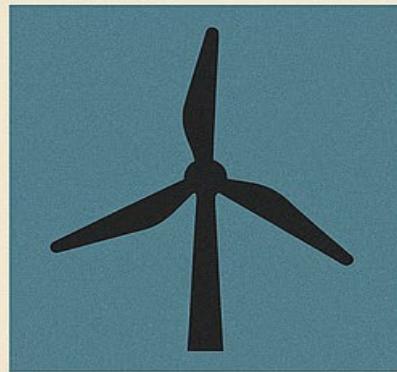
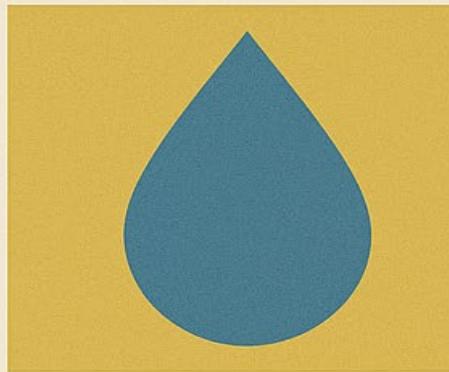
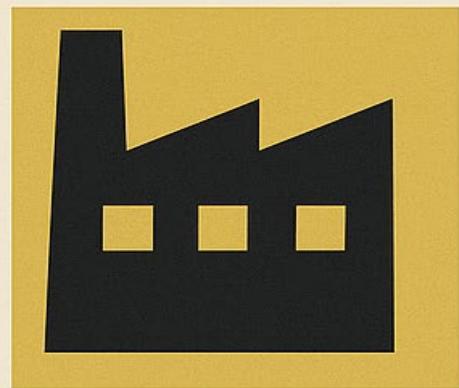
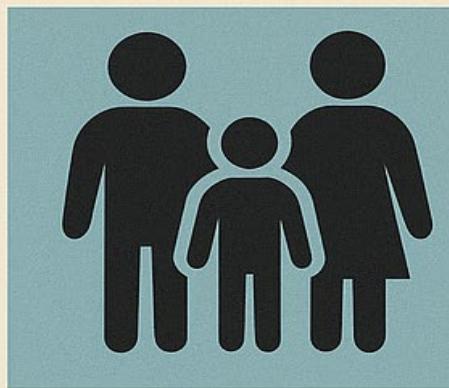
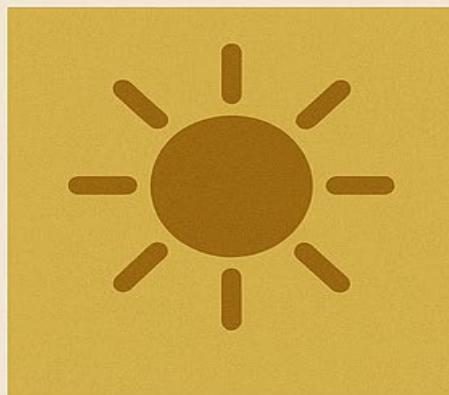


CEQA for the Future

Protecting Land, People, & Climate



Prepared by The Housing Workshop

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1. Introduction

This Report is the fourth in a series of studies analyzing how the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)¹ has functioned in California.² The studies examine critics' assertions that CEQA has erected significant obstacles to development in the state, particularly to the building of housing and infill development. Our three previous reports carefully examined these claims and the evidence cited to support them, and ultimately concluded the assertions were unfounded.³ In many cases, critics had utilized inaccurate data or had relied on incorrect assumptions.⁴ In others, they had overlooked CEQA's dynamic nature — that the law has been continually amended to meet changing needs.⁵

This study examines how CEQA has performed during the period from 2022 to 2023. Because our three previous studies considered CEQA cases dating back to 2013, we now have a vast body of data on which to base an assessment of the statute's functionality and significance.

This 2025 Report contains a four-part analysis.

First, the Report analyzes the CEQA litigation that was filed in 2022 and 2023. Consistent with the previous reports, we describe the volume of lawsuits and the rate of litigation for each year. The 2023 Report found that the number of CEQA cases filed between 2002 and 2021 averaged 192 annually.⁶ Moreover, while the number of lawsuits fluctuated slightly from year to year, the data revealed no overall pattern of increased litigation.⁷ In the present study period, the number of cases dropped markedly: petitioners filed only 131 lawsuits in 2022 and 153 lawsuits in 2023; the average number of cases filed annually between 2002 and 2023 dropped to 188. The average rate of litigation⁸ for this study period, 2022-2023, is also very low: 1.05%.

¹ Public Resources Code § 21000 et seq.

² The three previous studies are: BAE Urban Economics, *CEQA in the 21st Century* (Aug. 2016) (2016 Report),

https://www.housingworkshop.com/_files/ugd/a71a83_b5f3f5baaa244b41b6dac448c5447a40.pdf; The Housing Workshop, *CEQA: California's Living Environmental Law; CEQA's Role in Housing, Environmental Justice, & Climate Change* (Oct. 2021) (2021 Report), https://rosefdn.org/wp-content/uploads/CEQA-California_s-Living-Environmental-Law-10-25-21.pdf; The Housing Workshop, *CEQA by the Numbers: Myths & Facts* (May 2023) (2023 Report), <https://rosefdn.org/wp-content/uploads/CEQA-By-the-Numbers-2023-5-5-23-Final.pdf>. Janet Smith-Heimer and Jessica Hitchcock were the principal authors of the 2016 Report, the 2021 Report, and the 2023 Report.

³ E.g., 2016 Report at 23; 2021 Report at 26-27; 2023 Report at 34-35.

⁴ *Id.*

⁵ 2016 Report at 9-11; 2021 Report at 11-14; 2023 Report at 39-41.

⁶ 2023 Report at 3.

⁷ *Id.*

⁸ For the rate calculation, we examine only lawsuits challenging projects requiring an EIR, a Mitigated Negative Declaration or a Negative Declaration. As explained in Chapter 3, it was not possible to collect data on the overall number of exemptions approved in California, so our rate calculation does not include those CEQA determinations.

This Report also categorizes each of the 2022-2023 CEQA lawsuits by type of petitioner (e.g., environmental organization, community group, labor union) and type of project challenged (e.g., housing, mixed use, commercial). The data in this analysis disproves two charges, emphasized by critics: that “illegitimate groups” bring CEQA cases, and that petitioners in these cases mainly target housing projects. In addition, for the first time, we calculated the number of CEQA cases that included non-CEQA claims. Over the 2022-2023 period, 51% of the lawsuits asserted a cause of action *not* under CEQA. This evidence suggests that the majority of CEQA cases filed in 2022-2023 could have proceeded anyway in the absence of CEQA.

Second, this Report examines the specific features of projects challenged in CEQA lawsuits that involve housing. These projects include (1) “Housing-Only” developments, such as apartment buildings and residential subdivisions; (2) Mixed Use developments that include a residential component; and (3) Institutional projects that include housing, such as college dormitories. We found that only 21.8% of cases filed in 2022 and 2023 challenged housing units, and that the number of *units* challenged in this study period was dramatically lower than the number challenged in 2019-2021. The number of units subject to litigation in 2022-2023 amounts to 4.2% of the total number of housing units permitted in the state during the same time period. Further, as the Report explains, those blaming CEQA for housing shortages frequently ignore the serious economic factors impeding housing construction in California.

This Report then describes the use of CEQA streamlining measures, including exemptions, designed to accelerate the approval of certain housing types. Since the publication of the 2023 Report, the Legislature has adopted additional, very extensive measures to expedite these housing approvals. For example, in 2025, the Legislature passed AB 130, the broadest housing exemption in state history. We describe these new measures in detail and also analyze the effectiveness of SB 35, adopted in 2017, and SB 423, adopted in 2023. Finally, the Report uses case studies to describe the effect of litigation challenging housing, finding that several cases resulted in modifications that significantly improved projects.

Third, this Report updates the analyses in the 2016 and 2021 Reports of the direct cost of CEQA compliance. Using a total of eight case studies, the two prior reports found that the direct environmental review costs for these projects were extremely small, ranging from 0.025% to 0.6% of the total project costs.⁹ Our findings in the present study are consistent with this earlier data: two new case studies show the direct costs of environmental review for projects were between 0.07% and 0.1% of the total project costs. The Report also shows the time associated with environmental review for these projects and discusses the overlap in time between such review and other elements of the permitting and project development process.

Fourth, this Report updates the previous reports’ analyses of CEQA’s longstanding role in safeguarding California’s environment and communities. We describe CEQA litigation challenging industrial and commercial projects, such as warehouse logistics centers, port operations, and oil refineries, that threaten the health and safety of disadvantaged communities. Other case studies illustrate how CEQA operates to combat climate change by requiring polluting projects to mitigate their greenhouse gas emissions and/or address climate-related wildfire risks. Finally, our last set of case studies shows how CEQA protects California’s abundant natural and cultural resources, including scenic landscapes throughout the state.

⁹ 2021 Report at ii-iii.

2. Executive Summary

The findings below are based on analyses of new data conducted for this 2025 Report. These analyses address many of the topics covered in the 2016, 2021 and 2023 Reports, as well as new topics raised for the first time here.

The number of CEQA lawsuits filed throughout California remains very low and has decreased since 2021.

- 131 CEQA lawsuits were filed in 2022 and 153 lawsuits in 2023. Since 2002, California has averaged 188 CEQA lawsuits per year statewide.
- Starting in 2021, there has been a marked decrease in annual CEQA lawsuit filings. The volume of CEQA litigation has not grown over twenty years, even as California's population has risen by 12.5% between 2002 and 2023.

The rate of CEQA litigation is also very low, with lawsuits filed for 1.8 out of every 100 projects.

- The estimated rate of litigation for all CEQA projects requiring an Environmental Impact Report (EIR), a Mitigated Negative Declaration, or a Negative Declaration was 1.05% for the current 2022-2023 study period.
- The average litigation rate for the eleven-year period from 2013 to 2023 is 1.8%. This low rate is consistent with the findings of earlier studies.

A wide variety of petitioners filed CEQA lawsuits in 2022-2023. The vast majority of these suits were brought by environmental organizations and community groups.

- During this period, traditional environmental organizations filed a total of 48 cases.
- Environmental justice organizations filed a total of 11 cases. Often joining forces with traditional environmental groups, these organizations used CEQA to challenge large industrial, commercial, and transportation projects whose environmental impacts threatened the health and safety of residents in nearby disadvantaged communities.
- Community groups filed 119 CEQA lawsuits in 2022-2023. These petitioners frequently worked jointly with environmental groups on the same or related cases.
- A substantial number of CEQA cases were filed by public agencies (cities, counties, school districts, water agencies, and an airport authority) (36), business interests (41), and individuals (24).
- Historic preservation groups filed 6 suits to protect historic resources, districts, and landmarks.
- California Native American tribes filed 5 actions to preserve cultural resources.
- Labor unions filed 11 lawsuits in this two-year period.

The CEQA cases filed in 2022-2023 challenged a broad array of project types. 21.8% of these cases challenged new housing units.

- Challenged projects included the following categories: General Plan Updates and other land use regulations; Housing-Only; Mixed Use; Institutional; Commercial; Industrial; Water Plans and Projects; Agriculture and Forestry; Parks, Recreation, and Wildlife; Transportation; Demolitions/Removals; and Energy.
- 13.4 percent of the CEQA cases challenged Housing-Only projects (38 cases), while 12.7% challenged Mixed Use developments (36 cases). A total of 62 cases in these two categories, or 21.8% of all CEQA cases filed in 2022-2023, challenged projects with new housing units (not counting duplicative cases challenging the same project). Thus, the proportion of cases challenging new housing units in this period was far less than stated by CEQA critics.
- Nearly 20% of the lawsuits challenged Commercial and Industrial projects. Environmental justice organizations filed a significant number of these cases.
- Lawsuits challenging Water Plans and Projects accounted for 11.3% of the total cases, while Agriculture/Forestry cases accounted for 2.8%. The majority of the agriculture-related cases concerned cannabis operations.
- 7.4% of the lawsuits challenged Transportation projects, such as road widenings and the expansion of freeways and freeway interchanges.
- Cases challenging Energy projects accounted for 8.1% of the cases. Some of these cases raised environmental justice issues, such as challenges to oil drilling projects and biofuel refineries in and around disadvantaged communities.

The majority of CEQA cases filed in 2022-2023 included non-CEQA claims.

