

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

TO: Office of Planning and Research
State Clearinghouse
1400 Tenth Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

FROM: Russian River County Sanitation District
c/o Sonoma County Water Agency
404 Aviation Blvd.
Santa Rosa, CA 95403

County Clerk
County of Sonoma
585 Fiscal Drive, Room 103
Santa Rosa, CA 95403

Project Title: Russian River Redwoods Fee Title Purchase and Conservation Easement

Project Location- Specific: 12400 Mays Canyon Road, located south of Guerneville on the southeast side of the Russian River, between Neely Road and Mays Canyon Road

Project Location – City: Unincorporated

Project Location – County: Sonoma

Description of Nature, Purpose and Beneficiaries of Project: Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District (Open Space District) is funding the Russian River County Sanitation District's (Sanitation District) purchase of fee interest of the 394.23-acre Russian River Redwoods property. The Sanitation District is acquiring the property for the continued operation of an existing spray field irrigation field used for disposal of treated wastewater that is essential for the Sanitation District's operations. The Sanitation District will execute a Purchase and Sale Agreement with the landowner Save the Redwoods League. As a condition of the Open Space District's funding, the Sanitation District will convey a conservation easement and recreation conservation covenant, along with an associated Offer to Dedicate the fee interest, to the Open Space District at closing. The conservation easement will protect the natural, scenic, recreational, and education resources values of the property. The Sanitation District's enabling legislation does not allow for it to provide or fund recreation, so cooperation from other interested partners is required to realize beneficial use by the public. The recreation conservation covenant will ensure the property is open to the public within 10 years of, and in perpetuity as a park and open space preserve after, future compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: Russian River County Sanitation District

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: Russian River County Sanitation District

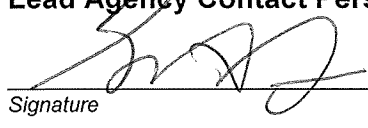
Exempt Status (check one):

- Ministerial (Sec. 21080(b)(1); 15268);
- Declared Emergency (Sec. 21080(b)(3); 15269(a));
- Emergency Project (Sec.21080 (b)(4); 15269(b)(c));
- Categorical Exemption. State type and section number: CEQA Guidelines Sections: 15301 (Existing facilities); 15316 (Transfer of ownership of land in order to create parks); 15317 (Open space contracts or easements); 15325 (Transfers of ownership of interest in land to preserve existing natural conditions and historical resources) (a) acquisition, sale, or other transfer of areas to preserve the existing natural conditions, including plant or animal habitats, (c) acquisition, sale, or other transfer of areas to allow restoration of natural conditions, including plant or animal habitats, and (f) acquisition, sale, or other transfer to preserve open space or lands for park purposes.
- Statutory Exemptions. State Code number: Public Resources Code Section 21080.28(a)(1) The acquisition, sale, or other transfer of interest in land by a public agency for any of the following purposes: (A) Preservation of natural conditions existing at the time of transfer, (B) Restoration of natural conditions, and (F) Preservation of open space or lands for park purposes.
- Other: CEQA Guidelines Section 15004(b)(2)(A)

Reasons why project is exempt: The project consists of acquisition of property adjacent to existing Sanitation District facilities. The project and conservation easement would allow for continued operation and maintenance of the Sanitation District's existing irrigation spray field on the property (CEQA Guidelines Section 15301), which will involve negligible or no expansion of existing or former use. The purchase and sale agreement and execution of the conservation easement and recreation covenant, along with an associated Offer to Dedicate the fee interest to the Open Space District is exempt because the purpose is to preserve the natural conditions of the property, including plant and animal habitats; the restoration of natural conditions, including plant and animal habitats, and the preservation of open space or lands for park purposes. CEQA Guidelines Section 15004(b)(2)(A) states that agencies "may enter into land acquisition agreements when the agency has conditioned the agency's future use of the site on CEQA compliance." Further development of the property for recreational purposes or expansion of treated wastewater disposal would be subject to future environmental review pursuant to CEQA.

Lead Agency Contact Person: Connie Barton

Area Code/Telephone/Extension: (707) 547-1905

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Signature Title Date
General Manager 8.20.24

Signed by Lead Agency

Signed by Applicant

Date received for filing at OPR: _____