

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

<p>To: Office of Planning & Research 1400 Tenth Street Sacramento, CA 95814</p> <p>To: Kern County Clerk 1115 Truxtun Avenue Bakersfield, CA 93301</p> <p>To: Fresno County Clerk 2221 Kern Street Fresno, CA 93721</p> <p>To: Tulare County Clerk Recorder 221 S. Mooney Blvd., Rm. 103 Visalia, CA 93291-4593</p>	<p>Lead Agency/Applicant</p> <p>From: Wheeler Ridge-Maricopa WSD 12109 Highway 166 Bakersfield, CA 93313-9630 661-527-6069</p>
---	--

Project Title: Wheeler Ridge-Maricopa Water Storage District and Orange Cove Irrigation District are proposing to transfer, in each of years 2020 through 2024 on behalf of Common Landowner Booth Ranches LLC, up to 2,500 af annually of CVP supplies from Orange Cove Irrigation District within the Friant Division of the Central Valley Project to Wheeler Ridge-Maricopa Water Storage District within Kern County Water Agency.

Wheeler Ridge - Maricopa Water Storage District ("WRM") is located in Kern County and has lands in the Delta Export Service Area of the CVP. Orange Cove Irrigation District ("OCID") is located in Fresno and Tulare Counties.

Location -- Counties: Kern County, Fresno County and Tulare County.

Description of Activity: Common Landowner Booth Ranches LLC from time to time has access to and/or receives transfers of water from others, including recaptured water supplies released into the San Joaquin River by the United State Bureau of Reclamation in connection with operation of facilities with the Friant Division of the Central Valley Project and the SJR Restoration Settlement. This supply is stored within the Federal share of the San Luis Reservoir by OCID and made available to its Landowners such as Booth Ranches LLC. Booth Ranches anticipates excess supplies of this nature, but not limited to such, in a quantity up to 2,500 af annually in each of years 2020-2024 to transfer and deliver to its lands in WRM and/or the Kern Fan Banking Projects. The Point of Delivery shall be O'Neill Forebay at San Luis Reservoir.

Name of Public Agencies Approving or Carrying Out Activity: Orange Cove Irrigation District, Wheeler Ridge - Maricopa WSD (Lead Agency), California Department of Water Resources, Kern County Water Agency (Responsible Agencies), Kern County, Fresno County and Tulare County.

Exempt Status:

- ☐ Ministerial
- ☐ Declared Emergency
- ☐ Emergency Project
- ☒ **Categorical Exemption.** State type and section number: See CEQA Guidelines Section 15301.
- ☐ **Statutory Exemption.** State code number: See CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)3.

Reasons why activity is exempt: CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)3 provides that a Lead Agency may determine an activity to be exempt from CEQA based upon the general rule that CEQA applies only to projects that have a potential for causing significant environmental impacts. Where it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the activity in question may have a significant effect on the environment, the activity is not subject to CEQA. WRM finds that approval of the proposed water transfer has no possibility for significant effect on the environment for the following reasons:

1. The proposed action consists of one-time annual water transfers that will use existing facilities and would not require any construction or grading.
2. The project does not constitute a new permanent source of water supply and will not result in any growth inducing or cumulative environmental impacts.
3. There will be no land use changes or additional agricultural acreage being cultivated as a result of the proposed project.

Additionally, since the project will rely on the operation of existing facilities, there will be no expansion of use beyond that existing at the time of the Lead Agency's determination and will not have a significant effect on the physical environment; the project also qualifies for a categorical exemption from CEQA pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15301. None of the exceptions listed in Section 15300.2 of the CEQA Guidelines would apply to the proposed action.

Lead Agency Contact Person: Wendy A. Jones

Telephone: (661) 527-6069

Signature: Wendy A. Jones

Title: WATER RESOURCES MGR. **Date:** 30. APR 2020

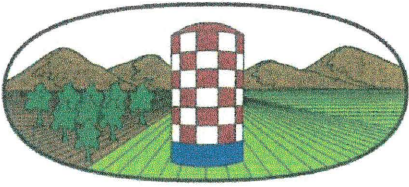
- ☒ Signed by Lead Agency
- ☒ Signed by Applicant

Date received for filing by County Clerk:

Governor's Office of Planning & Research

MAY 04 2020

STATE CLEARINGHOUSE



WHEELER RIDGE-MARICOPA WATER STORAGE DISTRICT

12109 Highway 166, Bakersfield, CA 93313-9630

Telephone: 661.858.2281 ♦ Fax: 661.858.2643 ♦ Water Orders: 661.858.2296
www.wrmwsd.com

SHERIDAN NICHOLAS
ENGINEER-MANAGER

JAMES D. SMITH
CONTROLLER

Certified Mail
70162710000037413495

April 30, 2020

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

RE: Notice of Exemption
2020-2024 Water Transfer from Orange Cove Irrigation District to Wheeler Ridge-Maricopa WSD

For filing with the CA State CEQA Clearinghouse, enclosed please find a signed Notice of Exemption regarding the above-referenced project.

Please use the duplicate copy enclosed for returning a conformed copy using the self-addressed stamped envelope, also enclosed.

Thank you.

Wendy A. Jones
Water Resources Manager
wjones@wrmwsd.com
661.527.6069

encl.

Working remotely 661.343.4409 cell