

To: Office of Planning and Research
 PO Box 3044
 1400 Tenth Street, Room 113
 Sacramento, CA 95812-3044

From: California Energy Commission
 715 P Street
 Sacramento, CA 95814

Project Applicant: Sonoma Clean Power

Project Title: A Community-based Assessment of Energy Transition Barriers in Rural and Tribal Areas

Project Location – Specific: 431 E St

Project Location – City: Santa Rosa 95404 **Project Location – County:** Sonoma

Description of Nature, Purpose and Beneficiaries of Project:

This project will conduct in-depth, localized analyses of the challenges and opportunities for decarbonization for the Sonoma Clean Power rural customer base, providing insight and effective strategies for maximizing customer and socioeconomic benefits.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: California Energy Commission

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: Sonoma Clean Power

Exempt Status: *(check one)*

- Ministerial Exemption (Pub. Resources Code § 21080(b)(1); Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 15268);
- Declared Emergency (Pub. Resources Code § 21080(b)(3); Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 15269(a));
- Emergency Project (Pub. Resources Code § 21080(b)(4); Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 15269(b)(c));
- Categorical Exemption. State type and section number
Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 15306
- Statutory Exemptions. State code number.
- Common Sense Exemption. (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, §15061(b)(3))

Reasons why project is exempt:

Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, sect; 15306 exempts basic data collection, research, experimental management, and resource evaluation activities which do not result in serious or major disturbance to an environmental resource. This project is a computer-based and field-based research project to identify high-leverage strategies to support fossil gas end-use conversion in California's residential and commercial sectors and to understand the social, technological, and socioeconomic barriers to the gas transition in rural and tribal communities. They will determine the area-specific costs and benefits of such a transition, including to health, the local economy, and energy system reliability to identify achievable pathways and timelines for selected and comparable communities to meet statewide electrification goals. Recipient will obtain feedback from at least 250 residents of the selected communities including surveys, focus groups, interviews, and stakeholder meetings, prioritizing representation of a diverse range of demographic and contextual conditions in rural and tribal communities. This work will not result in a serious or major disturbance to an environmental resource. For these reasons, the proposed project will have no significant effect on the environment and is categorically exempt under section 15306.

The project does not involve impacts on any particularly sensitive environment; will not impact an environmental resource of hazardous or critical concern where designated, precisely mapped, and officially adopted pursuant to law by federal, state, or local agencies; does not involve any cumulative impacts of successive projects of the

Authority cited: Sections 21083 and 21110, Public Resources Code. Reference: Sections 21108, 21152, and 21152.1, Public Resources Code.

same type in the same place that might be considered significant; does not involve unusual circumstances that might have a significant effect on the environment; will not result in damage to scenic resources within a highway officially designated as a state scenic highway; the project site is not included on any list compiled pursuant to Government Code section 65962.5; and the project will not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource. Therefore, none of the exceptions to categorical exemptions listed in CEQA Guidelines section 15300.2 apply to this project, and this project will not have a significant effect on the environment.

Lead Agency

Contact Person: Emily Field **Area code/Telephone/Ext:** 916-258-2983

If filed by applicant:

1. Attach certified document of exemption finding.
2. Has a Notice of Exemption been filed by the public agency approving the project? Yes No

Signature: Emily Field **Date:** April 10, 2026 **Title:** Commission Agreement Manager

Signed by Public Agency

Signed by Applicant

Date received for filing at OPR: _____