



# State Clearinghouse Handbook 2012

June 21, 2012

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Governor

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## STATE CLEARINGHOUSE HANDBOOK

### 2011 EDITION

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# INTRODUCTION

Established in 1973, the State Clearinghouse (SCH) coordinates the state-level review of environmental documents prepared pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). As a division of the Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR), the SCH is at the center of state agency involvement in the CEQA environmental review process. The CEQA Guidelines governs the operation of the SCH, and defines its roles and responsibilities regarding environmental review (California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Sections 15000-15387). [Appendix A](#) describes projects requiring environmental review through the SCH.

The SCH also functions as the "State Single Point of Contact" for coordinating state and local review of applications for federal grants or loans under select state programs (Presidential Executive Order 12372). In this capacity, the SCH coordinates state and local review of federal financial assistance applications. In addition, the SCH coordinates the review and comment of federal National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) documents. The purpose of these processes is to afford state and local participation in federal activities occurring within California, and does not replace public participation, comment, or review requirements of other federal laws, but gives the states an additional mechanism to ensure federal agency responsiveness to state and local concerns.

This SCH Handbook explains the functions of the SCH under CEQA and Presidential Executive Order 12372.

## Serving Government Agencies and the Public

With regard to statewide planning, the SCH serves government agencies and the public by coordinating environmental document distribution, providing assistance with the environmental review process, and managing the environmental information collected.

### I. Coordinate the Distribution and Review of Environmental Documents under CEQA

All draft Environmental Impact Reports and draft Negative Declarations<sup>1</sup> for projects that involve a state Responsible or Trustee agency or are of statewide, regional, or areawide significance must be submitted to the SCH (see [Appendix A](#) for a description). Upon receiving these documents from public agencies, the SCH distributes the documents to state agencies for comment. After the review period closes, the SCH coordinates the transmittal of comments from state agencies to the Lead Agency for certain types of environmental documents.

### II. Advise and Assist Government Agencies and the Public

The SCH staff provide information and assistance on the environmental review process to state and local government officials and the public. The SCH staff is available to organize scoping meetings and to help identify Lead, Responsible, and Trustee agencies for particular development proposals. The Director of OPR also has the authority to resolve Lead Agency disputes upon request by a public agency or private applicant.

### III. Manage Environmental Information

The SCH maintains a database of all environmental documents and notices that it receives. This information, dating to the mid-1980s, is available for use by state agencies, local governments, project applicants and the public. The database is available at [www.ceqanet.ca.gov](http://www.ceqanet.ca.gov).

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<sup>1</sup> As used in the SCH Handbook, the term "Negative Declaration" also includes Mitigated Negative Declaration.



## Where to Find Copies of CEQA and the CEQA Guidelines

CEQA is located in the California Public Resources Code beginning at Section 21000. It is important to check for changes annually because CEQA is subject to amendment. California Statutes are available online at [www.leginfo.ca.gov/calaw.html](http://www.leginfo.ca.gov/calaw.html).

The CEQA Guidelines are located in the California Code of Regulations, Title 14, beginning at Section 15000 and available online at [www.oal.ca.gov](http://www.oal.ca.gov).

The Statute and Guidelines are also available online from the California Land Use Planning and Information Network (LUPIN) website at [www.ceres.ca.gov/ceqa](http://www.ceres.ca.gov/ceqa).

The Association of Environmental Professionals provides an on-line version of the Statute and Guidelines at [www.califaep.org](http://www.califaep.org).

## ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENT REVIEW PROCESS

### Requirement to Submit Environmental Documents to the SCH

Lead agencies must send environmental documents, including all Notices of Preparation (NOP), and selected draft Negative Declarations and Draft Environmental Impact Reports (EIR), to the SCH pursuant to CEQA. The purpose is to allow state agencies the chance to review and comment on these documents and provide permit information for permits that may be needed for the project.

PRC Sections 21159.22 through 21159.24 also require Notices of Exemption for certain statutorily exempt housing projects to be filed with OPR (through the SCH).

Address submittals to:  
State Clearinghouse  
P.O. Box 3044  
Sacramento, CA 95812-3044

For courier or hand delivery:  
State Clearinghouse  
1400 Tenth Street, Suite 113  
Sacramento, CA 95814

The SCH must receive all of the following types of environmental documents:

- 1) All NOPs.
- 2) Draft EIRs and Negative Declarations prepared by a state Lead Agency.
- 3) Draft EIRs and Negative Declarations prepared by any public agency where a state agency is a Responsible Agency, Trustee Agency, or otherwise has jurisdiction by law with respect to the project.
- 4) Draft EIRs and Negative Declarations on projects identified in CEQA Guidelines Section 15206 as being of statewide, regional, or areawide significance.
- 5) Draft Environmental Impact Statements, Environmental Assessments, and Findings of No Significant Impact (FONSI) prepared pursuant to NEPA (Title 40 CFR, Part 1500, commencing with Section 1500.1).
- 6) Notices of Determination for any projects where the Lead Agency is a state agency and for local projects where a state agency is a Responsible Agency.
- 7) Notices of Exemption for projects using statutory exemptions pursuant to PRC Sections 21159.22 through 21159.24.

For requirements on the document submittal process, see [Appendix A](#) and [Appendix C](#). The following pages outline the step-by-step environmental document review procedures of the SCH.

### Negative Declaration Process

State review of a Negative Declaration is required when a state agency is the Lead Agency, Responsible Agency, Trustee Agency, or otherwise has jurisdiction by law over a project; or when the project has statewide, regional, or areawide impacts, as identified in Section 15206 of the CEQA Guidelines. The Lead Agency or a party authorized by the Lead Agency may submit draft Negative Declarations to the SCH.

#### Step 1: Submittal of a Negative Declaration to the SCH

When a Negative Declaration requires state agency review, at least 15 copies must be submitted to the SCH. The 15 copies may be in hardcopy or electronic format (CD/DVD). If submitting in electronic format, 15 hardcopies of the initial study, introduction section, or summary form (available on the OPR website) of the Negative Declaration must accompany the 15 CDs. Collate each of the 15 copies of the Negative Declaration with supporting documents, technical appendices, and/or CDs. The SCH encourages lead agencies to submit one copy of the Negative Declaration in electronic format when submitting 15 hardcopies (CEQA Guidelines Section 15205(a)).

**Minimum Contents of a Negative Declaration:**

(CEQA Guidelines Section 15071)

- A. A brief description and title of the project;
- B. Location of the project including latitude and longitude, preferably shown on a map, and the name of the project proponent;
- C. A proposed finding that the project will not have a significant effect on the environment;
- D. An attached copy of the initial study documenting reasons to support the finding; and
- E. Mitigation measures, if any, included in the project to avoid potentially significant effects.

One hardcopy of the Notice of Completion form (NOC) should accompany the 15 copies of the Negative Declaration. Completing this form facilitates the processing of environmental documents and is circulated with the Negative Declaration to state agencies. The information from the NOC form is entered into the SCH database. If the SCH does not receive an NOC form, the start of the review period may be delayed. The NOC form (Form A) is available at [www.opr.ca.gov/docs/NOC.pdf](http://www.opr.ca.gov/docs/NOC.pdf).

**Step 2: Distribution and Review Period**

When a complete submittal of a Negative Declaration is received by the SCH for distribution, a SCH clerk assigns a unique SCH identification number to the project. If the project already has a SCH identification number from a previous document submittal, the Lead Agency should reference the previously assigned SCH number on the NOC form. Next, a staff planner briefly reviews the document to determine its scope and to identify the state agencies that should receive it for review. The SCH will distribute the document to any Responsible or Trustee state agencies, and to any other state agencies that may have relevant expertise in the subject or otherwise have a reason to review the document. Refer to [Appendix F](#) for a listing of state agencies and departments to whom environmental documents normally are distributed.

The SCH clerk sets the review dates and attaches a distribution list to the NOC form. Documents are then mailed or otherwise delivered to the selected state agencies for review and comment.

The normal state agency review period for Negative Declarations submitted to the SCH is 30 calendar days (PRC Section 21091(b) and CEQA Guidelines Section 15105). The review period begins when the SCH circulates the document, which is usually the same day it is received although Statute allows the SCH 3 days to distribute the documents (PRC 21091(c)(3)). Documents received after 12:00 PM will be distributed the next working day. Specific review dates are calculated by counting Day 1 as the date on which the document is distributed by the SCH and concluding on the 30th calendar day thereafter. If the 30th day falls on a weekend or state holiday, the review period will end the next business day.

Negative Declaration Checklist of Responsibilities		Lead Agency	SCH	Reviewing Agency
1	On the basis of the Initial Study, prepare Negative Declaration.	x		
2	Send 15 copies of Negative Declaration and one copy of the NOC form to the SCH.	x		
3	Assign the SCH identification number and state review period (normally 30 days) and distribute to select state agencies.		x	
4	Review and comment on Negative Declaration. Send comments to the SCH within assigned review period.			x
5	Forward comments to the Lead Agency at end of review period with a closing letter.		x	
6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider comments received</li> <li>Adopt Negative Declaration</li> <li>Make decision on the project</li> </ul>	x		
7	File NOD with the county clerk if project is approved. Also file NOD with the SCH if project requires discretionary approval from a state agency.	x		

A shortened state agency review period of not less than 20 days may be granted under special circumstances (see [Requesting a Shortened Review Period](#)). Alternatively, Lead Agencies may request or provide for a state agency review period longer than 30 days. The SCH should be contacted in advance of document submittal if a lead agency is seeking a shortened review period. The SCH should be notified in writing of such requests or provisions.

### Step 3: Review of a Negative Declaration

After the SCH distributes a Negative Declaration to state agencies, those agencies may assign the document to staff members for review, analysis and comment. Agency comments are forwarded to the SCH prior to the end of the assigned review period.

Occasionally, state agencies may request an extension of a review period from the Lead Agency. If the extension is granted, the Lead Agency should notify the SCH in writing.

### Step 4: Comments on a Negative Declaration

On the working day following the close of the review period, the SCH forwards all comments from the reviewing state agencies and a closing letter to the Lead Agency.

### Step 5: Notice of Determination

Within five working days of approving a project for which a Negative Declaration has been adopted, a local Lead Agency must file a Notice of Determination (NOD) with the county clerk of the county or counties where the project is located. If the project requires discretionary approval from a state agency or if the Lead Agency is a state agency, the NOD also must be filed with the SCH.

The information required in a NOD is listed in Section 15075 of the CEQA Guidelines. AB 320 (Hill) (2011) amended PRC Sections 21108, 21152, and 21167.6.5 and requires lead agencies to identify the project applicant on the NOD form. The filing of the NOD begins a 30 calendar day statute of limitations on court challenges to the project approval under CEQA.

At the time of filing of the NOD, Lead Agencies are required to pay an environmental filing fee to the California Department of Fish and Game (DFG) unless the project will have no effect on fish and wildlife (see Fish and Game Code Section 711.4(c)(2)). The fee is subject to change annually, pursuant to Fish and Game Code Section 713. Please consult DFG's website at [www.dfg.ca.gov/habcon/ceqa/ceqa\\_changes.html](http://www.dfg.ca.gov/habcon/ceqa/ceqa_changes.html) for more information.

The environmental filing fee, if paid by a state agency, must be submitted to OPR and made payable to the DFG. If paid by a local agency, it must be paid to the county clerk. The SCH cannot post a NOD from a state agency without proof of payment of the required Fish and Game filing fee or a "no effect" determination.

#### Negative Declaration Helpful Hints

Submit one completed NOC with the Negative Declaration.

Submit 15 copies of the Negative Declaration. Submit additional copies if you have identified more than 15 state agencies that should receive a copy. Collate all supporting documents, appendices, and/or CDs to the Negative Declaration.

Include a cover letter if you have special instructions for the SCH staff.

For complete submittals, assume that the 30 day review period will commence within 24 hours of receipt by the SCH (PRC Section 21091 (c)(3) allows 3 days).

Plan ahead if you will need a shortened review period by calling the SCH before mailing your document.

