



NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

TO: Office of Planning & Research
 P. O. Box 3044, Room 212
 Sacramento, California 95812-3044

FROM: San Joaquin County
 Community Development Department
 1810 East Hazelton Avenue
 Stockton, California 95205

County Clerk, County of San Joaquin

Project Title: Waste Discharge Requirements for California Nuggets/Golden Gate Nut

Project Location - Specific: The project site is located on the west side of Frederick Road; 3,300 feet north of North Ripon Road, Ripon. (APN/Address: 228-130-20 & 21 / 23073 Fredericks Road, Ripon) (Supervisory District: 5)

Project Location – City: Ripon

Project Location – County: San Joaquin County

Project Description: The facility is a nut processing facility that currently operates under Waste Discharge Requirements (WDRs) issued by the Central Valley Water Board related to discharge of treated wastewater to approximately 5 acres (APN: 228-130-21) at their facility. The facility has purchased approximately 8 acres of almonds immediately north of the footprint of the plant (APN: 228-130-20) to increase the land application area for discharge of their process water. Prior to discharge, their process water, which consists of water used to process corn nuts and almonds, is first directed to a series of settling tanks and a dissolved air flotation (DAF) system to remove solids and suspended solids, then to an aeration pond. The WDRs requires weekly pond/effluent monitoring and quarterly groundwater monitoring to evaluate nutrient loading to the land application area. The facility intends to irrigate the additional 8 acres of almonds with process water and possible convert the almonds to forage crop to maximize nutrient uptake. Condor is assisting the facility to submit an amendment to the Report of Waste Discharge (ROWD) to the Water Board to provide updated information on facility operations since WDRs were issued in 2014.

There are currently no plans to alter the 8 acres in any way; the orchard is already equipped with micro irrigation, which will be kept and adapted if necessary to accommodate the facility's process water. For now, it will be kept to almonds. The facility intends to add microbes to the process water (at the pond or settling tanks) to evaluate if that will assist in the denitrification cycle. Any future expansions of the facility in regard to building square footage or land used for production purposes may require an additional land use permit.

The Property is zoned AG-40 (General Agriculture-40-acre minimum) and the General Plan designation A/G (General Agriculture).

Project Proponent(s): California Nuggets / Golden Gate Nut

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: San Joaquin County Community Development Department

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: Jennifer Jolley, Interim Director
 San Joaquin County Community Development Department

Exemption Status:

General Exemptions: Section 15061(b)(3)

Categorical Exemptions: Section 15301, Class 1; Section 15304, Class 4; and Section 15306, Class 6.

Exemption Reason:

The following categorical exemptions apply to this project:

Processed under the provisions of California Code of Regulations Section 15061(b)(3); Section 15301, Class 1; Section 15304, Class 4; and Section 15306, Class 6; which are exempt from CEQA.

This project is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) per CEQA Guidelines section 15061(b)(3). Section 15061(b)(3) states that "CEQA applies only to projects which have the potential for causing a significant effect on the environment. 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." There is no possibility that this project may have a significant effect on the environment and, therefore, the project is not subject to CEQA.

This project is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) per CEQA Guidelines Section 15301. Class 1 (Existing Facilities) consists of the operation, repair, maintenance, permitting, leasing, licensing, or minor alteration of existing public or private structures, facilities, mechanical equipment, or topographical features, involving negligible or no expansion of existing or former use.

This project is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) per CEQA Guidelines Section 15304. Class 4 (Minor Alterations to Land) applies to minor public or private alterations of the condition of land, water, or vegetation that do not include the removal of healthy, mature, scenic trees except for forestry and agricultural purposes. The exemption includes grading on land with a slope of less than 10% or new gardening or landscaping.

This project is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) per CEQA Guidelines Section 15306. Class 6 consists of basic data collection, research, experimental management, and resource evaluation activities which do not result in a serious or major disturbance to an environmental resource. These may be strictly for information gathering purposes, or as part of a study leading to an action which a public agency has not yet approved, adopted, or funded.

Lead Agency Contact Person:

Jennifer Jolley Phone: (209) 468-8908 FAX: (209) 468-3163 Email: jjolley@sjgov.org

Signature: Domenique Date: 6-20-22
Name: Domenique Martorella Title: Deputy County Clerk
Signed by Lead Agency

Date Received for filing at OPR: _____