

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

NAPA COUNTY PLANNING, BUILDING, & ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES
DEPARTMENT
1195 THIRD STREET, SUITE 210, NAPA, CA 94559

To: Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation
PO Box 0334
1400 Tenth Street, Room 121
Sacramento, CA 95814

EXEMPT FROM RECORDING FEE CG 27383

Napa County Clerk
1127 1st Street
Suite A
Napa, CA 94559

Lead Agency: County of Napa, Planning, Building and Environmental Services Department

NAME: Dana Morrison – Supervising Planner, Conservation

ADDRESS: 1195 Third Street – Suite 210

PHONE: (707) 253-4437

PROJECT INFORMATION

PROJECT TITLE: 2026 Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan (MJHMP) Update Adoption

PROJECT LOCATION - SPECIFIC: Countywide

PROJECT LOCATION – CITY (NEAREST): NAPA

PROJECT LOCATION - COUNTY: NAPA

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: The proposed project for purposes of this CEQA determination is Napa County's adoption of the 2026 MJHMP. The MJHMP was prepared as a multi-jurisdictional hazard mitigation planning document and is intended to satisfy applicable federal hazard mitigation planning requirements.

The planning process includes hazard identification and mapping, risk and vulnerability assessment, review and compilation of existing environmental and infrastructure information, development of mitigation goals, and identification and prioritization of potential mitigation strategies and actions. These functions are analytical, informational, and policy-oriented.

The 2026 MJHMP may identify future actions that participating agencies could elect to pursue. However, adoption of the MJHMP does not constitute approval of those future actions. The location, design, scope, funding, feasibility, permitting, and environmental effects of any future physical project would be determined through subsequent agency decisions. Where a future mitigation action is a CEQA project, the responsible lead agency would conduct the appropriate project-level CEQA review before approving or implementing that action.

LEAD AGENCY: Napa County Planning, Building and Environmental Services Department

ADDRESS: 1195 Third Street Suite 210, Napa Ca, 94559 **PHONE:** (707) 253-4437

NAME OF PUBLIC AGENCY APPROVING PROJECT: Napa County Board of Supervisors

ADDRESS: 1195 Third Street, Third Floor, Napa Ca 94559 **PHONE:** (707) 253-4580

APPLICANT OR AGENCY CARRYING OUT PROJECT: Brianna Jones, Emergency Services Officer

ADDRESS: 1535 Airport Blvd, Napa, Ca 94558 **PHONE:** (707) 253-4477

EXEMPT STATUS (CHECK ONE): (Also, see Appendix B of the *Napa Co Local Procedures for Implementing the CEQA*)

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

☐ Declared Emergency [Sec. 21080(b)(3); 15269(a)];

☐ Emergency Project [Sec. 21080(b)(4); 15268(b)(c)];

☒ Categorical Exemption. State type and section number:

- CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3) - Common Sense Exemption;
- CEQA Guidelines Section 15262 - Feasibility and Planning Studies; and
- CEQA Guidelines Section 15306 - Information Collection (Class 6 Categorical Exemption).

☐ Statutory Exemptions. State code number:

☐ General Rule: [Sec.15061(b)(3)]

REASONS WHY PROJECT IS EXEMPT:

A. CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3) - Common Sense Exemption

CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3) provides that CEQA applies only to activities that have the potential for causing a significant effect on the environment. Where it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility the activity in question may have a significant effect on the environment, the activity is not subject to CEQA.

The proposed action is adoption of a hazard mitigation planning document. Adoption will not cause construction, grading, vegetation removal, changes in land use or density, alteration of a watercourse, or other physical change to the environment. The MJHMP establishes a planning framework and identifies potential future mitigation strategies, but it does not approve or commit the County to implementation of any individual mitigation project.

Because future site-specific actions remain subject to separate discretionary review and CEQA compliance, as applicable, it can be seen with certainty that adoption of the 2026 MJHMP itself will not result in a significant effect on the environment. The Common Sense Exemption therefore applies.

