

ATTACHMENT 2: ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENT

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

TO: Santa Barbara County Clerk of the Board of Supervisors

FROM: Nereyda (Rey) Harmon, 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: 099-230-012

Case Nos.: 19APL-00000-00032 and 18LUP-00000-00351

Location: 7680 West Highway 246, Buellton, CA

Project Title: Santa Rita Valley Ag., Inc. Cannabis Cultivation Appeal

Project Applicant:

Santa Rita Valley Ag., Inc.

Project Description:

Santa Rita Valley Ag., Inc., the Applicant, requests a Land Use Permit (LUP) to allow 32 acres of outdoor cannabis cultivation. Processing of cannabis will take place at another off-site licensed facility. The application involves permitting a new fuel storage tank for a tractor and a new eight-foot chain link security fence encompassing the cultivation area. The Applicant is proposing to remove an existing barbed wire fence and to install a four-foot, redwood colored post rail fence to extend the length of the north side of the property along Highway 246 and on both sides of the driveway. Proposed landscaping will consist of adding a minimum of six coast live oaks (*Quercus agrifolia*), 19 olive trees (*Olea europaea*), and lavender (*Lavandula*) along Highway 246, and eight olive trees (*Olea europaea*) and lavender along the western property line. In addition, grapevines (*Vitis*) are proposed to be planted in front of the proposed chain link security fence along Highway 246 and along the western property line to mask the security fence. There will be four motion-sensor, hooded light fixtures mounted 12 feet high near the entry gate for security purposes. There is an existing 483 square-foot agricultural tool shed, a 1,180 square-foot single-family dwelling, and a 2,200 square-foot barn (for storage) onsite that will be affiliated with the cannabis operation. The single-family dwelling and barn pre-date County permit requirements (constructed before 1958). The agricultural tool shed will be permitted through the requested LUP. No grading or tree removal is proposed.

There will be 4-5 regular employees and 40-50 employees during harvest periods (two harvest periods per year, each lasting roughly three weeks). In addition to the agricultural workers, there will be 2-3 security personnel to monitor the property. The hours of operations will be from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. from Monday through Saturday for all employees. The security personnel will work 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, for approximately two months prior to harvest and during harvest. The parcel is served by a private well and private septic system. The regular employees will use a bathroom in the existing single-family dwelling which will be part of the cannabis operation, and the Applicant will provide portable toilets for seasonal employees (during harvest periods). The Santa Barbara County Fire Department will continue to serve the site. Access will continue to be provided off of Highway 246. The property is a 42.5-acre parcel zoned AG-II-100 and shown as Assessor's Parcel Number 099-230-012, located at 7680 West Highway 246, Buellton, Third Supervisorial District.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: County of Santa Barbara

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: Santa Rita Valley Ag., Inc.

Exempt Status: (Check one)

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

Cite specific CEQA and/or CEQA Guideline Section: 15270(a)

Reasons to support exemption findings:

The County of Santa Barbara is recommending denial of the project. CEQA does not apply to projects which a public agency rejects or disapproves.

Lead Agency Contact Person: Nereyda (Rey) Harmon

Phone #: 805-450-7806 Department/Division Representative: 

Date: June 2, 2020

Acceptance Date: _____

distribution: Hearing Support Staff

Date Filed by County Clerk: _____.