



**BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
AGENDA LETTER**

Agenda Number:

Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
105 E. Anapamu Street, Suite 407
Santa Barbara, CA 93101
(805) 568-2240

Submitted on:
(COB Stamp)

Department Name: PW/Flood Control
Department No.: 054
Agenda Date: July 15, 2025
Placement: Administrative Agenda
Estimated Time:
Continued Item: No
If Yes, date from:
Vote Required: Majority

TO: Board of Directors, Flood Control and Water Conservation District

FROM: Department Director: Chris Sneddon, Public Works Director
Contact: Walter Rubalcava, Deputy Director-Flood Control

SUBJECT: Annual Routine Maintenance Plan, Fiscal Year 2025-26 - All Supervisorial Districts

County Counsel Concurrence

As to form: Yes

Other Concurrence:

As to form: N/A

Auditor-Controller Concurrence

As to form: N/A

Recommended Actions:

That the Board of Directors:

- a) Approve the Fiscal Year 2025-26 Annual Routine Maintenance Plan, including the individual maintenance projects described in the Plan; and
- b) For the purposes of the California Environmental Quality Act:
 - i. Find that the Fiscal Year 2025-26 Annual Routine Maintenance Plan is within the scope of the Program Environmental Impact Report for the Updated Routine Maintenance Program [01-EIR-01; State Clearinghouse No. 2001031043] and subsequent annual addenda which adequately describe this activity for the purposes of the California Environmental Quality Act;
 - ii. Find that pursuant to the State California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines Sections 15168(c)(2) and 15162(a), after considering the Program Environmental Impact Report certified by the Board of Directors in November 2001, and subsequent annual addenda, that no subsequent Environmental Impact Report or Negative

Declaration is required because: i) no substantial changes are proposed which require major revisions of the Program Environmental Impact Report; ii) no substantial changes have occurred with respect to the circumstances under which the project is undertaken which require major revisions of the Program Environmental Impact Report; and iii) no new information of substantial importance concerning the project's significant effects or mitigation measures, which was not known and could not have been known with the exercise of reasonable diligence at the time that the Program Environmental Impact Report was certified, has been received;

- iii. Find that the proposed actions described in the Exempt Facilities Section of the Fiscal Year 2025-26 Annual Routine Maintenance Plan are for the operation and maintenance of existing public structures, facilities or topographical features, involving negligible or no expansion of use beyond that which presently exists and that the proposed actions are therefore exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act pursuant to the State's California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines Section 15301, and direct the Clerk of the Board to file the California Environmental Quality Act Notice of Exemption for each exempt facility project described in the Fiscal Year 2025-26 Annual Routine Maintenance Plan;
- iv. Determine that the addenda to the previously certified PEIR (01-EIR-01) contained within the Fiscal Year 2025-26 Annual Routine Maintenance Plan have been completed in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act and adopt the mitigation measures included for each project as the Mitigation and Monitoring Plan pursuant to the State's California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines Section 15168 (c)(3); and
- v. Approve and adopt the California Environmental Quality Act Findings included in the Fiscal Year 2025-26 Annual Routine Maintenance Plan.

Summary Text:

This item is on the agenda to approve the Annual Routine Maintenance Plan for FY 2025-26 (Annual Plan – Attachment A) which consists of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) exempt projects and projects defined within the scope of impacts identified by the Program Environmental Impact Report (PEIR – Attachment B) requiring addenda for FY 2025-26.

The CEQA exempt activities are based on State's CEQA Guidelines Section 15301, Existing Facilities. Projects that are exempt fall into one of the following five categories:

- Maintenance activities in existing non-perennial, fully concrete-lined stream channels,
- Removal of obstructive material,
- Clearing, repair, and replacement of flood control devices such as check structures, drop structures, levees, sediment basins, weirs, or stream flow measuring stations,
- Maintenance activities on access ways outside of estuaries and riparian corridors, and

- Maintenance activities on earthen channels, which have been developed to convey urban storm water, agriculture storm water, or agriculture tail water and have little or no vegetation in them.

The CEQA exempt activities are in areas where there are no impacts to any significant resource at the site, downstream, or adjacent to the site. The described FY 2025-26 exempt projects have been exempted in prior years with the Planning and Development Department's concurrence.

