

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

TO: Santa Barbara County Clerk of the Board of Supervisors

FROM: Santa Barbara County Water Agency

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: NA

Case No.: NA

Location: Santa Barbara County

Project Title: Adoption of the 2019 Integrated Regional Water Management Plan (IRWMP) Update

Project Description: The Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) Plan is a comprehensive report designed to improve collaboration in water resources management and comprehensively address all aspects of water planning throughout an IRWM region. The Santa Barbara County Region consists of the entirety of Santa Barbara County. The 2019 IRWM Plan is an update of the existing 2013 Plan.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: County of Santa Barbara

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: Santa Barbara County Water Agency

Exempt Status: (Check one)

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

Cite specific CEQA and/or CEQA Guideline Section: Categorical Exemption Section 15306 (Class 6) Basic data collection, research, experimental management, and resource evaluation activities.

Reasons to support exemption findings: The IRWM Plan provides information and data regarding the County's water, including water sources, quantity, quality, use, infrastructure, and distribution. This information is used for planning and reference as well as being a requirement for grant funding through multiple State Propositions and programs. The 2019 Plan update is needed to meet the Department of Water Resources' current IRWM Plan Standards and Guidelines released in 2016 and to secure eligibility for Implementation Round funding through Proposition 1. The Plan update includes required elements such as climate change adaptive strategies, groundwater management compliance,

revised program preferences and State-wide priorities, and incorporation of the County-wide Integrated Storm Water Resource Plan.

The Plan does not result in a serious or major disturbance to any environmental resource. Therefore, the above listed exemption applies to this action.

There is no substantial evidence that there are 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 IRWM Plan results in no physical disturbance to the environment.

- (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.

There are no significant incremental or measurable cumulative impacts for the IRWM Plan. Therefore, this exception to the Categorical Exemption is not applicable to the proposed project.

- (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.

The IRWM Plan is informational only and will have no significant effect on the environment. Therefore, there is no reasonable possibility that the Plan will have a significant effect on the environment due to unusual circumstances.

- (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 IRWM Plan does not result in the installation of any facilities that are viewable from any scenic highway area. Therefore, this exception to the Categorical Exemption is not applicable.

- (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 IRWM Plan is not a physical facility. Therefore, this exception to the Categorical Exemption is not applicable to the proposed project.

- (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 IRWM Plan will not result in any structural or physical changes that would impact any historical resources. Therefore, this exception to the exemption does not apply.

Lead Agency Contact Person: Fray Crease Phone #: 805 568-3542

Department/Division Representative: F.A. Crease Date: 1-18-19

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 by County Clerk:

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