



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
P.O. Box 54153
Los Angeles, California 90054-0153

Project Name: Coachella Valley Water District Colorado River Water Conservation Program

Project Location - Specific: CVWD Service Area within Riverside County

Project Location - City: Coachella **Project Location - County:** Riverside

Description of Project: To assist in cooperatively managing Colorado River reservoir levels during drought conditions now existing in the Colorado River Basin, MWD and CVWD enter into an agreement under which CVWD will undertake the Water Conservation Program and Metropolitan will pay CVWD for each acre-foot (af) of Colorado River water conserved under the Program through temporary fallowing and other agriculture conservation, up to a maximum amount of 10,000 af per year during calendar years 2022 and 2023.

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

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: Coachella Valley Water District

Exempt Status: (check as applicable)

- Ministerial (Public Resources Code §21080(b)(1); State CEQA Guidelines)
- Not a Project (Public Resources Code § 21065, State CEQA Guidelines § 15378)
- Declared Emergency (Public Resources Code §21080(b)(3); State CEQA Guidelines)
- Emergency Project (Public Resources Code §21080(b)(2); State CEQA Guidelines)
- Emergency Project (Public Resources Code §21080(b)(4); State CEQA Guidelines)
- Categorical Exemption, Class 1 Categorical Exemption (Section 15301)
- Statutory Exemption, State CEQA Guidelines § 15277
- Other, State CEQA Guidelines

Reasons why project is exempt:

This program will not result in expansion of use of CVWD's existing irrigation distribution system or its irrigation drainage system. Accordingly, since the proposed program involves operation and implementation of CVWD's existing irrigation distribution facilities and irrigation drainage system facilities with no or negligible expansion of use beyond that existing at the time of the lead agency's determination, these actions qualify for a Class 1 Categorical Exemption (State CEQA Guidelines Section 15301).

Environmental impacts expected from the implementation of the 2007 Interim Guidelines For Lower Basin Shortages and the Coordinated Operations of Lake Powell and Lake Mead (Guidelines) were analyzed in an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), pursuant to National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969 (refer to the following link (<http://www.usbr.gov/lc/region/programs/strategies/FEIS/index.html>)). The proposed action of using conserved water from the proposed Conservation Program to assist in managing reservoir elevations is within the scope of analysis of actions that were previously analyzed in that EIS. Thus, to the extent the proposed actions involve or may affect areas outside of California, such as at Lake Mead or on the portions of the Colorado River in Nevada or Arizona, they are exempt from CEQA under a Statutory Exemption (Public Resources Code Section 21080(b)(14) and State CEQA Guidelines Section 15277). The proposed action of adopting the Coachella Valley Water District Colorado River Water Conservation Program for 2022 and 2023 is exempt under the provisions of CEQA and the State CEQA Guidelines.

Lead Agency Contact Person: Sean Carlson at 213-217-76276

Signature: _____

Date: July 14, 2022

Team Manager
The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California

Date received for filing: