

Summary Form for Electronic Document Submittal

Form F

Lead agencies may include 15 hardcopies of this document when submitting electronic copies of Environmental Impact Reports, Negative Declarations, Mitigated Negative Declarations, or Notices of Preparation to the State Clearinghouse (SCH). The SCH also accepts other summaries, such as EIR Executive Summaries prepared pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15123. Please include one copy of the Notice of Completion Form (NOC) with your submission and attach the summary to each electronic copy of the document.

SCH #: _____

Project Title: North Fork Ranch Frost Ponds

Lead Agency: Santa Barbara County Planning & Development

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Project Location: 7400 Highway 166, approximatley nine miles west of New Cuyama, Santa Barbara County
City County

Project Description (Proposed actions, location, and/or consequences).

The North Fork Ranch Frost Pond project would result in the construction and operation of three water storage reservoirs (frost ponds) located on the south side of State Route 166 on a 6,565-acre parcel. The project parcel is located at 7400 Highway 166, approximately nine miles west of the community of New Cuyama. The reservoirs would be used to supply frost protection water to approximately 840 acres of existing vineyards generally during the months of February, March and April. Each of the proposed reservoirs would be lined to prevent water infiltration, and each would occupy an area of approximately five acres and have the capacity to store up to 49 acre feet of water. Water stored in the reservoirs would be supplied by existing agricultural wells located on the project parcel and north of SR 166. A total of approximately 257,945 cubic yards of cut and fill grading would be required to construct the three proposed reservoirs. In total the three reservoirs would occupy an area of approximately 15.6 acres.

Identify the project's significant or potentially significant effects and briefly describe any proposed mitigation measures that would reduce or avoid that effect.

Potential impacts of the reservoir project were evaluated by a proposed Final Mitigated Negative Declaration (SCH No. 2017061009). Potential impacts and mitigation measures are summarized below.

Biological Resources. Due to the low quality of habitat at the project sites, it is unlikely the reservoirs would result in significant long-term impacts to sensitive wildlife such as San Joaquin kit fox and American badger. The potential for construction-related impacts to those species would be reduced to less than significant with the implementation of specified avoidance measures.

Cultural Resources. The project would have the potential to result in a significant impact if intact cultural resources are encountered during project construction. This impact would be reduced to a less than significant level by measures that require construction monitoring, and if necessary resource avoidance measures.

Geologic Processes. Grading to construct the proposed reservoirs has the potential to result in significant short- and long-term erosion and sedimentation impacts to nearby ephemeral drainages that drain to the Cuyama River. These impacts would be reduced to a less than significant level with the implementation of an approved Erosion and Sediment Control Plan.

Water Resources/Flooding. Construction of the proposed reservoirs has the potential to result in impacts to the quality of surface water sources near the project sites. These impacts can be reduced to a less than significant level with the implementation of measures that minimize the potential for the release of construction site pollutants.

If applicable, describe any of the project's areas of controversy known to the Lead Agency, including issues raised by agencies and the public.

Upon appeal, the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors found that there is substantial evidence in the record to support a fair argument that the North Fork Ranch Frost Ponds Project may have a significant effect on the environment and that a focused EIR must be prepared to address the following issues:

Water Use. Water use impacts from the frost ponds and associated frost protection system may exceed the groundwater use significance threshold of 31 acre feet per year (AFY) adopted for the Cuyama Valley Groundwater Basin, which is in a critical overdraft situation with a long-term overdraft of nearly 30,000 AFY.

Biological Resources. The construction of the proposed reservoirs could adversely impact approximately 15.6 acres of habitat suitable for a range of native species including special status plants and animals.

Potential flooding to State Route 166. A catastrophic failure of the proposed reservoir berms would have the potential to result in the sudden release of stored that could flood portions of State Route 166.

Provide a list of the responsible or trustee agencies for the project.

See attached Notice of Completion