

Notice of Exemption

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

From: Central Coast Water Authority
255 Industrial Way
Buellton, CA 93427

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

County Clerk
County of Kern
1115 Truxtun Avenue
Bakersfield, CA 93301-4639

Project Title: Central Coast Water Authority and Irvine Ranch Water District 2019 Short Term Water Exchange Program

Location – Specific: Existing State Water Project (SWP) facilities to existing turnouts in Santa Barbara and Kern Counties. The SWP includes facilities located throughout the State of California. The SWP is owned and operated by the California Department of Water Resources (DWR), headquartered in Sacramento, California. The Central Coast Water Authority (CCWA) has assumed responsibility for the Santa Barbara County Flood Control and Water Conservation District (SBCFCWCD)'s State Water Project (SWP) and CCWA's service area is located in Santa Barbara County. The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California (MWDSC) is a SWP contractor serving most of Southern California and headquartered in Los Angeles, California. The California Department of Water Resources (DWR) is headquartered in Sacramento, California. Irvine Ranch Water District (IRWD) receives SWP water from MWDSC through the Municipal Water District of Southern California (MWDSC) and is located in Orange County. IRWD owns the Strand Ranch Integrated Banking Project and Stockdale Integrated Banking Project (Water Bank) located in Kern County. IRWD, MWDSC and MWDSC have executed a Coordinated Operating and Exchange Agreement that allows IRWD to secure SWP water on MWDSC's behalf for the joint benefit of MWDSC and IRWD. The Water Bank is operated by Rosedale-Rio Bravo Water Storage District (Rosedale) which has an annual SWP Table A allocation through SWP contractor Kern County Water Agency also located in Kern County.

Location – County: Santa Barbara and Kern Counties

Description of Activity: The CCWA and IRWD 2019 Short Term Exchange Program (Exchange) will provide for IRWD to store a portion of CCWA's unused SWP water in the Water Bank (Exchange Water) for the benefit of both agencies. In 2019, CCWA may deliver up to 700 acre-feet of Exchange Water to the Water Bank at the IRWD point of delivery which will be the Strand Ranch and/or Stockdale West Turnouts on the Cross Valley Canal, other Rosedale diversion locations as specified by Rosedale, or as directed by MWDSC. By December 31, 2025, IRWD will remit water in return equal to one-half of the Exchange Water placed into storage less applicable losses (Return Water) by either (i) an exchange of banked water for SWP water or other water already in the California Aqueduct, or (ii) recovery of water from the Water Bank wells with subsequent delivery through the Cross Valley Canal to the California Aqueduct. IRWD shall provide Return Water at a time when requested by CCWA at an annual rate not to exceed one-third of the amount of Exchange Water delivered to the Water Bank after losses. The other one-half of the Exchange Water placed into storage less applicable losses shall be deemed transferred to IRWD.

Name of Public Agency Approving or Carrying Out Activity: Central Coast Water Authority. Other approving agencies include: California Department of Water Resources, Santa Barbara County Flood Control and Water Conservation District, Irvine Ranch Water District, Metropolitan Water District of Southern California, Kern County Water Agency, and Rosedale-Rio Bravo Water Storage District,

Exempt Status:

- ☐ Ministerial
- ☐ Declared Emergency
- ☐ Emergency Project
- ☒ Categorical Exemption
- ☒ Statutory Exemption (Not a Project Under CEQA)

Reasons why activity is exempt:

- a. The Exchange is not a project under CEQA (Pub. Res. Code § 21065; 14 Cal. Code Regs. §§ 15061(b)(3), 15378) because the Exchange will not result in direct or indirect changes to the environment. IRWD has already conducted environmental review under CEQA for the Water Bank that takes into consideration the delivery of SWP water to the Water Bank. Rosedale and IRWD independently certified and approved the Water Bank Project on May 27, 2008 for Strand Ranch Integrated Banking Project and December 8, 2015 for Stockdale Integrated Banking Project. Moreover, the SWP long-term water supply contracts include provisions for delivery within the SWP place of use. Accordingly, the activity is simply a change in water management operations using existing facilities.
- b. The water exchanged will be delivered to existing facilities, which include the Cross Valley Canal, Strand Ranch and/or Stockdale West Turnouts on the Cross Valley Canal, California Aqueduct, or other existing water banking or exchange programs (including the Water Bank) in which IRWD is a participant in Kern County. The Exchange is intended to meet existing uses of water and would not support new development or a change in land use. (14 Cal. Code Regs. §§ 15061(b)(3), 15301.)

Agency Contact Person: Ray Stokes**Telephone:** (805) 688-2292**Signature:** **Date:** 9-30-19

Ray Stokes

Title: Executive Director, Central Coast Water Authority

Governor's Office of Planning & Research

Date received for filing OPR: OCT 03 2019**STATE CLEARINGHOUSE**