

NOTICE OF INTENT TO ADOPT A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION

BUTTE WATER DISTRICT

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that Butte Water District intends to adopt a Mitigated Negative Declaration for the following project on, or after, January 9, 2025, pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and CEQA Guidelines.

1. Project Title: Butte Water District 2025 Water Transfer Program

2. Description and Location of Project: The Butte Water District (BWD) proposes to sell up to 20,534 acre-feet (af) of water to the participating member districts of the State Water Contractors Incorporated or other South of Delta purchasers, including one or more Central Valley Project contractors (Buyers) during the 2025 irrigation season. Depending on hydrologic conditions, Buyers may seek up to approximately 300,000 af of transfer water from various willing sellers in the Sacramento Valley during the 2025 irrigation season. Purchasing this water would lessen potential water supply shortages to these Buyers that may occur as a result of dry hydrologic conditions and regulatory restrictions on pumping in the Delta. As a willing seller, BWD would make up to 20,534 af of water available to Buyers by idling rice cropland (i.e., non-irrigation of farmland by voluntary participants) and/or through groundwater substitution, (i.e., using groundwater supplies instead of surface water supplies). Water made available by crop idling and/or groundwater substitution within the boundaries of the BWD would then be retained and stored by the Department of Water Resources (DWR) at Lake Oroville for delivery to Buyers. Groundwater pumping, if applicable, would only occur within that portion of the BWD boundaries that lie within Sutter County and in a manner consistent with the Groundwater Sustainability Plan developed under the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA).

The project area, from which the water for this transfer will be made available, is defined by the BWD boundaries which encompass approximately 32,505 acres in the northern Sacramento Valley in Butte and Sutter Counties. Of that acreage, 24,638 acres are irrigable. Within the BWD boundaries approximately 5,958 acres are dedicated primarily to the production of rice.

3. Review Period: The review period is December 4, 2024, through January 9, 2025. The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) allows a 30-day comment period. **All written comments must be received by the close of the public comment period by the Board of Directors on January 9, 2025, in order to be considered.**

4. Public Meetings/Comments: The Mitigated Negative Declaration shall be considered for adoption at the regular Board Meeting of January 9, 2025, at 10 a.m. at the Butte Water District office at the below address. Prior to final consideration by the Board, the public will be allowed to testify on matters concerning the proposed adoption of a Mitigated Negative Declaration. Comments may also be made before the Board Meeting by writing at any time during the review period to Donnie Stinnett at 735 Virginia St, Gridley, CA 95948.

5. Location of Documents: A copy of the Proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration and Initial Study, including supporting documentation, are available for public review at buttewaterdistrict.org and during business hours at Butte Water District's office at 735 Virginia St, Gridley, CA 95948 beginning December 4, 2024. The staff contact is Donnie Stinnett at 530-682-9205 or donnie@buttewater.net.

6. Hazardous Waste Sites: The project location is not identified on any of the lists enumerated under Government Code Section 65962.5.

7. Proposed Finding Supporting Negative Declaration: Based on the Initial Study and the analysis, documents and record supporting the Initial Study, Butte Water District finds that adoption of the Project does not have a significant effect on the environment.

Dated: December 4, 2024



Donnie Stinnett, General Manager