- In 2022, 74 of the 131 CEQA cases included non-CEQA claims; in 2023, 72 of the 153 CEQA cases included non-CEQA claims. Accordingly, over our two-year study period, 51% of CEQA cases also asserted a cause of action *not* under CEQA.
- The non-CEQA claims ranged from claims under the Planning and Zoning Law and municipal codes to violations of the state and federal Constitutions, the Subdivision Map Act, the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act, the Brown Act, the Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Act, and many other laws.
- This evidence suggests that the majority of CEQA cases filed in 2022-2023 could have been litigated anyway if CEQA was unavailable.

CEQA litigation affects only a small percentage of housing development in California.

- Out of the number of lawsuits filed in 2022-2023, 21.8% of those cases challenged projects that include new housing units.
- CEQA litigation challenged 4% of all building permits issued for housing units in California during 2022-2023. This finding refutes assertions that CEQA stops nearly half of the state's housing production each year.

Powerful economic factors, not CEQA, are hindering housing production.

- In California, high interest rates, expensive land, and escalating construction costs are delaying or preventing the building of much-needed housing. At the same time, government subsidies for affordable housing are inadequate or entirely lacking.

Since the 2023 Report, lawmakers have adopted numerous CEQA streamlining measures and exemptions, including AB 130, AB 1449, AB 1307, SB 4, SB 131, SB 423, SB 684, AB 2243, AB 3035, AB 2553, AB 1893, AB 3057, SB 1361, and SB 1395. Data from the state shows growth in the use of the most significant streamlining measures.

- Newly adopted streamlining measures and exemptions have created expedited procedures for approving housing projects throughout California. For example, SB 423 (2023) extended and expanded SB 35 (2017), which allows ministerial approval (i.e., approval by right) of qualifying multifamily housing projects. In 2025, after the data for this Report was analyzed, the state passed AB 130, the largest housing exemption in the history of CEQA, allowing qualifying housing projects on sites as large as 20 acres to avoid environmental review.
- Other measures removed or loosened CEQA requirements for qualifying housing projects of higher education institutions, farmworker housing, infill housing projects, subdivisions for up to 10 housing units, and agency actions to facilitate homeless shelters and supportive housing.
- In 2022-2023, CEQA litigation had very little effect on Housing-Only and Mixed Use projects (those including a residential component) that were approved via exemption from CEQA. In that period, only 32 cases challenged such projects. Of these, 22 cases included non-CEQA claims, suggesting the cases could have proceeded anyway.
- Data from California’s Housing and Community Development Department indicate that SB 35 and SB 423 are increasing in use and together constitute an important initiative to expedite the approval of affordable housing.
- The growing use of CEQA streamlining measures and exemptions to expedite housing approvals, along with the housing litigation findings outlined above, strongly suggest that the Legislature should evaluate the effectiveness of the recently passed measures before it enacts further amendments of this sort. If the Legislature eliminates or weakens environmental review requirements, public health impacts and other harms may not be mitigated, and the opportunity for public input may disappear.

CEQA litigation challenging Housing-Only and Mixed Use projects frequently resulted in safer, more environmentally protective projects.

- CEQA litigation ensured that housing developments will avoid or reduce significant impacts on sensitive habitat and protected species.
- CEQA cases challenging housing developments proposed in high fire-hazard zones ensured that agencies will disclose and mitigate projects’ serious environmental impacts and fire safety risks.
- In none of the lawsuits did the court categorically prohibit a housing development. Once the lead agency complies with the Act’s requirements for disclosure and mitigation of environmental harms, development can proceed.

Case studies demonstrate that the direct costs of CEQA compliance are low.

- The 2016 Report analyzed the cost of CEQA compliance through the use of case studies of five projects located throughout California. The report found that the direct costs of environmental review for those five projects ranged from 0.025 to 0.6% of the total project costs. The 2021 Report provided three additional case studies and found that direct environmental review costs for those three projects ranged from 0.15 to 0.5% of the total project costs.
- This 2025 Report presents two additional case studies of projects. Like the projects analyzed in the two previous reports, the new projects were located in diverse California locations. The direct costs of environmental review for these two projects ranged from 0.07 to 0.1% of total project costs.
- The 2016 Report, the 2021 Report, and this Report found that environmental review periods for the cited projects ranged from 5 months to 28 months. Notably, the time for a project's environmental review typically overlaps with the time needed to complete other discretionary entitlement processes and with pre-development steps such as arranging project financing.

In 2022-2023, nonprofit groups continued to use CEQA to advance environmental justice, combat climate change, and protect natural resources throughout California.

- This Report presents five case studies showing how CEQA litigation led to effective mitigation for large polluting warehouses, a biofuels refinery, a shipping container terminal, and a local ordinance designed to expedite oil and gas drilling in California's largest oil-producing county. Each of these projects would have caused significant public health impacts to the disadvantaged communities where they are located. Environmental justice advocates emphasize that CEQA is typically the *only* legal tool that community groups have to ensure such health-protective outcomes.
- Four case studies illustrate CEQA's crucial role in California's efforts to meet its ambitious goals for reducing greenhouse gas emissions. For example, one CEQA lawsuit ensured that the California Geologic Energy Management Division, the state oil regulator, will analyze the climate impacts of its approval of seventeen new oil and gas wells in Los Angeles and Kern counties. CEQA is one of the state's principal tools for requiring developers to reduce their projects' climate-harming pollution.
- Three case studies demonstrate how CEQA continues to protect unique California natural areas and iconic landscapes. For example, one important lawsuit prevented the use of aquatic pesticides in the Lake Tahoe watershed without environmental review and mitigation. CEQA was the only law that environmental organizations could use to protect this world-renowned lake. In another case, CEQA ensured that Sonoma County officials will manage groundwater to protect the ecological health and viability of the region's rivers and associated habitat.

3. CEQA Litigation: Volume, Rate, and Type

CEQA enforcement does not fall to any specific state agency. Instead, the statute is enforced by private parties acting in the public interest, as well as by some public agencies and the California Attorney General. Without private enforcement through litigation, CEQA's requirements could be violated with impunity.

The 2023 Report analyzed the volume, rate, and type of CEQA litigation filed in 2019-2021. The current Report updates that information. It determines the number of CEQA cases filed in 2022 and 2023 and analyzes the rate of litigation between 2013 and 2023. This Report then categorizes the cases filed in 2022-2023 by the type of petitioner bringing the suit and the type of project challenged. In addition, the Report calculates the number of cases filed in 2022-2023 that included causes of action *not* brought under CEQA; the previous report did not conduct this analysis of non-CEQA claims.

As required by Public Resources Code section 21167.7, every party filing a CEQA lawsuit must submit a copy of the document that commences the CEQA litigation to the California Attorney General, who maintains these records. These documents are available for 2002 through 2025. Unless otherwise indicated, this Report's conclusions are based on lawsuit data obtained from the Attorney General's office.

Litigation Volume: CEQA Lawsuits (2002-2023)

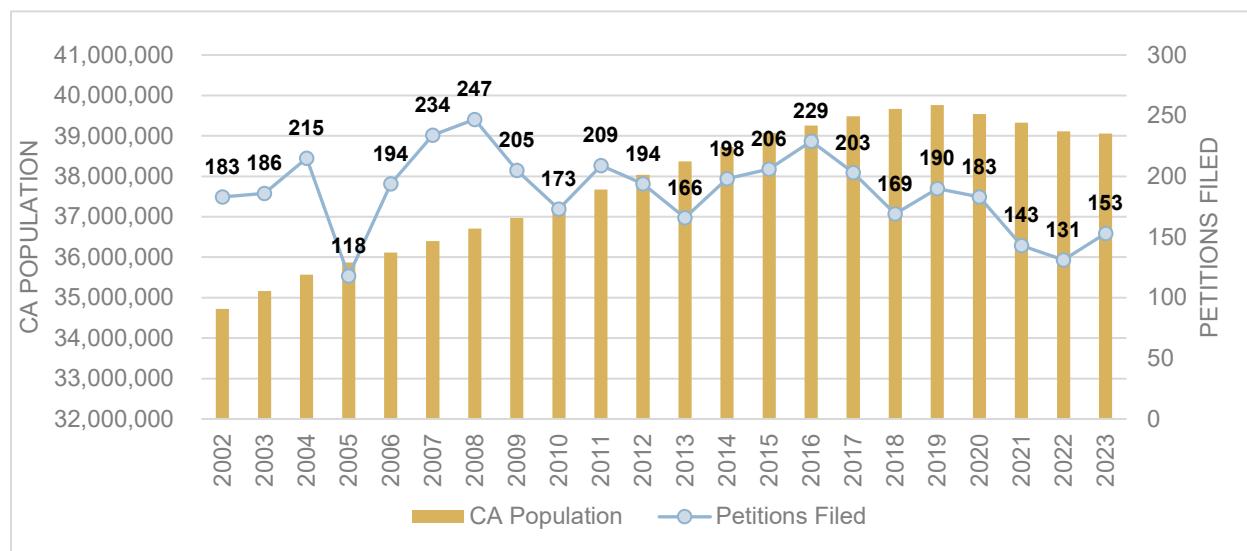
This Report updates the research on the volume of CEQA lawsuits through 2023. We find that 131 lawsuits were filed in 2022 and 153 lawsuits in 2023. Review of additional data received after the 2023 Report went to press showed that the correct number of CEQA cases filed in 2021 was 143 (8 more than the 135 indicated in the 2023 Report).¹⁰

California has averaged 188 CEQA lawsuits filed per year statewide over the entire period 2002-2023. The litigation has fluctuated slightly from 183 lawsuits filed in 2002 to 153 lawsuits in 2023, but there is

¹⁰ The 2023 Report included one lawsuit in its tally of 2021 cases that, in fact, did not include a CEQA claim: *Holt Partners v. City of Los Angeles*, Los Angeles County Superior Court case no. 21CTSP03836. In addition, the 2023 Report did not include the following CEQA cases filed in 2021: *Diamond Street Neighbors v. City of San Marco*, San Diego Superior Court case no. 37-2021-00050046; *Supporters Alliance for Environmental Responsibility v. City of Riverside*, Riverside County Superior Court case no. CVR12105791; *Bayside Village Marina, LLC v. Orange County Sanitation Dist.*, Orange County Superior Court case no. 20-2021-01194238; *Vendanta Society of So. California v. City of Los Angeles*, Los Angeles County Superior Court case no. 21STCP00816; *Committee to Relocate Marilyn v. City of Palm Springs*, Riverside County Superior Court case no. CVRI2101435; *Colton Joint Unified School Dist. v. County of San Bernardino*, San Bernardino County Superior Court case no. CVRI2101435; *PN-NE Action Group v. City of San Diego*, San Diego County Superior Court case no. 37-2021-00033583; *AIDS Healthcare Foundation v. City of Los Angeles*, Los Angeles County Superior Court case no. 21STCP04176; *Coronado Citizens for Transparent Government v. City of Coronado*, San Diego County Superior Court case no. 37-2021-00049694.

no trend of increases. Rather, our analysis reflects a marked drop in lawsuit numbers starting in 2021. Further, the year-to-year fluctuations found do not trend with population growth; despite a 12.5% increase in California's population for the period, the annual number of CEQA lawsuits has remained within a narrow range, with case numbers dropping in 2021, 2022 and 2023.

Figure 1: CEQA Lawsuits Filed 2002-2023



Sources: Data compiled for 2002-2011 from *The Litigation Myth* (David Pettit and Tom Adams, NRDC, 2013); for 2012 from *In the Name of the Environment* (J. Hernandez, Holland & Knight, 2015) at 92-122; for 2013-2015 from the 2016 Report at 19; for 2016-2018 from the 2021 Report at 18; for 2019-2021 from the 2023 Report at 12, and for 2022-2023 from this Report, Appendix A.

Estimated CEQA Litigation Rate (2013-2023)

The historic rate of lawsuits filed under CEQA has remained stable. Similar to the 2016, 2021, and 2023 Reports, the following analysis estimates a CEQA litigation rate by comparing the number of CEQA lawsuits filed each year to the estimated universe of all projects requiring environmental review under CEQA. For this Report, we estimate statewide litigation rates for the 2013-2023 period.¹¹ We find that the litigation rate for the most recent two years of data analyzed was 0.9% in 2022 and 1.2% in 2023, and that the litigation rate for the 2013-2023 period was 1.8%. This means that, for a decade, less than two projects out every 100 projects in California faced a CEQA lawsuit.

