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FRESNO COUNTY CLERK

BY _____ DEPUTY

Notice of Exemption

To: Office of Planning and Research
P.O. Box 3044, Room 113
Sacramento, CA 95812-3044

From: City of Orange Cove
633 6th Street
Orange Cove, CA 93646

County Clerk
County of Fresno
2220 Tulare Street
Fresno, CA 93721

No Fee – Government Code Sections 6103 & 27383

Project Title: Pilot Well and Municipal Production Well, Phase 1 Pilot Borehole

Project Applicant: City of Orange Cove

Project Location Specific: APN 378-021-03S, north side of E. Parlier Avenue approximately 1,800 feet west of Monson Avenue, immediately north of the City of Orange Cove Wastewater Treatment Plant and approximately 250 feet east of the Alta East Branch Canal.

Project Location City: Orange Cove

Project Location County: Fresno County

Description of Nature, Purpose and Beneficiaries of Project:
The City of Orange Cove proposes to drill and test one exploratory pilot borehole to measure the yield and water quality of the aquifer at this site. The data will be used to decide whether a municipal production well can be developed at the site as the City relies entirely on Central Valley Project water delivered through the Friant-Kern Canal, and its allocation is reduced in dry years. The borehole is located and conductor casing sized so that the borehole could be later be enlarged into a production well if results support it and the City approves of it. If the results do not support a production well, the borehole would be destroyed per DWR Bulletins 74-81 and 74-90 and the site restored. The production well and well site equipping is not approved by this action and will be evaluated in a separate CEQA document before the City considers them.. Beneficiaries are the residents and water customers of the City of Orange Cove.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: City of Orange Cove

Name of Person or Agency Carrying out Project: City of Orange Cove

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. State type and section number: Class 6, Section 15306 (Information Collection)
- ☐ Statutory Exemptions. State code number:

Reason why project is exempt:
The project is exempt from CEQA review pursuant to Title 14 Section 15306, Class 6, Information Collection, which consists of basic data collection, research, and resource evaluation activities which do not result in a serious or major disturbance to an environmental resource. Phase 1 is a temporary exploratory borehole and aquifer test with less than 1.0 acre of temporary disturbance that is restored when the work ends. None of the exceptions in Sec. 15300.2 apply:

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15300.2(a): The site is in FEMA Flood Zone AE (FIRM Panel 06019C2702H, effective 2/18/2009). Phase 1 places no permanent fill in the floodplain. Between Phase 1 and Phase 2, the borehole is secured with a watertight, welded and locked steel cap, and is destroyed if Phase 2 has not started within 12 months or if results do not support a production well. A Fresno County floodplain development permit will be obtained if deemed necessary for Phase 2.

15300.2(b): Phase 1 is a single temporary borehole. Because Phase 1 disturbance is temporary and restored, successive projects of this type in this place would not have a significant cumulative impact. Phase 2 and well site equipping will be evaluated in a separate CEQA document before approval.

15300.2(c): There are no unusual circumstances. The site is a previously disturbed City-owned parcel used for effluent land application, next to the City Wastewater Treatment Plant and a solar array, with orchards nearby. A test borehole and pumping test at this location are typical of the class. Test water is groundwater from beneath the site and stays in the City parcel; it is not discharged to the Alta East Branch Canal, to the treatment plant ponds, or off the parcel. No test water will be discharged until the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Board confirms coverage under Order 2003-0003-DWQ. Drilling fluid and cuttings are contained in portable tanks and disposed of off site, and dust is controlled under San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District Regulation VIII. Pre-construction surveys for nesting birds and burrowing owl will be conducted to comply with Fish and Game Code Sections 3503, 3503.5 and 3513 and the Migratory Bird Treaty Act.

15300.2(d): The project is not within or visible from an officially designated state scenic highway. The nearest officially designated state scenic highway is a segment of SR 180 more than 6 miles north of the site, per the California Department of Transportation State Scenic Highway System map reviewed on 11/17/2026.

15300.2(e): The site is not on any list compiled pursuant to Gov. Code Sec. 65962.5. The lists searched were through Geotracker, Envirostor, and the Cortese List Data Resources on the CalEPA website on 11/17/2026.

15300.2(f): A search of the California Office of Historic Preservation Built Environment Resource Directory on 11/17/2026 found no resources on the site. Ground disturbance is limited to the previously disturbed work area and berms. If cultural resources or human remains are found, work will stop and Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 and Public Resources Code Section 5097.98 will be followed.

LEAD AGENCY CONTACT PERSON: Orfil Muniz, PE **AREA CODE / TELEPHONE / EXTENSION:** (559) 429-4747

Signature: _____ Date: 11-18-26 Title: City Engineer

☒ Signed by Lead Agency ☐ Signed by Applicant

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