

**RESOLUTION NO. 2025-05**

**A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE SAN BENITO COUNTY WATER DISTRICT ADOPTING THE MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION FOR THE ACCELERATED DROUGHT RESPONSE PROJECT;**

**ADOPTING CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT FINDINGS OF FACT, MITIGATION MEASURES, AND MITIGATION MONITORING AND REPORTING PROGRAM; AND**

**APPROVING THE ACCELERATED DROUGHT RESPONSE PROJECT;**

**WHEREAS**, The San Benito County Water District (District) has the primary responsibility for managing the water supplies in San Benito County, including for the urban areas; and

**WHEREAS**, the District provides wholesale treated water to the City of Hollister and the Sunnyslope County Water District and anticipates providing such water to the City of San Juan Bautista (Retailers) in the near future; and

**WHEREAS**, the District and Retailers have worked cooperatively to identify water supply projects to improve the reliability of wholesale water deliveries during times of extreme drought; and

**WHEREAS**, the District is developing the Accelerated Drought Response Project (ADRoP) to mitigate for the variability in water supplies available to the District and improve water supply reliability for the Retailers; and

**WHEREAS**, ADRoP consists of an expansion of the existing West Hills Water Treatment Plant and the construction of up to five aquifer storage and recovery wells and associated pipelines; and

**WHEREAS**, in 2014 the District Certified a Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR), adopted California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) findings of fact, and a Mitigation, Monitoring, and Reporting Program for construction of the West Hills Water Treatment Plant, including subsequent expansions; and

**WHEREAS**, the expansion of the West Hills Water Treatment Plant being undertaken as part of ADRoP was previously evaluated in the 2014 FEIR and a subsequent analysis conducted in accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15162 found that the proposed expansion was still consistent with the previous FEIR; and,

**WHEREAS**, the Mitigation, Monitoring, and Reporting Program for the West Hills Water Treatment Plant has been updated as part of ADRoP, and

**WHEREAS**, the District, as lead agency pursuant to CEQA, has conducted an Initial Study for the aquifer storage and recovery wells and associated pipelines components of ADRoP; and

**WHEREAS**, the District, based on the Initial Study, has determined that, with the implementation of specific mitigation measures, ADRoP will not have a significant effect on the environment and therefore has prepared a Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND); and

**WHEREAS**, a separate Mitigation, Monitoring, and Reporting Program has been prepared for the aquifer storage and recovery wells and pipelines elements of ADRoP; and

**WHEREAS**, the District has considered the MND dated April 2025 and hereby finds that the MND:

- 1) Has been completed in compliance with CEQA;
- 2) Has been presented to the District Board of Directors and the Board has reviewed and considered the information contained in the MND prior to approving ADRoP;
- 3) Reflects the District's independent judgment and analysis;
- 4) Supports the determination that there are no unmitigated significant impacts; and
- 5) Incorporates the mitigation measures identified in the findings attached to this resolution that would avoid or mitigate potential significant environmental impacts

**Now therefore, be it resolved** that the Board of Directors of the District hereby:

- a. Adopt the San Benito County Water District *Mitigated Negative Declaration for the Accelerated Drought Response Project*
- b. Adopt by Resolution California Environmental Quality Act Modified Mitigation, Monitoring, and Reporting Program for the West Hills Water Treatment Plant.
- c. Adopt by Resolution California Environmental Quality Act Findings of Fact, Mitigation Measures, and Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program for the Wells and Pipelines Elements of ADRoP and Authorize the General Manager to Sign the Findings
- d. Direct District Staff to File Notice of Determination with San Benito County Recorder's Office
- e. Approve the Accelerated Drought Response Project

**PASSED AND ADOPTED** at a Special Meeting of the Board of Directors of the San Benito County Water District held on the 9<sup>th</sup> day of April, 2025 by the following vote:

AYES: DIRECTORS: Williams, Wright, Flores, Freeman & Tonascia

NOES: DIRECTORS: None

ABSENT: DIRECTORS: None

ABSTAIN: DIRECTORS: None

(Signature of presiding Board member  
Attested by Board Secretary  
Resolution #2025-05)

/s/Doug Williams  
Doug Williams  
President

ATTEST: /s/Barbara L. Mauro  
Barbara L. Mauro  
Board Secretary/Board Clerk