The analysis presented herein entails the following steps for each year:

1. We analyzed the number of lawsuits challenging an EIR, a Mitigated Negative Declaration (“MND”), or a Negative Declaration (collectively, “CEQA Review Document”);

¹¹ An estimate of litigation rates for the period prior to 2013 is not possible. As described further in this chapter and in the previous reports, the Report’s methodology relies on a sampling of jurisdictions used to estimate all CEQA review actions for a given year. That data is not available before 2013.

2. We estimated the universe of all projects in the state requiring a CEQA Review Document; and
3. We calculated the litigation rate using the following formula:

$$\frac{\text{Lawsuits Challenging CEQA Review Document}}{\text{All Projects with CEQA Review Document}} = \text{Litigation Rate}$$

To determine the rate of litigation, the following sections provide data on the number of lawsuits filed and estimates for the total number of projects for which a CEQA Review Document was prepared in the same time period.

Analysis of CEQA Lawsuits (the “Numerator”)

The 2016, 2021, and 2023 Reports and this Report categorized the CEQA lawsuits filed between 2013 and 2023 based on the nature of the environmental review being litigated.¹² The three categories utilized were: (1) lawsuits challenging a CEQA exemption, (2) lawsuits challenging a CEQA Review Document (i.e., an EIR, a MND, or a Negative Declaration), and (3) lawsuits categorized as “Other.” The latter category encompasses a range of less common lawsuits such as those alleging no environmental review, inappropriate reliance on prior EIR/MNDs, inadequacy of CEQA functional-equivalent documents, improper reliance on addendums to prior EIR/MNDs, or failure to enforce CEQA mitigation or settlements.

¹² See 2016 Report at 20-22 & Appx. B, for categorizations of CEQA lawsuits filed in 2013-2015; 2021 Report at 20 & Appx. C for categorizations of CEQA lawsuits filed in 2016-2018; 2023 Report at 13 & Appx. A for categorizations of CEQA lawsuits filed in 2019-2021.

The table below summarizes the CEQA lawsuits filed for the eleven-year period between 2013 and 2023, separated into the three categories.

Table 1: CEQA Lawsuits 2013-2023

Lawsuit Categories (a)	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021 (e)	2022	2023	Total	Avg. 2013-2023
Lawsuits Re:CEQA Review Document (b)	117	120	151	169	136	118	104	101	86	59	74	1,235	112
Lawsuits Disputing Exemption Status (c)	27	40	32	27	36	27	49	51	42	41	41	413	38
Other Lawsuits (d)	22	38	23	33	31	24	37	31	15	31	38	323	29
Total Lawsuits	166	198	206	229	203	169	190	183	143	131	153	1,971	179
Notes:													
a) To analyze petitions related to CEQA, all documents listed by the Attorney General related to the same case, such as primary and amended complaints, were indexed as one entry. Filings with different identification numbers but identical documents were considered as duplicates.													
b) Includes only lawsuits related to Negative Declarations, Mitigated Negative Declarations, and EIRs.													
c) Lawsuits disputing use of an exemption													
d) Lawsuits alleging no environmental review, inappropriate reliance on prior EIR/MND, inadequate CEQA functional equivalents, improper reliance on addendums to prior EIR/MND, or failure to enforce mitigation on CEQA entitlements.													
e) 1 case that had been reported erroneously as a lawsuit against an exemption (now removed), and 9 new cases not counted previously (now added). These 9 new cases include 2 MNDs, 1 Neg Dec, 4 EIRs, and 2 Exemptions.													
Sources: Office of the Attorney General, 2013-2025; BAE, 2016; 2021 Reports. The Housing Workshop, 2023 Report. 2025; See Appendix A for case details.													

As shown, a total of 1,971 lawsuits were filed between 2013 and 2023. During this overall period, 1,235 lawsuits challenged a CEQA Review Document. On an average annual basis for the decade, 112 lawsuits per year challenged a CEQA Review Document, 38 lawsuits per year challenged the Lead Agency's determination that the project was exempt from CEQA, and 29 lawsuits per year challenged scenarios categorized as "Other."

Estimate of Projects Subject to CEQA Review Documentation (the "Denominator")

Our methodology for determining the denominator for these reports is complicated because the State Clearinghouse's database, known as CEQAnet,¹³ has not included all CEQA Review Documents processed pursuant to CEQA. Instead, prior to 2022, state law required filings only for projects where (1) a state agency was a lead, responsible, or trustee agency, or (2) the project was of sufficient statewide, regional, or area-wide environmental significance.¹⁴ Local jurisdictions' reviews of projects that did not

¹³ <https://ceqanet opr.ca.gov/>.

¹⁴ See Remy Moose Manley, *Changes to State Clearinghouse Document Submission Process (AB 819)* Effective January 1, 2022, <https://www.rmmenvirolaw.com/7211->

require state agency comments were not required to be submitted to the Clearinghouse.¹⁵

Thus, while CEQAnet is a point of departure for estimating the universe of all projects subject to CEQA review in California, the lack of comprehensive reporting to CEQAnet means additional information is required to capture that figure. To adjust for cases not reported to the State Clearinghouse, we requested CEQA review data from 15 cities and counties across the state as part of the 2016 Report. This sample of 15 jurisdictions was carefully selected to represent a balance of northern and southern, coastal and inland, and larger and smaller local governments; however, some of the sample jurisdictions were not able to provide full records for all projects having undergone CEQA review during the study period. Five jurisdictions, including the City and County of San Francisco, the City of Los Angeles, the City of Merced, the City of Modesto, and Butte County were able to provide complete data regarding all CEQA-reviewed projects within their respective jurisdictions for the study period.¹⁶ These jurisdictions, which together represent 13.2 percent of California’s population, included a broad, balanced range of locales in terms of geography and population size.¹⁷

The 2016 Report compared the overall data from the five reporting jurisdictions to the State Clearinghouse figures for those same areas. Next, the 2016 Report calculated the proportion of all Negative Declarations, MNDs, and EIRs (i.e., CEQA Review Documents) in those jurisdictions that were reported to the State Clearinghouse. The statewide data was then adjusted proportionately to reflect the CEQA Review Documents *not* included in the CEQAnet reporting. This proportional adjustment yielded an estimate of total projects with CEQA Review Documents statewide — our denominator.¹⁸

Appendix B shows details on the CEQAnet submittals for the study period covered by this Report, the research of sampled jurisdictions conducted in 2016, minor adjustments made since that initial estimate to reflect better available historical data, and the resulting estimate of total projects statewide subject to a CEQA Review Document for the study period.

[2/#:~:text=Most%20notably%2C%20Public%20Resources%20Code,copes%20are%20no%20longer%20required.](#)

¹⁵ Assembly Bill 819, enacted in 2021, required that as of January 1, 2022 agencies must file all EIRs, MNDs, and Negative Declarations with the State Clearinghouse. However, data on local agency reporting to CEQAnet from 2017 to 2023 shows no discernable increase in filings of EIRs, MNDs, and Negative Declarations with the State Clearinghouse since AB 819’s effective date. *See Appx. B1.* That number should have increased to reflect the broader category of documents now required to be filed with the State. Given that 2022 and 2023 were the first years in which AB 816’s new requirement applied, it is apparent that many local agencies have not yet begun to comply with the new requirement. It is possible that filings with the State Clearinghouse will rise to yield a specific number that a subsequent report could rely upon. Absent such a number now, however, continued reliance on the methodology used in the past three reports will yield a more accurate analysis.

¹⁶ *See 2016 Report at 21-22.*

¹⁷ California Department of Finance, Estimate of Population, January 1, 2025. See: https://dof.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/sites/352/Forecasting/Demographics/Documents/E-1_2025_Press_Release.pdf

¹⁸ The 2021 Report made minor adjustments to the 2016 Report’s estimate of total statewide projects using CEQA Review Documents for study years 2013-2015. Since 2015, more complete data has become available, enabling the researchers to refine our records’ comparison from the five jurisdictions to CEQAnet for these prior years. This refinement resulted in a slight numerical rise in litigation rates for the 2013-2015 study period, but it did not change any of the overall findings of the prior 2016 Report.

Estimated Rate of CEQA Litigation in California

The CEQA litigation rate was calculated to encompass all court filings challenging CEQA Review Documents divided by the estimated total projects with CEQA Review Documents.¹⁹ As shown in Table 2, the litigation rate for the most recent two years of data analyzed was 0.9% in 2022 and 1.2% in 2023, yielding an average rate of 1.05% for the current study period. For the 11-year period of 2013 through 2023, the litigation rate was 1.8%.

Table 2: Litigation Rate, California Lawsuits 2013-2023

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Total 2013-2023
Lawsuits Re:CEQA Review Document (a)	117	120	151	169	136	118	104	101	86	59	74	1,235
Total CEQA Reviewed Projects (b)	6,258	7,134	6,829	6,673	6,459	6,082	5,777	5,662	5,717	6,422	5,954	68,967
Litigation Rate	1.9%	1.7%	2.2%	2.5%	2.1%	1.9%	1.8%	1.8%	1.5%	0.9%	1.2%	1.8%

Notes:

a) Includes only lawsuits related to Negative Declarations, Mitigated Negative Declarations, and EIRs from Table 1.

b) Estimate of all CEQA projects in this category by The Housing Workshop. See Appendix B for details.

Source: The Housing Workshop, 2025.

This low rate is consistent with other studies on the rate of CEQA litigation for earlier time periods. For example, in 2022, researchers at the University of California found that only 2.8% of all entitled housing projects in their study of 20 California jurisdictions faced litigation.²⁰ Similarly, in 2017, the Senate Environmental Quality Committee found that less than 1% of projects approved by state agencies in the previous four years were challenged in litigation.²¹

Types of Petitioners Filing CEQA Cases (2022-2023)

This Report sorts the petitioners who filed suits in 2022-2023 into the following ten categories: Environmental Organizations; Community Groups; Environmental Justice Organizations; Historic Preservation Organizations; California Native American Tribes; Labor Unions; Public Agencies; Businesses; Individuals; and Other. Environmental and Community Groups brought by far the largest

¹⁹ The 2016 Report also sought to analyze the volume of exemptions. However, other than San Francisco, jurisdictions providing their data did not reliably track exemptions. Thus, a proportional adjustment to CEQAnet's limited reported exemptions volume could not be reliably made.

²⁰ Moira O'Neill Hutson, et al., *Examining Entitlement in California to Inform Policy and Process: Advancing Social Equity in Housing Development Patterns* (California Air Resources Board and California Environmental Protection Agency, Mar. 18, 2022) at 78, https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3956250.

²¹ California State Legislature, Senate Environmental Quality Committee, *California Environmental Quality Act Survey* (2017) at 11, https://senv.senate.ca.gov/sites/senv.senate.ca.gov/files/ceqa_survey_full_report_-_final_12-5-17.pdf.

number of cases, but many other interests used the statute as well. The table at the end of this section summarizes the categorization of petitioners for all cases filed for the 2022-2023 period. Appendix A shows the details for each case by petitioner(s).

Environmental Organizations

This category includes national and state environmental organizations such as the Sierra Club and the Center for Biological Diversity. It also includes regional environmental groups such as the Endangered Habitats League and Los Angeles Waterkeeper. In 2022-2023, these petitioners initiated many actions aimed at curbing greenhouse gas emissions, safeguarding public health, and protecting sensitive habitat.²² Projects challenged by Petitioners included industrial warehouses,²³ permitting for new oil and gas wells,²⁴ mixed use developments located in areas of high fire risk,²⁵ and state and local water plans.²⁶ In several of these cases, environmental organizations were joined by local community groups, environmental justice organizations, tribes, and/or individuals.²⁷ In 2022-2023, environmental organizations filed 48 CEQA cases.

Most of the organizations in this category have existed for decades.²⁸ We found no evidence to support the allegation of one critic that only a small portion of CEQA lawsuits are filed by environmental organizations that existed prior to filing the cases.²⁹

²² Except as otherwise noted, the facts set forth regarding CEQA cases filed in 2022-2023 are based on the allegations in the petitions for writ of mandate filed in each action.

²³ *Sierra Club v. City of Moreno Valley*, Riverside County Superior Court case no. CVRI2300063 (challenging the Moreno Valley Business Center, a large warehouse facility located within 20 feet of homes).

²⁴ *Center for Biological Diversity v. California Geologic Energy Management Division*, Alameda County Superior Court case no. 23CV033371 (challenging fifteen new oil and gas wells in the Wilmington oilfield of Los Angeles County).

²⁵ *Preserve Wild Santee et al. v. City of Santee*, San Diego County Superior Court case no. 37-2022-00041478-CU-MC-CTL (challenging massive “Fanita Ranch” project).

