



Date: December 3, 2025

To: San Luis Obispo Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO)
1042 Pacific St. #A
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401

RE: Letter of Support for the Upper Salinas – Las Tablas Resource Conservation District (USLTRCD)

Dear Commissioners,

USLTRCD has played a vital role in supporting strategic prioritization, landscape level planning, permitting, grant preparation, and forest treatment implementation surrounding the community of Cambria and protecting one of three native Monterey Pine forest stands in California now, and in the future. This important collaboration exists between San Luis Obispo Community Firesafe Council, CAL FIRE, ARC Forestry, Ascent Environmental, SWCA Environmental Consultants, and Vegetation Management Partners (VMP). Without USLTRCD, the work creating a healthier Monterey Pine Forest and a wildfire defense line around the community of Cambria could not have happened.

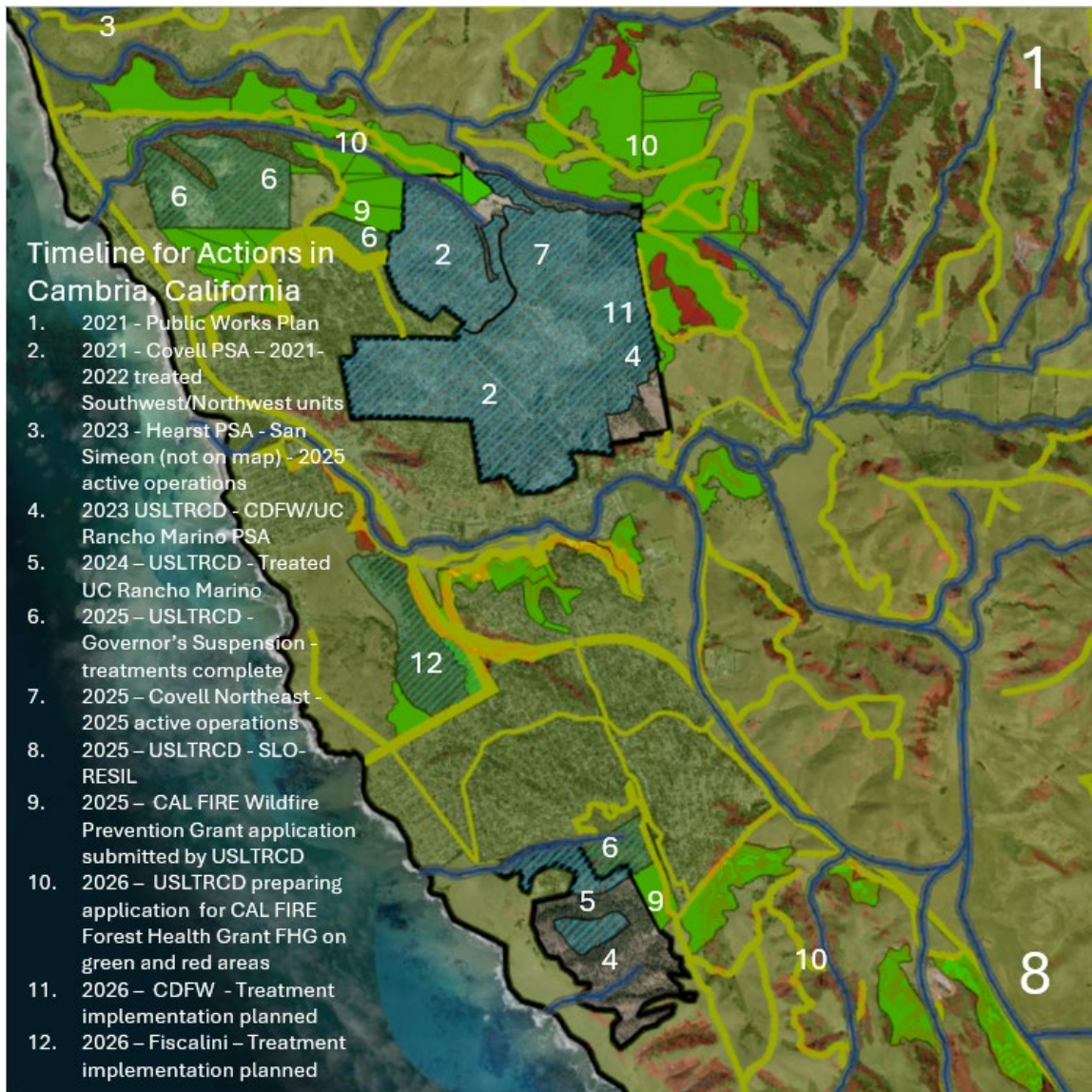


Figure 1. Timeline for actions in Cambria, California



1. **2021 – Public Works Plan** – approval of the USLTRCD Coastal Commission Public Works Plan (PWP) in 2021 allowing the use of the California Vegetation Treatment Programmatic Environmental Impact Report as a vehicle to conduct wildfire resilience treatments in the Coastal Zone (3rd approved in the state). The PWP covers approximately 88,000 acres.
2. **2021 – Covell PSA – 2021- 2022 – treated southwest and northwest units** – a California Vegetation Treatment Program (CalVTP) Project Specific Analysis (PSA) was approved through the USLTRCD PWP and over 300 acres of the Covell project area was treated next to the most at-risk locations in Cambria.
3. **2023 – Hearst PSA – San Simeon (not on map) – 2025 active operations** – a CalVTP PSA was approved through the USLTRCD PWP and over half of an approximately 350-acre treatment unit above the town of San Simeon has been treated.
4. **2023 CDFW/UC Rancho Marino PSA** - a CalVTP PSA was approved through the USLTRCD PWP.
5. **2024 – USLTRCD treated UC Rancho Marino** – treatments are almost complete across approximately 50 acres on UC Ranch Marino.
6. **2025 – Governor’s Suspension - treatments complete** – four Governor’s Suspension were submitted by USLTRCD in 2025 and all four project areas have initial treatments completed across over 100 acres.
7. **2025 – Covell Northeast - 2025 active operations** – treatments have begun in the northeast side of the Covell Ranch through the USLTRCD PWP and the Covell PSA.
8. **2025 – USLTRCD SLO-RESIL** – North Coastal San Luis Obispo County Regional Strategy for Improving Landscapes (SLO-RESIL) - approval of an 88,000-acre PSA where USLTRCD is the lead agency and permitted 88,000 acres for strategic and prioritized treatments to be considered for funding efforts. Also permitted under the PWP through the Coastal Commission. ***No other permitted CalVTP PSA document of this size currently exists in the California Coastal Zone for Wildfire Resilience.***
9. **2025 – CAL FIRE Wildfire Prevention Grant application submitted by USLTRCD** – USLTRCD submitted a Wildfire Prevention Grant to increase connectivity with treatments around critical areas of Cambria.
10. **2026 – USLTRCD preparing application for CAL FIRE Forest Health Grant FHG on green and red areas** – USLTRCD collaboratively identified over 1000 acres of treatment area where grants can be applied for that are “shovel ready”.
11. **2026 CDFW - Treatment implementation planned** – a series of treatments are planned for implementation under a CAL FIRE Forest Health Grant on California Department of Fish and Wildlife lands in critical areas surrounding Cambria in 2026.
12. **2026 – Fiscalini – Treatment implementation planned** - a series of treatments are planned for implementation under a CAL FIRE Forest Health Grant on the Fiscalini Ranch owned by the Cambria Community Services District lands in critical areas surrounding Cambria in 2026.



- Throughout our partnership, USLTRCD has consistently demonstrated their technical expertise, organizational capacity, and community-focused approach needed to deliver effective land-management and hazard-mitigation projects.
- Their staff understand local forest conditions and landowner needs.
- They have built strong partnerships with agencies, nonprofits, and private landowners, essential for landscape-scale wildfire resilience.
- USLTRCD has been central to advancing fuel-reduction work, habitat and watershed restoration, vegetation-management planning, and community wildfire-protection efforts. Their ability to administer the public works plan and streamline compliance through the PWP with their proven ability to obtain grants and successfully execute them makes them an indispensable regional partner.

For these reasons, **I strongly encourage LAFCO to recognize and support USLTRCD's demonstrated capacity to implement critical, community-safety-focused work.** Their continued leadership is vital to protecting the region's landscapes and communities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in red ink that reads "Steve R. Auten". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Steve R. Auten
Owner, RPF #2724
Cell (831) 247-6697