



# California Environmental Quality Act NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

**To: Office of Planning and Research**  
State Clearinghouse  
1400 Tenth Street  
Sacramento, California 95814

**From: The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California**  
700 North Alameda Street Los  
Angeles, California 90012

**Project Title:** Settlement Agreement between Metropolitan Water District and Imperial Irrigation District regarding Colorado River Drought Contingency Plan

**Project Location - Specific:** throughout Metropolitan's Distribution System and Service Area (see map)

**Project Location - City:**

**Project Location - County:** Ventura, Los Angeles, Orange

**Description of Project:**

Riverside, San Bernardino, San Diego

The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California (MWD) and the Imperial Irrigation District (IID) have settled two lawsuits filed by IID against MWD related to the Colorado River Lower Basin Drought Contingency Plan (DCP). As part of the settlement, MWD will temporarily store for IID a portion of 87,594 acre-feet (less storage losses) of Colorado River water that MWD diverted in 2018, which may be returned to IID under certain circumstances through 2026. Additionally, during 2021 through 2026, IID may store up to 50,000 acre-feet (at no more than 25,000 acre-feet per year) of conserved Colorado River water in MWD's Lake Mead Intentionally Created Surplus account. If MWD is required to make DCP contributions, IID will assist MWD by contributing the lesser of either three percent of California's DCP contribution or the amount of water IID has stored with MWD.

**Name of Public Agency Approving Project:** The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California

**Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project:** The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California

**Exempt Status:**

- Emergency Project--Repairs [Public Resources Code §21080(b)(2); State CEQA Guidelines
- Emergency Project--Prevent [Public Resources Code §21080(b)(4); State CEQA Guidelines
- Categorical Exemption, State CEQA Guidelines §15301, Class 1;
- Statutory Exemptions, State CEQA Guidelines
- Other, State CEQA Guidelines

**Reasons why project is exempt:**

The actions of authorizing and entering into an agreement to settle litigation related to the implementation of the DCP and related agreements with Imperial Irrigation District are exempt under the provisions of CEQA and the State CEQA Guidelines. The actions outlined in the settlement terms would involve continued operation and implementation of existing facilities, programs and activities involving negligible or no expansion beyond that existing at the time of the lead agency's determination, and therefore these actions qualify for a Class 1 Categorical Exemption (State CEQA Guidelines Section 15301).

**Lead Agency Contact:** Sean Carlson at (213) 217-6276

**Signature:** Sean Carlson

**Date:** 9/22/21

Environmental Planning Manager, The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California

Date received for filing: