

# Notice of Exemption

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**To:** ☒ Office of Planning and Research  
1400 Tenth Street #222  
Sacramento, CA 95812-3044  
Fax 916-324-9936

**From:** Calaveras County Water District  
120 Toma Court  
San Andreas, CA 95249  
(209) 754-3543

☒ County Clerk  
County of Calaveras  
891 Mountain Ranch Road  
Building A  
San Andreas, CA 95249

**Project Title:** Sawmill Tank Replacement

**Project Location – Specific:** Approx. 0.23 miles north of Highway 4, 0.75 miles east of White Pines Lake, CA.

**Project Location – City:** East of White Pines Lake, CA

**Project Location – County:** Calaveras (Unincorporated)

## Description of Nature, Purposes and Beneficiaries of the Project:

Calaveras County Water District (CCWD) proposes the replacement of the existing approximately 3.0-million-gallon potable water storage tank currently serving the Dorrington and Big Trees rural residential communities. The existing water tank was built in 1977 with improvements in 2012 and 2018. The current tank exceeds the size needed for normal water demands of the nearby communities. The excessive size and age-related deterioration of the tank has caused water quality issues from chlorinated organics. CCWD proposes to construct two 0.5-million-gallon tanks on new concrete foundations on land adjacent to the existing tank site; land for the replacement tanks will be obtained via an easement or lot line adjustment. Upon completion of the new water storage tanks, the CCWD will demolish the deteriorating tank and remove the existing concrete foundation.

The two proposed replacement tanks would be located adjacent to the existing tank. Tank construction and piping installation will require approximately 20,000 square feet of disturbance in this relatively level and recently-logged area. Access to replacement tank site will be accessible from the existing tank site for operation and maintenance. The replacement tank site is part of a larger timber management parcel owned by Sierra Pacific Industries (SPI); CCWD will obtain rights to construct the replacement tanks on the adjacent site from SPI.

Existing tree cover on the replacement tank site has been removed by the owner in accordance with an approved Timber Harvest Plan No. 4-24-00165-CAL known as the Crockett THP. As required by the California Forest Practice Act, SPI performed required technical studies of the larger THP parcel including the proposed replacement tank site. Technical studies included botanical, wildlife and cultural resources database searches and surveys during preparation of the THP application.

**Name of Public Agency Approving Project:** Calaveras County Water District (CCWD)

**Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project:** Calaveras County Water District (CCWD)

**Exempt Status:**

☐ Ministerial (Sec. 21080(b)(1); 15268);

(ENDORSED)  
**FILED**

County of Calaveras  
Rebecca Turner  
County Clerk-Recorder

05-2026-038

06/08/2026

  
J. Simpson, Deputy Clerk

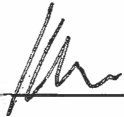
- ☐ Declared Emergency (Sec. 21080(b)(3); 15269(a);
- ☐ Emergency Project (Sec. 21080(b)(4); 15269(b)(c);
- ☒ Categorical Exemption. State type and section number: 15302(c) (14 Cal. Code of Regs §15302)
- ☐ Statutory Exemption. State code number: 21080.35 (14 Cal. Code of Regs. §21080.35)

**Reasons why project is exempt:**

This project is categorically exempt from CEQA review under Class 2 which consists of reconstruction or replacement of utility systems and facilities with no change, or with a negligible amount of change in capacity. The replacement or reconstruction must have the same purpose as the original structure. The project proposes 2 replacement water tanks with less capacity than the existing tank. The purpose of the new water tanks will be the identical to the current storage tank and therefor complies with the criteria for a Class 2 categorical exemption as set forth in the CEQA Guidelines.

The project proponent has considered the potential for environmental impacts associated with the project and finds, on the basis of analysis in a BaseCamp Environmental Exemption Report memo dated October 14, 2025, that the project would not result in any significant environmental effects in the issue areas covered in the current version of the CEQA Guidelines Appendix G Environmental Checklist.

**Lead Agency Contact Person: Kevin Williams, District Engineer**  
Contact E-Mail: [Kevinw@ccwd.org](mailto:Kevinw@ccwd.org)

Signature:  Date: 6-8-26

☒ Signed by Lead Agency

Date Filed with County Clerk: \_\_\_\_

Date Filed with OPR, Uploaded to CEQAnet: \_\_\_\_

**BASECAMP ENVIRONMENTAL  
CEQA CATEGORICAL EXEMPTION REPORT**

**SAWMILL TANK REPLACEMENT  
CALAVERAS COUNTY WATER DISTRICT  
OCTOBER 14, 2025**

**PROJECT NARRATIVE AND QUALIFICATION FOR CEQA EXEMPTION**

This report documents the Lead Agency's analysis and determination that the proposed project is categorically exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The proposed project considered in this analysis is described in Section 2.0.

**1.0 CEQA EXEMPTION REQUIREMENTS**

A "project" as defined by CEQA, including actions undertaken, permitted, or financed by a State or local agency, requires "environmental review" which is the agency's consideration of the project's potential for significant environmental effects prior to project approval. Environmental review considers the project's type and size, its environmental setting, and the resulting potential for environmental effects.

Certain projects require some consideration under CEQA but may qualify for an exemption from further CEQA review if the established qualification criteria are met. A project may be considered exempt from CEQA if it is consistent with certain project types described by the CEQA statute (a Statutory Exemption), as summarized in Sections 15260 to 15285 of the CEQA Guidelines. If a project qualifies for a statutory exemption, no further analysis is required.

A project may be considered categorically exempt from CEQA (Categorical Exemption) if it is consistent with one or more general classes of projects defined in the CEQA Guidelines Sections 15300 to 15333. A project may also qualify for a general rule or "common sense" exemption if the project lacks any potential to result in significant environmental effects. If a project cannot be considered exempt, more detailed analysis is required in an Initial Study or an Environmental Impact Report.

In the event that the Lead Agency finds that a project is exempt from CEQA, it may file a Notice of Exemption with the County Clerk as provided in CEQA Guidelines Section 15061.

**2.0 PROPOSED PROJECT**

Calaveras County Water District (CCWD) proposes the demolition and replacement of the existing approximately 3.0-million-gallon potable water storage tank currently serving the Dorrington and Big Trees rural residential communities. The current tank substantially exceeds the size needed for normal water demands of the nearby communities. The excessive size and age-related deterioration of the tank has caused water quality issues from chlorinated organics. The CCWD proposes to construct two 0.5-million-gallon tanks with concrete foundations adjacent to the existing storage tank site. Upon completion of the new water storage tanks, the CCWD will demolish the deteriorating tank and remove the existing concrete foundation.

**3.0 APPLICABILITY OF CEQA EXEMPTIONS TO THE PROJECT**

The proposed project was reviewed with respect to potential statutory exemptions described in CEQA Guidelines Sections 15260 to 1528. No statutory exemptions would apply to the project.

The proposed project was reviewed with respect to potential exemption classes described in CEQA Guidelines Sections 15300 to 15333 of the CEQA Guidelines. This project is considered categorically exempt from CEQA review under Class 2. Class 2 applies to reconstruction or replacement of utility

systems and facilities with no change, or with a negligible amount of change, in capacity. The replacement or reconstruction must have the same purpose as the original structure. The project proposes the construction of 2 waters tanks of substantially less capacity than the existing; the proposed use of the tanks is for the identical purpose of the current water storage tank and therefore complies with the requirements for a Class 2 categorical exemption from CEQA. A Notice of Exemption may be filed with the Calaveras County Clerk.

The project does not appear to involve any potential for significant environmental effects, including significant effects due to unusual circumstances, that might prohibit use of a categorical exemption. The Lead Agency's review of potential environmental effects is documented in Attachment A to this report.

