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**CERTIFICATE OF DETERMINATION  
OF EXEMPTION/EXCLUSION FROM ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW**

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Project Title: Little Butano Creek Flow Enhancement, Butano State Park Project

Project Location: The project will temporarily impact less than 1-acre of Butano State Park land which includes staging areas and spoil sites. Butano State Park is located at 1500 Cloverdale Road, Pescadero CA 94060. Geographic coordinates are: 37.205191 N, -122.334386 W.

Assessor's Parcel Numbers: 089-080-010

City and County: Unincorporated, San Mateo County

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Description of Nature and Purpose of Project:

The San Mateo Resources Conservation District (RCD), in partnership with California State Parks (CSP), is proposing to fix and upgrade Butano State Park's water system through a variety of actions that include: replacing failing distribution mainline, repairing leaks, installing water savings fixtures and constructing a 100,000 gallon water storage tank at Butano State Park. The RCD has applied for funding for this project through the Wildlife Conservation Board Proposition 1 Stream Flow Enhancement Program.

Currently, Butano State Park relies on surface water from Little Butano Creek to supply all water related infrastructure and user demand. This project would allow for increased water security, especially in years of drought, by adding an additional water storage.

The goals of the project are to improve instream flow conditions in Butano Creek and improve water security for Butano State Park located in upper Little Butano Creek Watershed, San Mateo County. The project goals will be accomplished by replacing the park's leaking mainlines and relocating them to roadways along with various efficiency upgrades and a storage component to allow for reduced diversions in the dry season and water security in drought years. This project will help protect streamflow in 10.25 mi of Little Butano and Butano Creek especially during the summer months when stream flows are at their lowest levels. These efforts will protect habitat for native steelhead trout (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*) and coho salmon (*Oncorhynchus kisutch*). This project is identified as a priority recovery action in the following documents:

- Pescadero-Butano Watershed Assessment ESA 2004. Environmental Science Associates Pacific Watershed Associates, O'Connor Environmental, Inc. Albion Environmental, Inc. Dennis Jackson.
  - California Department of Fish and Game, 2004, Recovery Strategy for California Coho Salmon, California Department of Fish and Game, Sacramento, CA
  - California Department of Fish and Wildlife, 2013, Updated Statewide 2013 Task List for the Steelhead Restoration and Management Plan for California, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, Sacramento, CA
  - NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service, 2012, Recovery Plan for Evolutionarily Significant Unit of Central California Coast Coho Salmon Final Plan, NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service, Santa Rosa, CA
  - NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service, 2011, North-Central Coast Recovery Domain 5 Year Review, NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service, Long Beach, CA
  - NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service, 2007, Federal Recovery Outline for the Distinct Population Segment of Central California Coast Steelhead, NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service, Santa Rosa, CA
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Name of Person, Board, Commission or Department Proposing to Carry Out Project:

San Mateo Resource Conservation District

Stephanie MacDonald

80 Stone Pine Road, Suite 100

Half Moon Bay, CA 94019

EXEMPT STATUS:

Categorical Exemption, Class 3 [CEQA State Guidelines, Section 15303]

Categorical Exemption, Class 33 [CEQA State Guidelines, Section 15333]

REMARKS: See next page.

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Contact Person:

Stephanie MacDonald

Telephone:

(650) 712-7765x118

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5/25/2022

Date of Determination:

I do hereby certify that the above determination has been made pursuant to State and Local requirements.

cc:



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**Stephanie MacDonald, Project Manager**

**REMARKS:**

The project will improve summertime streamflow conditions and water security for Butano State Parks domestic water system. The following provides a brief description of the project, and an explanation for why the project qualifies for a Categorical Exemption from Class 3 (15303) and Class 33 (15333).

Project Description

This project focuses on decreasing water usage and increasing water security for Butano State Park by replacing the leaky and vulnerable distribution mainline, repairing leaks, efficiency upgrades to water fixtures, and increased water storage capacity for Butano State Park. The RCD, Butano State Park, and SRT have created project designs to accomplish these goals by moving the unprotected aboveground mainline distribution system to a trench burial in existing roadways, fixing leaks and replacing inefficient water fixtures, and building a 100,000 gallon water storage tank to allow for decreased withdrawals from Little Butano Creek during the dry season. This project will help protect streamflow in Butano Creek especially during the summer months when stream flows are at their lowest levels.

