

Attachment 5

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**CEQA
Notice of Exemption**

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

TO: Santa Barbara County Clerk of the Board of Supervisors

FROM: Department of Public Works – Flood Control and Water Conservation District
(Lead Department/Division)

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: 007-120-036 **Case No.:** Real Property File No. 003892

LOCATION: Situs address: 640 Randall Rd. Montecito, 93118; (APN 007-120-036)

PROJECT TITLE: Property Acquisition of 640 Randall Road, Montecito, California

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: Acquisition of Assessor Parcel Number APN 007-120-036, located at 640 Randall Road, in the Community of Montecito an unincorporated area of the County of Santa Barbara California, 93118, in the First Supervisorial District by the Santa Barbara County Flood Control and Water Conservation District (“District”).

EXEMPT STATUS :(Check One)

- Ministerial
- Statutory Exemption
- Categorical Exemption
- Emergency Project
- No Possibility of Significant Effect

Cite specific CEQA Guideline Section: Cal. Pub. Res. Code Section 21080(b)(4) and CEQA Guidelines Section 15269(c) [Emergency Projects].

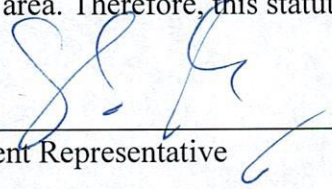
Reasons to support exemption findings (attach additional material, if necessary): CEQA Guideline Section 15269 (c) exempts *specific actions necessary to prevent or mitigate an emergency*. The January 9, 2018 debris flow was catastrophic. In addition to the loss of 23 lives in the Montecito area, approximately 470 structures were damaged and/or destroyed, and over 500,000 cubic yards of mud/rocks/debris/vegetation were removed from County debris basins, roadways, and area creeks. A similar amount of material was deposited across private property.

Burned watersheds typically take several years to recover and as such the community of Montecito remains in imminent risk for debris flow should we experience short duration, high intensity rainfall events. Given the damage to the watersheds from the Thomas Fire and subsequent 1/9/18 Debris Flow, the state of emergency still exists in Montecito. This was illustrated during the winter of 2018/2019 where a dramatic increase in runoff in creeks below the fire and deposition of rocks and debris in debris basins was repeatedly observed with low intensity storms, requiring continual clearing throughout the winter months. Over 150,000 cubic yards of sediment and rocks were removed from debris basins and

creeks between January and March of 2019. Due to the imminent risk of additional debris flows, the community of Montecito was evacuated four times between January 7, 2018 and March 20, 2018. An additional three times between January 14, 2019 and March 5, 2019, when storm forecasts exceeded the threshold for producing debris flows. The County has repeatedly continued the local emergency declaration at the Board of Supervisors.

The clear and imminent risk to life and property posed by the threat of debris flow events during the upcoming winter rain seasons constitutes an emergency under CEQA. The acquisition of 640 Randall Road will aid the District's long-term solutions for increased flood protection and support the possibility of a debris basin project that will undergo its own CEQA review.

As such, acquisition of this parcel is being done to prevent or mitigate the immediate threat to the Montecito area. Therefore, this statutory exemption applies to the proposed project.

 _____
Department Representative

5/1/19
_____ Date

NOTE: A copy of this document must be posted with the County's Planning & Development Department at least 6 days prior to consideration of the activity by the decision-makers to comply with County CEQA guidelines and a copy must be filed with the County Clerk of the Board after project approval to begin a 35 day statute of limitations on legal challenges.

Distribution: _____
Date filed with Planning & Development

_____ Date filed with Clerk of Board