## **ATTACHMENT A**

### **SAWMILL TANK REPLACEMENT CALAVERAS COUNTY WATER DISTRICT OCTOBER 2025**

#### **PROJECT'S POTENTIAL FOR SIGNIFICANT ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS DUE TO UNUSUAL CIRCUMSTANCES**

The potential applicability of a CEQA exemption to a project may be limited by the project's potential to result in significant environmental effects due to unusual circumstances. The following sections review the potential for the project to result in significant environmental effects in the various issue areas listed in the CEQA Guidelines Appendix G Environmental Checklist. If any exceptions described in the checklist apply, they are noted. If there are any "unusual circumstances" associated with any of the issues, they are also noted.

##### Aesthetics

The project site is already developed with a 3-million-gallon steel water storage tank and private dirt access road located east of White Pines Lake. There are no notable public scenic resources on the site or in the vicinity, however, the project is located on a small hilltop with a scenic view of the surrounding wooded area. The project would install 2 replacement potable water tanks of smaller size with less capacity but similar in design to the existing tank; the size and height of the replacement tanks would be less than the existing tank and would therefore not result in any significant long-term adverse aesthetic changes.

##### Agriculture and Forestry Resources

The project site is not located on or adjacent to farmland or farming-related industry. The project would have no impact on agricultural land or agriculture-related activity.

##### Air Quality

The project will result in brief air pollutant emissions from construction equipment but no new long-term air pollutant emissions. The project would not have a significant effect on air quality.

##### Biological Resources

SPI database searches and field surveys, as reported in the THP application and as discussed with SPI THP staff, did not find any special-status plant or notable wildlife species use of the replacement tank site or the vicinity. The project would have no significant adverse effect on biological resources.

##### Cultural Resources

SPI database searches and field surveys, as reported in the THP application and as discussed with SPI THP staff, did not find any cultural resources on the replacement tank site or in the vicinity. Cultural resource survey information is confidential and not available to public inspection. The project would have no effect on cultural resources.

##### Energy

Neither construction nor operation of the project would consume or generate any substantial amounts of energy. Potable water would be lifted to the replacement tank by existing pumps and distributed to the potable water system by existing facilities. The project would involve no wasteful, inefficient, or

unnecessary consumption of energy.

#### Geology and Soils

The project would involve no new exposure to seismic or geologic hazards such as ground shaking, liquefaction, or unstable soils. There are no active or potentially active faults in the project vicinity.

Calaveras County Water District (CCWD) proposes the demolition and replacement of the existing approximately 3.0-million-gallon potable water storage tank and the construction of two 0.5-million-gallon tanks with associated concrete pads on the project site. Project construction would not involve disturbance of any previously-undisturbed soils.

#### Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Project construction would generate a limited amount of greenhouse gas emissions during construction, which would be less than significant and would cease once project work is completed. The project would involve no long-term increase in greenhouse gas emissions.

#### Hazards and Hazardous Materials

The State Envirostor and Geotracker web sites indicate there are no documented hazardous material or contamination sites in the project vicinity. The project site does not contain any known clean-up sites or any hazardous waste records. The project would have no known impact on hazards and hazardous materials.

#### Hydrology and Water Quality

The project will not involve any groundwater withdrawal or contact with groundwater beneath the site. The project would have no substantial effect on surface or groundwater quality. The project would have no known effect on hydrology and water quality.

#### Land Use and Planning

The project site and vicinity are within the land use and planning jurisdiction of Calaveras County. The project would involve replacement of existing potable water storage tank serving existing rural residences in the vicinity. The project would not result in any change in existing land uses or potential conflicts with the Calaveras County General Plan.

#### Mineral Resources

There are no known mineral resources associated with the project site, nor are there any mining or mineral resource extraction activities in the immediate vicinity. The project would have no impact on mineral resources.

#### Noise

The existing noise environment in the project vicinity is quiet; there are no sensitive noise receptors in the immediate project area. Existing pumping equipment does not involve any significant noise outside the project site. The proposed project is not sensitive to noise exposure and would not generate any substantial long-term noise during operation. Intermittent construction noise would add temporarily to the noise environment in the immediate vicinity of the project. There are no noise-sensitive land uses in the immediate vicinity of the site; therefore, noise from construction activities is not expected to have any significant impact.

