

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

TO: Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation State Clearinghouse ☒ P. O. Box 3044, Room 113 Sacramento, CA 95812-3044	FROM: Name: Santa Margarita Water District Address: 26111 Antonio Pkwy, Rancho Santa Margarita, CA 92688 Telephone: (949) 459-6420
☒ Orange County Clerk 601 N. Ross St, Santa Ana, CA 92701	

1. Activity Title:	Inactive Eagle Nest and Tree Removal
2. Activity Applicant:	Scouting America, Orange County Council 2953 Pullman St Santa Ana, California 92705-5840
3. Activity Location – Identify street address and cross streets or attach a map showing project site (preferably a USGS 15' or 7 1/2' topographical map identified by quadrangle name):	Rancho Santa Margarita, California Latitude, Longitude: 33.6644333, -117.6224062
4. (a) Activity Location – City: Rancho Santa Margarita	(b) Activity Location – County: Orange
5. Description of nature, purpose, and beneficiaries of Activity:	Pursuant U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Permit No. PER29847282, Scouting America, Orange County Council will remove a hazardous tree containing an inactive eagle's nest ("Activity") located on premises leased from the Santa Margarita Water District (Lease Agreement No. 04/972/01).
6. Name of Public Agency approving Activity:	Santa Margarita Water District
7. Name of Person or Agency undertaking the Activity, including any person undertaking an activity that receives financial assistance from the Public Agency as part of the activity or the person receiving a lease, permit, license, certificate, or other entitlement of use from the Public Agency as part of the activity:	Scouting America, Orange County Council Primary Contact: Marie Becvar, Director of Outdoor Programs Telephone: (360) 770-9021
8. Exempt status: (check one)	
(a) ☒ Ministerial project.	(Pub. Resources Code § 21080(b)(1); State CEQA Guidelines § 15268)
(b) ☐ Not a project.	(State CEQA Guidelines §§ 15050(c)(2)-(3), 15378)
(c) ☐ Declared Emergency	(Pub. Resources Code § 21080(b)(3); State CEQA Guidelines § 15269(a))
(d) ☐ Emergency Project.	(Pub. Resources Code § 21080(b)(4); State CEQA Guidelines § 15269(b),(c))
(e) ☐ Categorical Exemption. State type and section number:	
(f) ☐ Statutory Exemption. State Code section number:	
(g) ☐ Other. Explanation:	(State CEQA Guidelines § 15061(b)(3) Common Sense exemption)

9. Reason why Activity was exempt:	The Activity is exempt from CEQA pursuant to section 15268 because it constitutes a ministerial action. Under State CEQA Guidelines section 15369, a "ministerial" project is a governmental decision involving little or no personal judgment by the public officials to the wisdom or manner of carrying out the project. The public official uses no special discretion or judgment in reaching a decision. A ministerial decision involves only the use of fixed standards or objective measurements, and the public official cannot use personal, subjective judgment in deciding whether or how the project should be carried out. Ministerial projects are exempt from the requirements of CEQA. (State CEQA Guidelines section 15268.) The proposed activity is being conducted pursuant to the existing lease terms and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Permit No. PER29847282, and does not require any discretionary approval by Santa Margarita Water District. Accordingly, Santa Margarita Water District's role in the decision to remove the tree or inactive eagle nest involves no exercise of discretion or judgment, nor does it have any discretion regarding how the activity will be carried out. Therefore, the project is ministerial and exempt from CEQA.
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10. Lead Agency Contact Person: Telephone:	Robert Grantham (949) 459-6420
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Date: August 3, 2026


Signature

Name: Robert Grantham

Title: General Manager, Santa Margarita Water District

☒ Signed by Lead Agency

☐ Signed by Applicant

Date Received for Filing:-

(Clerk Stamp Here)

Authority cited: Sections 21083 and 21110, Public Resources Code.

Reference: Sections 21108, 21152, and 21152.1, Public Resources Code.