

AGENDA STAFF REPORT

MEETING NAME: SPECIAL BOARD MEETING

MEETING DATE(S): MAY 19, 2025

FROM: DANNY FRIEND, DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS

FOR: ACTION X DIRECTION _____ INFORMATION _____



RESOLUTION 2025-08 RECOMMENDING APPROVAL OF A NOTICE OF EXEMPTION DETERMINATION UNDER THE CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT FOR THE HORTON WWTP SOLAR PPA PROJECT

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Adopt Resolution No. 2025-08, recommending approval of a Notice of Exemption (NOE) determination under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines pursuant to Section 15300 for the Horton WWTP Solar PPA Project and direct the General Manager to sign the attached Notice of Exemption and file the same with the Riverside County Clerk.

SUMMARY

Previously, District staff presented various solar photovoltaic (PV) system options for implementation, initially proposing a capital improvement project exceeding \$17 million. This proposal was not approved due to its substantial impact on the District's capital budget and bonding capacity. Subsequently, in late 2024, the Board approved a solar Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) project as an alternative approach. The original PPA project scope included the installation of solar PV systems at seven District locations: the Horton WWTP, the NWRWRF, Wells 24, 27, 29 and 32, and an expansion of the existing Well 33 RES-BCT solar site. The PPA project now includes the Horton WWTP, the NWRWRF, and a newly designated RES-BCT site. This revised project configuration is still projected to generate approximately 4 MW of power and 9,000,000 kWh of renewable energy annually.

CEQA compliance is a requirement for this project. Staff engaged Tom Dodson & Associates (TDA) in January 2025 to assess the project's eligibility for a Categorical Exemption under CEQA and to prepare and file the necessary NOE. Following their review, TDA concluded that the Horton WWTP portion of the PPA project qualifies for a Categorical Exemption pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15303 (d & e), New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures. The attached NOE provides additional details regarding why the project meets the exemption.

ANALYSIS

Based on the review and determination by TDA, Staff finds that the project is exempt from review under the CEQA and recommends approval of the NOE.

FISCAL IMPACT & STRATEGIC PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

The adoption of the resolution approving the Notice of Exemption has no fiscal impact. This action is consistent with Strategic Plan Goal 5.1 - Increase Use of Sustainable Energy Sources and Optimize Efficiencies.

ATTACHMENTS

Resolution 2025-08
Notice of Exemption Form

FINANCIAL DATA		
Cost Associated with this action:	\$0	
Current FY cost:	\$0	
Future FY cost:	\$0	
Is it covered in current budget year:	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
Budget adjustment needed:	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If yes, year needed:	N/A	
All previous contracts, including dates, amounts and board approvals are attached or have been made available.		
FUNDING SOURCES		
Source of funds:	N/A	
BID/Job#	N/A	
Current BID/Job balance	\$0	
Balance remaining if approved:	\$0	