-half of the association's property is reviewed every other year. To organize the effort, the association has been divided into two sections: Area A, which covers the west side of the property, and Area B, which covers the east side (refer to the site map for the boundary of each area). Each year, one of these areas is inspected, ensuring that the entire association is systematically reviewed over a two-year cycle.

I conducted a ground-level assessment of all trees in the designated area using a walk-by visual evaluation. No individual tree received a detailed or invasive inspection, and my assessment was based solely on observable elements and conditions present at the time of the site visit. The evaluation considered the general health, structure, species, and location of each tree, as well as the potential targets or risk factors in the immediate area.

I also considered the maintenance needs of the trees over the next 24 months, making recommendations based on visible indicators such as overall vitality, deadwood, or structural concerns. However, it is important to note that no specialized tools or advanced diagnostic techniques were used during this evaluation. This means that methods such as aerial or climbing inspections, wood-resistance drilling, root collar excavation, load testing, or tissue analysis were not employed. My findings reflect the current state of the trees as of my fieldwork, completed on August 26, 2025, and should be interpreted within the limitations of this visual, non-invasive assessment.

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Limitations of Visual Tree Assessment

It's important to recognize that trees, like all living organisms, can have internal defects or hidden imperfections that may not be immediately visible or detectable during a visual inspection. These hidden weaknesses may compromise the structural integrity of a tree without showing clear external signs. Therefore, while my assessment is based on observable conditions, it is always possible that unseen issues could exist within any tree at any given time.

When a tree shows an observable condition that raises a significant concern regarding risk, stability, or overall health - and there is no reasonable mitigation available, I have recommended its removal. Common reasons for removal include trees that are dead, in significant decline, leaning in a hazardous manner, or exhibiting poor structural integrity, especially when these trees have become more exposed due to environmental changes like other nearby tree removals or construction. Trees that present an elevated risk to people, property, or infrastructure are prioritized in these recommendations, as maintaining public safety and mitigating potential hazards is paramount.

Please note that this assessment is not a guarantee against tree failure, and does recognize that additional tree work, above and beyond the work recommended in this plan, may be needed on these Association trees throughout the next 24 months due to unusual weather events, owner requests, special projects, etc.

Site Map

The enclosed map provides approximate property lines, addresses, lot numbers, and identifies all the large *Eucalyptus* trees currently in Area A. There is also one pine tree on the map. This year two silk oak trees were added to the map by request. Trees are marked with circles and color-coded to indicate my recommendations: green signifies a pruning recommendation, red indicates a removal recommendation, and unshaded circles reflect that no action is recommended at this time. The site map also includes six separate call-outs that provide additional details about some of the trees

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highlighted in the pruning color code. Please refer to the enclosed Area A site map for further details and specific tree locations.

If a tree has been included on the map, and listed for Pruning or "No Action", it is expected that such a tree will be receiving bi-annual review and attention moving forward. If a tree is listed for removal, it is expected it will be removed and will not be part of any future assessment process.

In Area A, there are approximately 178 large eucalyptus trees. I have recommended 17 for pruning and four (4) for removal. The pruning specification is for Crown thinning by approximately 25% (especially the heavy ends on many of the trees). I have also recommended Crown reduction on certain trees. If labeled for Selective Reduction, that is to mean that only a portion of the overall crown is to be reduced (this was reviewed with the contractor during the site walk). The removals should be cut to a low stump (near ground level).

In Area B, you asked me to assess one tree. I recommend removing the dead *Eucalyptus* at the East Entrance, near the corner of Highland and San Mario. Please note that this tree does not appear on the enclosed site map.

Pruning Directive

Crown thinning includes the removal of dead, dying, diseased, crowded, weakly attached, and low-vigor branches and watersprouts from a tree crown as well as the selective removal of live branches to increase light penetration and air movement into the crown. This selective live branch removal should include branches *2 inches in diameter or less.* It is preferred that many smaller branches be removed during a thinning process than fewer larger branches. Increased light and air stimulates and maintains interior foliage, which in turn improves branch taper and strength. Thinning reduces the wind sail effect of the crown and the weight of heavy limbs. In general, the trees should be pruned in such a way as to maintain their natural structure and shape. Pruning should be performed to

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enhance the safety, health, and beauty of the trees and should comply with sound arboricultural practices for the particular species of tree(s) being pruned.

Crown reduction may be specified to reduce branch length, tree canopy height, and/or tree canopy spread. Crown reduction is a pruning practice used to reduce the overall size and height of a tree's canopy while maintaining its natural form and structural integrity. Unlike topping, which makes indiscriminate cuts and can severely damage a tree, crown reduction involves selective pruning back to healthy lateral branches that are large enough to assume the role of the removed portion. This technique is typically recommended when a tree has grown too large/tall for its space, is interfering with structures or utilities, or when reducing weight is needed to lessen the risk of branch or trunk failure. Proper crown reduction helps preserve the tree's health, stability, and appearance, while minimizing stress and avoiding excessive regrowth of weak shoots. If reduction is specified, details will be included on the color-coded map page. It is important to understand that proper crown reduction is not the same as topping.

Disclaimer

Arborists are tree specialists who use their education, knowledge, training and experience to examine trees, recommend measures to enhance the beauty and health of trees, and attempt to reduce the risk of living near trees. Clients may choose to accept or disregard the recommendations of the arborist or seek additional advice.

Arborists cannot detect every condition that could possibly lead to the structural failure of a tree. Trees are living organisms that can fail in ways we do not fully understand. Conditions are often hidden within trees and below ground. Arborists cannot guarantee that a tree will be healthy or safe under all circumstances, or for a specified period of time. Likewise, remedial treatments, like any medicine, cannot be guaranteed.

Treatment, pruning, and removal of trees may involve considerations beyond the scope of the arborist's services such as property boundaries, property ownership, site lines, disputes between

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neighbors, landlord-tenant matters, etc. Arborists cannot take such issues into account unless complete and accurate information is given to the arborist. The person hiring the arborist accepts responsibility for authorizing and/or accomplishing the recommended treatment or remedial measures once explained and acknowledges that successful results can never be guaranteed.

Trees can be managed, but they cannot be controlled. To live near trees is to accept some degree of risk. The only way to eliminate all risks from trees is to eliminate all trees.

If you should have any questions, please feel free to contact me anytime.

Sincerely,

Ron Matranga

ASCA RCA #488
Registered Consulting Arborist®
ISA Board-Certified Master Arborist
ISA Tree Risk Assessment Qualified
ASCA Tree and Plant Appraisal Qualified

Enclosure: Color-coded Site Map

San Elijo Hills I - Area A

Large / Slope Eucalyptus Locations; 2025 Assessment (August)

09/01/2025

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LEGEND

E - Eucalyptus [178]
P - Pine [1]
So - Silk Oak [2]

○ - No Work [160]
● - Crown Thin [17]
● - Removal [4]