

# MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION

Public Resources Code section 21080(c)

**Project Title:** Conditional Waiver of Waste Discharge Requirements for Small Food Processors, Wineries, and Related Agricultural Processors within the Central Valley Region

**Project Location:** The Conditional Waiver regulates entities located throughout the Central Valley Region

**Project Description:** Water Code section 13269 authorizes the California Regional Water Quality Control Board, Central Valley Region (Central Valley Water Board) to conditionally waive waste discharge requirements if the waiver is consistent with the Central Valley Water Board's water quality control plans and is in the public interest. The Central Valley Water Board has developed a Conditional Waiver to regulate the discharge of wastewater and residual solids from small food processing operations, small wineries, and certain agricultural operations (such as nut hulling and seed washing operations). If wastewater and residual solids meets certain criteria specified in the Conditional Waiver, regulated entities can irrigate crops or landscaped areas with up to 1,000,000 gallons of wastewater per year and can use the residual solids as a soil amendment. The Board's adoption of the proposed Conditional Waiver is considered a project under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (Pub. Resources Code, § 21000 et seq.).

The Conditional Waiver, as initially proposed, incorporated conditions and prohibitions to mitigate any potentially-significant environmental impacts to levels that would be considered less than significant. These include conditions and prohibitions designed to ensure that pollution and nuisance do not occur as a result of the discharge of wastewater and residual solids pursuant to the Conditional Waiver.

**Findings:** An Initial Study was prepared in conjunction with the development of the Conditional Waiver, and the Board accepted comments on the Initial Study, this draft Mitigated Negative Declaration, and the proposed Conditional Waiver from 31 October 2014 until 1 December 2014. Based on the Initial Study and the comments received from interested persons through the comment period and at a public hearing, the Central Valley Water Board has concluded that there is no substantial evidence, in light of the whole record before the Central Valley Water Board, that the project may have a significant effect on the environment.

I, PAMELA C. CREEDON, Executive Officer, do hereby certify that the foregoing is the Mitigated Negative Declaration adopted by the California Regional Water Quality Control Board, Central Valley Region after conducting a public hearing on \_\_\_.

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PAMELA C. CREEDON, Executive Officer