²⁶ *Los Angeles Waterkeeper et al. v. County of Los Angeles*, Los Angeles County Superior Court case no. 22STCP02608 (challenging master plan for Los Angeles River); *Coastal Ranches Conservancy v. California Dept. of State Parks and Recreation*, Santa Barbara County Superior Court case no. 22CV02818 (challenging plan to divert water from Gaviota Creek).

²⁷ See, e.g., *Fiber First Los Angeles et al. v. County of Los Angeles*, Los Angeles County Superior Court case no. 23STCP00750; *Northcoast Environmental Center et al. v. County of Humboldt*, Humboldt County Superior Court case no. CV2101703.

²⁸ See, e.g., <https://www.biologicaldiversity.org/about/story/> (Center for Biological Diversity founded in 1989); https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sierra_Club (Sierra Club founded in 1892); [https://www.ocnonprofitcentral.org/organizations/endangered-habitats-league-inc#:~:text=Founded%20in%201991%20as%20a,3\)%20membership%20organization%20in%201993](https://www.ocnonprofitcentral.org/organizations/endangered-habitats-league-inc#:~:text=Founded%20in%201991%20as%20a,3)%20membership%20organization%20in%201993) (Endangered Habitats League founded in 1991); <https://www.crunchbase.com/organization/los-angeles-waterkeeper> (Los Angeles Waterkeeper founded in 1993).

²⁹ See J. Hernandez, *Anti-Housing CEQA Lawsuits Filed in 2020 Challenge Nearly 50% of California’s Annual Housing Production* (Center for Jobs & the Economy, 2022) at 3, referring to finding in 2015 Holland & Knight study (“we also discovered only 13% of [CEQA] lawsuits were filed by environmental organizations that existed prior to filing their CEQA lawsuit”), <https://centerforjobs.org/wp-content/uploads/Full-CEQA-Guest-Report.pdf>.

Community Groups

This category includes local community groups from all parts of California. Unlike the preceding category, these petitioners are primarily focused on environmental, public health, and safety issues affecting a local area or neighborhood. In 2022-2023, community groups filed 119 CEQA cases. In many of these cases, larger environmental organizations, historic preservation groups, and/or individuals joined as co-petitioners.³⁰ This category includes six homeowner associations.³¹

Community groups typically allege in their CEQA actions that local government officials have failed to disclose or mitigate the environmental ramifications of a local project. While these disputes might not attract the attention of a national environmental group, the issues they raise are vitally important to the local community. For example, in 2022, a small organization, Friends of Folsom Preservation, challenged a crematorium project that would impact historic resources in the City of Folsom's Historic District.³² In the same year, another small organization, Save Public Access to the Milburn Area, sued a state agency over its plan to isolate the Milburn Area from the San Joaquin River, causing a loss in environmental and recreational resources.³³ In 2023, a community group successfully sued the County of Sonoma over its approval of a poorly conceived plan to develop the site of the former Sonoma Developmental Center in the Valley of the Moon.³⁴ The plan's vision for the development was beyond the capacity for its rural setting and the EIR was unresponsive to community concerns about wildfire vulnerability, water supply, biological impacts and a broad range of other environmental issues.³⁵

In Southern California, a community organization challenged a warehouse project that would have introduced thousands of diesel truck trips per day at a site near homes and a school.³⁶ Other small local groups challenged the City of Burbank's plan to remove 119 pine trees from a public right of way, and the County of Los Angeles's plan to construct a large dumpster/barge at the mouth of Ballona Creek at the Pacific Ocean.³⁷

³⁰ 2025 Report, Appx. A.

³¹ *Glenoaks Canyon Homeowners Association v. City of Glendale*, Los Angeles County Superior Court case no. 22STCP00114; *Brentwood Homeowners Association v. City of Los Angeles*, Los Angeles County Superior Court case no. 22STCP01886; *California Park Association and Sierra Sunrise Village Property Owners Association v. City of Chico*, Butte County Superior Court case no. 22CV02340; *Heather Farms Homeowners Association v. Contra Costa County*, Contra Costa County Superior Court case no. N23-0179; *Mt. Woodson Homeowners Association v. County of San Diego*, San Diego County Superior Court case no. 37-2023-00007281-CU-TT-CTL; *Protect Roseville Neighborhoods and Paseo Del Norte Homeowners Association v. City of Roseville*, Placer County Superior Court case no. S-CV-0051108.

³² *Friends of Folsom Preservation et al. v. City of Folsom*, Sacramento County Superior Court case no. 34-2022-80003898.

³³ *Save Public Access to Milburn Area v. California Dept. of Water Resources*, Sacramento County Superior Court case no. 34-2022-80003919.

³⁴ *Sonoma Community Advocates for a Livable Environment et al. v. County of Sonoma*, Sonoma County Superior Court case no. SCV-272539, Judgment Granting Peremptory Writ of Mandamus (Oct. 8, 2024) at 2.

³⁵ *Sonoma Community Advocates for a Livable Environment et al. v. County of Sonoma*, Sonoma County Superior Court case no. SCV-272539, Petition for Writ of Mandamus (Jan. 18, 2023) at 3,

³⁶ *South Colton Families First et al. v. City of Colton*, San Bernardino County Superior Court case no. CIVSB2317228.

³⁷ *Guardians of the Pines v. City of Burbank*, Los Angeles County Superior Court case no.

Small community organizations are uniquely situated to bring environmental issues affecting their local neighborhoods to the attention of local leaders and ensure that CEQA is enforced. These groups have used CEQA to protect the environment and improve development projects in their neighborhoods for over five decades.³⁸

Environmental Justice Organizations

This category includes organizations throughout the state who work to ensure that new development and policies do not adversely impact adult residents and schoolchildren in vulnerable, low-income communities. As the 2021 Report explained, these frontline communities bear the brunt of the environmental pollution created by our society’s industrial development, transportation systems, and other large-scale projects.³⁹ This type of manifest environmental injustice has become more widely recognized in recent years.

In 2022-2023, environmental justice groups brought 11 CEQA cases to defend their neighborhoods and protect the environment. For example, in Riverside County, the Center for Community Action and Environmental Justice was the lead plaintiff in a challenge to the Compass Danbe Centerpointe project, two industrial warehouse buildings directly across the street from residents and a charter school.⁴⁰ Similarly, the People’s Collective for Environmental Justice brought a lawsuit contending that San Bernardino County failed to analyze the air quality impacts of constructing large warehouses near schools and homes in Bloomington.⁴¹ In both of these cases, national environmental groups joined the action as co-petitioners. See Chapter 6 for an in-depth discussion of these and other environmental justice cases filed in 2022-2023.

Historic Preservation Organizations

In 2022-2023, historic preservation groups and others filed six CEQA cases seeking to protect historic resources, districts, and landmarks throughout the state.⁴² For example, the Laguna Beach Historic Preservation Coalition challenged the California Coastal Commission’s Local Coastal Plan amendment that would have required owner consent for identification of local historic resources in the City of Laguna Beach.⁴³ Elsewhere in Southern California, a local historic preservation organization was part of a broad

23STCP03707; *Robert Kailes and Guardians of Ballona Creek Ecosystem v. County of Los Angeles*, Los Angeles County Superior Court case no. 22STCP01221.

³⁸ See 2023 Report, Appx. D (partial list of published appellate decisions illustrating successes in community group cases).

³⁹ 2021 Report at 77.

⁴⁰ *Center for Community Action and Environmental Justice et al. v. City of Moreno Valley*, Riverside County Superior Court case no. CVRI2200683.

⁴¹ *People’s Collective for Environmental Justice et al. v. County of San Bernardino*, San Bernardino County Superior Court case no. CIVSB2228456.

⁴² In some cases, community groups and/or individuals joined the historic preservation groups as petitioners. E.g., *Newtown Preservation Society et al. v. County of El Dorado*, El Dorado County Superior Court case no. PC 20190037 (includes individual petitioner); *West Adams Heritage Assn. et al. v. City of Los Angeles*, Los Angeles County Superior Court case no. 20STCP00916 (includes local community group).

⁴³ *Laguna Beach Historic Preservation Coalition et al. v. California Coastal Commission*, San Francisco County Superior Court case no. CPF22517789. (The case was transferred to San Diego Superior Court,

coalition challenging a Los Angeles County ordinance that would allow the permitting of new wireless transmission towers and support structures on properties listed, or eligible for listing, on national, state, or county historic registers.⁴⁴

California Native American Tribes

This category includes California Native American tribes, which encompass both federally-recognized tribes and those not recognized by the federal government, as well as organizations dedicated to preserving tribal resources. In 2022-2023, diverse tribes from around California filed five CEQA cases, using the Act to protect their cultural resources and sacred lands. In some of these cases, environmental, community groups, and others joined as co-petitioners.

For example, in 2022 the Amah Mutsun Tribal Band sued the County of San Benito over its approval of a project that would construct a large gas station, restaurant, motel, outdoor event centers, and souvenir shops on ancestral lands containing valuable tribal resources.⁴⁵ In 2023, the Pechanga Band of Indians together with the Soboba Band of Luiseno Indians challenged the City of Corona's failure to enforce mitigation measures placed as conditions on the City's approval of a sewage facility located in the middle of a Native American cemetery. As a result of this failure, the tribes were not properly informed of Native American human remains uncovered during the City's construction activities.⁴⁶

Labor Unions

In 2022-2023, labor unions filed 11 CEQA cases. The allegations in the unions' complaints read much like the CEQA claims advanced by environmental and community-based organizations; after all, many union members reside in the communities where they work and thus have a stake in public agencies' compliance with environmental laws. For example, in 2022, the Laborers' International Union of North America ("LUNA") Local Union No. 294 challenged the County of Tulare's failure to prepare an environmental impact report for a rezoning that would allow industrial buildings with a footprint of up to 1.25 million square feet on agricultural land.⁴⁷ The petition alleges that LUNA members live, work, and recreate in the county.

where it bears case number 37-2022-00041130.)

⁴⁴ *Fiber First Los Angeles et al. v. County of LA*, Los Angeles County Superior Court case no. 23STCP00750.

⁴⁵ *Amah Mutsun Tribal Band v. County of San Benito*, San Benito County Superior Court case no. CU-22-00249.

⁴⁶ *Pechanga Band of Indians et al. v. City of Corona*, Riverside County Superior Court case no. CVRI2306028.

⁴⁷ *Eddie Armando Torres and Laborers' International Union of North America Local Union No. 294 v. County of Tulare*, Tulare County Superior Court case no. VCU294433.

Just as the 2023 Report found for 2019-2021, the number of union lawsuits in 2022-2023 remained low. By comparison, as discussed below, public agencies filed over three times as many cases in this time period. Moreover, in two of the union cases filed in 2022-2023, community groups joined the unions as co-petitioners.⁴⁸ In some cases, individuals joined the labor union as co-petitioners.⁴⁹

Public Agencies

In 2022-23, public agencies filed 36 CEQA cases. These petitioners include cities, counties, water agencies, school districts, and transportation agencies.⁵⁰ Their cases address a broad range of important environmental and land use issues.

Cities frequently bring CEQA litigation because they are concerned that a neighboring jurisdiction has approved a development project without mitigating its extra-jurisdictional significant environmental impacts. For example, the City of Perris sued the City of Menifee, alleging its neighbor had failed to properly analyze or mitigate the impacts of a large warehouse facility on traffic, noise, and air quality.⁵¹ Similarly, the City of Vallejo challenged the City of American Canyon's approval of a massive industrial development that could affect the water supplies of the neighboring city.⁵²

In other cases, public agencies are concerned about new infrastructure projects that could significantly impact their residents and the local environment. For example, the City of Ontario challenged the Inland Empire Utilities Agency's adoption of the Chino Basin Program, a project that would have reduced the city's water supplies and impacted valuable natural resources.⁵³ The Long Beach Unified School District sued a state agency over its failure to conduct environmental review for a drainage control project that will impede emergency evacuations at a district campus.⁵⁴

Other public agencies challenge approvals because they are concerned about the regional effects of large, impactful projects. For example, the City of Marina challenged a desalination project that would extend 18 miles through Monterey County. Among other impacts, the project would destroy rare coastal dunes that provide habitat to protected species; impair a unique public access point to the coast; and deplete critical groundwater supplies.⁵⁵ CEQA is a key tool for addressing these issues.

⁴⁸ *East Oakland Stadium Alliance et al. v. City of Oakland*, Alameda County Superior Court case no. 22CV009325; *East Oakland Stadium Alliance et al. v. Bay Conservation and Development Commission*, Alameda County Superior Court case no. 22CV015323.

