

Notice of Exemption

Appendix E

To: Office of Planning and Research
P.O. Box 3044, Room 113
Sacramento, CA 95812-3044

County Clerk

From: (Public Agency): RCD of Santa Cruz County
820 Bay Ave, Suite136
Capitola, CA 95010

County of: Santa Cruz

701 Ocean St, Room 210
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

San Mateo

555 County Center
Redwood City, CA
94063

Monterey

168 West Alisal
Street, 1st Floor
Salinas, CA

San Benito

1601 Lana Way
Hollister, CA
95023

Project Title: State Water Efficiency and Enhancement Program (SWEEP) Block Grant

Project Applicant: Resource Conservation District of Santa Cruz County (RCDSCC)

Project Location - Specific:

35 farming operations located in existing agricultural land in Santa Cruz, San Mateo, San Benito and Monterey Counties

Project Location – City: Unincorporated County

Project Location – County: Santa Cruz, San Mateo, San Benito, Monterey

Description of Nature, Purpose and Beneficiaries of Project:

The State Water Efficiency and Enhancement Program Block Grant Pilot (SWEEP BGP) administrated by the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) is a part of the State Water Efficiency and Enhancement Program (SWEEP), which was first developed in 2014 in response to severe drought. SWEEP provides financial incentives for California agricultural operations to invest in irrigation systems that save water and reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. Through this Block Grant Pilot, CDFA is providing funding to organizations that will further disburse the funds to individual agricultural operations. CDFA aims to support regional capacity building and provide opportunities for regional strategic use of SWEEP funding to address local concerns regarding water conservation and water efficiency. With this particular SWEEP block grant, the RCDs of Santa Cruz, San Mateo and Monterey Counties are supporting 35 different farming operations (beneficiaries), which will receive grants to implement water and energy conservation projects including the following: irrigation pump upgrades, installing variable frequency drives (VFDs) to improve pumping energy efficiency, replacing diesel pumps with electric pumps, installing solar energy to run pumps, replacing old and leaky pipelines, upgrading inefficient irrigation systems (primarily sprinkler and drip), installing new filtration systems, installing water management tools to improve irrigation scheduling and water conservation.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: RCD Santa Cruz County and CA Dept of Food and Ag (CDFA)

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: RCD of Santa Cruz

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: Section 15301 (Class 1 Existing Facilities), Section 15302 (Class 2 Replacement or Reconstruction, and Section 15304 (Class 4 Minor Alterations to Land)
- Statutory Exemptions. State code number: _____

Reasons why project is exempt:

The Project will involve replacement (upgrading efficiency) or minor alteration of existing, private agricultural land

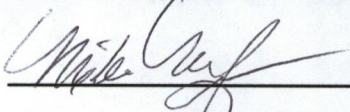
and facilities, involving no expansion of use. All project beneficiaries are actively farming on long-established agricultural land. Project activities are required to result in water savings and reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. No project activities will result in expansion of agricultural lands, deepening or drilling of new groundwater wells, or negatively impacting natural habitat surrounding farms.

Lead Agency

Contact Person: Sacha Lozano Area Code/Telephone/Extension: (831) 205-3758

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:  Date: 9/23/2024 Title: Vice President

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.

Section 15301 (Class 1 Existing Facilities), Section 15302 (Class 2 Replacement or Reconstruction), and Section 15304 (Class 4 Minor Alterations to Land)