



## Empire West Side Irrigation District Finding of Exemption

**Project Title:** 2026 Common Landowner Transfer up to 1,954 acre-feet of Empire West Side Irrigation District Table A to Kern County Water Agency.

**Description of Nature, Purpose and Beneficiaries of Project:** The Empire West Side Irrigation District (District) will transfer up to 1,954 acre-feet of its State Water Project Table A to Kern County Water Agency on behalf of Sandridge Partners, who farms in both districts. The transfer will be completed in 2026. The lands have been actively farmed in the past.

**Entity or Person Undertaking Project:** Empire West Side Irrigation District  
Scott Sills  
P.O. Box 66  
Stratford, CA 93266  
559-352-7947

**Recommendation:** Staff, having undertaken and completed a review of this project for CEQA compliance, has determined that this project does not require further environmental assessment because:

- 1. The proposed action does not constitute a project (Guidelines, section 15378).
- 2. This project is a ministerial project (Guidelines, sections 15369, 15268).
- 3. The project is an emergency project (Guidelines, sections 15269, 15359).
- 4. The project is categorically exempt (Guidelines, Article 19, sections 15300-15329)
  - A. Applicable Exemption Class: 1
- 5. No foreseeable impacts on the environment (Guidelines, section 15061(b)(3)).
- 6. Statutory Exemption (CA Water Code 1729).

**Brief statement of reasons why project is exempt:** The District has determined that there are no foreseeable environmental impacts. The single year transfer is also exempt from CEQA under Water Code Section 1729. Further, the transfer is categorically exempt under CEQA since it involves the use and operation of an existing facility (CEQA Guidelines 15301).

**Name of Lead Agency:** Empire West Side Irrigation District

Date: February 26, 2026

  
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Scott Sills, General Manager