⁴⁹ *E.g., Eddie Armando Torres and Laborers' International Union of North America Local Union No. 294 v. County of Tulare*, Tulare County Superior Court case no. VCU294433.

⁵⁰ 2023 Report, Appx. A.

⁵¹ *City of Perris v. City of Menifee*, Riverside County Superior Court case no. CVRI2303456.

⁵² *City of Vallejo v. City of American Canyon*, Napa County Superior Court case no. 23CV000517.

⁵³ *City of Ontario v. Inland Empire Utilities Agency*, San Bernardino County Superior Court, case no. SB221925.

⁵⁴ *Long Beach Unified School Dist. v. California Dept. of Toxic Substances Control*, Los Angeles County Superior Court case no. 22STCP0415.

⁵⁵ *City of Marina v. California Coastal Commission*, Monterey County Superior Court case no. 22CV004063.

Businesses

Business interests and trade associations also use CEQA to address a broad array of issues. In 2022-2023, they filed 41 cases under the Act.

In many of these actions, businesses were concerned that a proposed project adjacent to their property had not received adequate environmental review. For example, a business in Santa Barbara County challenged a large cannabis cultivation project located in an uniquely sensitive part of the Santa Maria Valley, 200 feet from the Santa Maria River.⁵⁶ It alleged that the county failed to sufficiently analyze the project's impacts on air quality, water quality, and endangered steelhead in the Santa Maria River.⁵⁷

In another set of cases, farming entities were concerned about proposed plans and projects that would damage farmland or take agricultural land out of production. For example, in San Joaquin County, a vineyard owner challenged the City of Manteca's approval of a general plan update that would redesignate large swaths of agricultural land for residential development.⁵⁸

At the same time, landowners and developers brought CEQA cases to challenge the process that the lead agency followed to comply with the Act. For example, a real estate developer objected to the City of Davis's delay in conducting CEQA review for its proposed subdivision,⁵⁹ and an oil company challenged a state agency's refusal to declare its drilling project exempt from CEQA.⁶⁰ In these types of cases, developers frequently bring claims under laws besides CEQA. In the Davis case, for example, the developer's suit also asserted causes of action under the Housing Accountability Act and the Permit Streamlining Act; CEQA was the last claim on the list.⁶¹

Finally, certain industries filed CEQA actions after public agencies enacted land use regulations restricting their operations. For example, various oil companies and a petroleum association brought challenges to the City of Los Angeles's adoption of an ordinance that would curtail oil and gas operations.⁶² As with the cases brought by developers, most of these companies asserted several other causes of action besides CEQA, such as claims for state preemption, vested rights, inverse condemnation, due process, and general plan inconsistency.⁶³

⁵⁶ *West Bay Company, LLC v. County of Santa Barbara*, Santa Barbara County Superior Court case no. 22CV00169.

⁵⁷ *Id.*

⁵⁸ *Delicato Vineyards, LLC v. City of Manteca*, San Joaquin County Superior Court case no. STK-CV-UWM-2023-0008966.

⁵⁹ *Palomino Place, LLC v. City of Davis*, Yolo County Superior Court case no. CV2023-2059.

⁶⁰ *San Joaquin Facilities Management, Inc. v. California Geologic Energy Management Division*, Kern County Superior Court case no. BCV-23-100065.

⁶¹ *Palomino Place, LLC et al. v. City of Davis*, Yolo County Superior Court case no. CV2023-2059.

⁶² *E & B Natural Resources Management Corp. et al. v. City of Los Angeles*, Los Angeles County Superior Court case no. 23STCP00070; *Warren E & P et al. v. City of Los Angeles*, Los Angeles County Superior Court case no. 23STCP00060; *Native Oil Producers and Employees of California and Western States Petroleum Assn. v. City of Los Angeles*, Los Angeles County Superior Court case no. 23STCP00085; and *National Assn. of Royalty Owners-California, Inc. et al. v. City of Los Angeles*, Los Angeles County Superior Court case no. 23STCP00106.

⁶³ *E & B Natural Resources Management Corp. et al. v. City of Los Angeles*, Los Angeles County Superior Court case no. 23STCP00070 (improper amortization, state preemption, general plan

Individuals

In this category of cases, individuals assert a variety of claims under CEQA.⁶⁴ These actions are similar to lawsuits brought by environmental and community groups, with the petitioner expressing concern about a project's impacts on natural resources. For example, one individual challenged Santa Cruz County's failure to prepare an environmental impact report for a subdivision that would be located within a riparian environment containing two wetlands and that would impact neighboring agricultural resources.⁶⁵ Similarly, two individuals sued the County of Monterey over its refusal to prepare an environmental impact report for the Blaze Engineering Project, a commercial construction business to be located on environmentally sensitive habitat in scenic Big Sur.⁶⁶ Individuals' cases account for 24 of the CEQA cases filed in 2022-2023.⁶⁷

Other

This category includes six petitioners that could not be classified in the categories described above, including entities like Yes In My Back Yard,⁶⁸ Project for Open Government,⁶⁹ and the Watsonville Pilots Association.⁷⁰

inconsistency, vested rights, inverse condemnation, due process, impairment of contracts, breach of contract); *Warren E & P et al. v. City of Los Angeles*, Los Angeles County Superior Court case no. 23STCP00060 (general plan inconsistency, vested rights, inverse condemnation, estoppel, due process); *National Assn. of Royalty Owners-California, Inc. et al. v. City of Los Angeles*, Los Angeles County Superior Court case no. 23STCP00106 (state preemption, improper amortization, general plan inconsistency, inverse condemnation).

⁶⁴ In identifying cases in the Individual petitioner category, we did not include cases in which a community group, labor union, or other entity was a co-petitioner. Attorneys often include individuals in such actions as a precaution to establish standing; in most cases, the individual is a member of, or associated with, the group.

⁶⁵ *Curtis v. County of Santa Cruz*, Santa Cruz County Superior Court case no. 23CV02150.

⁶⁶ *Matthew Donaldson et al. v. County of Monterey*, Monterey County Superior Court case no. 23CV003599.

⁶⁷

⁶⁸ *Yes In My Back Yard v. City of Sausalito*, Marin County Superior Court case no. CIV2300652.

⁶⁹ *Project for Open Government v. City of San Diego*, San Diego County Superior Court case no. 337-2022-00018873-CU-WM-CTL.

⁷⁰ *Watsonville Pilots Assn. v. City of Watsonville*, Santa Cruz County Superior Court case no. 23CV00425.

Summary of Petitioner Types

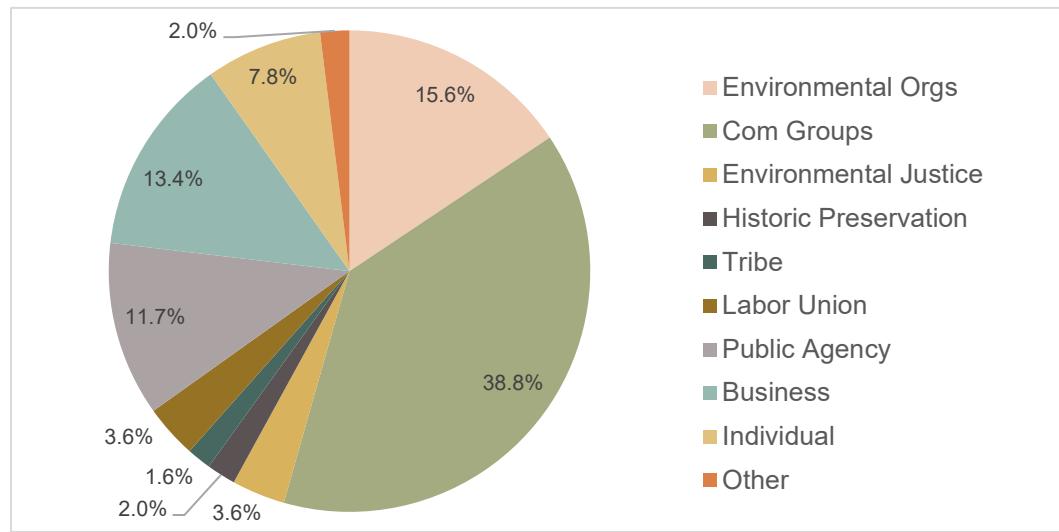
The types of petitioners for CEQA lawsuits span a broad array of organizations, public agencies, companies, tribes, and individuals. The table and graph below show the number of lawsuits for the 2022-2023 period broken down by the categorizations described above. As indicated, the Community Group category was the most frequent type of petitioner. Environmental Organizations also filed a substantial number of cases and were frequently joined by Environmental Justice groups. The other large categories were Public Agencies, Businesses, and Individuals.

Table 3: Type of Petitioner, 2022-2023

Note: Number of Petitioners exceeds number of cases due to multiple petitioners for some cases.

	2022	2023	Total	% of Total
Environmental Organization	22	26	48	15.6%
Community Group	58	61	119	38.8%
Environmental Justice	7	4	11	3.6%
Historic Preservation	3	3	6	2.0%
Tribe	1	4	5	1.6%
Labor Union	8	3	11	3.6%
Public Agency	18	18	36	11.7%
Business	17	24	41	13.4%
Individual	12	12	24	7.8%
Other	2	4	6	2.0%
Total	148	159	307	100.0%

Figure 2: Lawsuits by Type of Petitioner, 2022-2023



Types of Projects Challenged (2022-2023)

This Report also sorts the CEQA cases filed in 2022-2023 into the following thirteen categories based on the type of project challenged: General Plan Updates and similar land use regulations; Housing-Only; Mixed Use; Institutional; Commercial; Industrial; Water Plans and Projects; Agriculture and Forestry; Parks, Recreation, and Wildlife; Transportation; Demolitions/Removals; Energy; and Other. Appendix A lists each case and the category of project it challenged. In many cases, the lawsuits resulted in further mitigation for projects that would have caused significant impacts to the environment and public health, or posed unacceptable risks to public safety.⁷¹

General Plan Updates and Similar Land Use Regulations

This category includes CEQA cases challenging General Plan Updates, Housing Element Updates, and other broad planning and zoning regulations. Because these “projects” did not arise as a result of applications by a landowner or developer, the lawsuits do not include real parties in interest or applicants. For example, in 2022, a community group challenged the County of Los Angeles’s Oak Tree Ordinance, a broad new policy that would make it easier to issue removal permits for oak trees, including heritage oaks.⁷² In 2023, a coalition of groups challenged an update to the Hollywood Community Plan, alleging the City of Los Angeles failed to analyze the project’s impacts on imperiled wildlife and plant species.⁷³ In that same year, an environmental group filed suit against the City of Rancho Cordova over its adoption of a Climate Action and Adaptation Plan that failed to include performance standards, timelines, or other elements to ensure that projects’ contributions to climate change within the city were less than significant.⁷⁴

To the extent the challenged laws/documents in this category govern land use, they merely plan for development at some unspecified point in the future; such future development is subject to further change or amendment. For example, before any housing development can occur under a planning update or zoning ordinance, a more detailed process of developer involvement, financing, and design would need to occur — a time-consuming process that in some cases narrows the eventual housing units permitted. Thus, because any future housing identified in the plans and ordinances included in this category would require further review and project-specific approvals, these lawsuits were not included in Appendix A’s housing unit column.⁷⁵

This category includes a total of 30 cases, or 10.6% of the CEQA cases filed in 2022-2023.

⁷¹ See Chapters 4 and 6 for a discussion of such cases.

⁷² *Santa Clarita Organization for Planning the Environment v. County of Los Angeles*, Los Angeles County Superior Court case no. 22STCP01579.

⁷³ *Laurel Canyon Association v. City of Los Angeles*, Los Angeles County Superior Court case no. 23STCP01972; *Voters for a Superior Hollywood Plan v. City of Los Angeles*, Los Angeles County Superior Court case no. 23STCP01968.

⁷⁴ *350 Sacramento v. City of Rancho Cordova*, Sacramento County Superior Court case no. 23WM000101.

⁷⁵ As explained in Chapter 4, we compared the units approved for specific Housing-Only, Mixed Use, and Institutional projects to the numbers of units permitted in California for that same year — a comparison that cannot logically be made for this category of broad planning documents.

Housing-Only Projects

This category includes CEQA cases challenging the approval of a specific housing project, such as a residential subdivision,⁷⁶ apartment complex,⁷⁷ single family home,⁷⁸ retirement community,⁷⁹ homeless shelter,⁸⁰ or recreational vehicle encampment.⁸¹ Appendix A to this Report provides the number of housing units, if any, included in the challenged project,⁸² based on the allegations in the petition for writ of mandate. For homeless shelters and other congregate facilities, the Report counts each bed or suite as one unit.

