

Notice of Exemption

Appendix E

To: Office of Planning and Research
P.O. Box 3044, Room 113
Sacramento, CA 95812-3044
County Clerk
County of: Kern
1115 Thurston Avenue
Bakersfield, CA 93301

From: (Public Agency): Tejon-Castac Water District
c/o Angelica Martin
PO Box 1000, Tejon Ranch, CA 93243
(Address)

Project Title: Component 2: GSP Reporting, Data Gap Filling, Outreach and SGMA Compliance...

Project Applicant: Tejon-Castac Water District

Project Location - Specific:
See Attachment 1

Project Location - City: Project Location - County: Kern

Description of Nature, Purpose and Beneficiaries of Project:
See Attachment 1

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: Tejon-Castac Water District

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: Angelica Martin

- Exempt Status: (check one):
Ministerial (Sec. 21080(b)(1); 15266);
Declared Emergency (Sec. 21080(b)(3); 15269(a));
Emergency Project (Sec. 21080(b)(4); 15269(b)(c));
Categorical Exemption. State type and section number: See Attachment 1
Statutory Exemptions. State code number:

Reasons why project is exempt:
See Attachment 1

Lead Agency
Contact Person: Angelica Martin Area Code/Telephone/Extension: (661) 663-4262

- If filed by applicant:
1. Attach certified document of exemption finding.
2. Has a Notice of Exemption been filed by the public agency approving the project? Yes No

Signature: [Handwritten Signature] Date: 5/16/2014 Title: Board Secretary

Signed by Lead Agency Signed by Applicant

Authority cited: Sections 21083 and 21110, Public Resources Code. Date Received for filing at OPR:
Reference: Sections 21108, 21152, and 21152.1, Public Resources Code.

Attachment 1

Background: "Component 2: GSP Reporting, Data Gap Filling, Outreach and SGMA Compliance Activities" (Project) is a separate and distinct project effort proposed by the White Wolf Groundwater Sustainability Agency (WWGSA) under a package of activities funded by the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) under Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) Implementation Grant Agreement #4600015663 (Grant). The Project involves certain non-physical planning activities performed by WWGSA, including groundwater systems modeling and conditions reporting (the "Planning Activities"), as well as the installation of monitoring well(s) for the purposes of data collection and to evaluate groundwater resources (the "MW Install"). The WWGSA holds SGMA authorities and, through its member agencies, maintains jurisdiction within the White Wolf Subbasin portion of the San Joaquin Valley Groundwater Basin (the "Subbasin", DWR Basin No. 5-022.18). Tejon-Castaic Water District (TCWD) is a formal member of the WWGSA and is filing this Notice of Exemption (NOE) on behalf of the Project proponents. This NOE only to this Project and none of the others receiving funding via the Grant.

Project Location: MW Install consists of the physical installation of up to three groundwater monitoring wells, proposed for the following locations:

- Monitoring Well #1: Site of current RMW-WWB-009 defunct monitoring well located at Wheeler Ridge-Maricopa Water Storage District's (WRMWSD) "PB-1 Pump Station" along their "850 Canal" within Kern County Assessor's Parcel Number (APN) 238-071-03.
- Monitoring Well #2: At or near site of current RMW-WWB-005 defunct monitoring well located on private land at APN 238-030-37.
- Monitoring Well #3: At or near site of current RMW-WWB-007 defunct monitoring well located on private land at APN 238-040-18.

The nearest communities to these sites are Mettler and Wheeler Ridge, both in Kern County.

Description of Nature, Purpose, and Beneficiaries of Project: Project is being pursued by WWGSA to assist the agency with its regulatory obligations and to support the planning and implementation activities defined in its Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP). The GSP provides WWGSA's roadmap for achieving certain sustainability conditions in the Subbasin as mandated by SGMA. The MW Install activities which include the installation of up to three groundwater monitoring wells will be utilized to monitor Subbasin static groundwater levels and to analyze key factors such as sub-surface flows, long-term trends, among other GSP-defined factors. The data collected from the contemplated monitoring well(s) will replace the currently defunct RMW-WWB-009, RMW-WWB-005, and RMW-WWB-007 monitoring wells while facilitating continuous measurement data near the existing sites to complement the historic collection data. These wells will directly support WWGSA's efforts to monitor its Subbasin conditions for SGMA-defined "undesirable results" and shall be reported publicly to DWR and other mandated sources.

Reasons why Project is exempt (from CEQA): The Planning Activities are not considered a "project" under CEQA Guidelines. The MW Install qualifies for the following exemptions:

- Section 105302(c), Class 2 Categorical Exemption which consists of replacement or reconstruction of existing structures and facilities, where the new structure will be located on the same site as the structure replaced and will have substantially the same purpose and capacity as the structure replaced, given the installed monitoring well(s) are replacing existing ones located on the same parcels – see *Project Location*.

- Section 15304, Class 4 Categorical Exemption which consists of minor public alterations in the condition of land, water, and/or vegetation, in this case, relatively minor alterations for the installation of monitoring well(s) equipment.
- Section 15306, Class 6 Categorical Exemption which 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, given the purpose of this work is for data collection to evaluate and manage and environmental resource managed by the WWGSA (a public agency).
- Section 10561(b)(3) of the CEQA Guidelines provides that a project is exempt from CEQA if the activity is covered by the "common sense exemption" that CEQA applies only to projects which have the potential for causing a significant affect on the environment. The installed monitoring well(s) are not expected to: 1) occupy a surface area greater than 16 square feet, similar to the pre-existing defunct monitoring wells on-site, and 2) will not result in any consumptive uses of water provided by the installed wells.

Given these exemptions and given the MW Install will not result in any serious or major disturbance to an environmental resource, the MW Install has been determined to be exempt from CEQA analyses.