



# MAGTFTC-MCAGCC 29 Palms

## Environmental Standard Operating Procedure



1 October 2025

### Vegetation Maintenance and Removal (VMR)

#### Application and Purpose

These procedures apply to any individual trimming or removing trees, shrubs, nonturf grasses, and stumps (collectively referred to as “vegetation”), whether the vegetation is living, downed, or dead, aboard the Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center.

This document provides environmental protection procedures for vegetation maintenance and stump removal.

Personnel trimming or removing vegetation will confirm that their actions do not negatively impact natural resources without written authorization.

#### Operational Controls

The following controls apply:

- Before starting work, confirm compliance with the Environmental Standard Operating Procedure (ESOP) for National Environmental Policy Act documentation.
- Trim or remove vegetation.
  - Cutting or harvesting any vegetation in the range training areas is prohibited at all times unless given specific and prior written authorization from Environmental Affairs (EA).
  - Trimming or removing vegetation from Mainside (1 February through 30 September) requires a nest check by authorized personnel (refer to the item “Personnel authorized to conduct nest checks are as follows”) before the start of work.
  - The person performing the nest check will provide a completed record of nest check to both the requesting organization and to EA Conservation. This person will include documentation detailing that the proposed work is clear and ready to proceed.
  - Trimming or removing vegetation will occur within 48 hours after the nest check. If work lasts longer than 2 weeks, a second nest check of the remaining work area will be performed and reported by authorized personnel (refer to the item “Personnel authorized to conduct nest checks are as follows”).
  - Trimming or removing vegetation in Mainside (1 October through 31 January) does not require a nest check.
  - Tree, shrub, and bush trimmings must be removed and disposed within 48 hours after trimming.
  - Additional requirements for stump removal include the following:

- Contact the Public Works Division to obtain a dig permit, as applicable. Confirm permit requirements are met.
- Confirm compliance with reference (b), the Soil Excavation and Grading ESOP.
- Personnel authorized to conduct nest checks are as follows:
  - Natural resources staff within EA are authorized to conduct nest checks. Contact EA Conservation at least 2 business days before starting work to arrange for EA personnel to perform these checks.
  - EA encourages organizations with regular vegetation maintenance duties to obtain authorization for their personnel to conduct nest checks. Personnel eligible to receive authorization will have operational control over the work being performed and at least 3 years of vegetation maintenance experience (such as being a groundskeeping crew lead). Contact EA Conservation to obtain this authorization.
- Contact EA Conservation if birds, bird parts, nests, or eggs are found in any plant material that has been removed manually or naturally. Bird materials are protected by law and may be handled only by authorized personnel.
- Dispose green waste in accordance with the most current procedures for solid waste collection and transportation (refer to the Solid Waste Collection and Transportation ESOP).

Contact EA Conservation regarding specific situations or other concerns not addressed by this procedure.

## **Training Requirements**

Affected personnel must be trained in this document and the following:

- General Environmental Awareness training
- Globally Harmonized System training
- Designated Operator training (as assigned)

## **Recordkeeping**

The following records must be maintained for 3 years:

- The person conducting the nest check will, within 1 week of the nest check, provide a copy of the completed record of nest check to EA Conservation, who will maintain that record.
- Vegetation maintenance crews will maintain, at the worksite, a copy of the completed record of nest check while conducting any work covered by this ESOP.
- EA Conservation will maintain records of any personnel, other than natural resources staff, that have been authorized to conduct nest checks.

## **Emergency Preparedness and Response Procedures**

Refer to Combat Center Order (CCO) 5090.1J.

## **Inspection and Corrective Action**

The Environmental Compliance Coordinator (ECC) will confirm unit adherence to this ESOP. The ECC will confirm that unit personnel are trained in this ESOP and maintain appropriate documentation in accordance with this ESOP. If this ESOP contains an enclosed inspection checklist, designated personnel will conduct the inspections using this ESOP as guidance and document the inspections via the enclosed checklist. If deficiencies are discovered during an inspection, the ECC will ensure immediate corrective action is taken and that all deficiencies and corrective actions are recorded on the enclosed checklist.

## **References**

- (a) National Environmental Policy Act documentation ESOP
- (b) Soil Excavation and Grading ESOP
- (c) Solid Waste Collection and Transportation ESOP
- (d) CCO 5090.1J, Environmental Protection

## **Use and Version Control**

ESOPs are used to augment instructions contained in official orders and directives, and, where necessary, provide for sufficient control of the installation's significant practices. Environmental Affairs maintains the authoritative, current version of this and other ESOPs on the installation's website:

<https://www.29palms.marines.mil/Staff-Offices/G-4-Installation-Support-Directorate/Environmental-Affairs/#environmental-sops>.



# Vegetation Maintenance and Removal (VMR)

## Record of Nest Check

**Name of Authorized Person Checking:**

**Date Checked:**

**Location of Nest Check:**

(Provide location information and describe the vegetation checked sufficiently that work crews can understand what vegetation is cleared for work.)

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**The nest check determined: (choose one)**

☐ No nests present; work may proceed.

☐ One or more nests present.

**If nests were present: (choose one)**

☐ EA Conservation destroyed the inactive nest. Work may proceed.

☐ EA Conservation removed the active nest. Work may proceed.

☐ EA Conservation flagged and left the active nest in place. Work may not disturb the nest but otherwise may proceed.

I personally performed the nest check described above and certify these statements are accurate to the best of my knowledge.

**Signed:**