

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

RECEIVED

2025 JAN 15 A 10: 20

TO: Santa Barbara County Clerk of the Board of Supervisors

FROM: Laguna County Sanitation District

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: 113-200-013, 113-210-015, and 113-240-015 **Case No.:** Not applicable

Location: [Include street address and cross street (if urbanized area)]

Project Title: Lease Agreement for the Grazing of Non-Dairy Livestock on Laguna County Sanitation District Property

Project Applicant:

Project Description: Renewal of the lease for the grazing of cattle on 542.6 acres of irrigated and non-irrigated Laguna County Sanitation District property with K2 Cattle Company, LLC for the next five years. The land is divided into 4 pastures to provide for cattle rotation. Irrigation is performed by a separate agricultural labor contractor. The pastures are irrigated with District treated recycled water.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: Laguna County Sanitation District Board of Directors

Name of Person or Entity Carrying Out Project: Laguna County Sanitation District

Exempt Status:

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

Cite specific CEQA and/or CEQA Guidelines Section: [cite section number and brief description or title of the exemption] 15301. EXISTING FACILITIES (Class 1) and 15304. MINOR ALTERATIONS TO LAND (Class 4).

Reasons to support exemption findings: CEQA Guidelines Section 15301 consists of the operation, repair, maintenance, permitting, leasing, licensing, or minor alteration of existing public or private structures, facilities, mechanical equipment, or topographical features, involving

negligible or no expansion of existing or former use. CEQA Guidelines Section 15304 consists of minor public or private alterations in the condition of land, water, and/or vegetation which do not involve removal of healthy, mature, scenic trees except for forestry or agricultural purposes.

The proposed project represents a renewal of a lease to allow cattle grazing on Laguna County Sanitation District property. Grazing has been conducted on the properties since 1988. The pastures consist of primarily perennial Bermuda grass and non-native annual grasses. One of the pastures (Pasture 5) is within the Conservation Easement recorded in association with the Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) and Incidental Take Permit (ITP) for the Laguna County Sanitation District's Facilities Construction, Operation, and Maintenance activities. Grazing of this pasture is included in the HCP and the Conservation Easement management plan. The lease includes provisions for compliance with the ITP and HCP and includes specifications for the grazing operation to prevent degradation of the forage or damage to the land.

Consistent with CEQA Guidelines Sections 15301 and 15304, the renewal of the lease would involve continued operation of an existing grazing operation on existing Laguna County Sanitation District property with no expansion of the use and would only result in temporary minor alteration of the vegetation as the pastures are grazed and rotated to prevent overgrazing and no tree removal would occur. Therefore, the project can be found to be categorically exempt from CEQA.

The proposed project does not involve unusual circumstances, including future activities, resulting in or which might reasonably result in significant impacts which threaten the environment. The exceptions to the categorical exemptions pursuant to Section 15300.2 of the State CEQA Guidelines are:

- (a) Location.** Classes 3, 4, 5, 6, and 11 are qualified by consideration of where the project is to be located – a project that is ordinarily insignificant in its impact on the environment may in a particularly sensitive environment be significant. Therefore, these classes are considered to apply all instances, except where the project may impact on an environmental resource of hazardous or critical concern where designated, precisely mapped, and officially adopted pursuant to law by federal, state, or local agencies.

Except for Pasture 5, the areas proposed for grazing under the renewed lease are not in sensitive areas. Pasture 5 is within the conservation area preserved for California tiger salamander and California red-legged frog under the District's HCP and ITP. The Conservation Area Management Plan and the Lease include provisions to prevent harm to these species through management of the irrigation and grazing. Therefore, this exclusion does not apply.

- (b) Cumulative Impact.** All exemptions for these classes are inapplicable when the cumulative impact of successive projects of the same type in the same place, over time is significant.

The proposed project is the continuation of grazing that has occurred since 1988. No other projects have or are proposed that would contribute to cumulative impacts. Therefore, this exclusion does not apply.

- (c) Significant Effect.** A categorical exemption shall not be used for an activity where there is a reasonable possibility that the activity will have a significant effect on the environment due to unusual circumstances.

Except for Pasture 5, the areas proposed for grazing under the renewed lease are not in sensitive areas. Pasture 5 is within the conservation area preserved for California tiger salamander and California red-legged frog under the District's HCP and ITP. The Conservation Area Management Plan and the Lease include provisions to prevent harm to these species through management of the irrigation and grazing. Therefore, continuation of the grazing lease is not expected to result in a significant effect on the environment and this exclusion does not apply.

- (d) Scenic Highways.** A categorical exemption shall not be used for a project which may result in damage to scenic resources, including but not limited to, trees, historic buildings, rock outcroppings, or similar resources, within a highway officially designated as a state scenic highway. This does not apply to improvements which are required as mitigation by an adopted negative declaration or certified EIR.

The project involves a lease for continued grazing on irrigated and non-irrigated fields and does not affect scenic resources. Therefore, this exemption does not apply.

- (e) Hazardous Waste Sites.** A categorical exemption shall not be used for a project located on a site which is included on any list compiled pursuant to Section 65962.5 of the Government Code.

The properties involved in the grazing lease are not known to be listed on any hazardous waste site databases. Therefore, this exemption does not apply.

- (f) Historical Resources.** A categorical exemption shall not be used for a project which may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource.

The project involves a lease for continued grazing on irrigated and non-irrigated fields and does not affect historical resources. Therefore, this exemption does not apply.

Lead Agency Contact Person: Martin Wilder, District Manager **Phone #:**

Notice of Exemption
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Department/Division Representative: Joddi Leipner, Engineering Environmental Project Leader

Date: October 26, 2024

Acceptance Date: _____

Date Filed by County Clerk: 1-15-2025

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COUNTY
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FUTURE

2024 CEQA Transmittal Memorandum

County of Santa Barbara - Clerk of the Board of Supervisors

105 E. Anapamu St. Room 407 • Santa Barbara • CA • 93101

(805) 568-2240

Complete this form when filing a Notice of Determination (Negative Declaration, Mitigated Negative Declaration, Environmental Impact Report) or Notice of Exemption.

A scanned copy of the Department of Fish and Wildlife Receipt, Transmittal Memorandum and the CEQA filing including the date/time of posting will be emailed to the Lead Agency and Project Applicant. If you would like a return copy, please submit an extra copy along with a pre-addressed, stamped envelope.

Contact Person Kevin Thompson, Joddi Leipner		Phone (805) 803-8756	
Lead Agency Laguna County Sanitation District		Lead Agency Email kethomp@countyofsb.org; jleipner@countyofsb.org	
Project Title Grazing Lease Agreement with K2 Cattle Company, LLC - Fourth and Fifth Supervisorial Districts			
Project Applicant Laguna County Sanitation District	Email kethomp@countyofsb.org; amarredondo@countyofsb.org	Phone (805) 803-8756	
Project Applicant Address 620 West Foster Road	City Santa Maria	State CA	Zip 93455

DOCUMENT BEING FILED:

- ☐ Notice of Determination - Environmental Impact Report (EIR)
- ☐ 2024 Filing Fee\$4,051.25
- ☐ Previously Paid (must attach receipt) \$0.00
- ☐ No Effect Determination (must be attached)..... \$0.00

Environmental Filing Fees will be collected *only* for projects that are approved. The Applicant must attest to the following:

- ☐ This project has been approved. Date of Approval: Click or tap to enter a date.

- ☐ Notice of Determination - Negative Declaration (ND) or Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND).....
- ☐ 2024 Filing Fee \$2,916.75
- ☐ Previously Paid (must attach receipt) \$0.00
- ☐ No Effect Determination (must be attached)..... \$0.00

Environmental Filing Fees will be collected *only* for projects that are approved. The Applicant must attest to the following:

- ☐ This project has been approved. Date of Approval: Click or tap to enter a date.

- ☒ Notice of Exemption.....\$0.00

- ☒ County Administrative Handling Fee (required for all filings, effective 7/19/18)\$50.00

TOTAL: \$ 50.00

PAYMENT METHOD: ALL APPLICABLE FEES MUST BE PAID AT THE TIME OF FILING

- ☐ Cash ☐ Credit ☐ Check # _____ ☐ Journal Entry # **JE 0274835**
- In person only In FIN send to 'COB CEQA' in CEO Dept

Journal Entry

Document Number: JE - 0274835
Document Description: CEQA fees - Grazing Lease Agreement
Post On: 1/14/2025

Batch ID: 2971548
Processed On:
Processed By:

Created On: 11/26/2024 3:56:24 PM
Created By: Angela Arredondo

References

Audit Trail: Cash Type: I - Interfund

Accounting

Fund	Dept	GL Acct	LI Acct	Debit Amount	Credit Amount	Prog	OUnit	Proj	Act	Area	Equip	Depositor	Description
2870	054	2810	8300	50.00		6400		010000	VEHL				Grazing Lease Agreement-CEQA NOE fees
2870		0110			50.00								Grazing Lease Agreement-CEQA NOE fees
0001		0110		50.00									Grazing Lease Agreement-CEQA NOE fees
0001	012	2710	5746		50.00	4020							Grazing Lease Agreement-CEQA NOE fees
Total				100.00	100.00								

Signatures

Signed By	Approval Level	Department/Agency-Fund Group	Signed On	Valid
Angela Arredondo	Fund/Department	054-Laguna Sanitation	11/26/2024 4:22:29 PM	Y



State of California - Department of Fish and Wildlife
2025 ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENT FILING FEE
CASH RECEIPT
DFW 753.5a (REV. 01/01/25) Previously DFG 753.5a

Print	Start Over	Save
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RECEIPT NUMBER:
42 — 01/15/2025 — 012
STATE CLEARINGHOUSE NUMBER (If applicable)

SEE INSTRUCTIONS ON REVERSE. TYPE OR PRINT CLEARLY.

LEAD AGENCY Laguna County Sanitation District	LEAD AGENCY EMAIL kethomp@countyofsb.org; Jleipner@countyofsb.org	DATE 01/15/2025
COUNTY/STATE AGENCY OF FILING Santa Barbara	DOCUMENT NUMBER	

PROJECT TITLE

Grazing Lease Agreement with K2 Cattle Company, LLC - Fourth and Fifth Supervisorial Districts

PROJECT APPLICANT NAME Laguna County Sanitation District	PROJECT APPLICANT EMAIL kethomp@countyofsb.org; amarredondo@countyofsb.org	PHONE NUMBER (805) 803-8756
PROJECT APPLICANT ADDRESS 620 West Foster Road	CITY Santa Maria	STATE CA
		ZIP CODE 93455

PROJECT APPLICANT (Check appropriate box)

☒ Local Public Agency ☐ School District ☐ Other Special District ☐ State Agency ☐ Private Entity

CHECK APPLICABLE FEES:

<input type="checkbox"/> Environmental Impact Report (EIR)	\$4,123.50	\$	0.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Mitigated/Negative Declaration (MND)(ND)	\$2,968.75	\$	0.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Certified Regulatory Program (CRP) document - payment due directly to CDFW	\$1,401.75	\$	0.00

☒ Exempt from fee

☒ Notice of Exemption (attach)

☐ CDFW No Effect Determination (attach)

☐ Fee previously paid (attach previously issued cash receipt copy)

<input type="checkbox"/> Water Right Application or Petition Fee (State Water Resources Control Board only)	\$850.00	\$	0.00
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> County documentary handling fee		\$	50.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Other		\$	

PAYMENT METHOD:

☐ Cash ☐ Credit ☐ Check ☒ Other TOTAL RECEIVED \$ 50.00

SIGNATURE X Katherine Douglas	AGENCY OF FILING PRINTED NAME AND TITLE Katherine Douglas, Deputy Clerk
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