Call the SCH in advance if you have any questions regarding these procedures.

Contact the DFG by phone at (916) 651-0603 or visit their website at [www.dfg.ca.gov](http://www.dfg.ca.gov) if you believe your project will have no effect on fish and wildlife.

## Environmental Impact Report (EIR) Process

Lead Agencies are required to submit a Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) to the SCH when: (a) the Lead Agency is a state agency, (b) the project involves one or more Responsible or Trustee state agencies, or (c) the project has statewide, regional, or areawide significance, as identified in Section 15206 of the CEQA Guidelines. Submittal of Draft EIRs to the SCH must be done by the Lead Agency or by a party authorized by the Lead Agency.

### Step 1: Notice of Preparation

As part of the EIR scoping process, a Lead Agency must circulate a [Notice of Preparation \(NOP\)](#) to OPR and all Responsible and Trustee Agencies advising them of its intention to prepare a Draft EIR (CEQA Guidelines Section 15082).

The 30 calendar day review period for a NOP begins when an agency receives the notice. Lead Agencies are required to send copies of a NOP directly to the SCH and to all Responsible and Trustee Agencies. The SCH staff can assist in identifying Responsible and Trustee state agencies.

The Lead Agency's distribution list for the NOP should be attached to the copy sent to the SCH. Filing the NOP and distribution list with the SCH helps ensure that no Responsible or Trustee state agencies have been overlooked.

#### *Minimum Contents of a Notice of Preparation:*

- A. Description of the project;
- B. Location of the project, indicated either on an attached map (preferably a topographical map), or by a street address in an urbanized area, and by latitude and longitude; and
- C. Probable environmental effects of the project.

The SCH also requests that a completed NOC Form be submitted with the NOP. This form expedites processing of the NOP and allows for accurate data entry into the CEQAnet database.

The project description provided in the NOP should be complete enough to enable reviewers to make meaningful comments. Although a map is not required, providing a good site map and vicinity map is strongly encouraged. The mapping should show the site in a context broad enough to indicate the area to be affected by the project, including rivers, airports, schools, railways, and highways. The Initial Study, if one has been completed, should be attached to show the probable environmental effects of the project.

### Step 2: SCH Number and Distribution

When a NOP is submitted to the SCH, a clerk assigns a unique SCH identification number to the project. The SCH will review the Lead Agency's distribution list and may send copies of the NOP to additional state agencies that have relevant expertise in the subject or otherwise have reason to review the project, even though they are not Responsible or Trustee Agencies. This does not extend the 30 day comment period for Responsible and Trustee Agencies that already received the NOP directly from the Lead Agency.

SCH receipt of the NOP will be acknowledged through a letter sent to the Lead Agency. This letter also notes that the SCH identification number assigned will be used for all subsequent environmental documents for that project. A state agency distribution list will be attached to the acknowledgement letter, indicating the agencies to which the SCH has forwarded a copy of the NOP.

### Step 3: NOP Review Period

Responsible agencies have a maximum of 30 calendar days from receipt of a NOP to comment on a proposed project (CEQA Guidelines Section 15103). When a state agency comments on a NOP, the original comment letter must be sent directly to the Lead Agency and a copy sent to the SCH. The SCH does not compile and transmit state agency comment letters on NOPs to the Lead Agency after the end of the 30 day comment period.

## Step 4: Submittal of Draft EIR to the SCH

When a Draft EIR requires state agency review, at least 15 copies of the document must be submitted to the SCH. The 15 copies may be in hardcopy or electronic format (CD/DVD). If submitting in electronic format, 15 hardcopies of the Draft EIR summary or executive summary must accompany the 15 CDs. One hardcopy of the NOC form must also be submitted with the 15 copies (CEQA Guidelines Section 15085(d)). Each of the 15 copies of the Draft EIR should be collated with supporting documents, technical appendices, and/or CDs. Lead Agencies are encouraged to submit one copy of the Draft EIR in electronic format when submitting 15 hardcopies (CEQA Guidelines Section 15205(a)).

A Draft EIR may not be circulated for public review before the end of the comment period for the NOP (CEQA Guidelines Section 15082(a)).

The SCH identification number assigned to the NOP should be referenced on the NOC and EIR title page.

## Step 5: Draft EIR Review Period

The normal review period for a Draft EIR submitted to the SCH is 45 calendar days (PRC Section 21091(a) and CEQA Guidelines Section 15105). The state review period typically starts on the same day the Draft EIR is received by the SCH if (a) the document is received by 12:00 PM, and (b) the submittal is complete. Documents received after 12:00 PM typically are distributed the next working day, although Statute allows 3 days for SCH to distribute the documents (PRC 21091(c)(3)). Day 1 of the review period is the day the document is distributed by the SCH. The review period ends on the 45th calendar day thereafter. If the 45th day falls on a weekend or state holiday, the review period will end the next business day. On the next working day following the close of the review period, the SCH will prepare and mail a closing letter to the Lead Agency. Attached to the closing letter will be copies of comments received from state agencies.

A shortened state review period of not less than 30 days may be granted under exceptional circumstances (see [Requesting a Shortened Review Period](#)). Lead Agencies may request or provide for a longer review period than 45 days. The local public review period must be at least as long as the assigned state agency review period (PRC Section 21091(c)).

Environmental Impact Report Checklist of Responsibilities		Lead Agency	SCH	Reviewing Agency
1	Send NOP to the SCH with distribution list, and to each responsible and trustee state agency.	x		
2	Assign the SCH identification number, review distribution list, send to additional state agencies if necessary.		x	
3	Review NOP and send comments to Lead Agency, and a copy to the SCH within 30 days of receipt.			x
4	Prepare Draft EIR and send 15 copies with NOC form to the SCH.	x		
5	Assign Draft EIR state review period (normally 45 days) and distribute to selected state agencies.		x	
6	Review and comment on Draft EIR. Send comments to the SCH within assigned review period.			x
7	Forward comments to Lead Agency at end of review period with a closing letter.		x	
8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Respond to comments</li> <li>Prepare and certify Final EIR</li> <li>Make decision on the project</li> </ul>	x		
9	File NOD with the county clerk if project is approved. Also file NOD with the SCH if project requires discretionary approval from a state agency.	x		

## Step 6: Review of Draft EIR

SCH staff briefly reviews a Draft EIR to determine the project's scope and to identify the state agencies that should review it. A distribution list is attached to the NOC form, review dates are assigned, and the documents are distributed to selected state agencies. Reviewing agencies are selected for their expertise in a particular subject matter or geographical area, or based on their responsibility for particular types of projects. [Appendix F](#) has more information on the state agencies to whom the SCH may send environmental documents for review.

When the Draft EIR is received by reviewing state agencies, those agencies may assign the document to staff members for review, analysis and comment. Agency comments are forwarded to the SCH prior to the end of the assigned review period.

State agencies may request from the Lead Agency, an extension of a review period while a document is under review. If the extension is granted, the Lead Agency should notify the SCH in writing.

Review CEQA Guidelines Section 15096(d) for more information on how Responsible and Trustee state agencies are expected to comment.

File the NOD with the county clerk if the project is approved. Also file the NOD with the SCH if the project requires discretionary approval from a state agency.

## Step 7: Comments on Draft EIR

On the next working day following the close of the review period, the SCH staff will forward a complete package of state agency comments to the Lead Agency.

## Step 8: Final EIR

Final EIRs are not required to be filed with the SCH. However, the SCH will circulate Final EIRs to state agencies at the request of Lead Agencies, provided adequate copies are submitted.

## Step 9: Notice of Determination

Within five working days of approving a project for which an EIR was prepared, a local Lead Agency must file a NOD with the county clerk of the county or counties where the project will be located. If the project requires discretionary approval from a state agency, the NOD must also be filed with the SCH. State Lead Agencies must also file the NOD with the SCH. The NOD must be signed by the proper authority of the Lead Agency and completed in full before the SCH will post it.

The information required in a NOD is listed in CEQA Guidelines Section 15094. PRC Sections 21108, 21152, and 21167.6.5 also require lead agencies to identify the project applicant on the NOD form (see [Form C](#)). The filing and posting of the NOD begins a 30 day statute of limitations on court challenges to the project approval under CEQA.

At the time of filing of the NOD, Lead Agencies are required to pay an environmental filing fee to the DFG unless the project will have no effect on fish and wildlife (see Fish and Game Code Section 711.4(c)(2)). The fee for EIRs is subject to change annually, pursuant to Fish and Game Code Section 713. Please consult DFG's website at [www.dfg.ca.gov/habcon/ceqa/ceqa\\_changes.html](http://www.dfg.ca.gov/habcon/ceqa/ceqa_changes.html) for more information.

The environmental filing fee, if paid by a state agency, must be submitted to OPR and made payable to the DFG. If paid by a local agency, the filing fee must be paid to the county clerk. The SCH cannot post a NOD from a state agency without proof of payment of the required Fish and Game filing fee or a "no effect" determination.



Notice of Preparation and Draft Environmental Impact Report Helpful Hints
Send all NOPs to the SCH.
Send NOP to Responsible and Trustee agencies using certified mail or a similar method to ensure receipt.
Submit one NOC with NOP and/or Draft EIR.
Submit 15 copies of each Draft EIR. Submit additional copies if you have identified more than 15 state agencies that should receive a copy. Collate all supporting documents, appendices, and/or CDs to the Draft EIR.
Include a cover letter to the SCH if you have special instructions.
Advise the SCH in advance if your Draft EIR may require special handling.
Plan ahead if you need a shortened review by calling the SCH before mailing your document.
Call the SCH in advance if you have any questions regarding these procedures.
The SCH does not retain copies of all environmental documents it receives.
Contact the DFG by phone at (916) 651-0603 or visit their website at <a href="http://www.dfg.ca.gov">www.dfg.ca.gov</a> if you believe your project will have no effect on fish and wildlife.
For complete submittals, assume the 45-day review period will commence within 24 hours of receipt by the SCH.

## Submission of Electronic CEQA Documents to the SCH

To take advantage of the cost and time savings afforded by electronic documents, the SCH accepts electronic copies of CEQA documents under the conditions outlined in this section.

The following policy does not invalidate CEQA Guidelines Section 15205, which requires a public agency submitting printed documents to the SCH to send an electronic copy of the document, *if available*.

Electronic documents shall be on CD/DVD and in a common file format, such as Adobe PDF or Microsoft Word.

For EIRs and Negative Declarations, Lead Agencies must provide 15 copies of the CD to the SCH. In addition, each CD must be accompanied by 15 printed copies of an associated summary such as:

- A. Draft EIR summary (described in CEQA Guidelines Section 15123) or an executive summary; or
- B. Initial study, introduction section, or summary of a Negative Declaration (see [Form F](#)).

This allows the SCH and the reviewing agencies to efficiently route the document to the proper persons. Provide one hardcopy of a NOC form with each submittal of a Negative Declaration or Draft EIR.

## Special Considerations

When submitting electronic copies of CEQA documents for certain types of projects, particularly large infrastructure projects including airport expansions, the SCH may request a certain number of printed copies of the full Negative Declaration or Draft EIR in addition to the 15 CDs. Lead Agencies shall be expected to honor these special requests for additional printed copies.

Please contact the SCH if you have any questions regarding the submission and circulation of environmental documents in electronic format.



## Requesting a Shortened Review Period

Under exceptional circumstances, and when requested by the Lead Agency, the SCH may shorten the normal review periods for draft Negative Declarations and EIRs. It is strongly advised that the Lead Agency contact the SCH prior to submitting a request for shortened review.

Written requests for a shortened review **must** be submitted to the SCH together with the required 15 copies of the draft environmental document. The request letter must explain why the shortened review is needed and identify prior approval from Responsible and Trustee state agencies. Certain types of projects are not eligible for shortened reviews. Refer to the Shortened Review Request Procedures and Criteria (PRC Section 21091(e)).