Class 3: New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures (CEQA State Guidelines, Section 15303)

Class 3 consists of construction and location of limited numbers of new, small facilities or structures; installation of small new equipment and facilities in small structures; and the conversion of existing small structures from one use to another where only minor modifications are made in the exterior of the structure. The numbers of structures described in this section are the maximum allowable on any legal parcel.

Examples of this exemption that this project is most related to include, but are not limited to:

(d) Water main, sewage, electrical, gas, and other utility extensions, including street improvements, of reasonable length to serve such construction.

The project will improve and expand an existing raw water storage tank and relocate approximately 5,000 ft. of pipeline. The permanent area of impact for the storage tank will be less than 1,500 sq ft. as the 100,000 gallon tank is replacing a 5,000 gallon tank.

Class 33: Small Habitat Restoration Projects (CEQA State Guidelines, Section 15333)

Section 15333 of the guidelines describes Small Habitat Restoration Projects that do not exceed 5 acres in size and are constructed for the purpose of maintenance, restoration, enhancement, or protection of habitat for fish, plants or wildlife. As described above, the project site is less than 5 acres in size and is proposed to improve instream flow and provide for higher functioning aquatic and riparian habitat for species that may spawn, nest, forage, or transit Little Butano Creek.

The following three bullets list the criteria for projects to meet Categorical Exemption 15333 as described in the CEQA Statute and Guidelines.

*(a) There would be no significant adverse impact on endangered, rare or threatened species or their habitat pursuant to section 15065*

The project occurs mainly within paved and unpaved roadways within Butano State Park, as well as at an existing tank site near an existing water treatment plant. The pipelines will be installed under the roadways while the new raw water storage tank will be installed at the existing tank site. Due to the pre-disturbed nature of these areas and the existing infrastructure, most project activities will be taking place outside of prime habitat for species that live within the park. Biological monitors will be present during critical construction phases to ensure that no species of concern are in danger of being harmed.

Project activities will not result in a significant impact on endangered, rare or threatened species or their habitat. As noted above, the project will improve streamflow and provide for higher functioning aquatic and riparian habitat for species that may spawn, nest, forage, or transit the project vicinity, including steelhead trout and coho salmon. Construction-related best management practices and precautionary actions will be utilized to ensure that sensitive habitats are not significantly impacted. Additionally, erosion control measures such as fiber rolls and silt fence will be installed where needed to further reduce the risk of sedimentation resulting from project activities.

The project does not have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment and will not substantially reduce the habitat or threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community; substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of any endangered, rare or threatened species; or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory.

*(b) There are no hazardous materials at or around the project site that may be disturbed or removed*

No hazardous materials are known to the site or project vicinity.

*(c) The project will not result in impacts that are significant when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects*

The proposed project will not result in adverse impacts that are significant when viewed in connection with effects of past, current, and probable future projects. Construction-related impacts will be short-term and limited to the project site. As noted above, best management practices will be implemented to ensure construction-related impacts on sensitive resources are avoided or minimized. The project will not significantly adversely affect public services, geologic stability, soils, or health risk. In the near- and long-term, the project will improve late summer and early fall streamflow and provide for higher functioning aquatic and riparian habitat.

The proposed project is exempt under Class 33 as it restores streamflow in Little Butano Creek for aquatic habitat during the time that low flows are a principal limiting factor to the recovery of steelhead trout and coho salmon populations in the creek (Pescadero-Butano Watershed Assessment ESA 2004). By storing more water when streamflow is more abundant (winter and spring), the project will reduce and eliminate diversions when streamflow is dangerously low for aquatic species (late summer and early fall).

CEQA State Guidelines Section 15300.2 states that a categorical exemption shall not be used for an activity where there is a reasonable possibility that the activity will have a significant effect on the environment due to unusual circumstances. As described above, there are no unusual circumstances surrounding the proposed project that suggest a reasonable possibility of a significant environmental effect.

## **References**

California Department of Fish and Game, 2004, Recovery Strategy for California Coho Salmon, California Department of Fish and Game, Sacramento, CA

California Department of Fish and Wildlife, 2013, Updated Statewide 2013 Task List for the Steelhead Restoration and Management Plan for California, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, Sacramento, CA

NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service, 2012, Recovery Plan for Evolutionarily Significant Unit of Central California Coast Coho Salmon Final Plan, NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service, Santa Rosa, CA

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Pescadero-Butano Watershed Assessment ESA, 2004. Environmental Science Associates Pacific Watershed Associates, O'Connor Environmental, Inc. Albion Environmental, Inc. Dennis Jackson.