



Notice of Exemption

To: ☒ Office of Planning and Research
Submitted online

From: ZONE 7 WATER AGENCY
100 North Canyons Parkway
Livermore, CA 94551
925-454-5000
Attn.: Elke Rank

To: ☒ County Clerk, County of Alameda
1106 Madison Street
Oakland, CA 94612

Date: September 1, 2026

To: ☒ Kern County Clerk
1115 Truxtun Avenue
Bakersfield, CA 93301-4639

To: ☒ King County Clerk
1400 W. Lacey Blvd.
Hanford, CA. 93230

Project Title: Westside Water Districts 2026 Water Transfer

Project Location – Specific: California Department of Water Resources' State Water Project facilities, Dudley Ridge Water District, Zone 7 Water Agency, and four member units within the Kern County Water Agency; Berrenda Mesa Water District, Belridge Water Storage District, Lost Hills Water District, and Wheeler Ridge – Maricopa Water Storage District.

Project Location – County: Alameda County, Kings County, Kern County

Description of Nature, Purpose, and Beneficiaries of Project: Zone 7 Water Agency and Dudley Ridge Water District, Berrenda Mesa Water District, Belridge Water Storage District, Lost Hills Water District, and Wheeler Ridge – Maricopa Water Storage District (all five agencies collectively called the Westside Water Districts herein) propose a water transfer of up to 8,000 Acre-feet of Zone 7's State Water Project 2026 Table A water supplies. All six entities are either State Water Project contractors or member agencies of a State Water Project contractor (Kern County Water Agency). The water will be delivered to the Westside Districts via existing facilities such as the California Aqueduct and the Point of Transfer will be Banks Pumping Plant. To deliver the water, a water transfer agreement will be executed among all six agencies and a State Water Project Agreement will be executed between the California Department of Water Resources, Dudley Ridge Water District, Zone 7 Water Agency, and Kern County Water Agency.

Name of Public Agency Approving and Carrying Out Project: Zone 7 Water Agency, Dudley Ridge Water District, Berrenda Mesa Water District, Belridge Water Storage District, Lost Hills Water District, and Wheeler Ridge – Maricopa Water Storage District are all transfer participants.

In addition, Kern County Water Agency and the Department of Water Resources will be involved in the State Water Project Agreement.

Exempt Status: *(check one)*

- ☐ Ministerial (Sec. 21080(b)(1); 15268)
- ☐ Declared Emergency (Sec. 21080(b)(3); 15269(a))
- ☐ Emergency Project (Sec. 21080(b)(4); 15269(b)(c))
- ☒ Categorical Exemption. CEQA Guidelines Section **15301. EXISTING FACILITIES; 15061(b)(3) – COMMON SENSE RULE.**
- ☐ Statutory Exemptions

Reasons Why Project is Exempt:

The project qualifies for a Categorical Exemption under CEQA Guidelines as follows:

15301. EXISTING FACILITIES. Operation, repair, maintenance, permitting, leasing, licensing, or minor alteration of existing public or private structures, facilities, mechanical equipment, or topographical features, involving negligible or no expansion of existing or former use. No new facilities are being authorized as part of this agreement; it is anticipated to utilize existing facilities in a like manner as they have historically been used, and environmental considerations are expected to be similar as historical operations.

The project is also not subject to CEQA as follows:

15061(b)(3) – COMMON SENSE RULE. The activity is covered by the common sense exemption that CEQA applies only to projects which have the potential for causing a significant effect on the environment. Where it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the activity in question may have a significant effect on the environment, the activity is not subject to CEQA.

None of the conditions noted under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines 15300.2 (as revised) will occur. Furthermore, this project will not result in potential for significant environmental impacts because:

- No new facilities are being authorized by the agreement and existing facilities will continue to be used in a like manner.
- Any incremental water transported in State Water Project Facilities or other water conveyance facilities via this transfer is anticipated to be di minimis compared to the total amount of water those existing facilities convey.

Lead Agency CEQA Contact: Elke Rank **Area Code/Telephone/Ext:** 925-454-5005

Signature:	<i>Elke Rank</i>
Title	Water Resources Planner Zone 7 Water Agency