

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

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

FROM: 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: Water Resources Investigations to Evaluate Streambed Clogging Impacts on Riverbank Filtration

Project Location- Specific: Information collection would occur at Sonoma Water's facilities located at 9765 Wohler Road and 10290 Westside Road.

Project Location – City: Forestville

Project Location – County: Sonoma

Description of Nature, Purpose and Beneficiaries of Project: Sonoma County Water Agency (Sonoma Water) uses riverbank filtration (RBF) as a sustainable alternative to traditional drinking-water treatment. RBF relies on maintaining the natural hydraulic connection between surface water and groundwater across the streambed of the Russian River. RBF operations are affected more directly by changes in environmental conditions (e.g., droughts, floods, nutrients) than conventional systems. During the most recent drought, reductions in water-withdrawal efficiencies at Sonoma Water's Wohler facility were significantly greater than have been observed in the past. Careful and ongoing study is needed to address any uncertainties that may exist from potential changes in surface-water quality and quantity to carefully plan for and mitigate operational risks and costs (e.g., pumping strategies).

Sonoma Water is coordinating with United States Geological Survey (USGS) to identify environmental drivers (winter storms, temperature, water quality) related to variability in abundance, structure, and persistence of microbial biomass within the hyporheic zone at Sonoma Water's RBF sites. Under the agreement, USGS will continue to collect and analyze groundwater, surface water, and streambed sediment samples to identify various factors related to water quality and biological responses in the Russian River streambed (e.g. streambed clogging) to changing climate, surface, and groundwater conditions, and predict possible future outcomes for riverbed filtration efficiency.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: Sonoma County Water Agency

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: Sonoma County Water Agency

Exempt Status (check one):

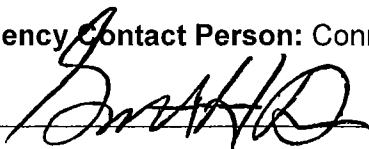
- Ministerial (Sec. 21080(b)(1); 15268);
- Declared Emergency (Sec. 21080(b)(3); 15269(a));
- Emergency Project (Sec.21080 (b)(4); 15269(b)(c));
- Categorical Exemption. State type and section number: CEQA Guidelines 15306: Information Collection
- Statutory Exemptions. State Code number:

Reasons why project is exempt: The project consists of data collection and research activities which do not result in a serious or major disturbance to an environmental resource or result in a substantial adverse change to a historical resource.

Lead Agency Contact Person: Connie Barton

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

Signature



General Manager
Title

2/24/2025
Date

- Signed by Lead Agency
- Signed by Applicant

Date received for filing at OPR: _____