NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

TO: California Office of Planning and Research
P.O. Box 3044, Room 113
Sacramento, CA 95812-3044

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

FROM: Cody Graybehl, City of Santa Maria, Community Development Department
110 East Cook Street, Santa Maria, CA 93454

The project or activity identified below is determined to be exempt from further environmental review requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) of 1970, as defined in the State Guidelines for the implementation of CEQA.

Project No.: SP2026-0005

Location: 3300 Skyway Drive, Santa Maria, CA 93455 (APN 111-100-020) and 3107 Orcutt Road, Santa Maria, CA 93455 (APN 111-100-018)

Project Title: SEMCO Groundwater Monitoring Wells

Project Applicant: City of Santa Maria

Project Description: The project includes the installation of two groundwater monitoring wells in accordance with the Water Board's approval of the technical workplan for the purposes of gauging depths to water and semi-annual data collection and monitoring. The project includes the installation of two 4-inch diameter groundwater monitoring wells to an approximate depth of 245 feet below ground surface (bgs). The 9-inch boreholes will be advanced to a maximum depth of 270 feet bgs using sonic drilling. The well locations will be cleared using soft-digging techniques to at least 5 feet bgs. Soil cuttings, decontamination water, and purge water will be properly tested and transported offsite for disposal.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: Central Coast Regional Water Board

Name of Person or Entity Carrying Out Project: City of Santa Maria, County of Santa Barbara, Santa Maria Public Airport District.

Exempt Status:

_____ Ministerial
_____ Statutory Exemption
X Categorical Exemption
_____ Emergency Project
_____ Declared Emergency

Cite specific CEQA or CEQA Guidelines Section: This is a Class 4 (Minor Alterations to Land) and Class 6 (Information Collection)

Reasons to support exemption findings: This project consists of actions taken by a regulatory agency, pursuant to a lawsuit and voluntary settlement, to collect data in support of protecting state waters and the environment. The project will benefit the people of Santa Barbara County. The project is exempt because the monitoring wells are for data gathering purposes only and will not result in a serious or major disturbance to groundwater. The project will comply with all local permitting requirements. No further environmental review is required. The exceptions to the categorical exemptions pursuant to Section 15300.2 of the State CEQA Guidelines are:

(a) Location. Classes 3, 4, 5, 6, and 11 are qualified by consideration of where the project is to be located – a project that is ordinarily insignificant in its impact on the environment may in a particularly sensitive environment be significant. Therefore, these classes are considered to apply all instances, except where the project may impact on an environmental resource of hazardous or critical concern where designated, precisely mapped, and officially adopted pursuant to law by federal, state, or local agencies.
The project is being done under the approval oversight of the Water Board and is not located in an area that may impact a designated, precisely mapped and officially adopted environmental resource of hazardous or critical concern. The project locations are designated for recreational land-use and the reviewed recent monitoring data for the nearby operational drinking water supply wells did not have reportable detections of constituents of concern.

(b) Cumulative Impact. All exemptions for these classes are inapplicable when the cumulative impact of successive projects of the same type in the same place, over time is significant.
The project will not result in cumulative impacts because the scope of work is limited to two groundwater monitoring wells as part of a settlement and is designed to collect data over a period of time. Any future monitoring that may be required will be performed utilizing the same wells.

(c) Significant Effect. A categorical exemption shall not be used for an activity where there is a reasonable possibility that the activity will have a significant effect on the environment due to unusual circumstances.
The environmental safeguards, permits, and monitoring procedures that are enforceable and made a condition of project approval will prevent unusual circumstances from occurring so that there is no reasonable possibility that the project will have a significant effect on the environment. The locations of the wells will be placed in such locations that they will not require tree removal or other major disruptions or interference to the existing park resources.

(d) Scenic Highways. A categorical exemption shall not be used for a project which may result in damage to scenic resources, including but not limited

to, trees, historic buildings, rock outcroppings, or similar resources, within a highway officially designated as a state scenic highway. This does not apply to improvements which are required as mitigation by an adopted negative declaration or certified EIR.
The site is not visible from any highway officially designated as a state scenic highway and there are no protected scenic views impacted by the project.

(e) Hazardous Waste Sites. A categorical exemption shall not be used for a project located on a site which is included on any list compiled pursuant to Section 65962.5 of the Government Code.
The sites (APN 111-100-020 and 111-100-018) where the two respective groundwater wells will be installed are not included on any list compiled pursuant to Section 65962.5 of the Government Code.

(f) Historical Resources. A categorical exemption shall not be used for a project which may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource.
The project will not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource. The subject sites are parks with recreational uses, and the wells will be installed in areas of vehicle roadways/pathways or parking areas that will not require any tree removal or other disruption to the parks.

Lead Agency Contact Person: Kelsey DeLong, PE, Water Resource Control Engineer, Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board

Phone #: (805) 549-3147

Department/Division Signature: Cody Graybehl

Date: February 3, 2026

Acceptance Date: _____

Date Filed by County Clerk: _____