B. CEQA Guidelines Section 15262 - Feasibility and Planning Studies

CEQA Guidelines Section 15262 applies to a project involving only feasibility or planning studies for possible future actions that the agency has not approved, adopted, or funded, provided the study does not commit the agency to a project that may have a significant effect on the environment.

The 2026 MJHMP is a planning-level document that evaluates hazards, vulnerabilities, community capabilities, and alternative strategies for reducing future risk. Its purpose is to guide future decision-making and establish priorities for consideration. Adoption of the MJHMP does not itself authorize implementation of any physical mitigation action and does not commit Napa County to a particular location, design, construction method, or capital improvement.

Specific future mitigation projects identified in or consistent with the MJHMP may require additional technical study, design, funding, permitting, discretionary approvals, and CEQA review before they can proceed. Accordingly, the County's adoption of the MJHMP is consistent with the planning-study exemption in Section 15262.

C. CEQA Guidelines Section 15306 - Information Collection (Class 6)

CEQA Guidelines Section 15306 categorically exempts basic data collection, research, experimental management, and resource evaluation activities that do not result in a serious or major disturbance to an environmental resource.

Preparation of the 2026 MJHMP consists substantially of gathering, compiling, evaluating, and communicating information concerning hazards, exposure, vulnerability, infrastructure, community assets, and potential risk-reduction strategies. Hazard mapping, risk assessment, vulnerability analysis, and compilation of existing environmental and infrastructure information are informational and analytical activities and do not authorize physical alteration of the environment.

To the extent adoption of the MJHMP incorporates and relies upon these information-gathering and resource-evaluation activities, the Class 6 categorical exemption is applicable.

I. EXCEPTIONS TO THE “CLASS 6” CATEGORICAL EXEMPTION

CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2 identifies circumstances in which an otherwise applicable categorical exemption may not be used. The record supports an express finding that none of those exceptions applies to adoption of the 2026 MJHMP.

Sensitive Location / Environmental Resources. The proposed action is adoption of a planning document and does not authorize ground disturbance or other physical activity at any location. The adoption action therefore does not create a location-specific impact on an environmental resource of hazardous or critical concern.

Cumulative Impacts. Adoption of the MJHMP will not itself result in physical environmental effects and therefore will not contribute to a significant cumulative impact. Future mitigation projects will be evaluated individually and cumulatively as required at the time they are proposed.

Unusual Circumstances. There are no unusual circumstances associated with adoption of a planning-level hazard mitigation document that create a reasonable possibility of a significant environmental effect. The plan does not approve construction or other physical alteration of the environment.

Scenic Highways. Adoption of the MJHMP will not damage scenic resources within a designated state scenic highway because no physical development is authorized by the adoption action.

Hazardous Waste Sites. Adoption of the MJHMP will not undertake development on any site listed pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5. Any future site-specific action involving such a site would be subject to separate environmental and regulatory review.

Historical Resources. Adoption of the MJHMP will not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource because it does not authorize demolition, alteration, excavation, or

construction. Future projects with the potential to affect historical resources would undergo separate CEQA review.

II. EVIDENCE SUPPORTING THE COUNTY'S DETERMINATION

The 2026 MJHMP is a program- and planning-level document.

The planning effort focuses on hazard mapping, risk assessment, vulnerability analysis, information compilation, mitigation goals, and identification of potential future actions.

Adoption of the MJHMP does not authorize construction, grading, vegetation removal, demolition, or other physical alteration of the environment.

The County is not committing itself through adoption to implement any particular mitigation project, location, design, or construction program.

Future mitigation actions that have the potential to result in direct or reasonably foreseeable indirect physical changes to the environment will remain subject to separate project-level CEQA review and all other applicable discretionary approvals.

Because future physical projects are not approved as part of this action, environmental effects associated with the details of those future projects would be speculative at the time of MJHMP adoption and will be evaluated when sufficient project-specific information is available.

LEAD AGENCY CONTACT PERSON: Dana Morrison, Supervising Planner (PBES)

PHONE: (707) 253-4437

Signature:  Date: 10/2/2026 Title: Supervising Planner

- ☒ Signed by Lead Agency
☐ Signed by Applicant

Date received for filing at LCI: 10/2/2026



MEMORANDUM

To:	Napa County Board of Supervisors	From:	Brieanna Jones, MPH, Emergency Services Officer Dana Morrison, Supervising Planner – Conservation, Planning, Building, & Environmental Services
Date:	08/28/2026		
Re:	CEQA Exemption Memorandum for Napa County 2026 Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan Update Adoption		

I. INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS

Napa County is considering adoption of the 2026 Napa County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan Update (2026 MJHMP). The 2026 MJHMP is a planning-level document prepared to identify natural and human-caused hazards, assess community risk and vulnerability, establish mitigation goals, and identify potential mitigation actions that may be considered by participating jurisdictions over the life of the plan.

Adoption of the 2026 MJHMP does not itself authorize, fund, approve, or commit Napa County to construction of any specific mitigation project. Rather, the plan provides a policy and planning framework to guide future hazard mitigation decisions and to maintain eligibility for applicable federal hazard mitigation assistance. Any future mitigation action that constitutes a project under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and has the potential to result in a direct physical change or a reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment would be subject to separate, project-specific environmental review before implementation.

Based on the nature of the proposed action and the information summarized in this memorandum, adoption of the 2026 MJHMP is exempt from further environmental review under CEQA. The County has determined the following CEQA provisions, individually and collectively, apply to the proposed MJHMP update:

- CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3) - Common Sense Exemption;
- CEQA Guidelines Section 15262 - Feasibility and Planning Studies; and
- CEQA Guidelines Section 15306 - Information Collection (Class 6 Categorical Exemption).

These exemptions are supported because the County's action is limited to adoption of a planning and information document; the action will not result in physical development; the plan does not commit the County to any specific future project; and future site-specific mitigation projects remain subject to all applicable discretionary approvals, environmental review, permitting, and regulatory

requirements.

II. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed project for purposes of this CEQA determination is Napa County's adoption of the 2026 MJHMP. The MJHMP was prepared as a multi-jurisdictional hazard mitigation planning document and is intended to satisfy applicable federal hazard mitigation planning requirements.

The planning process includes hazard identification and mapping, risk and vulnerability assessment, review and compilation of existing environmental and infrastructure information, development of mitigation goals, and identification and prioritization of potential mitigation strategies and actions. These functions are analytical, informational, and policy-oriented.

The 2026 MJHMP may identify future actions that participating agencies could elect to pursue. However, adoption of the MJHMP does not constitute approval of those future actions. The location, design, scope, funding, feasibility, permitting, and environmental effects of any future physical project would be determined through subsequent agency decisions. Where a future mitigation action is a CEQA project, the responsible lead agency would conduct the appropriate project-level CEQA review before approving or implementing that action.

III. APPLICABLE CEQA EXEMPTIONS

A. CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3) - Common Sense Exemption

CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3) provides that CEQA applies only to activities that have the potential for causing a significant effect on the environment. Where it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility the activity in question may have a significant effect on the environment, the activity is not subject to CEQA.

The proposed action is adoption of a hazard mitigation planning document. Adoption will not cause construction, grading, vegetation removal, changes in land use or density, alteration of a watercourse, or other physical change to the environment. The MJHMP establishes a planning framework and identifies potential future mitigation strategies, but it does not approve or commit the County to implementation of any individual mitigation project.

Because future site-specific actions remain subject to separate discretionary review and CEQA compliance, as applicable, it can be seen with certainty that adoption of the 2026 MJHMP itself will not result in a significant effect on the environment. The Common Sense Exemption therefore applies.

B. CEQA Guidelines Section 15262 - Feasibility and Planning Studies

CEQA Guidelines Section 15262 applies to a project involving only feasibility or planning studies for possible future actions that the agency has not approved, adopted, or funded, provided the study does not commit the agency to a project that may have a significant effect on the environment.