### Criteria for Approving a Shortened Review

A request for a shortened review period will only be considered prior to the start of the state review period. The SCH will not shorten a review period while the regular review period is running. Shortened reviews are not granted for projects considered to be of statewide, regional, or areawide significance. Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Appendix K, the SCH will consider a request for a shortened review if one or more of the following criteria are met:

- 1) The lead agency is operating under an extension of the one year period for completion of an EIR and would not otherwise be able to complete the EIR within the extended period.
- 2) The public project applicant is under severe time constraints with regard to obtaining financing or exercising options which cannot be met without shortening the review period.
- 3) The document is a supplement to a Draft EIR or proposed Negative Declaration or Mitigated Negative Declaration previously submitted to the SCH.
- 4) The health and safety of the community would be at risk unless the project is approved expeditiously.
- 5) The document is a revised Draft EIR, or proposed Negative Declaration or Mitigated Negative Declaration, where changes in the document are primarily the result of comments from agencies and the public.

### Step 1: Before Requesting a Shortened Review

Before submitting a shortened review request, the Lead Agency must have obtained verbal or written approval for a shortened review period from Responsible and Trustee state agencies. An application for a shortened review must identify which state agencies have been contacted and the agencies' responses to the request for a shortened review.

The Lead Agency should provide evidence that there has been prior consultation with Responsible and Trustee state agencies. In the case of a Draft EIR, the Lead Agency should have sent a NOP to the Responsible and Trustee state agencies. For Negative Declarations, the Lead Agency should have previously consulted, formally or informally, with Responsible and Trustee state agencies.

### Step 2: Submitting a Shortened Review Request

The request for a shortened review period must be made to the SCH in writing by the decision-making body of the Lead Agency, or an authorized representative of the Lead Agency (e.g., City Manager or Planning Director), and shall be made on Lead Agency letterhead. When submitted by a representative, a copy of the resolution or ordinance from the decision-making body of the Lead Agency delegating authority should be attached.

A Shortened Review Request Form ([Form E](#)) must also be completed and attached to the letter. The Shortened Review Request Form is available online at [http://opr.ca.gov/docs/form\\_e.pdf](http://opr.ca.gov/docs/form_e.pdf).

The request must explain the "exceptional circumstances" that warrant the shortened review, and identify which of the 5 criteria are met. The request must be accompanied by 15 copies of the environmental document and properly collated with supplemental documents.

### Step 3: Approval/Denial of Request

After reviewing the written request and the environmental document, the SCH will either approve or deny the request. The SCH will notify the Lead Agency within 24 hours of its decision.

Shortened Review Request Helpful Hints
Determine whether the project has statewide, regional, or areawide significance as defined in CEQA Guidelines Section 15206. If it does, a shortened review will not be approved.
Determine whether the project meets at least one of the 5 criteria for shortened review. If it does not, the shortened review will not be approved.
SCH approval of a shortened review period must be granted before the Lead Agency issues the public notice of availability.
The local public review period must be at least as long as the review period set by the SCH.
The review period for a Negative Declaration shall not be shorter than 20 days. The Lead Agency must specify the requested length of the shortened review period.
The review period for a Draft EIR shall not be shorter than 30 days. The Lead Agency must specify the requested length of the shortened review period.
Plan ahead if you need a shortened review by calling the SCH before mailing your document.
Contact the SCH in advance if you have any questions regarding these procedures.

### Lead Agency Designation

In the event that a dispute arises as to which agency is the Lead Agency for a project subject to CEQA, PRC Section 21165 authorizes OPR to designate the Lead Agency for the project. The PRC defines a Lead Agency dispute as a contested, active difference of opinion between two or more public agencies as to which of those agencies shall prepare any necessary environmental document. A dispute exists where each of those agencies claims that it either has or does not have the obligation to prepare that environmental document.

If a dispute is determined to exist, the disputing agencies should consult with each other in order to resolve the dispute (Title 14, Cal. Code of Regs, Section 16013).

If the dispute cannot be resolved, a request for the designation of the Lead Agency may be submitted in writing to the OPR Director. The regulations for the designation of a Lead Agency are described in the California Code of Regulations Section 16000 et. seq. The request must be signed by an executive of the public agency making the request or by the project applicant. A complete request shall contain:

- 1) Written information regarding the general nature of the dispute and proof that the requesting agency and other disputing agencies have consulted in an effort to resolve the dispute.
- 2) A statement of contentions from each disputing agency as described in California Code of Regulations Section 16015.
- 3) Written information showing that the agency or applicant requesting the designation has given notice in writing to, and such notice has been received by, all disputing agencies and the project applicant. The notice must state that the dispute is being submitted to OPR for resolution and that each disputing agency is required to send a statement of contentions to OPR within 10 days after receiving the notice.

The OPR Director may designate the Lead Agency on the basis of the written statements or may require a hearing to determine the Lead Agency. The designation of the Lead Agency for the project will be made within 21 days after the receipt by OPR of a completed request. The decision of the Director is final and binding on the parties to the dispute.

## Projects of Statewide, Regional, or Areawide Significance

*(CEQA Guidelines Section 15206)*

- (a) Projects meeting the criteria in this section shall be deemed to be of statewide, regional, or areawide significance.
- (1) A draft EIR or negative declaration prepared by any public agency on a project described in this section shall be submitted to the State Clearinghouse and should be submitted also to the appropriate metropolitan area council of governments for review and comment. The notice of completion form required by the State Clearinghouse must be submitted together with the copies of the EIR and may be submitted together with the copies of the negative declaration. The notice of completion form required by the State Clearinghouse is included in Appendix C. If the lead agency uses the on-line process for submittal of the notice of completion form to the State Clearinghouse, the form generated from the Internet shall satisfy this requirement (refer to [www.ceqanet.ca.gov](http://www.ceqanet.ca.gov)).
- (2) When such documents are submitted to the State Clearinghouse, the public agency shall include, in addition to the printed copy, a copy of the document in electronic format on a diskette or by electronic mail transmission, if available.
- (b) The Lead Agency shall determine that a proposed project is of statewide, regional, or areawide significance if the project meets any of the following criteria:
- (1) A proposed local general plan, element, or amendment thereof for which an EIR was prepared. If a Negative Declaration was prepared for the plan, element, or amendment, the document need not be submitted for review.
- (2) A project has the potential for causing significant effects on the environment extending beyond the city or county in which the project would be located. Examples of the effects include generating significant amounts of traffic or interfering with the attainment or maintenance of state or national air quality standards. Projects subject to this subdivision include:
- (A) A proposed residential development of more than 500 dwelling units.
  - (B) A proposed shopping center or business establishment employing more than 1,000 persons or encompassing more than 500,000 square feet of floor space.
  - (C) A proposed commercial office building employing more than 1,000 persons or encompassing more than 250,000 square feet of floor space.
  - (D) A proposed hotel/motel development of more than 500 rooms.
  - (E) A proposed industrial, manufacturing, or processing plant, or industrial park planned to house more than 1,000 persons, occupying more than 40 acres of land, or encompassing more than 650,000 square feet of floor area.
- (3) A project which would result in the cancellation of an open space contract made pursuant to the California Land Conservation Act of 1965 (Williamson Act) for any parcel of 100 or more acres.
- (4) A project for which an EIR and not a Negative Declaration was prepared which would be located in and would substantially impact the following areas of critical environmental sensitivity:
- (A) The Lake Tahoe Basin.
  - (B) The Santa Monica Mountains Zone as defined by Section 33105 of the Public Resources Code.
  - (C) The California Coastal Zone as defined in, and mapped pursuant to, Section 30103 of the Public Resources Code.
  - (D) An area within 1/4 mile of a wild and scenic river as defined by Section 5093.5 of the Public Resources Code.
  - (E) The Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta, as defined in Water Code Section 12220.
  - (F) The Suisun Marsh as defined in Public Resources Code Section 29101.
  - (G) The jurisdiction of the San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission as defined in Government Code Section 66610.
- (5) A project which would substantially affect sensitive wildlife habitats including but not limited to riparian lands, wetlands, bays, estuaries, marshes, and habitats for endangered, rare and threatened species as defined by Section 15380 of this Chapter.
- (6) A project which would interfere with attainment of regional water quality standards as stated in the approved areawide waste treatment management plan.
- (7) A project which would provide housing, jobs, or occupancy for 500 or more people within 10 miles of a nuclear power plant.

*Note: Authority cited: Section 21083, Public Resources Code. Reference: Section 21083, Public Resources Code.*

## FEDERAL GRANTS PROCESS

### *Presidential Executive Order 12372*

OPR is responsible for implementing Presidential Executive Order (E.O.) 12372. This E.O. requires federal agencies to use state and local processes of intergovernmental coordination for the review of federal financial assistance applications, direct development activities, and environmental documents. The SCH, which is already responsible for coordinating the distribution of environmental documents, serves as the State Single Point of Contact (SPOC) for coordination of state and local review of federal financial assistance applications. Many federal financial assistance applications specifically instruct the applicant to contact the SPOC to ensure coordination of state and local review.

The Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) contains an appendix titled "Programs Requiring Executive Order 12372 Review," which lists all the programs potentially subject to review by the State of California. Grant applicants should consult the OPR website ([www.opr.ca.gov/s\\_federalgrantreview.php](http://www.opr.ca.gov/s_federalgrantreview.php)) to determine whether the program they are applying for is subject to state review. Applicants also may call the SCH to make this determination.

Only some of the programs generally subject to intergovernmental review may be subject to review by the state. OPR is responsible for selecting the federal programs reviewed by the state. If you are applying for a federal grant or loan that is on the CFDA list and it is one of the programs selected for review by the state, you must contact the SCH as follows.

#### **Step 1: Submitting the Federal Standard Form (FSF) 424**

Applicants for federal assistance programs covered under E.O. 12372 must send a copy of the FSF 424 to the SCH and to their appropriate [Areawide Clearinghouse](#). FSF 424 is the cover sheet of the federal grant application and is titled, "Application for Federal Financial Assistance." **Do not transmit the entire application package to the SCH.**

#### **Step 2: Review Period Begins**

FSF 424 is date stamped upon receipt by the SCH, which begins a 30 day review period. If a Notice of Intent to Comment is received from any agency within the first 30 days of the review period, the review period is automatically extended 30 days, allowing a total review period of not more than 60 days. This extension is intended to allow a commenting agency sufficient time to submit comments to the applicant.

