

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

TO: ☒ Office of Planning and Research
State Clearinghouse
1400 Tenth Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

FROM: Sonoma County Water Agency,
404 Aviation Blvd.
Santa Rosa, CA 95403

☒ County Clerk
County of Sonoma
585 Fiscal Drive, Room 103
Santa Rosa, CA 95403

Project Title: Mark West Wikiup Open Space Preserve Fee Title Purchase and Conservation Easement

Project Location- Specific: The project is located at 5001 Carriage Lane and adjacent to Mark West Creek in the Larkfield/Wikiup neighborhood of unincorporated Sonoma County, California.

Project Location – City: Unincorporated

Project Location – County: Sonoma

Description of Nature, Purpose and Beneficiaries of Project: Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District (District) is funding Sonoma County Water Agency's (Sonoma Water) purchase of a fee interest of the approximately 30-acre property. Sonoma Water is acquiring the property for the potential to further programs related to habitat restoration, groundwater opportunities, water education, and recreational opportunities for the public. Sonoma Water will execute a Purchase and Sale Agreement with the landowner WBR, LLC. As a condition of the District's funding, Sonoma Water will convey a conservation easement and recreation conservation covenant, along with an associated Offer to Dedicate the fee interest, to the District at closing. The conservation easement will protect the scenic, natural, recreational, and educational resource values of the Property, which is adjacent Mark West Creek and the densely populated Larkfield-Wikiup neighborhood. The recreation covenant will ensure the Property is open to the public within three years after execution and in perpetuity as a park and open space preserve after future compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: Sonoma County Water Agency

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: Sonoma County Water Agency

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: Sections 15316 (Transfer of ownership of land in order to create parks), 15317 (Open space contracts or easements), 15325 (Transfers of ownership of interest in land to preserve existing natural conditions and historical resource), (a) Acquisition, sale, or other transfer of areas to preserve the existing natural conditions, including plant or animal habitats, (c) Acquisition, sale, or other transfer to allow restoration of natural conditions, including plant or animal habitats, & (f): Acquisition, sale, or other transfer to preserve open space or lands for park purposes.
☒ Statutory Exemptions. State Code number: Public Resources Code Section 21080.28 (a)(1) The acquisition, sale, or other transfer of interest in land by a public agency for any of the following purposes: (A) Preservation of natural conditions existing at the time of transfer, including plant and animal habitats, (B) Restoration of natural conditions, including plant and animal habitats, & (F) Preservation of open space or lands for park purposes.

Reasons why project is exempt: The purchase and sale agreement and execution of the conservation easement and recreation covenant acquisition, along with an associated Offer to Dedicate the fee interest to the District is exempt because the purpose of the project is to preserve the natural condition of the Property, including plant and animal habitats; the restoration of natural conditions including plant and animal habitats; and the preservation of open space or lands for park purposes. This project is also exempt because the purpose is to provide for a park and to maintain the open space character of the area.

Lead Agency Contact Person: Thomas English

Area Code/Telephone/Extension: (707) 495-6072

Signature

General Manager
Title

Date

12.12.23

- ☐ Signed by Lead Agency
☐ Signed by Applicant

Date received for filing at OPR:

This notice was posted on 12/12/2023
and will remain posted for a period of thirty days
through 01/12/2024

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Deva Marje Proto, County Clerk
BY: *MJ Larson*
Mary Damon, Deputy Clerk

