

Notice of Exemption

To: Office of Planning and Research
Post Office Box 3044, Room 113
Sacramento, California 95812-3044

From: San Antonio Basin Groundwater
Sustainability Agency
1005 S. Broadway
Santa Maria, CA 93454

Clerk of the Board
County of Santa Barbara
105 E. Anapamu Street, Room 407
Santa Barbara, CA 93101

Project Title: Adoption of Ordinance No. 25-001 - An Ordinance of the Board Of Directors of the San Antonio Basin Groundwater Sustainability Agency Requiring Metering and Reporting of Groundwater Extraction

Project Applicant: San Antonio Basin Groundwater Sustainability Agency

Location – Specific: San Antonio Creek Valley Groundwater Basin (CA Dept. of Water Resources Basin No. 3-014)

Description of Nature, Purpose and Beneficiaries of Project:

The San Antonio Basin Groundwater Sustainability Agency (“Agency”) adopted Ordinance No. 25-001 (the “Ordinance”) at a regular Board of Directors meeting held on March 18, 2025. The Ordinance requires all landowners within the San Antonio Creek Valley Groundwater Basin, except de minimis extractors, to install measuring devices on groundwater extraction facilities and file reports on a biannual basis reporting groundwater extraction to the Agency. Pursuant to Water Code Section 10725 et seq., the Agency is empowered to enforce adopted rules, regulations, ordinances, and resolutions necessary and appropriate to implement its Groundwater Sustainability Plan (adopted 12/07/21), which identified the development of a metering and reporting program as a Tier 1 Management Action.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: San Antonio Basin Groundwater Sustainability Agency

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: San Antonio Basin Groundwater Sustainability Agency

Exempt Status:

- 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
- Statutory Exemption (Not a Project Under CEQA)

Reasons why activity is exempt:

The Agency’s Board of Directors finds that adoption of this Ordinance, including the SABGSA Rules and Regulations, is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act pursuant to Sections 15307, 15308, and 15061 subdivision (b)(3) of Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations (“CEQA Guidelines”) because the Ordinance will support implementation of the Agency’s Groundwater Sustainability Plan by establishing rules and regulations to support groundwater management in order to prevent environmental degradation associated with groundwater overdraft and said rules and regulations will not have a significant effect on the environment.

CEQA Guidelines Section 15307 – Protection of Natural Resources. Class 7 consists of actions taken by regulatory agencies, as authorized by state law or local ordinance, to maintain, restore, or enhance a natural resources. As stated above, the Agency adopted the ordinance to effectively implement sustainable groundwater management and thus the Agency’s action helps to maintain a natural resource. Accordingly, the Agency’s adoption of the Ordinance is exempt from CEQA pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15307.

CEQA Guidelines Section 15308 – Protection of the Environment. Class 8 consists of actions by regulatory agencies, as authorized by state law or local ordinance, to ensure the maintenance, restoration, enhancement, or protection of the environment. As stated above, the Agency adopted the ordinance to effectively implement sustainable groundwater management and thus the Agency’s action ensure the maintenance and protection of the environment — namely the groundwater basin. Accordingly, the Agency’s adoption of the Ordinance is exempt from CEQA pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15308.

CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3) – Common Sense Exemption. The “common sense” exemption set forth in CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3) exempts from CEQA certain projects if “it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the activity in question may have a significant effect on the environment.” As stated above, the Ordinance merely imposes a requirement to measure and report groundwater extraction. Accordingly, it can be seen with certainty that the ordinance requirement would not trigger any significant effect on the environment, and therefore the Agency’s adoption of the Ordinance is exempt from CEQA pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3).

Agency Contact Person: Stephanie Bertoux

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Signature: 
Stephanie Bertoux
Executive Director, San Antonio Basin Groundwater Sustainability Agency

Date: March 20, 2025

Date received for filing OPR: _____