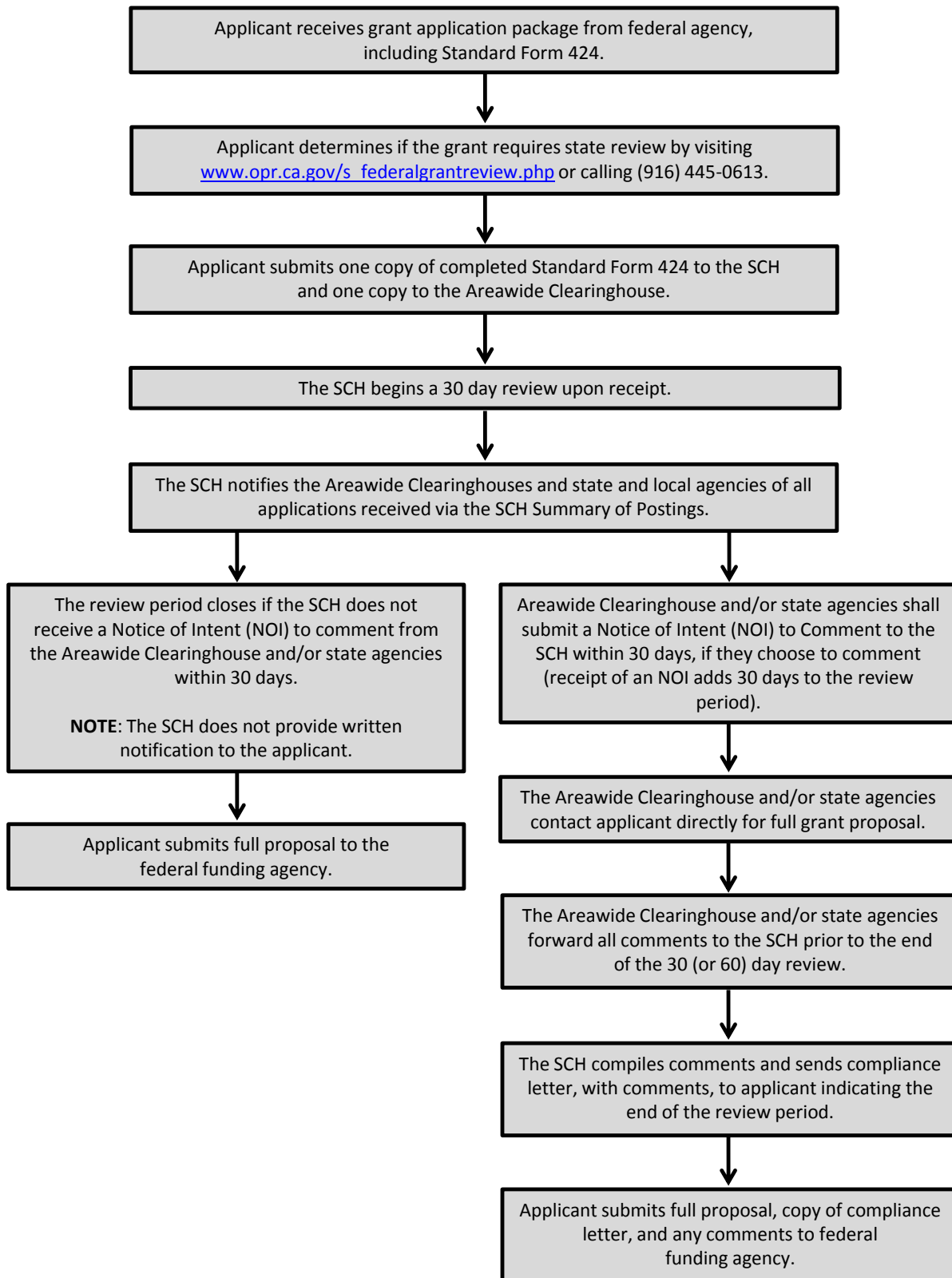
The SCH does not assign identification numbers to grant applications, nor are the grant applications tracked in a database.

The SCH notifies the public of the grant applications by publishing a bi-monthly online *SCH Summary of Postings* (SOPs). Copies of all FSF 424s received by the SCH for the preceding two-week period are included in the SOPs. The SOPs allows agencies and individuals the opportunity to review applications, and to decide whether they would like to comment on a particular application. Since the SCH does not receive a complete copy of the federal assistance proposal, any person wishing to review a proposal must contact the applicant directly for more information.

#### **Step 3: After the Review Period**

At the end of the 30 or 60 day comment period, the SCH will forward copies of any comment letters it receives to the applicant. If no comments are received, the SCH will not notify the applicant in writing. This ends SCH involvement in the grant review process.

## Federal Grant Review



## Areawide Clearinghouses

### Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG)

101 Eighth Street  
Oakland, CA 94607

T: (510) 464-7900

F: (510) 464-7970

info@abag.ca.gov

[www.abag.ca.gov](http://www.abag.ca.gov)

*Regions: Counties of Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Napa, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Solano, Sonoma, and 100 cities*

### Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (AMBAG)

445 Reservation Road, Suite G  
Marina, CA 93933-0809

T: (831) 883-3750

F: (831) 883-3755

info@ambag.org

[www.ambag.org](http://www.ambag.org)

*Regions: Counties of Monterey, San Benito, Santa Cruz and 18 Cities*

### Fresno Council of Governments (FresnoCOG)

2035 Tulare Street, Suite 201  
Fresno, CA 93721

T: (559) 233-4148 x241

F: (559) 233-9645

parnest@fresnocog.org

[www.fresnocog.org](http://www.fresnocog.org)

*Regions: Fresno County and 15 Cities*

### Kern Council of Governments (Kern COG)

1401 19th Street, Suite 300  
Bakersfield, CA 93301

T: (661) 861-2191

F: (661) 324-8215

[www.kerncog.org](http://www.kerncog.org)

*Regions: Kern County and 11 Cities*

### Kings County Association of Governments (KCAG)

339 West D Street, Suite B  
Lemoore, CA 93245

T: (559) 852-2654

F: (559) 924-5632

[www.kingscog.org](http://www.kingscog.org)

*Regions: Kings County and 4 Cities*

### Merced County Association of Governments (MCAG)

369 West 18th Street  
Merced, CA 95340

T: (209) 723-3153

F: (209) 723-0322

info@mcagov.org

[www.mcagov.org](http://www.mcagov.org)

*Regions: Merced County and 6 Cities*

### Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG)

1415 L Street, Suite 300  
Sacramento, CA 95814

T: (916) 321-9000

F: (916) 321-9551

contact@sacog.org

[www.sacog.org](http://www.sacog.org)

*Regions: Counties of Placer (part), Sacramento, Sutter, Yolo, Yuba, El Dorado and 22 Cities*

### San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG)

401 B Street, Suite 800  
San Diego, CA 92101

T: (619) 699-1900

F: (619) 699-1905

pio@sandag.org

[www.sandag.org](http://www.sandag.org)

*Regions: San Diego County and 19 Cities*

### San Joaquin Council of Governments (SJCCOG)

555 East Weber Avenue  
Stockton, CA 95202-2804

T: (209) 235-0600

F: (209) 235-0438

info@sjcog.org

[www.sjcog.org](http://www.sjcog.org)

*Regions: San Joaquin County and 7 Cities*

### Santa Barbara County Association of Governments (SBCAG)

260 North San Antonio Road, Suite B  
Santa Barbara, CA 93110

T: (805) 961-8900

F: (805) 961-8901

info@sbcag.org

[www.sbcag.org](http://www.sbcag.org)

*Regions: Santa Barbara County and 8 Cities*

### Sierra Economic Development Corporation

560 Wall Street, Suite F  
Auburn, CA 95603

T: (530) 823-4703

F: (530) 823-4142

[www.sedcorp.biz/](http://www.sedcorp.biz/)

*Regions: Counties of El Dorado (part), Nevada, Placer (part), Sierra and 10 Cities*

### Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG)

818 West Seventh Street, 12th Floor  
Los Angeles, CA 90017

T: (213) 236-1800

F: (213) 236-1825

[www.scag.ca.gov](http://www.scag.ca.gov)

*Regions: Counties of Imperial, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, Ventura and 191 Cities*

### Stanislaus Council of Governments (StanCOG)

1111 I Street, Suite 308  
Modesto, CA 95354

T: (209) 525-4600

F: (209) 558-7833

[www.stancog.org](http://www.stancog.org)

*Regions: Stanislaus County and 9 Cities*

### Tulare County Association of Governments (TCAG)

210 North Church Street, Suite B  
Visalia, CA 93291

T: (559) 733-6291

F: (559) 730-2653

ablythe@tularecog.org

[www.tularecog.org](http://www.tularecog.org)

*Regions: Tulare County and 8 Cities*

## GENERAL ACTIVITIES AND SERVICES

Although coordinating state agency review of environmental documents and grants is the primary function of the SCH, the office also has other responsibilities, and provides services that can be useful to those involved in the land use field. These services include posting of certain notices, publication of a bi-monthly Summary of Postings, and maintaining a searchable computer database of CEQA notices.

### Posting Environmental Notices

The SCH maintains a database of environmental notices filed and posts these notices online (CEQA Guidelines Section 15023(h)). The notices can be found at [www.ceqanet.ca.gov](http://www.ceqanet.ca.gov). Notices include, but are not limited to the following:

#### Notice of Completion (NOC)

(PRC Section 21161)

CEQA requires that a NOC be filed with the SCH by a public agency whenever a Draft EIR is completed. The SCH requests that Lead Agencies also submit a NOC for Negative Declarations and NOPs. The NOC is available online at [www.opr.ca.gov/docs/NOC.pdf](http://www.opr.ca.gov/docs/NOC.pdf).

#### **Notice of Availability**

(PRC Section 21092)

Public notice of the availability of a Draft EIR or a Negative Declaration must be provided by the Lead Agency to enable public agencies and individuals to review and comment on the document.

#### *Minimum Contents of Public Notice of Availability:*

- A. Description of proposed project;
- B. Location of proposed project;
- C. Specific period during which comments on proposed project will be accepted;
- D. Date, time, and place of any public meetings on proposed project;
- E. Address where copies of Draft EIR or Negative Declaration are available for review; and
- F. Environmental effects of the project, if any.

The notice must be provided to all organizations and individuals who previously requested notice. At least one of the following notification methods must be used:

- 1) Publication by the Lead Agency in a newspaper of general circulation in the area affected by the proposed project.
- 2) Posting of the notice by the Lead Agency on- and off-site in the area where the project is to be located.
- 3) Direct mailing to the owners and occupants of contiguous property shown on the latest equalized assessment roll.

A Notice of Availability does not need to be filed with the SCH. However, the Lead Agency may submit this notice together with its Draft EIR or Negative Declaration to provide additional information to state agencies.

#### Notice of Determination (NOD)

(CEQA Guidelines Sections 15075 and 15094 and PRC Sections 21065 and 21108)



A NOD is a document filed by a public agency within 5 days after it approves or determines to carry out a project that is subject to the requirements of CEQA.

Filing the NOD starts a 30 calendar day statute of limitations on court challenges to the project approval under CEQA. If a NOD is not filed, the statute of limitations is 180 days from the date of approval.

Filing requirements for state and local agencies differ as follows:

**Local Lead Agency:** If a local Lead Agency approves the project, it must file the NOD with the county clerk of the county or counties where the project will be located within 5 working days. In addition, if the project requires discretionary approval from any state agency, the local Lead Agency must file a copy of the NOD with the SCH.

**State Lead Agency:** When a state agency is the Lead Agency, the NOD must be filed with the SCH.

*Minimum Contents of a NOD:*

For a Negative Declaration

(CEQA Guidelines Section 15075 and PRC Sections 21065 and 21108)

- A. Identification of the project, including its common name or title, if possible;
- B. Location of the project;
- C. Name of person carrying out the project;
- D. Brief description of the project;
- E. Date the agency approved the project;
- F. Determination by the approving agency that the project in its approved form will not have a significant effect on the environment;
- G. Statement that a Negative Declaration was prepared pursuant to the provisions of CEQA; and
- H. Address where a copy of the environmental document and record of project approval can be examined;

For an EIR

(CEQA Guidelines Section 15094 and PRC Sections 21065 and 21108)

- A. Identification of the project, including its common name or title, if possible;
- B. Location of the project;
- C. Name of person carrying out the project;
- D. Brief description of the project;
- E. Date the agency approved the project;
- F. Determination by the approving agency whether the project in its approved form will have a significant effect on the environment;
- G. Statement that an EIR was prepared pursuant to the provisions of CEQA;
- H. Whether mitigation measures were made a condition of the approval of the project;
- I. Whether a statement of overriding considerations was adopted for the project;
- J. Whether findings were made pursuant to Section 15091 of the CEQA Guidelines;
- K. Address where a copy of the Final EIR and record of project approval may be examined; and
- L. The notice shall be mailed to any person who has filed a written request for such notice;

Notice of Exemption (NOE)

(CEQA Guidelines Section 15062 and PRC Sections 21065 and 21108)

A NOE is a brief notice that can be filed after a public agency has decided to carry out or approve a project it has determined is exempt from CEQA. The NOE is generally optional except when lead agencies are relying on statutory exemptions in PRC Sections 21159.22, 21159.23 and 21159.24. In these cases, the NOE must be filed with the SCH, pursuant to PRC Section 21152.1.



For optional filing, the NOE should be filed with the county clerk or the SCH after the project has been approved. When a public agency approves an applicant's project, either the agency or the applicant may file a NOE.

There are different filing requirements for state agencies, local agencies, and project applicants, as follows:

**State Lead Agency:** If a state agency, board, or commission determines that a project is not subject to CEQA, it may file a NOE with the SCH after the project has been approved.

**Local Lead Agency:** When a local agency files a NOE, it must be filed with the county clerk of the county or counties where the project is to be located.

**Applicant:** When an applicant files a NOE, the notice must be filed in the same place as if it were filed by the Lead Agency. Additionally, the notice shall be accompanied by a certified document issued by the public Lead Agency stating that the agency has found the project to be exempt.

Additionally, the notice must be mailed to any person who has filed a written request for such notice.

The filing of a NOE begins a 35 day statute of limitations on legal challenges to the Lead Agency's decision that the project is exempt from CEQA. If a NOE is not filed, a 180 day statute of limitations applies.

***Minimum Contents of a NOE:***

- A. Brief description of the project;
- B. Name of person carrying out the project;
- C. Finding that the project is exempt, including a citation that references the CEQA Guidelines or Statutory section under which it is found to be exempt; and
- D. Brief statement of reasons to support the finding.

## CEQA Database

[www.ceqanet.ca.gov](http://www.ceqanet.ca.gov)

Summary information of the environmental documents submitted to the SCH are recorded in an online CEQA database. This database serves as a resource for planners, consultants, and project applicants who are preparing environmental documents. The purpose of the database is to streamline the environmental document preparation process by allowing reuse of relevant information from prior documents for similar projects or issues. For environmental documents, the summary information in the database is taken directly from the NOC forms provided by the Lead Agency, and includes the following:

- A. Title of the project;
- B. Project's SCH identification number;
- C. Name and address of the Lead Agency;
- D. Name and telephone number of the contact person;
- E. Location of the project;
- F. Description of the project;
- G. Type of document submitted for review;
- H. Environmental issues discussed in the document;
- I. State agencies reviewing the document; and
- J. State review period.

By searching the database, Lead and Responsible agencies or other interested parties may confirm the date that a notice was filed at the SCH. Hardcopies of all NODs and NOEs received by the SCH are kept on file for a period of five years. All paper records older than five years are removed to archives.

## SCH Summary of Postings

The SCH Summary of Postings (SOPs) is published twice per month. It contains general information, a brief listing of all environmental documents received (including NOPs, NOCs, NODs, NOEs, Final EIRs, etc.), and a copy of all FSF 424s for federal grant applications received during the preceding two weeks. The SOPs is posted on the OPR website at [www.opr.ca.gov/s\\_newslettersandgrants.php](http://www.opr.ca.gov/s_newslettersandgrants.php).

## Sending Faxes to SCH

SCH Fax Number: (916) 323-3018

The SCH accepts certain documents by fax. The SCH does not require receipt of a hardcopy of the document when a faxed version is submitted. The SCH accepts the following faxed documents.

1. **Comment Letters:** State agency comments on environmental documents.
2. **Environmental Documents:** After prearrangement with the appropriate SCH clerk, NOPs may be accepted by fax.
3. **Environmental Notices:** NODs and NOEs are accepted by fax. Instead of mailing a copy of a NOD or NOE that has already been faxed, the Lead Agency is encouraged to call the SCH to make sure that it was received. If the Lead Agency follows up with a duplicate mailed copy, the Lead Agency must indicate to the SCH that a prior copy was sent by fax.
4. **Federal Standard Form 424**

The SCH does not accept Negative Declarations or Draft EIRs by fax.

## Useful Websites

California Environmental Resources Evaluation System (CERES) (<http://ceres.ca.gov/ceqa>): View and download CEQA, the CEQA Guidelines, court cases and other CEQA related reference documents.

Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR) ([www.opr.ca.gov](http://www.opr.ca.gov)): View and download information about OPR, SCH, local government assistance, and publications and templates.

NEPANet (<http://ceq.hss.doe.gov/nepa/nepanet.htm>): View and download NEPA, NEPA Regulations and related guidance.

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) ([www.cfda.gov](http://www.cfda.gov)): Access the CFDA to find grants and grant identification numbers to verify if it requires state review.

## GENERAL CEQA INFORMATION

### Purposes of Review

As defined in the CEQA Guidelines Section 15200, the purposes of reviewing EIRs and Negative Declarations include:

- a) Sharing expertise,
- b) Disclosing agency analyses,
- c) Checking for accuracy,
- d) Detecting omissions,
- e) Discovering public concerns, and
- f) Soliciting counter proposals.

### Types of Agencies

The following are definitions of various types of agencies with roles and responsibilities in the CEQA process.

**Lead Agency** (CEQA Guidelines Section 15367): The public agency that has the principal responsibility for carrying out or approving a project. Criteria for determining which agency will be the Lead Agency for a project are contained in CEQA Guidelines Section 15051.

**Local Agency** (CEQA Guidelines Section 15368): Any public agency other than a state agency, board, or commission.

**Public Agency** (CEQA Guidelines Section 15379): Includes any state agency, board, or commission and any local or regional agency, as defined in the CEQA Guidelines. It does not include agencies of the federal government.

**Responsible Agency** (CEQA Guidelines Section 15381): A public agency that proposes to carry out or approve a project, for which a Lead Agency is preparing or has prepared an EIR or Negative Declaration. For purposes of CEQA, the term "Responsible Agency" includes all public agencies other than the Lead Agency that have discretionary approval power over the project.

**State Agency** (CEQA Guidelines Section 15383): A governmental agency in the executive branch of state government and funded primarily by the State Treasury. Health and Safety Code Section 25199.1 (o) defines a "state agency" as "any agency, board, or commission of state government... include[ing] an air pollution control district and an air quality management district."

**Trustee Agency** (CEQA Guidelines Section 15386): A state agency having jurisdiction by law over natural resources affected by a project that are held in trust for the people of the State of California. Trustee Agencies include but are not limited to:

- California Department of Fish and Game
- California Department of Parks and Recreation
- California State Lands Commission
- University of California

### Types of Documents

It is the responsibility of the Lead Agency to determine the appropriate type of CEQA document for a project based on the CEQA Statutes and CEQA Guidelines.

**Negative Declaration** (CEQA Guidelines Section 15371): A written statement by the Lead Agency briefly describing the reasons why a proposed project, not exempt from CEQA, will not have a significant effect on the environment

and, therefore, does not require the preparation of an EIR. The contents of the Negative Declaration are described in CEQA Guidelines Section 15071.

**Environmental Impact Report (EIR)** (CEQA Guidelines Section 15362): A detailed statement prepared under CEQA describing and analyzing the significant environmental effects of a project and discussing ways to mitigate or avoid the effects. The contents are also listed under CEQA Guidelines, Article 9.

**Notice of Preparation** (CEQA Guidelines Section 15375): A brief notice sent by a Lead Agency to notify the Responsible, Trustee, and involved federal agencies that the Lead Agency plans to prepare an EIR for the project. The purpose of the notice is to solicit guidance from those agencies as to the scope and content of the environmental information to be included in the EIR.

**Project EIR** (CEQA Guidelines Section 15161): The most common type of EIR examines; the environmental impacts of a specific development project. This type of EIR should focus primarily on the changes in the environment that would result from the development project. The EIR shall examine all phases of the project including planning, construction, and operation.

**Program EIR** (CEQA Guidelines Section 15168): An EIR that may be prepared on a series of actions that can be characterized as one large project and are related either geographically, or are "logical parts in the chain of contemplated actions, or are in connection with issuance of rules, regulations, plans, or other general criteria to govern the conduct of a continuing program, or as individual activities carried out under the same authorizing statutory or regulatory authority and having generally similar environmental effects which can be mitigated in similar ways."

**Supplement to an EIR** (CEQA Guidelines Section 15163): The Lead or Responsible Agency may choose to prepare a supplement to an EIR rather than a subsequent EIR if only minor additions or changes would be necessary to make the previous EIR adequately apply to the project in the changed situation.

The supplement to the EIR needs only to contain the information necessary to make the previous EIR adequate for the project, as revised. A supplement to an EIR shall be given the same kind of notice and public review as is given to a Draft EIR under Section 15087 of the CEQA Guidelines. A supplement to an EIR may be circulated by itself without re-circulating the previous Draft or Final EIR.

**Subsequent EIR and Negative Declaration** (CEQA Guidelines Section 15162): Where an EIR or Negative Declaration has been prepared, it is not necessary to prepare an additional EIR or Negative Declaration unless substantial changes occur with respect to the circumstances under which the project is undertaken, and these changes will require important revisions in the previous EIR or Negative Declaration due to the involvement of new significant environmental impacts not covered in a previous document.

**Addendum to an EIR or Negative Declaration** (CEQA Guidelines Section 15164): The Lead or Responsible Agency shall prepare an addendum to an EIR or Negative Declaration if only minor technical changes or additions are necessary to make the document adequate, and the changes made by the addendum do not raise important new issues about the significant effects on the environment.

An addendum need not be circulated for public review but can be included in, or attached to, the Final EIR or adopted Negative Declaration. The decision-making body shall consider the addendum with the Final EIR or Negative Declaration prior to making a decision on the project.

**Final EIR** (CEQA Guidelines Sections 15132 and 15362): An EIR containing information from the Draft EIR, comments either verbatim or in summary received in the review process, a list of persons commenting, and the response of the Lead Agency to the comments received.

## Commenting on CEQA Documents

**Authority to Comment** (CEQA Guidelines Section 15044): Any person or entity other than a Responsible Agency may submit comments to a Lead Agency concerning any environmental effects of a project being considered by the Lead Agency.

**Comments by E-mail** (PRC Section 21091(d)(3)): The Lead Agency must accept comments on a Draft EIR, Negative Declaration or any CEQA notice via e-mail and must treat e-mail comments as equivalent to written comments.

**Response to Notice of Preparation** (CEQA Guidelines Section 15082(b) and Section 15103): Within 30 days after receiving the NOP, each Responsible Agency shall provide the Lead Agency with specific detail about the scope and content of the environmental information related to the Responsible Agency's area of statutory responsibility which must be included in the Draft EIR.

The response, at a minimum, shall identify the significant environmental issues and reasonable alternatives and mitigation measures that the Responsible Agency will need to have explored in the Draft EIR. The response shall also identify whether the agency will be a Responsible Agency or Trustee Agency for the project.

If a Responsible Agency fails to reply within 30 days with either a response or a well-justified request for additional time, the Lead Agency may assume that the Responsible Agency has no response and may ignore a late response.

**Responsible Agency Comments on Draft EIRs and Negative Declarations** (CEQA Guidelines Section 15096(d)): A Responsible Agency should review and comment on Draft EIRs and Negative Declarations for projects that the Responsible Agency would later be asked to approve. Comments should focus on any shortcomings in the EIR, the appropriateness of using a Negative Declaration, or additional alternatives or mitigation measures the EIR should include. The comments shall be limited to those project activities within the agency's area of expertise or that are required to be carried out or approved by the agency or that will be subject to the exercise of powers by the agency. Comments shall be as specific as possible and supported by either oral or written documentation.

**Consideration of Comments on a Negative Declaration** (CEQA Guidelines Section 15074(b)): Prior to approving the project, the decision-making body of the Lead Agency shall consider the proposed Negative Declaration together with any comments received during the public review process. They shall approve the project if they find there is no substantial evidence the project will have a significant effect on the environment.

**Evaluation of, and Response to, EIR Comments** (CEQA Guidelines Section 15088): The Lead Agency shall evaluate comments on environmental issues received from persons who reviewed the Draft EIR and shall prepare a written response. The Lead Agency shall respond to comments received during the noticed comment period and any extensions, and may respond to late comments.

The written response shall describe the disposition of significant environmental issues raised (e.g., revisions to the proposed project to mitigate anticipated impacts or objections). In particular, the major environmental issues raised when the Lead Agency's position varies from recommendations and objections raised in the comments must be addressed in detail giving reasons why specific comments and suggestions were not accepted. There must be good faith, reasoned analysis in the response. Conclusory statements unsupported by factual information will not suffice.

The response to comments may take the form of a revision to the Draft EIR or may be a separate section in the Final EIR. Where the response to comments makes important changes in the information contained in the text of the Draft EIR, the Lead Agency should either revise the text in the body of the EIR, or include marginal notes showing that the information is revised in the response to comments.

**Contents of the Final EIR** (CEQA Guidelines Section 15132): The Final EIR shall consist of, among other things, the responses of the Lead Agency to significant environmental points raised in the review and consultation process.

**Failure to Comment** (CEQA Guidelines Section 15207): If any public agency or person who is consulted with in regard to an EIR or Negative Declaration fails to comment within a reasonable time as specified by the Lead Agency, it shall be assumed, without a request for a specific extension of time, that such agency or person has no comment to make. Although the Lead Agency need not respond to late comments, it may choose to respond.

**Retention and Availability of Comments** (CEQA Guidelines Section 15208): Comments received through the consultation process shall be retained for a reasonable period and available for public inspection at an address given in the Final EIR. Comments that may be received on a Draft EIR or Negative Declaration under preparation shall also be considered and kept on file.

## STATE CLEARINGHOUSE FORMS

This section contains the standard forms used by the SCH. Although the forms in this section have been carefully developed to transmit the information required under CEQA, the Statute does not require agencies to use these particular forms. Agencies are free to devise their own forms. However, agencies choosing to create their own forms must be sure to include all the information required in the CEQA Guidelines.

The SCH strongly encourages Lead Agencies to use the following forms, especially when state level review is required.

### Form A: Notice of Completion (NOC)

CEQA Guidelines Section 15085 requires agencies to file a NOC form with OPR as soon as the Draft EIR is complete. If the Draft EIR will be subject to a state review period, the SCH requires that the NOC form accompany the submittal of the required 15 copies of the environmental document.

The NOC form should be used as a document transmittal form when submitting Negative Declarations, NOPs and federal environmental documents to the SCH. Note the Document Type section on the form and check the appropriate box. This form expedites the processing of environmental documents submitted to the SCH for review.

### Form B: Notice of Preparation (NOP)

CEQA Guidelines Section 15082 discusses the required contents of a NOP. The SCH must receive all NOPs.

### Form C: Notice of Determination (NOD)

CEQA Guidelines Sections 15075 and 15904 outline the content requirements for filing a NOD. The NOD form can be used to file with the SCH and/or the county clerk.

### Form D: Notice of Exemption (NOE)

CEQA Guidelines Section 15062 discusses the content requirements for filing a NOE. The NOE form can be used to file with the SCH and/or the county clerk.

### Form E: Shortened Review Request

PRC Section 21091 allows for shortened review periods under certain circumstances. Appendix K of the CEQA Guidelines contains the criteria for receiving a shortened review. A form for requesting shortened review has been provided in the appendices to ensure that the requesting agency provides all the information necessary for the SCH to make a determination. For more information on this process, refer to the [Requesting a Shortened Review](#) section.

### Form F: Sample Summary for Electronic Document Submittal

When submitting electronic copies of EIRs, Negative Declarations, or NOPs to the SCH, a summary must be included. The SCH recommends using the Sample Summary Form, but also accepts other summaries such as an EIR summary prepared pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15123.



## Explanation of the Notice of Completion Form (NOC)

The NOC Form ([Form A](#)) is required to be submitted with 15 copies of every Draft EIR (CEQA Guidelines Section 15085(d)) and requested and strongly advised to be submitted with 15 copies of every Negative Declaration, NOP, and federal environmental document submitted to the SCH.

### LEAD AGENCY

**Project Title:** Project's common name. It is best to use project specific words to facilitate database searches.

**Lead Agency:** Name of the public agency that has legal responsibility for preparation and review of the environmental document.

**Contact Person:** Name of the contact person from the Lead Agency. This should not be the consultant's name.

**Mailing Address:** Mailing address for the contact person at the Lead Agency. State agency comments will be mailed to this address.

**Phone:** Phone number of the contact person at the Lead Agency.

**City:** City of the Lead Agency address. This is not necessarily the city in which the project is located.

**Zip:** Zip code of the Lead Agency. Indicate the nine-digit zip code, if applicable.

**County:** County of the Lead Agency address. This is not necessarily the county in which the project is located.

### PROJECT LOCATION

**County:** County in which the project is located. Most state agencies assign projects for review according to the county of the project.

**City/Nearest Community:** City or town in which the project is located, or the community nearest the location of the project.

**Latitude and Longitude:** PRC Section 21161 requires the Lead Agency to provide the latitude and longitude for the project location.

**Total Acres:** Total area encompassed by the project site gives some indication of the scope of the project and its regional significance.

**Cross Streets:** Indicate the nearest major cross street or streets.

**Assessor's Parcel Number (APN):** Indicate the APN.

**Section, Township, Range and Base:** Indicate base meridian. If you are unable to provide the APN, also provide Section, Township, and Range.

**Highways, Airports, Railroads, Schools, and Waterways (including streams or lakes):** These identifiers are of consequence to many projects. By restricting the information to those features within a two-mile radius of the project site, unnecessary data collection can be avoided. Indicate name(s) of the waterways, airports, railroads, schools, and route number(s) of the state highways.

### DOCUMENT TYPE

Identifies the nature of the environmental document. Check appropriate box.

### LOCAL ACTION TYPE

Helps reviewers understand the type of local approvals that will be required for the project and the nature of the project and its environmental documentation. Check appropriate box(es).

### DEVELOPMENT TYPE

Data category that helps identify the scope of the project for distribution purposes. Additionally, the information serves to identify projects of a similar character to assist in the reuse of environmental documents. For some development types, identify number of acres, square footage, and number of permanent employees. Check and fill in appropriate box(es).

### PROJECT ISSUES DISCUSSED IN DOCUMENT

Topics on which the environmental document focuses attention. These are not necessarily the adverse impacts of the project, but the issues that are discussed in some depth. Check appropriate box(es).

### PRESENT LAND USE AND ZONING

Enables agencies to understand the extent of the changes proposed and helps to identify projects with similar environmental issues for later reuse of information.

### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Brief (1-2 paragraph) description of the proposed project, that is thorough enough for reviewing agencies to understand the total project concept. The data categories can provide guidance and structure to the explanation given.

### REVIEWING AGENCIES CHECKLIST

List of agencies and departments to whom the SCH may distribute a draft document. The Lead Agency can indicate for the SCH's information any Responsible, Trustee, or concerned agencies they would like to review the document, or who have previously been involved in the project's review. Any agencies that received the document directly from the Lead Agency also should be marked accordingly.

### LOCAL PUBLIC REVIEW PERIOD

Section to be filled in when the NOC form is filed and not being submitted with environmental documents.

### CONSULTING FIRM

Information to be filled in only if applicable.

### APPLICANT

Identifies whether the applicant or project proponent is a private developer or the Lead Agency.



**Notice of Completion & Environmental Document Transmittal**

Mail to: State Clearinghouse, P.O. Box 3044, Sacramento, CA 95812-3044 (916) 445-0613  
 For Hand Delivery/Street Address: 1400 Tenth Street, Sacramento, CA 95814

SCH #
-------

**Project Title:** \_\_\_\_\_

Lead Agency: \_\_\_\_\_ Contact Person: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_ County: \_\_\_\_\_

**Project Location:** County: \_\_\_\_\_ City/Nearest Community: \_\_\_\_\_

Cross Streets: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Longitude/Latitude (degrees, minutes and seconds): \_\_\_\_\_° \_\_\_\_\_' \_\_\_\_\_" N / \_\_\_\_\_° \_\_\_\_\_' \_\_\_\_\_" W Total Acres: \_\_\_\_\_

Assessor's Parcel No.: \_\_\_\_\_ Section: \_\_\_\_\_ Twp.: \_\_\_\_\_ Range: \_\_\_\_\_ Base: \_\_\_\_\_

Within 2 Miles: State Hwy #: \_\_\_\_\_ Waterways: \_\_\_\_\_

Airports: \_\_\_\_\_ Railways: \_\_\_\_\_ Schools: \_\_\_\_\_

**Document Type:**

CEQA: ☐ NOP ☐ Draft EIR NEPA: ☐ NOI Other: ☐ Joint Document  
☐ Early Cons ☐ Supplement/Subsequent EIR ☐ EA ☐ Final Document  
☐ Neg Dec (Prior SCH No.) \_\_\_\_\_ ☐ Draft EIS ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_  
☐ Mit Neg Dec Other: \_\_\_\_\_ ☐ FONSI \_\_\_\_\_

**Local Action Type:**

☐ General Plan Update ☐ Specific Plan ☐ Rezone ☐ Annexation  
☐ General Plan Amendment ☐ Master Plan ☐ Prezone ☐ Redevelopment  
☐ General Plan Element ☐ Planned Unit Development ☐ Use Permit ☐ Coastal Permit  
☐ Community Plan ☐ Site Plan ☐ Land Division (Subdivision, etc.) ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**Development Type:**

☐ Residential: Units \_\_\_\_\_ Acres \_\_\_\_\_ ☐ Transportation: Type \_\_\_\_\_  
☐ Office: Sq.ft. \_\_\_\_\_ Acres \_\_\_\_\_ Employees \_\_\_\_\_ ☐ Mining: Mineral \_\_\_\_\_  
☐ Commercial: Sq.ft. \_\_\_\_\_ Acres \_\_\_\_\_ Employees \_\_\_\_\_ ☐ Power: Type \_\_\_\_\_ MW \_\_\_\_\_  
☐ Industrial: Sq.ft. \_\_\_\_\_ Acres \_\_\_\_\_ Employees \_\_\_\_\_ ☐ Waste Treatment: Type \_\_\_\_\_ MGD \_\_\_\_\_  
☐ Educational: \_\_\_\_\_ ☐ Hazardous Waste: Type \_\_\_\_\_  
☐ Recreational: \_\_\_\_\_ ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_  
☐ Water Facilities: Type \_\_\_\_\_ MGD \_\_\_\_\_

**Project Issues Discussed in Document:**

☐ Aesthetic/Visual ☐ Fiscal ☐ Recreation/Parks ☐ Vegetation  
☐ Agricultural Land ☐ Flood Plain/Flooding ☐ Schools/Universities ☐ Water Quality  
☐ Air Quality ☐ Forest Land/Fire Hazard ☐ Septic Systems ☐ Water Supply/Groundwater  
☐ Archeological/Historical ☐ Geologic/Seismic ☐ Sewer Capacity ☐ Wetland/Riparian  
☐ Biological Resources ☐ Minerals ☐ Soil Erosion/Compaction/Grading ☐ Growth Inducement  
☐ Coastal Zone ☐ Noise ☐ Solid Waste ☐ Land Use  
☐ Drainage/Absorption ☐ Population/Housing Balance ☐ Toxic/Hazardous ☐ Cumulative Effects  
☐ Economic/Jobs ☐ Public Services/Facilities ☐ Traffic/Circulation ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**Present Land Use/Zoning/General Plan Designation:** \_\_\_\_\_**Project Description:** (please use a separate page if necessary)

continued

**Reviewing Agencies Checklist**

Lead Agencies may recommend State Clearinghouse distribution by marking agencies below with an "X".

If you have already sent your document to the agency please denote that with an "S".

