



WHEELER RIDGE-MARICOPA WATER STORAGE DISTRICT

12109 Highway 166, Bakersfield, CA 93313-9630

Telephone: 661.858.2281 ♦ Fax: 661.858.2643 ♦ Water Orders: 661.858.2296
www.wrmwsd.com

SHERIDAN NICHOLAS
ENGINEER-MANAGER

JAMES D. SMITH
CONTROLLER

Certified Mail
70162710000037413679

July 7, 2020

State Clearinghouse
1400 Tenth Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Notice of Exemption
2020 Water Transfer from Pixley Irrigation District to
Wheeler Ridge-Maricopa Water Storage District

For filing with the CA State CEQA Clearinghouse, enclosed please find a signed Notice of Exemption regarding the above-referenced project.

A duplicate copy is enclosed for returning a conformed copy using the self-addressed stamped envelope also enclosed.

Thank you.

Wendy A. Jones
Water Resources Manager
wjones@wrmwsd.com
661.527.6069

encl.

Governor's Office of Planning & Research

JUL 16 2020

STATE CLEARINGHOUSE

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

To:	State Clearinghouse Office of Planning & Research 1400 Tenth Street Sacramento, CA 95814	From:	Lead Agency/Applicant Wheeler Ridge-Maricopa WSD 12109 Highway 166 Bakersfield, CA 93313-9630 661-527-6069
To:	Kern County Clerk 1115 Truxtun Avenue Bakersfield, CA 93301		
To:	Tulare County Clerk-Recorder 221 S. Mooney Blvd., Room 103 Visalia, CA 93291-4593		

Project Title: 2020-2021 Water Transfer and Exchange between Pixley Irrigation District within the Central Valley Project and Wheeler Ridge-Maricopa Water Storage District within the State Water Project.

Location -- Specific: Pixley Irrigation District ("Pixley ID") is located in Tulare County and Wheeler Ridge-Maricopa Water Storage District ("Wheeler Ridge") is located in Kern County. Wheeler Ridge has lands in the Delta Export Service Area of the Central Valley Project.

Location -- Counties: Kern County and Tulare County.

Description of Activity: Pixley ID is proposing to transfer up to 1,695 AF of its 2020-2021 Central Valley Project ("CVP") Cross Valley Canal water from Pixley ID to Wheeler Ridge. Pixley ID has a contract for an agricultural water supply with the United States Department of Interior, Bureau of Reclamation ("Reclamation") for water to be provided from the Central Valley Project ("CVP"). In exchange for non-project water previously delivered to PID from the Kaweah, Tule and/or Kings River under the terms of a 2017 Agreement between Pixley ID and a common landowner to the Districts, Pixley ID forecasts that it will have up to 1,695 AF of such 2020-2021 CVP water supply captured at O'Neill Forebay in San Luis Reservoir that it is willing to transfer to Wheeler Ridge from O'Neill Forebay during the noted Water Years.

Name of Public Agencies Approving or Carrying Out Activity: Pixley Irrigation District, Wheeler Ridge – Maricopa WSD (Lead Agency), California Department of Water Resources and Kern County Water Agency (Responsible Agencies), Tulare County and Kern County.

Exempt Status:

- Ministerial
- Declared Emergency
- Emergency Project
- Categorical Exemption.** State type and section number: See CEQA Guidelines Section 15301.
- Statutory Exemption.** State code number: See CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)3.

Reasons why activity is exempt: CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)3 provides that a Lead Agency may determine an activity to be exempt from CEQA based upon the general rule that CEQA applies only to projects that have a potential for causing significant environmental impacts. Where it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the activity in question may have a significant effect on the environment, the activity is not subject to CEQA. Wheeler Ridge finds that approval of the proposed water transfer has no possibility for significant effect on the environment for the following reasons:

1. The proposed action consists of a one-time water transfer that will use existing facilities and would not require any construction or grading.
2. The project does not constitute a new permanent source of water supply and will not result in any growth inducing or cumulative environmental impacts.
3. There will be no land use changes or additional agricultural acreage being cultivated as a result of the proposed project.

Additionally, since the project will rely on the operation of existing facilities, there will be no expansion of use beyond that existing at the time of the Lead Agency's determination and will not have a significant effect on the physical environment; the project also qualifies for a categorical exemption from CEQA pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15301. None of the exceptions listed in Section 15300.2 of the CEQA Guidelines would apply to the proposed action.

Lead Agency Contact Person: Wendy A. Jones
Water Resources Manager
(661) 527-6069

Signature: Wendy A. Jones **Title:** Water Resources Manager **Date:** July 6, 2020

- Signed by Lead Agency
- Signed by Applicant

Date received for filing by County Clerk:

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