### Population and Housing

The project would continue potable public water service to existing residences in the Big Trees and Dorrington community but would not construct new housing, demolish housing, or otherwise affect the housing stock in the project area. The proposed project would have no impact on population or housing.

### Public Services

The project would involve no substantial demands for police, fire, schools or recreation services. There are no existing public service facilities in the vicinity that could conceivably be impacted by the project.

### Transportation

Project construction may involve small increases in local traffic on the lightly-used dirt roads serving the project vicinity. Construction may involve intermittent interruption of road access, which would be managed by the contractor and CCWD. The project would not generate any substantial new operational traffic and would have no significant transportation effect.

### Tribal Cultural Resources

As the project does is categorically exempt from CEQA, no AB 52 consultation is required.

### Utilities and Service Systems

The project involves replacement of a potable water storage tank to benefit overall operation of this system. The new storage tank will be in service before the existing tank is demolished. No other utilities will be impacted by the project. The project would have no significant utility impact.

### Wildfire

The project site is located in a wooded rural area on a small hilltop. This area, according to the California State Fire Marshal (OSFM) Fire Hazard Severity Zone Map is subject to Very High wildfire exposure, but the existing tank site is maintained and kept free of flammable brush as will the replacement tank site.

### Conclusion

As discussed in the above analysis, the project would not result in a significant effect on the environment and would not require any mitigation measures. As to the specific exceptions to applicability of a categorical exemption, the above analysis indicates that the project:

Would not 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 (CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2(a)).

Does not involve potential for significant cumulative impacts in conjunction with successive projects of the same type in the same place, over time (CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2(b)).

Does not involve any potential for significant effects under "unusual circumstances" as described in CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2(c)).

Would not 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 (CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2(d)).

Is not located on a site which is included on any list compiled pursuant to Section 65962.5 of the Government Code (CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2(e)).

Has no potential to cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource (CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2(f)).

**2026 ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENT FILING FEE CASH RECEIPT**

DFW 753.5a (REV. 01/01/26) Previously DFG 753.5a

RECEIPT NUMBER:

05-2026-038

STATE CLEARINGHOUSE NUMBER (If applicable)

**SEE INSTRUCTIONS ON REVERSE. TYPE OR PRINT CLEARLY.**

LEAD AGENCY

CALAVERAS COUNTY WATER DISTRICT

LEAD AGENCY EMAIL

kevinw@ccwd.org

DATE

06/08/2026

COUNTY/STATE AGENCY OF FILING

CALAVERAS

DOCUMENT NUMBER

PROJECT TITLE

SAWMILL TANK REPLACEMENT

PROJECT APPLICANT NAME

CALAVERAS COUNTY WATER DISTRICT

PROJECT APPLICANT EMAIL

kevinw@ccwd.org

PHONE NUMBER

(209) 754-3543

PROJECT APPLICANT ADDRESS

120 TOMA COURT

CITY

SAN ANDREAS

STATE

CA

ZIP CODE

95249

**PROJECT APPLICANT** (Check appropriate box)☐ Local Public Agency☐ School District☒ Other Special District☐ State Agency☐ Private Entity**CHECK APPLICABLE FEES:**☐ Environmental Impact Report (EIR)

\$4,227.50

\$

☐ Mitigated/Negative Declaration (MND)(ND)

\$3,043.75

\$

☐ Certified Regulatory Program (CRP) document - payment due directly to CDFW

\$1,437.25

\$

☒ Exempt from fee☒ Notice of Exemption (attach)☐ CDFW No Effect Determination (attach)☐ Fee previously paid (attach previously issued cash receipt copy)☐ Water Right Application or Petition Fee (State Water Resources Control Board only)

\$850.00

\$

☐ County documentary handling fee

\$

☐ Other

\$

**PAYMENT METHOD:**☐ Cash☐ Credit☐ Check☒ Other

TOTAL RECEIVED

\$

\$0.00

SIGNATURE

AGENCY OF FILING PRINTED NAME AND TITLE

Stacy Simpson, Deputy County Clerk-Recorder