

## **ATTACHMENT 4: CEQA NOTICE OF EXEMPTION**

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

**FROM:** Selena Evilsizor, Planner  
Planning and Development Department

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(s):** Not applicable.

**Case No.:** Not applicable.

**Location:** State Highway 101 within the Gaviota Coast, from the City of Goleta boundary to Las Cruces

**Project Title:** State Scenic Highway Designation for Highway 101 – Gaviota Coast

**Project Description:** The County of Santa Barbara is applying to Caltrans to designate 21 miles of Highway 101 on the Gaviota coast as a State Scenic Highway. The proposed Scenic Highway Corridor would run from the City of Goleta's western boundary to the intersection of State Route 1 at Las Cruces.

Exempt Status:

- Ministerial  
 Statutory  
 Categorical Exemption, Section 15308  
 Emergency Project  
 No Possibility of Significant Effect, Section 15061(b)(3)

### **Cite specific CEQA Guideline Sections:**

- Section 15308 – Actions by Regulatory Agencies for Protection of the Environment  
CEQA Section 15308 states:  
Class 8 consists of actions taken by regulatory agencies, as authorized by state or local ordinance, to assure the maintenance, restoration, enhancement, or protection of the environment where the regulatory process involves procedures for protection of the environment.
- Section 15061(b)(3) - No possibility of significant effect.  
CEQA Section 15061(b)(3) states:  
The activity is covered by the general rule that CEQA applies only to projects which have the potential for causing a significant effect on the environment. Where it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the activity in

question may have a significant effect on the environment, the activity is not subject to CEQA.

**Reasons to support exemption findings:**

The designation of State Highway 101 in the Gaviota coast area as a State Scenic Highway would not alter the purpose and intent of any existing policies or development standards applicable to development within the Highway 101 viewshed in the Gaviota area. No new policies, regulations, or ordinances would be required as part of the scenic highway designation application. Designation of the highway segment as a State Scenic Highway would not result in any inconsistencies with adopted policies and development standards.

The Scenic Highway Designation would assist the County in protecting and promoting the natural views and complementary development along the Gaviota coast. The corridor would be known to residents and visitors as a visually significant resource because of its placement on Scenic Highway maps, and signs classifying it as a Scenic Highway. The proposed designation is not related to any particular development projects and future individual projects along the corridor would be subject to compliance with CEQA, as applicable.

The exceptions to the CEQA exemptions (Section 15300.2) do not apply to the project, as follows:

- (a) *Location:* The scenic highway designation would not have a significant impact on the environment in the proposed location within the Gaviota coast. The designation would not impact an environmental resource of hazardous or critical concern.
- (b) *Cumulative Impact:* Although this proposed scenic corridor would connect to an already designated corridor along State Route 1 into Lompoc, there would be no significant cumulative impacts from the designation of the Gaviota coast segment of Highway 101.
- (c) *Significant Effect:* There is no reasonable possibility that the scenic designation would have a significant effect on the environment due to unusual circumstances.
- (d) *Scenic Highways:* There would be no physical changes to the environment as a direct result of the scenic designation, particularly with respect to damage to scenic resources such as trees, historic building, rock outcroppings, or similar resources.
- (e) *Hazardous Waste Site:* There is one hazardous waste site listed on the State of California Department of Toxic Substances Control (EnviroStor) website: the Shell (former Hercules) Gas Plant, located at 14730 Highway 101. It is a gas processing facility that historically served up to four offshore natural gas wells. However, the scenic highway designation would not directly or physically affect the Shell Gas Plant.
- (f) *Historical Resources:* No impact to historical resources would occur as a result of the scenic highway designation.

Applying for the designation and the designation itself do not result in direct or indirect physical changes in the environment; therefore, it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that this activity may have a significant effect on the environment.

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Department/Division Representative \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Acceptance Date (date of final action on project): \_\_\_\_\_

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

*Note: A copy of this form must be posted at Planning and Development six days prior to a decision on the project. Upon project approval, this form must be filed with the County Clerk of the Board and posted by the Clerk of the Board for a period of 30 days.*

Distribution: (post six days prior to action, and post original after project approval)

Hearing Support Staff

Forward to Selena Evilsizor for case file