The Report's totals for housing units approved in a given year do not include duplicative units. For example, in 2023, there were two lawsuits challenging Contra Costa County's approval of a very large retirement community that failed to adequately mitigate impacts to sensitive habitat;⁸³ the Report counts the project's residential units only once.⁸⁴ Similarly, the Report does not include in its totals for 2023 the 20 housing units proposed by a project that had been successfully challenged in 2021; the 2023 case was challenging the reapproval of the same project.⁸⁵

This category includes a total of 38 cases, or 13.4% of CEQA cases filed in 2022-2023. Of those 38 cases, 34 cases challenged projects with new (non-duplicative) housing units.⁸⁶

⁷⁶ *Save Redlands Orange Groves v. City of Redlands*, San Bernardino County Superior Court case no. CIVSB2200943 (challenging subdivision to be located on historic orange grove property).

⁷⁷ *Supporters Alliance for Environmental Responsibility v. City of Inglewood*, Los Angeles County Superior Court case no. 23STCP00195 (challenging apartment complex that would affect special status bird species and pose significant risks to public health).

⁷⁸ *Crane Boulevard Safety Coalition v. City of Los Angeles*, Los Angeles County Superior Court case no. 23STCP02375 (challenging single family home on steep hillside in Mount Washington community of Los Angeles).

⁷⁹ *Heather Farms Homeowners Association v. Contra Costa County*, Contra Costa County Superior Court case no. N23-0179 (challenging retirement complex that failed to include adequate mitigation for impacts to sensitive habitat).

⁸⁰ *Louviere v. County of Kern*, Kern County Superior Court case no. BCV-23-100007 (challenging homeless shelter in Kern County).

⁸¹ *Friends of Northwest Sebastopol v. City of Sebastopol*, Sonoma County Superior Court case no. SCV-270053 (challenging encampment of 22 campers, trailers and other recreational vehicles on Gravenstein Highway in Sebastopol).

⁸² Some of the cases included in the "Housing-Only" category challenge residential projects that would not add new housing units. *E.g., Laguna Beach Historic Preservation Coalition et al. v. City of Laguna Beach*, Orange County Superior Court case no. 30-2023-01303311-CU-TT-CXC (challenge to substantial demolition and remodel of historic 1927 Craftsman-influenced home).

⁸³ *The Seven Hills School v. County of Contra Costa*, Contra Costa County Superior Court case no. N23-0051; *Heather Farms Homeowners Association v. Contra Costa County*, Contra Costa County Superior Court case no. N23-0179.

⁸⁴ See 2025 Report, Appx. A.

⁸⁵ *Andrea Grano v. City of Los Angeles*, Los Angeles County Superior Court case no. 23STCP04569.

⁸⁶ 2025 Report, Appx. A.

Mixed Use Developments

This category includes cases challenging projects that incorporate a combination of different land uses. In 2022, for example, petitioners challenged an industrial park that included over three million square feet of heavy industrial uses, 210,000 square feet of light industrial uses, a convenience store, two drive-through restaurants, and a large car wash.⁸⁷ In 2023, environmental groups challenged the City of Chico’s approval of the “Valley Edge Specific Plan,” a massive residential/commercial development that had a multitude of potential effects, including impacts to special status species, vernal pools, and wildfire risk.⁸⁸

For each Mixed Use project that contains housing, Appendix A to this Report provides the number of units proposed for the project, based on the allegations in the petition. Again, the Report’s totals for housing units approved in a given year do not include duplicative units. For example, in 2022, three lawsuits challenged public agencies’ approvals of a mixed use project that included a baseball stadium, commercial/retail uses, and 3,000 residential units.⁸⁹ The Report counts the residential units only once.⁹⁰ Similarly, the Report does not include in its 2022 totals the 3,008 units proposed by a development project that had been successfully challenged in 2020; the 2022 case was challenging the reapproval of the same project.⁹¹

This category includes a total of 36 cases, or 12.7% of the CEQA cases filed in 2022-2023. Of those 36 cases, 28 cases challenged projects with new (non-duplicative) housing units.⁹²

Institutional Projects

This category includes lawsuits challenging developments proposed by institutions, such as universities and school districts. For example, in 2022, petitioners brought lawsuits to set aside the University of California’s plans to expand development on two of its campuses.⁹³ In another institutional case, petitioners challenged the adoption of the Los Angeles Zoo Vision Plan, which would destroy 16 acres of native California Chaparral habitat in Griffith Park.⁹⁴

⁸⁷ *Eddie Armando and Laborers’ International Union of North America Local Union No. 294 v. City of Visalia*, Tulare County Superior Court case no. VCU292111.

⁸⁸ *Sierra Club et al. v. City of Chico*, Butte County Superior Court case no. 23CV00376.

⁸⁹ *East Oakland Stadium Alliance et al. v. City of Oakland*, Alameda County Superior Court case no. 22CV009325; *Union Pacific Railroad Company v. City of Oakland*, Alameda County Superior Court case no. 22CV009330; *East Oakland Stadium Alliance et al. v. Bay Conservation and Development Commission*, Alameda County Superior Court case no. 22CV015323.

⁹⁰ See 2025 Report, Appx. A.

⁹¹ *Preserve Wild Santee et al. v. City of Santee*, San Diego County Superior Court case no. 37-2022-00041478-CU-MC-CTL.

⁹² See 2025 Report, Appx. A.

⁹³ *City of Santa Cruz v. Regents of the University of California*, Santa Cruz County Superior Court case no. 22CV00373 (challenging the 2021 Long Range Development Plan for UCSC campus); *Habitat and Watershed Caretakers et al. v. Regents of the University of California*, Santa Cruz County Superior Court case no. 23CV00880 (challenging reapproval of the Student Housing West project on East Meadow of UCSC campus); *American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees Local 3299 v. Regents of the University of California*, San Diego County Superior Court case no. 37-2023-00045816-CU-TT-CTL (challenging expansion of UCSD’s Science Research Park).

⁹⁴ *Griffith J. Griffith Charitable Trust et al. v. City of Los Angeles*, Los Angeles County Superior Court case no. 23STCP03390.

For institutional projects that include housing, Appendix A to the Report provides the number of units in question (typically expressed as “beds” in a dorm) based on the allegations in the petition. Again, the Report does not count duplicate units.⁹⁵

This category includes a total of 21 cases, or 7.4% of the CEQA cases filed in 2022-2023. None of these cases challenged an institutional project with new (non-duplicative) housing units.⁹⁶

Commercial Development

This category encompasses lawsuits challenging a variety of purely commercial projects. In 2022, for example, the Amah Mutsun Tribal Band challenged the approval of a large gas station, restaurant, motel, outdoor event centers, and souvenir shops to be located on ancestral grounds containing valuable tribal resources.⁹⁷ In 2023, a community group sued Shasta County over its refusal to prepare an environmental impact report for a large outdoor gun range complex that could significantly impact special-status and fully protected species.⁹⁸ Similarly, two homeowner associations challenged the City of Chico’s approval of a four-story hotel that could affect special status species and water quality in the nearby Deadhorse Slough.⁹⁹

Examples in Southern California include a community group’s suit challenging a complex of commercial buildings including a grocery store, tire shop, drive-through restaurant, car wash, and retail establishment.¹⁰⁰ Meanwhile, another community group challenged a 13-story, 175-room hotel on Sunset Boulevard in Los Angeles. Despite evidence of impacts on indoor and outdoor air quality, greenhouse gas emissions, and public health, the City of Los Angeles approved the project based on a negative declaration.¹⁰¹

This category includes a total of 25 cases, or 8.8% of the CEQA cases filed in 2022-2023.

⁹⁵ Specifically, the Report does not include in its totals for 2023 the 3,000 units proposed by the University of California that had been successfully challenged in 2021; the 2023 case was simply challenging the reapproval of the same project. *Habitat and Watershed Caretakers et al. v. Regents of the University of California*, Santa Cruz County Superior Court case no. 23CV00880 (challenging reapproval of the Student Housing West project on East Meadow of UCSC campus); *Habitat and Watershed Caretakers et al. v. Regents of the University of California*, Santa Cruz County Superior Court case no. 21CV01022 (same).

⁹⁶ 2025 Report, Appx. A.

⁹⁷ *Amah Mutsun Tribal Band v. County of San Benito*, San Benito County Superior Court case no. CU-22-00249.

⁹⁸ *Anderson/Millville Residents v. County of Shasta*, Shasta County Superior Court case no. 23CV-0203713.

⁹⁹ *California Park Association et al. v. City of Chico*, Butte County Superior Court case no. 22CV02340.

¹⁰⁰ *Friends of Guenther Willows Park et al. v. Riverside County*, Riverside County Superior Court case no. CVSW2201526.

¹⁰¹ *Supporters Alliance for Environmental Responsibility v. City of Los Angeles*, Los Angeles County Superior Court case no. 23STCP01664.

Industrial Development

This category includes lawsuits challenging industrial projects, most of which were warehouse logistics centers. Raising environmental justice concerns, petitioners used CEQA to challenge warehouse projects sited near homes and schools in low-income communities, insisting that lead agencies adopt mitigation measures to address the projects' serious air quality, noise, traffic, and other impacts.¹⁰² Other cases in this category challenged the environmental review for a large self-storage project to be located with the safety zone of a municipal airport,¹⁰³ and the approval of a crematorium that posed risks to a city's historic resources.¹⁰⁴

This category includes a total of 27 cases, or 9.5% of the CEQA cases filed in 2022-2023.

Water Plans and Projects

This category includes lawsuits challenging water projects and plans in various areas of the state. In 2022, for example, a community group and several individuals challenged the County of Los Angeles's use of an exemption for the Ballona Creek Trash Interceptor Pilot Project, which would construct a large floating dumpster/barge at the mouth of Ballona Creek at the Pacific Ocean.¹⁰⁵ In the same year, a community group successfully challenged the Santa Clara Valley Water District's use of an exemption in connection with the District's extensive geotechnical investigations for the Pacheco Reservoir Expansion Project.¹⁰⁶ In another example, the City of Marina and several water agencies challenged the California Coastal Commission's failure to conduct the required CEQA review for a sprawling desalination project that would extend approximately 18 miles through Monterey County.¹⁰⁷

This category includes a total of 32 cases, or 11.3% of the CEQA cases filed in 2022-2023.

Agricultural and Forestry Projects

The majority of the cases included in this category challenged projects related to cannabis growing operations and cannabis processing facilities.¹⁰⁸ Petitioners filed other types of agriculture-related and

¹⁰² See, e.g., *Center for Community Action and Environmental Justice et al. v. City of Moreno Valley*, Riverside County Superior Court case no. CVRI2200683 (Compass Danbe Centerpointe); *People's Collective for Environmental Justice et al. v. County of San Bernardino*, San Bernardino County Superior Court case no. CIVSB2228456 (Bloomingdale Distribution Center); *South Colton Families First et al. v. City of Colton*, San Bernardino County Superior Court case no. CIVSB2317228 (Agua Mansa Logistics Center).

¹⁰³ *Watsonville Pilots Assn. v. City of Watsonville*, Santa Cruz County Superior Court case no. 23CV00425.

¹⁰⁴ *Friends of Folsom Preservation et al. v. City of Folsom*, Sacramento County Superior Court case no. 34-2022-80003898.

¹⁰⁵ *Robert Kailes and Guardians of Ballona Creek Ecosystem v. County of Los Angeles*, Los Angeles County Superior Court case no. 22STCP01221; *Blumenthal v. County of Los Angeles*, Los Angeles County Superior Court case no. 22STCP01873.

¹⁰⁶ *Stop the Pacheco Dam Project Coalition v. Santa Clara Valley Water Dist.*, Santa Clara County Superior Court, case no. 22CV399384; *id.*, Order Granting Petition for Writ of Mandate (May 18, 2023).

¹⁰⁷ *City of Marina et al. v. California Coastal Commission*, Monterey County Superior Court, case no. 22CV004063.

¹⁰⁸ E.g., *Neighbors of Penman Springs v. County of San Luis Obispo*, San Luis Obispo County Superior Court, case no. 22CVP-0154 (cannabis cultivation and processing facility); *Environmental Democracy*

forestry litigation as well. For example, in 2022, a community group challenged the approval of a plan to log 276 acres of forestland adjacent to the Gualala River.¹⁰⁹

This category includes a total of eight cases, or 2.8% of the CEQA cases filed in 2022-2023.