<input type="checkbox"/> Air Resources Board	<input type="checkbox"/> Office of Historic Preservation
<input type="checkbox"/> Boating & Waterways, Department of	<input type="checkbox"/> Office of Public School Construction
<input type="checkbox"/> California Emergency Management Agency	<input type="checkbox"/> Parks & Recreation, Department of
<input type="checkbox"/> California Highway Patrol	<input type="checkbox"/> Pesticide Regulation, Department of
<input type="checkbox"/> Caltrans District # _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Public Utilities Commission
<input type="checkbox"/> Caltrans Division of Aeronautics	<input type="checkbox"/> Regional WQCB # _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Caltrans Planning	<input type="checkbox"/> Resources Agency
<input type="checkbox"/> Central Valley Flood Protection Board	<input type="checkbox"/> Resources Recycling and Recovery, Department of
<input type="checkbox"/> Coachella Valley Mtns. Conservancy	<input type="checkbox"/> S.F. Bay Conservation & Development Comm.
<input type="checkbox"/> Coastal Commission	<input type="checkbox"/> San Gabriel & Lower L.A. Rivers & Mtns. Conservancy
<input type="checkbox"/> Colorado River Board	<input type="checkbox"/> San Joaquin River Conservancy
<input type="checkbox"/> Conservation, Department of	<input type="checkbox"/> Santa Monica Mtns. Conservancy
<input type="checkbox"/> Corrections, Department of	<input type="checkbox"/> State Lands Commission
<input type="checkbox"/> Delta Protection Commission	<input type="checkbox"/> SWRCB: Clean Water Grants
<input type="checkbox"/> Education, Department of	<input type="checkbox"/> SWRCB: Water Quality
<input type="checkbox"/> Energy Commission	<input type="checkbox"/> SWRCB: Water Rights
<input type="checkbox"/> Fish & Game Region # _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Tahoe Regional Planning Agency
<input type="checkbox"/> Food & Agriculture, Department of	<input type="checkbox"/> Toxic Substances Control, Department of
<input type="checkbox"/> Forestry and Fire Protection, Department of	<input type="checkbox"/> Water Resources, Department of
<input type="checkbox"/> General Services, Department of	
<input type="checkbox"/> Health Services, Department of	<input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Housing & Community Development	<input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Native American Heritage Commission	

**Local Public Review Period (to be filled in by lead agency)**

Starting Date \_\_\_\_\_ Ending Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Lead Agency (Complete if applicable):**

Consulting Firm: _____	Applicant: _____
Address: _____	Address: _____
City/State/Zip: _____	City/State/Zip: _____
Contact: _____	Phone: _____
Phone: _____	

**Signature of Lead Agency Representative:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

Authority cited: Section 21083, Public Resources Code. Reference: Section 21161, Public Resources Code.

**Notice of Preparation****Notice of Preparation****To:** \_\_\_\_\_ **From:** \_\_\_\_\_

(Address)

(Address)

**Subject: Notice of Preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Report**

\_\_\_\_\_ will be the Lead Agency and will prepare an environmental impact report for the project identified below. We need to know the views of your agency as to the scope and content of the environmental information which is germane to your agency's statutory responsibilities in connection with the proposed project. Your agency will need to use the EIR prepared by our agency when considering your permit or other approval for the project.

The project description, location, and the potential environmental effects are contained in the attached materials. A copy of the Initial Study ( ☐ is ☐ is not ) attached.

Due to the time limits mandated by State law, your response must be sent at the earliest possible date but not later than 30 days after receipt of this notice.

Please send your response to \_\_\_\_\_ at the address shown above. We will need the name for a contact person in your agency.

**Project Title:** \_\_\_\_\_**Project Applicant, if any:** \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

**Reference:** California Code of Regulations, Title 14, (CEQA Guidelines) Sections 15082(a), 15103, 15375.

Form C

**Notice of Determination****Appendix D****To:**

☐ Office of Planning and Research  
*U.S. Mail:* *Street Address:*  
 P.O. Box 3044 1400 Tenth St., Rm 113  
 Sacramento, CA 95812-3044 Sacramento, CA 95814

☐ County Clerk

County of: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**From:**

Public Agency: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Contact: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Lead Agency (if different from above): \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

***SUBJECT: Filing of Notice of Determination in compliance with Section 21108 or 21152 of the Public Resources Code.***

State Clearinghouse Number (if submitted to State Clearinghouse): \_\_\_\_\_

Project Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Project Applicant: \_\_\_\_\_

Project Location (include county): \_\_\_\_\_

Project Description:

This is to advise that the \_\_\_\_\_ has approved the above  
 ( ☐ Lead Agency or ☐ Responsible Agency )

described project on \_\_\_\_\_ and has made the following determinations regarding the above  
 (date)  
 described project.

1. The project ☐ will ☐ will not] have a significant effect on the environment.
2. ☐ An Environmental Impact Report was prepared for this project pursuant to the provisions of CEQA.  
☐ A Negative Declaration was prepared for this project pursuant to the provisions of CEQA.
3. Mitigation measures ☐ were ☐ were not] made a condition of the approval of the project.
4. A mitigation reporting or monitoring plan ☐ was ☐ was not] adopted for this project.
5. A statement of Overriding Considerations ☐ was ☐ was not] adopted for this project.
6. Findings ☐ were ☐ were not] made pursuant to the provisions of CEQA.

This is to certify that the final EIR with comments and responses and record of project approval, or the negative Declaration, is available to the General Public at:

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Signature (Public Agency): \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Date Received for filing at OPR: \_\_\_\_\_

Authority cited: Sections 21083, Public Resources Code.  
 Reference Section 21000-21174, Public Resources Code.

Revised 2011

**Notice of Exemption****Appendix E**

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

County Clerk

County of: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**From:** (Public Agency): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

(Address)

Project Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Project Applicant: \_\_\_\_\_

Project Location - Specific: \_\_\_\_\_

Project Location - City: \_\_\_\_\_ Project Location - County: \_\_\_\_\_

Description of Nature, Purpose and Beneficiaries of Project: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: \_\_\_\_\_

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: \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Statutory Exemptions. State code number: \_\_\_\_\_

Reasons why project is exempt: \_\_\_\_\_

Lead Agency

Contact Person: \_\_\_\_\_ Area Code/Telephone/Extension: \_\_\_\_\_

**If filed by applicant:**

1. Attach certified document of exemption finding.
2. Has a Notice of Exemption been filed by the public agency approving the project? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ 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.

Date Received for filing at OPR: \_\_\_\_\_

## Form E

**Shortened Review Request Form**

California State Clearinghouse Handbook •

(To be filled out and signed by the **Lead Agency** and submitted with DEIR or Negative Declaration to SCH)

To: State Clearinghouse  
P.O. Box 3044  
Sacramento, CA 95812-3044

From: \_\_\_\_\_  
Lead Agency

\_\_\_\_\_  
Address

\_\_\_\_\_  
Phone #: (     )

SCH # \_\_\_\_\_

Contact: \_\_\_\_\_

Project Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Project Location: \_\_\_\_\_  
*City* *County*

Explain "exceptional circumstances" (CEQA, Section 15205(d)) for requesting a shortened review. Identify which of the 5 criteria in Appendix K are met for this project.

List responsible and trustee state agencies with contact person, phone number and date of consent for the shortened review, as well as any agencies that have commented on the project (attach additional pages, if necessary):

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

As designated representative for the lead agency, I verify, in their behalf, that there is no "statewide, regional, or areawide significance" to this project.

Length of review being requested: \_\_\_\_\_ days

\_\_\_\_\_  
Today's Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

Revised 2006

**Sample Summary for Electronic Document Submittal**

15 copies of this document may be included when a Lead Agency is submitting electronic copies of environmental impact reports, negative declarations, mitigated negative declarations, or notices of preparation to the SCH. The SCH will still accept other summaries, such as an EIR summary prepared pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15123, attached to the electronic copies of the document.

SCH # \_\_\_\_\_

Lead Agency: \_\_\_\_\_

Project Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Project Location: \_\_\_\_\_  

CityCounty

Please provide a Project Description (Proposed Actions, location, and/or consequences).

Please identify the project's significant or potentially significant effects and briefly describe any proposed mitigation measures that would reduce or avoid that effect.

**continued**

---

If applicable, please describe any of the project's areas of controversy known to the Lead Agency, including issues raised by agencies and the public.

Please provide a list of the responsible or trustee agencies for the project.



## APPENDIX A

### Environmental Documents and Projects Requiring SCH Review

As required by the CEQA Guidelines Sections 15205 and 15206, the following types of environmental documents must be submitted to the SCH for state agency review:

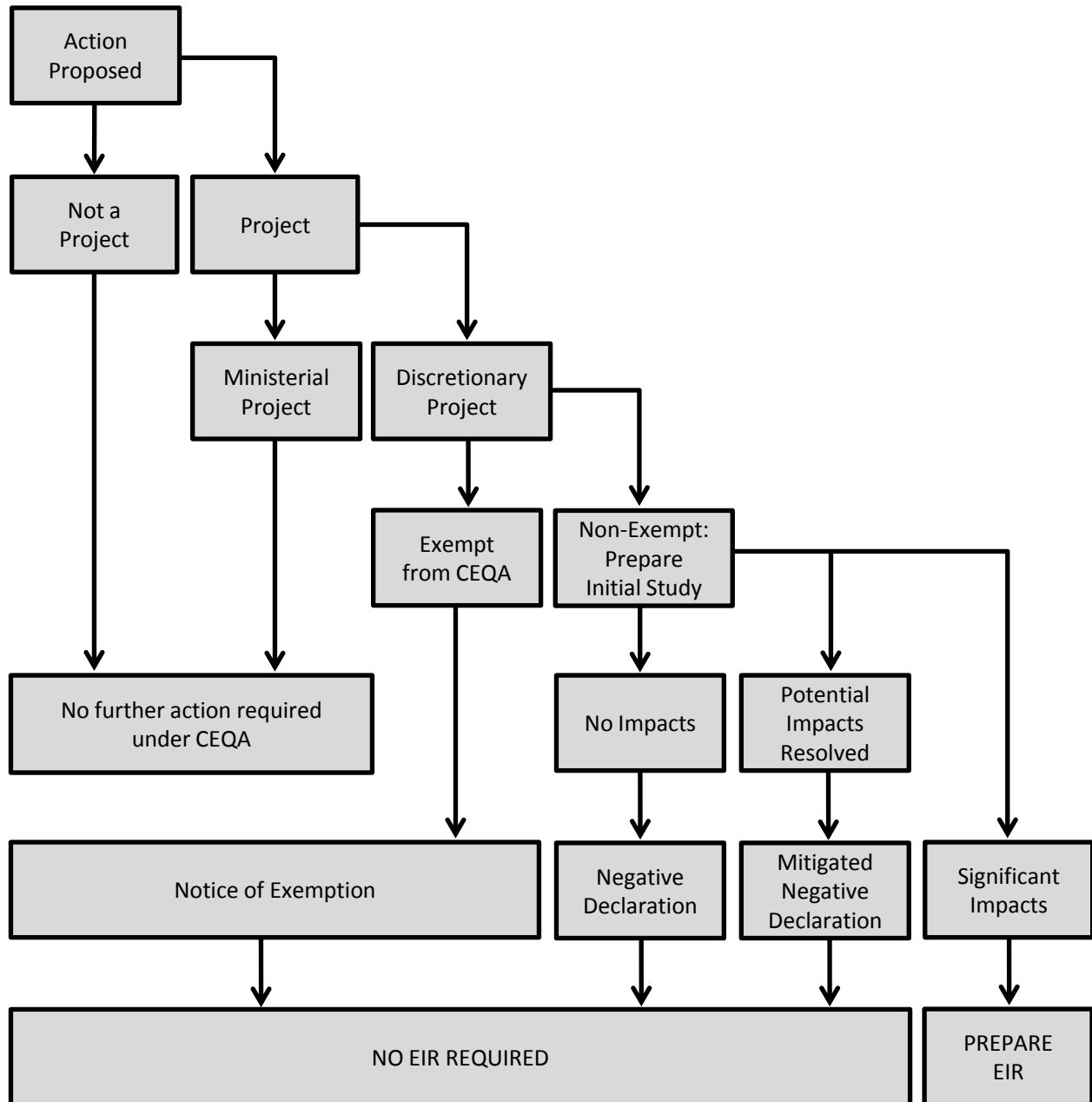
1. Where the lead agency is a state agency (CEQA Guidelines Section 15205).
2. Where there is a responsible or trustee state agency (CEQA Guidelines Section 15205).
3. Where the project has statewide, regional, or areawide significance (CEQA Guidelines Section 15206).

