

## ATTACHMENT 2: CEQA – NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

**TO:** Santa Barbara County Clerk of the Board of Supervisors

**FROM:** Joseph Dargel, Planning & Development

The project or activity identified below is determined to be exempt from further environmental review requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) of 1970, as defined in the State and County Guidelines for the implementation of CEQA.

**APN:** 147-010-045

**Case No.:** 16CUP-00000-00005

**Location:** Located along State Route 166, approximately nine miles west of the community of New Cuyama, between Cottonwood Canyon Road and Schoolhouse Canyon Road

**Project Title:** North Fork Ranch Frost Ponds Project

**Project Applicant:**

Matt Turrentine – Brodiaea, Inc.  
P.O. Box 6565  
Santa Maria, CA 93455  
(805) 312-1828

**Project Description:**

The North Fork Ranch Frost Pond project is a request to construct and operate three frost ponds (reservoirs) that will store water to be used for frost protection at the North Fork Ranch Vineyards. The project also includes the construction of new underground pipelines that will extend between each of the proposed reservoirs and the existing vineyard irrigation system.

The proposed reservoirs will serve an existing approximately 840-acre vineyard. Reservoir No. 1 will be located on the eastern portion of the project site adjacent to Schoolhouse Canyon Road (a private road). Reservoir No. 2 will be located in the central portion of the project site, and Reservoir No. 3 will be located on the western portion of the project site approximately 0.75 mile east of Cottonwood Canyon Road. Access to the reservoirs will be from existing roads that connect to State Highway 166.

Frost protection will be achieved by sustained spray irrigation of grape vines when frost damage has the potential to occur. Frost protection will generally be required during the months of February, March and April. The reservoirs will be maintained at a full condition between February and April. A maximum of three feet of well-supplied water will be maintained in the reservoirs between May 1<sup>st</sup> through January 31<sup>st</sup>. Water above a depth of three feet contained in the reservoirs after May 1 will be distributed for vineyard irrigation.

Each reservoir will have a water storage capacity of approximately 44-acre-feet and will be lined with a high-density polyethylene plastic liner to prevent water seepage. Each reservoir will also have an emergency overflow discharge system to prevent stored water from overtopping the reservoir. Water to be stored in the reservoirs will be supplied by existing agricultural wells located on the north side of State Route 166. Water from the wells will be conveyed to the reservoirs by existing vineyard irrigation pipelines that extend beneath the highway and throughout the vineyard. A six-foot high fence will be installed around the exterior perimeter of each reservoir to prevent unauthorized entry. Life ring stations and floating pool ropes will also be provided for rescue purposes.

A total of approximately 257,945 cubic yards of cut and fill grading will be required to construct the three proposed reservoirs. The reservoirs will have a maximum depth of 27-28 feet, and in total occupy an area of approximately 15.6 acres. Proposed pipelines to convey water from the vineyard's existing irrigation system to each of the reservoirs will have a total length of 1,350 feet. Proposed pipelines to convey water from each of the reservoirs to the vineyard's existing spray irrigation system will have a total length of 976 feet. Construction details for each of the proposed reservoirs are summarized on Table 2. It is estimated that the construction period for the three proposed reservoirs will be approximately one year.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: County of Santa Barbara

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: Brodiaea, Inc.

**Exempt Status:** (Check one)

- Ministerial
- Statutory Exemption
- Categorical Exemption
- Emergency Project
- Declared Emergency

**Cite specific CEQA and/or CEQA Guideline Section:** Section 15270, which exempts projects that are disapproved.

**Reasons to support exemption findings:** CEQA Section 15270 states that "CEQA does not apply to projects which a public agency rejects or disapproves." The Planning Commission's decision to deny the requested project is thus exempt from CEQA.

Lead Agency Contact Person: Joseph Dargel

Phone #: (805) 568-3573

Department/Division Representative: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: 9/27/2023

Acceptance Date: \_\_\_\_\_

distribution: Hearing Support Staff

Date Filed by County Clerk: \_\_\_\_\_