Parks, Recreation, and Wildlife Plans and Projects

This category includes a small number of lawsuits challenging plans and facilities for public parks, recreation, and wildlife. For example, in 2022, a community group challenged the approval of the Milburn Pond Isolation Project, which would result in the loss of environmental and recreational resources near the San Joaquin River.¹¹⁰ In 2023, an environmental group sued the County of Santa Barbara over its approval of a plan to expand off-highway vehicle use within Red Rock Canyon State Park, thereby threatening valuable habitat for imperiled wildlife species.¹¹¹

This category includes a total of eight cases, or 2.8% of the CEQA cases filed in 2022-2023.

Transportation Plans and Projects

This category encompasses lawsuits challenging a variety of transportation plans and related construction projects. For example, in 2022, a community group challenged the County of Santa Barbara's approval of a road and retaining wall within Modoc Nature Preserve, which is protected by a conservation easement.¹¹² In 2023, an environmental organization challenged the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transit Authority's plan to install dozens of digital billboards throughout the County.¹¹³ In the same year, two public agencies sued the City of Moreno over its approval of a plan to build parking stalls within the "Clear Zone," i.e., runway protection area, on March Air Reserve Base.¹¹⁴

This category includes a total of 21 cases, or 7.4% of the CEQA cases filed in 2022-2023.

Energy Projects

This category includes challenges to various energy projects, ordinances, and regulations. For example, in 2022, environmental and environmental justice groups successfully challenged Contra Costa County's

Project v. City of Oakland, Alameda County Superior Court case no. 22CV020520 (major indoor cannabis cultivation facilities); *McGibney v. County of San Luis Obispo*, San Luis Obispo County Superior Court, case no. 22CVP-0287 (cannabis cultivation and processing facility).

¹⁰⁹ *Friends of the South Fork Gualala v. California Dept. of Forestry and Fire Protection*, Sonoma County Superior Court case no. SCV-271904.

¹¹⁰ *Save Public Access to Milburn Area v. California Dept. of Water Resources*, Sacramento County Superior Court case no. 34-2022-80003919.

¹¹¹ *Center for Biological Diversity. v. California Dept. of Parks and Recreation*, Sacramento County Superior Court case no. 34-2023-80004109-CU-WM-GDS.

¹¹² *Community Association for the Modoc Preserve v. County of Santa Barbara*, Santa Barbara County Superior Court case no. 22CV04768.

¹¹³ *Coalition for a Scenic Los Angeles v. Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transit Authority*, Los Angeles County Superior Court case no. 23STCP00626.

¹¹⁴ *County of Riverside v. City of Moreno Valley*, Riverside County Superior Court case no. CVRI2301559; *March Joint Powers Authority v. City of Moreno Valley*, Riverside County Superior Court case no. CVRI2301582.

inadequate environmental review for a massive biofuel refinery conversion project in Rodeo.¹¹⁵ In the same year, a similar coalition of environmental organizations challenged a biofuels project in the City of Paramount.¹¹⁶ That project would have greatly increased the refinery's processing of fats, oils and greases; constructed a fossil gas hydrogen generation unit; and installed a fossil gas pipeline through residential neighborhoods.¹¹⁷

In 2023, an environmental group challenged a state agency's failure to conduct necessary environmental review for six new steam injection wells in San Luis Obispo County and 15 new oil and gas wells in the Wilmington area of Los Angeles County.¹¹⁸ Petitioners also challenged a small number of solar energy projects in 2023. For example, a community group and farming interest sued Imperial County over its approval of a solar project to be located on hundreds of acres of highly productive farmland.¹¹⁹

In 2023, industrial interests filed several CEQA suits seeking to invalidate ordinances and regulations that would restrict their activities. For example, oil producers and the Western States Petroleum Association challenged the City of Los Angeles's adoption of an ordinance prohibiting new oil and gas extraction and making existing oil wells a non-conforming use.¹²⁰ Meanwhile, the Western States Petroleum Association and the Western States Trucking Association filed another set of cases, seeking to set aside the California Air Resources Board's adoption of its Advanced Clean Fleets Regulations. Those regulations establish deadlines for all heavy-duty trucks (and certain other vehicles) to become zero-emissions vehicles or near zero-emissions vehicles.¹²¹ In almost every instance, these industry cases asserted other legal claims besides CEQA.

This category includes a total of 23 cases, or 8.1% of the CEQA cases filed in 2022-2023.

Closures and Removals

This category, which makes up 1.8% of the total CEQA cases, includes five lawsuits challenging projects that involve either the closure of a facility or the removal of trees. For example, CEQA actions challenged the closure of schools in the City of Oakland¹²² and the removal of trees in the Cities of Stockton and

¹¹⁵ *Communities for a Better Environment et al. v. County of Contra Costa*, Contra Costa County Superior Court case no. N22-1080.

¹¹⁶ *Communities for a Better Environment et al. v. City of Paramount*, Los Angeles County Superior Court case no. 22STCP01875.

¹¹⁷ *Id.*

¹¹⁸ *Center for Biological Diversity v. California Geologic Energy Management Division*, Alameda County Superior Court case no. 23CV033371.

¹¹⁹ *Backcountry Against Dumps et al. v. Imperial County*, Imperial County Superior Court case no. ECU002971.

¹²⁰ *Native Oil Producers and Employees of California et al. v. City of Los Angeles*, Los Angeles County Superior Court case no. 23STCP00085; *National Association of Royalty Owners-California, Inc. v. City of Los Angeles*, Los Angeles County Superior Court case no. 23STCP00106.

¹²¹ *Western States Petroleum Association v. California Air Resources Board*, Fresno County Superior Court case no. 23CECG02976; *Western States Trucking Association v. California Air Resources Board*, Fresno County Superior Court case no. 23CECG02964.

¹²² *Justice for Oakland Students v. Oakland Unified School Dist.*, Alameda County Superior Court case no. 22CV011073.

Burbank.¹²³

Other

This category includes ten projects that could not be readily classified within the categories described above. Examples include environmental organizations' challenge to a water board's approval of an herbicide project impacting Lake Tahoe¹²⁴ and environmental groups' challenge to a county's contract with the U.S. Department of Agriculture that includes a program to kill predator animals.¹²⁵ Other examples include several lawsuits by applicants complaining about the manner in which lead agencies processed their development applications.¹²⁶

Summary of Types of Projects Challenged (2022-2023)

Based on the above descriptions of project categories, the table and graph on the next page show a summary of all petitions filed in 2022-2023. Notably, 13.4% of the CEQA cases filed in this time period challenged Housing-Only Projects (38 cases), and 12.7% challenged Mixed Use developments (36 cases). The total of 62 cases in these two categories, or 21.8% of all CEQA cases filed in 2022-2023, challenged new (non-duplicative) housing units.¹²⁷ This data refutes critics' contention that the majority of CEQA cases "target" housing and transit projects.¹²⁸

Challenges to Commercial and Industrial Projects accounted for 18.3% of all CEQA lawsuits filed in 2022-23, with 25 commercial and 27 industrial projects challenged. 11.3% of the cases challenged Water Plans and Projects, 7.4% challenged Transportation Plans/ Projects, and 8.1% challenged Energy Projects.

¹²³ *Tree Stockton Foundation v. City of Stockton*, San Joaquin County Superior Court case no. STK-CV-UWM-2023-0006306; *Guardians of the Pine v. City of Burbank*, Los Angeles County Superior Court case no. 23STCP03707.

¹²⁴ *California Sportfishing Protection Alliance et al. v. Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board*, El Dorado County Superior Court case no. 22CV0841.

¹²⁵ *Feather River Action! et al. v. County of Plumas et al.*, Plumas County Superior Court case no. CV22-0037.

¹²⁶ E.g., *New Faze Development v. City of Vallejo*, Solano County Superior Court case no. FCS058776; *San Joaquin Facilities Management, Inc. v. California Geologic Energy Management Division*, Kern County Superior Court case no. BCV-23-100065.

¹²⁷ 2025 Report, Appx. A.

¹²⁸ See J. Hernandez, *In the Name of the Environment – the Sequel* (2018) 24 Hastings Environmental L.J. 21, 23 ("The top lawsuit targets remain infill housing and local land use plans to increase housing densities and promote transit.").

Table 4: Lawsuits by Type of Challenge, 2022-2023

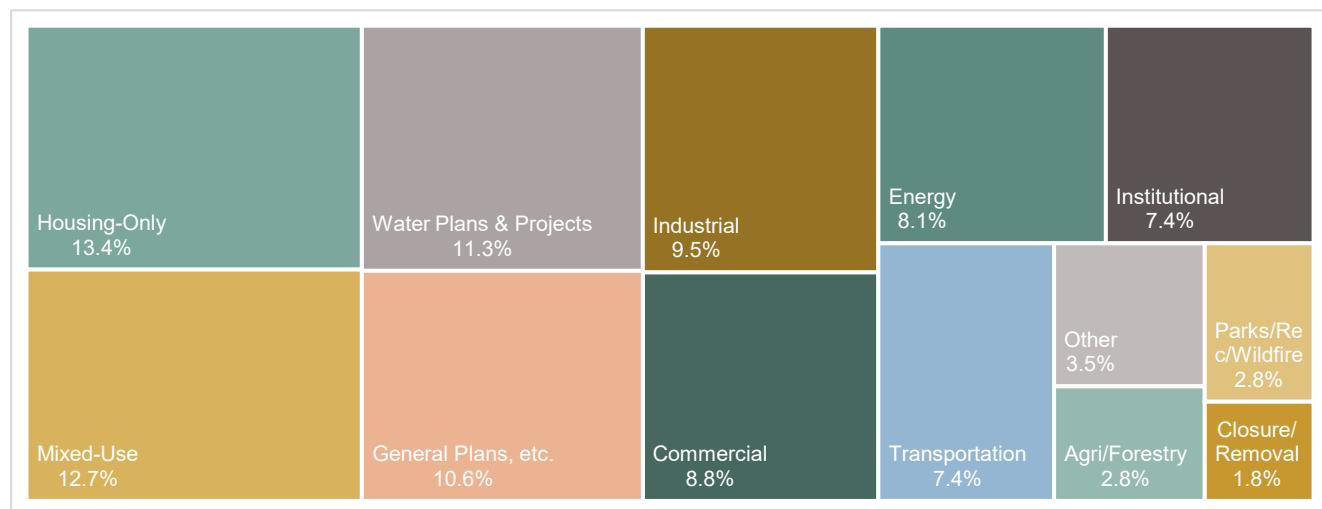
	2022	2023	Total	% of Total
General Plans, etc.	10	20	30	10.6%
Housing-Only (a)	16	22	38	13.4%
Mixed-Use (b)	22	14	36	12.7%
Institutional	9	12	21	7.4%
Commercial	11	14	25	8.8%
Industrial	7	20	27	9.5%
Water Plans & Projects	17	15	32	11.3%
Agri/Forestry	8	0	8	2.8%
Parks/Rec/Wildfire	5	3	8	2.8%
Transportation	11	10	21	7.4%
Energy	8	15	23	8.1%
Closure/Removal	2	3	5	1.8%
Other	5	5	10	3.5%
Total Cases	131	153	284	100.0%

a) Only 34 of the Housing-Only cases challenged projects with new (non-duplicative) housing units, see Appendix A.

b) Only 28 of Mixed-Use cases challenged projects with new (non-duplicative) housing units, see Appendix A.

Source: The Housing Workshop, 2025.

Figure 3: Lawsuits by Type of Challenge, 2022-2023



CEQA Cases Containing Non-CEQA Claims (2022-2023)

The 2025 Report calculates the number of CEQA cases in our study period that included non-CEQA claims. This represents our first analysis of this issue, as our previous reports did not examine petitions for non-CEQA claims.

In 2022, 74 of the 131 CEQA cases included non-CEQA claims; in 2023, 72 of the 153 CEQA cases included non-CEQA claims. Accordingly, over that two-year study period, 51% of the cases asserted a cause of action *not* under CEQA. This evidence suggests that the majority of CEQA cases filed in 2022-2023 could have proceeded anyway.