Activities within the scope of the PEIR are described in individual addenda to the PEIR specific to the named drainages where they will occur within the Annual Plan. The maintenance activities are presented as an Addendum to the PEIR utilizing appropriate maintenance practices described and analyzed in the PEIR. The mitigation measures incorporated in each of these projects become the mitigation and monitoring program to ensure that impacts are mitigated to the fullest extent feasible.

Once the Board has approved projects described in the Annual Plan, applications can be made to the appropriate regulatory agencies for notices to proceed on the approved projects.

The Flood Control District (District) has current long-term permits with the Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE), Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB), and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW).

Background:

In December 2001, the Board of Directors adopted a revised Annual Routine Creek Maintenance Program which included: a) Maintenance Practices and Mitigation Measures; b) Associated Flood Control Policy Statements; and c) An annual planning and project approval process.

Development of the Annual Plan provides multiple benefits. The plan serves as a basis for demonstrating need, analyzing alternatives, proposing mitigation, and selecting the most effective and least environmentally damaging District maintenance practices. The plan also allows the District to prioritize maintenance efforts and expenditures which also helps in the management of individual projects.

The annual planning process, as adopted by the Board, requires that the District conduct a public workshop to hear the public and other agencies' input and concerns about the proposed Annual Plan.

An email announcing the workshops and the availability of the summary was sent on May 2, 2025 to individuals and organizations who have previously expressed an interest in this maintenance program. The District also provided notice of workshops in the Santa Maria Times, Lompoc Record, and Santa Barbara Independent. A summary of the proposed Annual Plan was available in our office and was posted on the District's website on May 13, 2025.

The public workshop was held virtually via the Teams app on May 20, 2025. Four members of the public requested access and three participated in the meeting. District staff remained available for public comment and questions through June 3, 2025.

The proposed Final Annual Plan has been posted on the District’s website here: <https://www.countyofsb.org/2384/Environmental-Group>.

Mandates have been discussed in previous Board letters regarding the Revised Creek Maintenance Program. The District’s authority under state law allows the District to undertake these projects for the public’s benefit. Several projects constructed in cooperation with the federal government have mandated levels of maintenance associated with them. The District’s projects are subject to compliance with environmental laws and regulations.

Fiscal and Facilities Impacts:

The costs associated with the Fiscal Year 2025-26 Annual Routine Maintenance Plan are included in the adopted FY 2025-26 Flood Control District budget within the Public Works Department, as reflected in the County Budget Book on page D-324. The total estimated cost is \$4,740,000, funded by the Flood Control District funds across all flood control flood zones.

As in prior years, the scope and prioritization of maintenance projects are determined based on available funding and current facility conditions. Each year’s Annual Plan includes the drainages most in need of maintenance. While much of the facility maintenance is not mandated, ongoing maintenance is required for certain engineered or improved facilities, including many federally funded projects now owned and maintained by the District.

Preparing a comprehensive Annual Plan allows the District to reduce costs by combining environmental review into a single document, rather than preparing separate environmental documentation for each project. More importantly, the Annual Plan streamlines the state and federal permitting process, which allows the district to complete maintenance work before the next storm season.

Fiscal Analysis:

Funding Source	FY 2025-26	FY [<i>fiscal year 2</i>]	FY [<i>fiscal year 3</i>]	Total
FC Funds – All Zones	4,740,000.00			\$4,740,000.00
State				
Federal				
Fees				
[<i>Other Source</i>]				
Total	\$4,740,000.00			\$4,740,000.00

The costs for the Fiscal Year 2025-26 Annual Routine Maintenance Plan are included in the Flood Control District’s adopted budget under the Public Works Department. This work is budgeted in the various Flood Zones every fiscal year as part of the annual budget process.

No General Fund monies will be utilized for this work.

Special Instructions:

Direct the Clerk of the Board to post the attached CEQA NOE (Attachment C) and to email a copy of the minute order of these actions along with a copy of the stamped NOE to the Flood Control District, Attn: Christina Lopez at clopez@countyofsb.org.

Attachments:

Attachment A: Annual Routine Maintenance Plan Fiscal Year 2025-26

Attachment B: 2001 Program EIR for the Updated Routine Maintenance Program

Attachment C: CEQA Notice of Exemption

Contact Information:

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Regulatory Compliance Manager

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