

NOTICE OF INTENT TO ADOPT INITIAL STUDY/MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION

DATE: August 2, 2022

Based upon the conclusions set forth in the Initial Study, the CEQA Lead Agency finds that the proposed Project, which includes measures and mitigations designed to minimize environmental impacts, would not result in significant adverse effects on the environment. The CEQA Lead Agency has prepared this Notice of Intent to adopt the Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) pursuant to 14 CCR Section 15072.

Title: Project Nexus

Project Description: The Turlock Irrigation District (TID), in partnership with the California Department of Water Resources (DWR), Solar AquaGrid LLC, and the University of California, proposes to implement Project Nexus (Project Nexus, or Project), which includes installation of solar panels that would cover and span various sections of TID's existing irrigation canal system. Project Nexus would serve as a proof of concept to pilot, research, and study solar over canal designs and deployment on behalf of the State of California using TID land and electric grid access. It is expected that the Project would provide various co-benefits, including reduced water evaporation resulting from mid-day shade and wind reduction, water quality improvements through reduced vegetative growth, reduced canal maintenance through reduced vegetative growth, and renewable power generation, among other benefits. The Project also includes installation of energy storage facilities.

Project Location: The proposed Project sites (referred to in this document and the IS/MND as *Site 1 and Site 2*) are along existing canals in Stanislaus County that are owned by TID. Project Site 1 is between Ceres and Turlock, approximately 2 miles west of State Route 99, and Project Site 2 is approximately 19 miles east-southeast of Modesto, about 1.6 miles south of State Route 132 (also known as Yosemite Boulevard).

Project Proponent: TID

Lead Agency: TID

Public Review Period: A 30-day public review period will begin on August 2, 2022. Written comments must be submitted to the Lead Agency no later than 5:00 p.m. on September 1, 2022.

Available Material: A copy of the draft IS/MND and supporting material are available online at: <https://www.tid.org/about-tid/current-projects/project-nexus/> or physically at 333 E. Canal Drive, Turlock, CA 95381.

Contact for Public Comments: Written comments on the draft IS/MND may be addressed to: Bill Penney, Turlock Irrigation District, and can be delivered by hard copy to 333 E. Canal Drive, Turlock, CA 95381, or electronically by email to bfpenney@TID.ORG.

For questions, please contact Bill Penney at (209) 883-8385.