

**ATTACHMENT C
NOTICE OF EXEMPTION**

TO: Santa Barbara County Clerk of the Board of Supervisors

FROM: Kathleen Volpi, Planning and 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: 007-280-012 **Case No.:** 23CDH-00027

Location: 1690 San Leandro Lane

Project Title: Promise Land LLC - As-Built Wall

Project Applicant: Promise Land LLC

Project Description: The project is a request for a Coastal Development Permit with Hearing to legalize an as-built approximately 110-foot-long grouted sandstone boulder wall within the San Ysidro Creek. The wall ranges in height from 2 to 12 feet tall and 7.5 to 15 feet wide. No grading or tree removal is proposed. The parcel will continue to be served by the Montecito Water District, the Montecito Sanitary District, and the Montecito Fire District. Access will continue to be provided off of San Leandro Lane. The property is a 4.01-acre parcel zoned 2-E-1 and shown as Assessor's Parcel Number 007-280-012, located at 1690 San Leandro Lane in the Montecito Community Plan Area, First Supervisorial District.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: County of Santa Barbara

Name of Person or Entity Carrying Out Project: SEPPS Inc.

Exempt Status:

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

Cite specific CEQA and/or CEQA Guidelines Section: The project is categorically exempt from environmental review pursuant to Sections 15302 [Replacement or Reconstruction]. Section 15302 exempts replacement or reconstruction of existing structures and facilities where the new structure will be located on the same site as the replaced structure and will have substantially

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the same purpose and capacity as the structure replaced. Given that the project is for the validation of an as-built grouted sandstone boulder wall that was constructed within the same footprint and built in a like for like fashion with the portion of an existing wall that was destroyed during the 2018 Montecito debris flow, and the project has demonstrated no change in conveyance capacity of the creek as reviewed by Public Works Flood Control, the project is 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.**

The proposed project is considered a “Class 2” exemption and thus does not fall within the qualifying classes of this exemption therefore this exception to the categorical exemption 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.**

This exception to the categorical exemptions does not apply because the additional structural development included in the project is limited to the validation of an existing grouted sandstone boulder wall within a creek. The wall replaces a portion of an existing wall that was destroyed by the Montecito debris flow of 2018 and was built in a like-for-like fashion. It does not change the capacity or flow of San Ysidro Creek and a Biological Report prepared by Watershed Environmental, Inc., dated August 2023, determined the work resulted in a less than significant impact to known Environmentally Sensitive Habitat (ESH) in the project study area. Precautions were taken to protect any remaining ESH that may have survived the debris flow. These precautions included hand grouting the wall in lieu of heavy machinery and appropriate placement of materials and equipment in areas already disturbed by the debris flow, denuded of ESH. Additional structural development and developed structures of the same type in the same place, over time, that is developed in conformance with applicable ordinance and policy regulations in a manner similar to

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the subject project, on residentially-zoned parcels in the vicinity would not result in a cumulatively significant impact.

- (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.**

This exception to the categorical exemptions does not apply. because. The wall proposed for validation is a repair to an existing wall within San Ysidro Creek that was destroyed. The repairs tie into the portion of existing wall that was not destroyed and was rebuilt in a like-for-like fashion to the existing wall. Public Works Flood Control reviewed the project and concluded that the flow conveyance capacity of the creek remains unchanged. A Biological Report prepared by Watershed Environmental, Inc., dated August 2023, surveyed the project study area and determined almost all herbaceous and shrub vegetation was destroyed by the Montecito debris flow of 2018, including many mature trees. The report determined that the repairs to the grouted sandstone boulder wall created less than significant impacts to vegetation, protected trees, and native trees given the previous, widespread and devastating disturbance to ESH caused by the debris flow. Therefore, the proposed project involves no unusual circumstances, including future activities, resulting in or which might reasonably result in significant impacts which threaten the environment.

- (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.**

This exception to the categorical exemptions does not apply because the proposed project is not adjacent to, or visible from, any state scenic highway.

- (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.**

This exception to the categorical exemptions does not apply because the proposed project is not located on a site that is included on any list compiled pursuant to Section 65962.5 of the Government Code.

- (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.**

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This exception to the categorical exemptions does not apply because the proposed project is for the validation of an as-built wall within a creek bed. The wall replaces a portion of an existing wall with an unknown construction date. The portion that was replaced was destroyed in the 2018 Montecito debris flow. All non-damaged portions of the wall were retained. The reconstruction was conducted in a like-for-like fashion.

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Department/Division Representative: *Kathleen Volpi*

Date: February 11, 2026

Acceptance Date: _____

Distribution: Hearing Support Staff

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