The 2026 MJHMP is a planning-level document that evaluates hazards, vulnerabilities, community capabilities, and alternative strategies for reducing future risk. Its purpose is to guide future decision-making and establish priorities for consideration. Adoption of the MJHMP does not itself authorize implementation of any physical mitigation action and does not commit Napa County to a particular location, design, construction method, or capital improvement.

Specific future mitigation projects identified in or consistent with the MJHMP may require additional technical study, design, funding, permitting, discretionary approvals, and CEQA review before they can proceed. Accordingly, the County's adoption of the MJHMP is consistent with the planning-study exemption in Section 15262.

C. CEQA Guidelines Section 15306 - Information Collection (Class 6)

CEQA Guidelines Section 15306 categorically exempts basic data collection, research, experimental management, and resource evaluation activities that do not result in a serious or major disturbance to an environmental resource.

Preparation of the 2026 MJHMP consists substantially of gathering, compiling, evaluating, and communicating information concerning hazards, exposure, vulnerability, infrastructure, community assets, and potential risk-reduction strategies. Hazard mapping, risk assessment, vulnerability analysis, and compilation of existing environmental and infrastructure information are informational and analytical activities and do not authorize physical alteration of the environment.

To the extent adoption of the MJHMP incorporates and relies upon these information-gathering and resource-evaluation activities, the Class 6 categorical exemption is applicable.

IV. EXCEPTIONS TO THE “CLASS 6” CATEGORICAL EXEMPTION

CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2 identifies circumstances in which an otherwise applicable categorical exemption may not be used. The record supports an express finding that none of those exceptions applies to adoption of the 2026 MJHMP.

Sensitive Location / Environmental Resources. The proposed action is adoption of a planning document and does not authorize ground disturbance or other physical activity at any location. The adoption action therefore does not create a location-specific impact on an environmental resource of hazardous or critical concern.

Cumulative Impacts. Adoption of the MJHMP will not itself result in physical environmental effects and therefore will not contribute to a significant cumulative impact. Future mitigation projects will be evaluated individually and cumulatively as required at the time they are proposed.

Unusual Circumstances. There are no unusual circumstances associated with adoption of a planning-level hazard mitigation document that create a reasonable possibility of a significant environmental effect. The plan does not approve construction or other physical alteration of the environment.

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Historical Resources. Adoption of the MJHMP will not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource because it does not authorize demolition, alteration, excavation, or construction. Future projects with the potential to affect historical resources would undergo separate CEQA review.

V. EVIDENCE SUPPORTING THE COUNTY'S DETERMINATION

The 2026 MJHMP is a program- and planning-level document.

The planning effort focuses on hazard mapping, risk assessment, vulnerability analysis, information compilation, mitigation goals, and identification of potential future actions.

Adoption of the MJHMP does not authorize construction, grading, vegetation removal, demolition, or other physical alteration of the environment.

The County is not committing itself through adoption to implement any particular mitigation project, location, design, or construction program.

Future mitigation actions that have the potential to result in direct or reasonably foreseeable indirect physical changes to the environment will remain subject to separate project-level CEQA review and all other applicable discretionary approvals.

Because future physical projects are not approved as part of this action, environmental effects associated with the details of those future projects would be speculative at the time of MJHMP adoption and will be evaluated when sufficient project-specific information is available.

VI. CONCLUSION

Based on the foregoing, substantial evidence supports Napa County's determination that adoption of the 2026 Napa County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan Update is exempt from further environmental review pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Sections 15061(b)(3), 15262, and 15306.

The County may therefore adopt the 2026 MJHMP without preparation of an Initial Study, Negative Declaration, Mitigated Negative Declaration, or Environmental Impact Report. Following Board of Supervisors approval, the County may file a Notice of Exemption identifying the exemptions relied upon.

This memorandum is intended to support the County's CEQA determination for adoption of the 2026

MJHMP. It does not constitute project-level environmental clearance for any individual mitigation measure or capital improvement that may later be proposed for implementation.

