

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

To: Office of Planning and Research
Post Office Box 3044
Sacramento, California 95812

From: Department of Water Resources
Project Water Management Office
1516 9th Street
Sacramento, California 95814

Project Title: Agreement Between the Department of Water Resources of the State of California and the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California (SWPAO #22002).

Location – Specific: From the Delta to Metropolitan Water District of Southern California's turnout(s) located on the California Aqueduct.

Location – County: Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Diego Counties

Description of Activity: This project will make available up to 48,688 acre-feet of Metropolitan Water District of Southern California's (MWDSC) Flex Storage water in Lake Perris on the East Branch of the California Aqueduct under Article 54 of MWDSC's water supply contract with the California Department of Water Resources (DWR), for withdrawal by MWDSC from Castaic Lake on the West Branch of the California Aqueduct. The water will be delivered to MWDSC through existing facilities for use in its service area. Further withdrawal of Flex Storage from Lake Perris is not currently possible because the downstream conveyance facilities are being utilized for the reverse flow of non-project water from Diamond Valley Lake to meet MWDSC's demands for water due to drought (Agreement SWPAO # 21006). In addition, the highest demand for SWP water supply in MWDSC's service area is near the West Branch of the California Aqueduct, whereas other supplies are currently being used to meet the demands in the vicinity of the East Branch of the California Aqueduct during the drought. MWDSC will restore the water taken under SWPAO #22002 by providing an equivalent amount of replacement water in accordance with Article 54 of MWDSC's water supply contract.

Name of Public Agency Approving or Carrying out Activity: MWDSC and DWR (responsible agency)

Exempt Status:

- Ministerial
- Declared Emergency
- Emergency Project (Sec. 21080(b)(4); 15269(c))
- Categorical Exemption: Class 1; CEQA Guidelines Section 15301, existing facility
- Statutory Exemption:

Reason why activity is exempt:

- a. The Governor's October 19, 2021 Proclamation of a State of Emergency declared the statewide drought state of emergency. On November 9, 2021, the MWDSC Board of Directors adopted a resolution declaring a Regional Drought Emergency. The project is needed to deliver water to the areas of need in response to the statewide and regional drought emergencies and to meet MWDSC's minimum human health and safety demands for water.
- b. SWP long-term water supply contracts include provisions for delivery within SWP place of use. Existing facilities will be used and no construction is required to implement the proposed delivery, and there will be no change in land use.

Responsible Agency Contact Person: Patrick Luzuriaga

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Signature: Brian G. Heiland acting for _____
John Leahigh, Water Operations Executive Manager
Division of Operation and Maintenance
Department of Water Resources

Date: 12/29/2021

Date received for filing by OPR: _____