The CEQA Guidelines define the following types of projects as having statewide, regional, or areawide significance:

1. A proposed local general plan, element, or amendment for which an EIR was prepared.
2. A proposed residential development of more than 500 dwelling units.
3. A proposed shopping center or business establishment that will employ more than 1,000 persons or encompass more than 500,000 square feet of floor space.
4. A proposed commercial office that will employ more than 1,000 persons or encompass more than 250,000 square feet of floor space.
5. A proposed hotel/motel development of more than 500 rooms.
6. A proposed industrial, manufacturing, or processing plant, or industrial park, planned to house more than 1,000 persons, occupy more than 40 acres of land, or encompass more than 650,000 square feet of floor area.
7. A project that would result in the cancellation of a Williamson Act Contract for any parcel of 100 or more acres.
8. A project for which an EIR was prepared and which is located in and substantially impacting an area of critical environmental sensitivity. This includes the Lake Tahoe Basin, the Santa Monica Mountains Zone, the California Coastal Zone, the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta, the Suisun Marsh, any area within 1/4 mile of a wild and scenic river, and the jurisdiction of the San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission.
9. A project that would substantially affect sensitive wildlife habitats such as riparian lands, wetlands, bays, estuaries, marshes, and habitats for endangered, rare and threatened species.
10. A project that would interfere with the attainment of regional water quality standards as stated in the approved areawide wastewater management plan.
11. A project that would provide housing, jobs, or occupancy for 500 or more people within ten miles of a nuclear power plant.

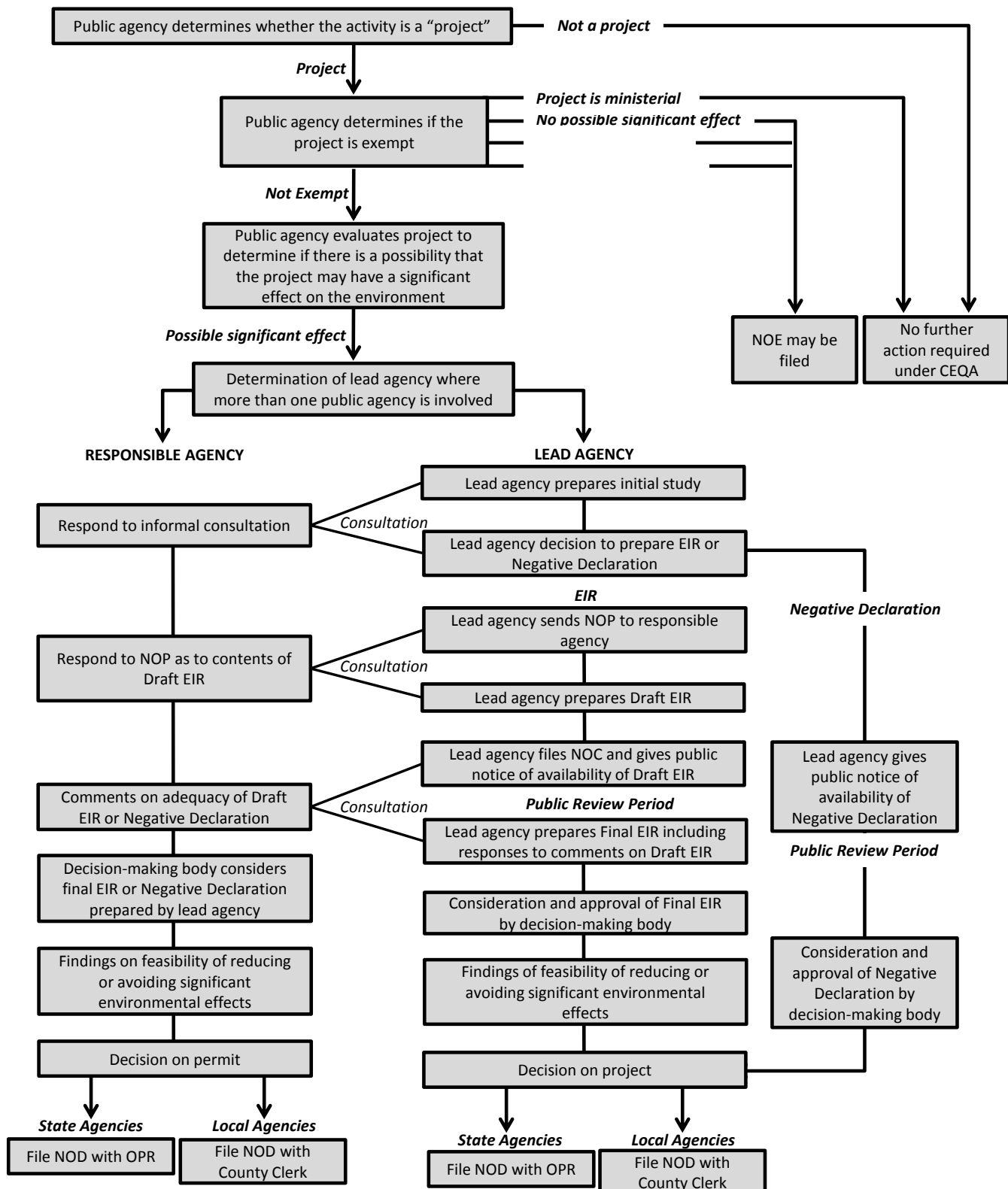
## APPENDIX B

### Lead Agency Decision to Prepare an EIR



## APPENDIX C

### CEQA Process



## APPENDIX D

### Time Periods for Review of Environmental Documents

Document or Action	Effect	Time Period	CEQA Statute and Guidelines
Review of application for completeness	Lead agency has 30 days to review an application for completeness. If no determination is made within this period, it will be deemed complete	30 days	15060 15101
Lead Agency acceptance of an application as complete	Begins maximum one year period to complete environmental review for certain projects	1 year	15060 PRC 21100.2 PRC 21151.5
Initial Study	Provides 30 days to determine whether an EIR or Negative Declaration will be required	30 days	15102
Notice of Preparation (NOP)	Provides 30 days from receipt of NOP for agencies to respond to the lead agency	30 days	15103
Convening of scoping meetings	Requires a meeting requested by an agency or by the applicant to be convened within 30 days of the request	30 days	15104
Public review of draft documents	When an environmental document is submitted to the SCH, the public review period shall be set at least as long as the review set by the SCH	EIR: 30-60 days ND: 20-30 days	15105
Review by state agencies	Provides standard 45 days for EIRs and standard 30 days for Negative Declarations, through the SCH	EIR: 45 days ND: 30 days	15105
Completion of Negative Declaration	For a private project, the Negative Declaration must be adopted within 180 days after the application is complete	180 days	15107 PRC 21100.2 PRC 21151.5
Completion and certification of EIR	For a private project, an EIR must be completed within one year - may be extended once for up to 90 days	1 year	15108 PRC 21100.2 PRC 21151.5
Response to comments (EIR)	Lead agency must give commenting agencies a response at least 10 days before certifying the EIR	10 days	PRC 21092.5
Notice of Determination (NOD)	Provides that agencies shall file notice within 5 days of project approval	5 days	15075 15094
Statute of limitations for CEQA challenge	Filing starts a 30 day statute of limitations to court challenges to the approval of the project. If NOD not filed, then statute of limitations is 180 days from date of project approval	30 days 180 days	15075 15094 15112
Notice of Exemption (NOE)	Filing of NOE following approval of projects exempt from CEQA starts a 35 day statute of limitations. If NOE is not filed, then statute of limitations is 180 days	35 days 180 days	15062
Suspension of time limits	Unreasonable delay of document preparation caused by the application allows suspension of time periods in Guidelines, Sections 15107 and 15108	Varies	15109
Projects with federal involvement	Time limits may be waived or superseded by federal time requirements	Varies	15110

NOTE: Related time periods for project approval are contained in Chapter 4.5 of the Government Code beginning at Section 65920.

## APPENDIX E

### SCH Identification Number

The SCH identification number is a ten-digit number that is unique to each project reviewed through the SCH. The first four digits indicate the year in which the document was processed by the SCH (or first processed in the case of projects for which several documents have been sent to the SCH). The next two digits indicate the month in which the document was processed. The seventh digit indicates the geographic location of the project or unique type of document (i.e. "region"). The last three digits indicate the sequential order in which the document was processed that month.

Example: 2012053089

The document having this SCH number was the eighty-ninth document processed in May of 2012 for Region #3.

2012	05	3	089
Year	Month	Region	Sequence Number

The same SCH identification number must be used on all documents relating to a particular project. This enables the SCH to keep better records on the history of projects and assures that comments and subsequent documents will be correctly filed for future reference.

#### IMPORTANT:

**Always identify any known SCH identification number on all communication with the SCH.**

## APPENDIX F

### State Reviewing Agencies Address List

*The contact information for the State Reviewing Agencies is updated frequently. Please contact the SCH to obtain a copy of the most current list.*

## APPENDIX G: List of Acronyms

APN	Assessor's Parcel Number
CEQA	California Environmental Quality Act
CERES	California Environmental Resources Evaluation System
CFDA	Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance
DFG	California Department of Fish and Game
EIR	Environmental Impact Report
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
E.O.	Executive Order
FONSI	Findings of No Significant Impact
LUPIN	California Land Use Planning and Information Network
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NOC	Notice of Completion
NOD	Notice of Determination
NOE	Notice of Exemption
NOP	Notice of Preparation
NOI	Notice of Intent
OPR	Governor's Office of Planning and Research
PRC	Public Resources Code
SCH	State Clearinghouse
SOPs	Summary of Postings

## APPENDIX H: PRINTABLE GUIDE TO CEQA DOCUMENT SUBMISSION

### Where to File Environmental Documents

**USPS:** State Clearinghouse, P.O. Box 3044, Sacramento, CA 95812-3044

**Courier Service/Walk-in Deliveries:** State Clearinghouse, 1400 10th Street, Room 113, Sacramento, CA 95814

**Fax (only allowed for certain documents):** (916) 323-3018

**Office and Delivery Hours:** Monday-Friday (excluding state holidays) from 9:00 AM-5:00 PM (see below chart for recommended delivery times)

#### How to Contact the SCH

Phone: (916) 445-0613 Email: [state.clearinghouse@opr.ca.gov](mailto:state.clearinghouse@opr.ca.gov)

### Document Submission Requirements and Advisories

TYPE OF DOCUMENT	REQUIREMENTS	ADVISORIES
EIR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 copy of NOC Form</li> <li>• 15 copies of entire document</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 copy of NOC Form OR 2 copies for walk-in deliveries</li> <li>• 15 hardcopies of entire document</li> <li>OR</li> <li>• 15 hardcopies of Executive Summary, initial study or other applicable summary form and 15 CDS of entire document</li> <li>• Collate and bind</li> <li>• Deliver between 9:00 AM-12:00 PM for same day posting</li> <li>• Faxed copies will not be accepted. In certain circumstances, faxed NOPs may be accepted through prior arrangement with SCH staff</li> </ul>
Negative Declaration/Mitigated Negative Declaration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 15 copies of the entire document</li> </ul>	
NOP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 copy</li> </ul>	
NEPA Federal Documents: Notice of Intent (NOI), Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), Environmental Assessment (EA)		
NOD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 copy</li> <li>• State Agencies: pay DFG fees or show proof of payment (or posting will be delayed)</li> <li>• Local Agencies: pay fees to County Clerk</li> <li>• Certified Regulatory Programs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 copies for walk-in deliveries</li> <li>• Faxed copies are acceptable; do not follow-up with a mailed copy</li> <li>• For mailed copies, include 2 copies and send a self-addressed stamped envelope if you would like a stamped copy returned</li> <li>• Deliver between 9:00 AM-5:00 PM</li> </ul>
NOE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 copy</li> </ul>	
Shortened Review Request	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prior approval from Responsible/ Trustee Agencies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contact the SCH prior to submitting a request/ environmental document</li> </ul>
Comment Letters		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Faxed copies are acceptable; do not follow-up with a mailed copy</li> </ul>
Final Documents		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 hardcopy or CD</li> <li>• For distribution to state agencies for informational purposes, send 15 hardcopies or 15 CDs and 1 NOC Form</li> </ul>