

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

TO: Santa Barbara County Clerk of the Board of Supervisors

FROM: Kylie Brown, Planner, Planning & 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: Caltrans R.O.W Between Post Miles 47.1 & 47.74 **Case No.:** 23EMP-00010

Location: Between Post Miles 47.1 & 47.74, near Gaviota Tunnel

Project Title: Caltrans Gaviota Scour Repair and Wall

Project Applicant: Allison Donatello for Caltrans

Project Description: This is a report to the Board of Supervisors of the Director of P&D's action to issue an Emergency Permit to allow the repair of the revetment and embankment supporting the southbound Highway 101 just South of the Gaviota Tunnel, between Post Miles 47.1 and 47.25, and the repair of three spot locations of scour damage between Post Miles 47.25 to 47.75. The Emergency Permit was issued for construction of an approximately 550-foot-long secant pile wall and installation of Rock Slope protection (RSP) to repair the revetment and embankment supporting the southbound Highway 101 just South of the Gaviota Tunnel, between Post Miles 47.1 and 47.25. In addition, the permit allowed the repair of three spot locations of scour damage to existing revetments and embankment supporting northbound and southbound Highway 101, between Post Miles 47.25 to 47.75. A series of heavy storms and atmospheric rivers in January 2023 caused widespread flooding and elevated creek levels throughout Santa Barbara County, resulting in storm damage on Highway 101 near Gaviota Tunnel. Extreme flows in Gaviota Creek adjacent to Highway 101 damaged existing revetments and resulted in creek scouring causing over-steepened slopes compromising the stability of the highway. Approximately 500 feet of creek bank and revetments were damaged leaving little to nothing remaining to protect the highway embankment from continued loss eventually resulting in the loss of shoulder, lane, or the entire roadbed of southbound Highway 101. The slope adjacent to Highway 101 between the southbound lane and Gaviota Creek was previously protected by a combination of stacked sackcrete and Rock Slope Protection (RSP) but these protective measures are failing. The Emergency Permit allowed work within the Caltrans right-of-way between Post Miles 47.1 and 47.74, near the Gaviota Tunnel to stabilize the slope supporting Highway 101. Grading allowed by the permit includes approximately 6,500-7,000 cubic yards of excavation for piles and slope repair, and approximately 1,500 cubic yards of temporary fill to support equipment. The repairs are expected to be completed by winter 2023. The project is located within the Caltrans right-of-

Santa Barbara Botanic Garden, Case No. 23EMP-00003

March 3, 2023

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way near the Gaviota Tunnel, between Post Miles 47.1 and 47.74, in the Gaviota area, Third Supervisorial District.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: County of Santa Barbara

Name of Person or Entity Carrying Out Project: CalTrans

Exempt Status:

- Ministerial
- Statutory Exemption
- Categorical Exemption
- Emergency Project
- Declared Emergency
- Not a Project

Cite specific CEQA and/or CEQA Guidelines Section: CEQA Guidelines Section 15378(b)(5) (Not a Project).

Reasons to support exemption findings: *CEQA Guidelines Section 15378(b)(5)* states that an organizational or administrative activity of governments that will not result in direct or indirect impacts to the environment is not considered a project under CEQA. Providing a report that describes the Emergency Permit to the Board of Supervisors is an administrative responsibility that has no impact on the environment and thus is not a project under CEQA.

Lead Agency Contact Person: Kylie Brown, Planner

Phone #: (805) 568-2507 **Department/Division Representative:** _____

Date: June 7, 2023

Acceptance Date: _____

Distribution: Hearing Support Staff

Date Filed by County Clerk: _____