

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

To: Office of Planning & Research
1400 Tenth St.
Sacramento, CA 95814

From: Dudley Ridge Water District
286 W. Cromwell Ave.
Fresno, CA 93711-6162

To: Kings County Clerk
1400 W. Lacy Blvd.
Kings County Government Center
Hanford, CA 93230

To: Los Angeles County Clerk
PO Box 1208
Norwalk, CA 90650-1208

Project Title: 2020 Water Banking Program Between San Gabriel Valley Municipal Water District and Dudley Ridge Water District.

Location -- Specific: Both San Gabriel Valley Municipal Water District ("SGVMWD") and Dudley Ridge Water District ("DRWD") are State Water Project ("SWP") contractors. SGVMWD is located in northern Los Angeles County; DRWD is located in southern Kings County in the San Joaquin Valley. The SWP includes facilities located throughout the State of California. The California Department of Water Resources ("DWR") is headquartered in Sacramento, California.

Location -- County: Kings and Los Angeles Counties.

Description of Activity: SGVMWD and DRWD have maintained a Water Banking Program since 1995, which from time to time has been amended to reflect the changing needs of both districts. The most recent amendment to their program is documented in the "2020 Water Banking Agreement", which modifies and restates the 2017 Water Exchange Agreement by reducing the Table A retention by SGVMWD from 10,000 acre-feet per year ("af/y") to 5,000 af/y, increasing the maximum reclassification from 3,000 af/y to 5,000 af/y, and, increasing the term through 2085 (subject to the pending DWR extension of the Water Supply Contracts to 2085). The 2020 Water Banking Program also provides SGVMWD a second priority for recharge and recovery of SGVMWD's water in DRWD's capacity for groundwater banking in the Kern Water Bank ("KWB"). SGVMWD would be eligible to recover 90% of the water they deliver to the KWB. The DRWD-SGVMWD 2020 Water Banking Program is consistent with the CEQA documentation adopted in 2016 for DRWD's Water Management Plan, which describes the DRWD-SGVMWD and similar exchange and banking programs as an integral part of DRWD's routine water management strategy; a Notice of Determination for the DRWD 2015 Update to the 2012 Agricultural Water Management Plan was filed in April 2016 (SCH #2016021110). As an accommodation to DWR, this Notice of Exemption is being filed by DRWD. There is no construction, land use change, or modification to existing facilities; no new lands will be brought into production as a result of the proposed water banking program.

Name of Public Agency Approving or Carrying Out Activity: Dudley Ridge Water District (Lead Agency); California Department of Water Resources and San Gabriel Valley Municipal Water District (Responsible Agencies).

Exempt Status:

- Ministerial
- Declared Emergency
- Emergency Project
- Categorical Exemption.** State type and section number: See CEQA Guideline 15301(b).
- Statutory Exemption.

CEQA Guideline Section 15301(b) provides that a lead agency may determine an activity to be exempt from CEQA in that it utilizes only existing facilities. This program involves project water within DRWD's Water Supply Contract with DWR, all deliveries occur entirely within the SWP place of use, and exclusively utilize existing facilities. This program is also consistent with DRWD's Negative Declaration (SCH #2016021110) for DRWD's 2015 Update to the 2012 Agricultural Water Management Plan that addressed long-term banking and exchange programs, including (a) deliveries in and out of the Kern Water Bank, (b) banking and exchange programs with SGVMWD, (c) transfers with other SWP contractors or their member units, and (d) transfers with other SWP contractors or their member units with established water banking or exchange programs.

Lead Agency Contact Person: Dale K. Melville

Telephone: (559) 449-2700

Signature:  **Title:** Manager-Engineer **Date:** 7-24-2020
Dale K. Melville

- Signed by Lead Agency
- Signed by Applicant

Date received for filing OPR:

Governor's Office of Planning & Research

Date received for filing by County Clerk:

AUG 04 2020
STATE CLEARINGHOUSE

[This Notice of Exemption has been prepared as an accommodation to DWR to provide DWR and other parties a better understanding of the absence of impacts related to the DRWD-SGVMWD 2020 Water Banking Program. DRWD has determined that the exchange program has been adequately covered under the CEQA documentation prepared for the District's 2015 Update to the 2012 Agricultural Water Management Plan (SCH #2016021110), CEQA documentation prepared for the initial 1995 water banking program (SCH #94042003), and CEQA actions for subsequent amendments to the 1995 program.]