The majority of the non-CEQA causes of action alleged violations of the state Planning and Zoning Law and/or local land use ordinances. For example, an environmental justice group concerned that a large hotel project would displace residents in South Los Angeles alleged that the project violated the City of Los Angeles's General Plan and Municipal Code in addition to CEQA.¹²⁹

In other cases, petitioners alleged violations of the federal Clean Water Act,¹³⁰ and state laws like the Coastal Act,¹³¹ the Public Trust Doctrine,¹³² the Subdivision Map Act,¹³³ the State Aeronautics Act,¹³⁴ the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act,¹³⁵ the Vehicle Code,¹³⁶ the Brown Act,¹³⁷ the Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Act,¹³⁸ and the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act.¹³⁹ Lawsuits brought by business interests to challenge actions restricting their activities frequently alleged that the public agency had infringed on their vested rights, due process rights, and/or property rights.¹⁴⁰ In several of these cases,

¹²⁹ *Strategic Actions for a Just Economy v. City of Los Angeles*, Los Angeles County Superior Court case no. 23STCP00702.

¹³⁰ *California Sportfishing Protection Alliance et al. v. Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board*, El Dorado County Superior Court case no. 22CV0841.

¹³¹ *Citizens Protecting San Pedro v. City of Los Angeles*, Los Angeles County Superior Court case no. 22STCP03522.

¹³² *Coastal Ranches Conservancy v. California Dept. of State Parks and Recreation*, Santa Barbara County Superior Court case no. 22CV02818.

¹³³ *Citizens Against Market Place Apartment/Condo Development v. City of San Ramon*, Contra Costa County Superior court case no. N23-0770.

¹³⁴ *Watsonville Pilots Assn. v. City of Watsonville*, Santa Cruz County Superior Court case no. 23CV00425.

¹³⁵ *James Irrigation District v. McMullin Area Groundwater Sustainability Agency*, Fresno County Superior Court case no. 23CV417565.

¹³⁶ *Center for Biological Diversity v. California Dept. of State Parks and Recreation*, Sacramento County Superior Court case no. 34-2023-80004109-CU-WM-GDS.

¹³⁷ *Westia et al. v. City of Watsonville*, Santa Cruz County Superior Court case no. 23CV00800.

¹³⁸ *San Diego County Water Authority v. San Diego County Local Agency Formation Commission*, San Diego County Superior Court case no. 37-2023-00036018-CU-TT-CTL.

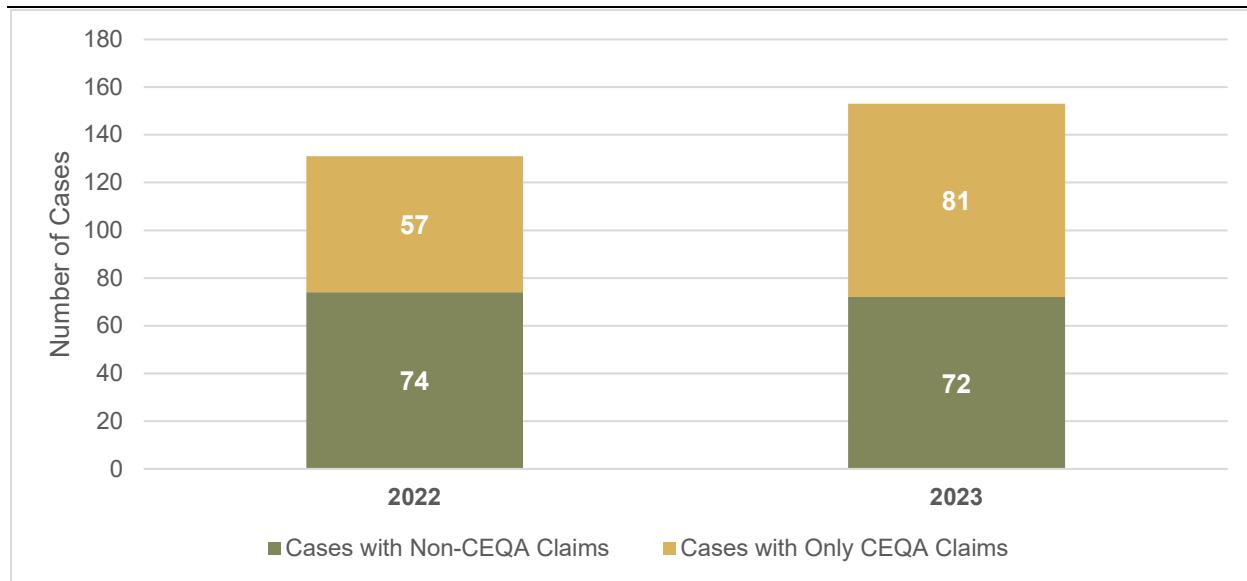
¹³⁹ *San Joaquin Tributaries Authority v. California State Water Resources Control Act*, Fresno County Superior Court case no. 23CECG04201.

¹⁴⁰ E.g., *E & B Natural Resources Management Corp. et al. v. City of Los Angeles*, Los Angeles County Superior Court case no. 23STCP00070 (improper amortization, state preemption, general plan inconsistency, vested rights, inverse condemnation, due process, impairment of contracts, breach of

CEQA was not the primary claim asserted.¹⁴¹

In short, the majority of CEQA cases filed in 2022-2023 included non-CEQA claims. This finding is consistent with a 2022 University of California study that analyzed cases challenging housing projects in twenty California jurisdictions. Focusing on cases filed in 2014-2017, the UC researchers found that 70% of CEQA lawsuits also asserted claims based on local land use laws.¹⁴²

Figure 4: Number of Cases with Non-CEQA Claims, 2022 & 2023



Summary

The number of CEQA lawsuits filed each year continues to be low. Only 131 lawsuits were filed in 2022 and 153 lawsuits in 2023. Since 2002, California has averaged 188 CEQA lawsuits per year statewide. The litigation has fluctuated slightly over the last 20 years, but there is no trend of increases. Rather, our analysis reflects a marked drop in lawsuit numbers starting in 2021. The rate of CEQA litigation for the 2022-2023 study period is also low, averaging 1.05%. From 2013 to 2023, the average litigation rate was 1.8%.

The types of petitioners filing CEQA lawsuits in 2022-2023 spanned a broad array of organizations, public agencies, companies, tribes, and individuals. The Community Group category was the most frequent type of petitioner. Environmental Organizations also filed a substantial number of cases and

contract); *National Assn. of Royalty Owners-California, Inc. et al. v. City of Los Angeles*, Los Angeles County Superior Court case no. 23STCP00106 (state preemption, improper amortization, general plan inconsistency, inverse condemnation).

¹⁴¹ See, e.g., *id.*

¹⁴² Moira O'Neill Hutson, et al., *Examining Entitlement in California to Inform Policy and Process: Advancing Social Equity in Housing Development Patterns* (California Air Resources Board and California Environmental Protection Agency, Mar. 18, 2022) at 9-10, https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3956250.

were frequently joined by Environmental Justice groups. The other large categories were Public Agencies, Businesses, and Individuals.

CEQA lawsuits in 2022-2023 challenged various project types, from commercial and industrial to water and transportation to housing and mixed use. Only 21.8% of all CEQA cases filed in this study period challenged new (non-duplicative) housing units.

The majority of CEQA cases filed in 2022-2023 included non-CEQA claims. While most of the non-CEQA causes of action alleged violations of the state Planning and Zoning Law or local land use ordinances, numerous lawsuits included claims under other state laws. This evidence suggests that many of these cases could have proceeded anyway.

4. CEQA Litigation Regarding Housing-Related Projects

CEQA detractors claim that CEQA litigation against housing is both rampant and misguided, and that CEQA is therefore largely responsible for the state’s affordable housing crisis. In 2023, one prominent critic, appearing before the Little Hoover Commission, flatly asserted that housing projects were the “top target” of CEQA litigation.¹⁴³ However, the data contradict this charge.

First, as explained in Chapter 3, the volume of CEQA litigation decreased markedly starting in 2021. Moreover, just 21.8% of all CEQA cases in that time period challenged projects that included new (non-duplicative) housing units. And the number of housing *units* affected by those legal challenges amounted to only 4.2% of permitted units in California during 2022-2023.

Second, the data show that CEQA is not a significant barrier to affordable housing construction. Rather, economic factors, like high land and construction costs leading to low profit margins on market-rate housing, and lack of sufficient public subsidies for low-income housing, all appear to be suppressing housing production. Indeed, while some California cities have a large pipeline of newly approved housing projects, many projects are not currently breaking ground due to the upside-down economics of relatively flat rents and rapidly rising costs.

Third, even though CEQA is not among the root causes of California’s housing crisis, the Legislature continues to adopt streamlining measures and exemptions to expedite the approval of housing in urban, infill areas. Our research demonstrates that public agencies are increasingly employing these measures. We urge California’s policy leaders to carefully assess how the new measures play out before further weakening CEQA’s protections.

Finally, we use case studies to analyze the ultimate effect, or outcome, of CEQA litigation challenging housing projects in the 2022-2023 period. Our analysis concludes that such litigation succeeded in securing environmental improvements for many of these projects, by ensuring adequate mitigation for environmental impacts and exposing hazards relating to the project’s location. Indeed, some of these cases have resulted in vital protections for sensitive species and habitat, reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, and greater safety for residents.

In short, our specific data and detailed analysis tell a story remarkably different from the one painted by CEQA critics. The numbers show that CEQA is not seriously impeding housing construction, and that much of the litigation resulted in environmental improvements to the housing in question.

¹⁴³ Oral testimony of J. Hernandez, Little Hoover Commission hearing (Mar. 16, 2023) at 03:16:40-45, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ky_hyxqkVfU&t=418s

Housing-Related CEQA Litigation (2022-2023): The Numbers

This section describes (1) the number of CEQA lawsuits that challenged new housing units in 2022-2023, and (2) the number of housing units affected by the CEQA challenges. The section then provides context for housing litigation under CEQA by comparing the number of challenged housing units to the number of residential building permits issued in California.

As detailed in the prior chapter, just 62 out of 284 cases brought during the 2022-2023 period (21.8%) challenged projects that included new housing units. This case total includes 34 Housing-Only cases and 28 Mixed Use cases, for an average of 31 cases per year, statewide, that actually challenged proposed housing units.

We then determined *how many* housing units had been challenged by those 62 cases. Relying on information contained in the case petitions or court documents, we tallied the number of units for each challenged project (excluding duplicative cases for the same housing project). For Housing-Only projects, we conservatively assumed that the entire unit count provided for the challenged project would be permitted in a single calendar year (and then built shortly thereafter). We then compared the number of units challenged in Housing-Only projects to the number of building permits issued in the same year statewide.

The analysis was more complicated for Mixed Use projects, because they can vary from projects with a single residential tower over ground-floor retail to large master-planned communities built out over decades. For the large master-planned communities, it would *not* be accurate to attribute the challenged project's total housing units to a single calendar year, for comparison to housing permits issued in the same year. But critics of CEQA grossly inflate their projections by ignoring how these large projects work; they compare all housing units subject to CEQA litigation in a given year to the number of building permits issued in that same year.¹⁴⁴ In doing so, they ignore the fact that the large master planned communities, often with thousands of housing units identified in the court documents, would be built in phases and would not be fully completed for many years.

To accurately compare the units affected by court cases challenging very large, long-term Mixed Use developments against yearly building permits issued in California, we estimated the *annualized* number of housing units for these few very large projects. To formulate our estimate, we used one of the largest master planned communities in California, known as Mountain House, as an example. Relying on Mountain House, we estimated the annualized number of housing units for the large Mixed Use projects challenged in 2022 and 2023, and then used this annualized number for purposes of comparison to annual permit data for the same years as the legal challenges.¹⁴⁵

¹⁴⁴ See, e.g., J. Hernandez, *Anti-Housing CEQA Lawsuits Filed in 2020 Challenge Nearly 50% of California's Annual Housing Production* (Center for Jobs & the Economy, August 2022) at 2, <https://centerforjobs.org/wp-content/uploads/Full-CEQA-Guest-Report.pdf>.

¹⁴⁵ Note that, because large mixed-use projects play out over many years, this methodology does not assume that the specific units challenged by CEQA lawsuits were also permitted in the same year. The methodology instead compares the number of housing units subjected to court CEQA challenges in a given year to the number of housing units permitted for construction in the same year.

Mountain House is a recently incorporated “new town” located in San Joaquin County at the Alameda County border. The project for this area was approved in the early 1990s and broke ground in 2001. Mountain House is planned to build out by 2040 (a nearly 40-year period) and will ultimately contain 15,705 housing units. Because this community is being built on well-located undeveloped land along I-580 between Livermore and Tracy (a major commute corridor), it represents a good example of the time needed to construct and absorb the many phases of housing development. Based on US Census data, Mountain House had a housing unit count of 3,237 in 2010 and grew to 7,189 by 2020 — an increase of 3,952 units for the decade, or an average of 395 units per year. Rounding up to 400 units to be conservative, we used this estimate to calculate the *annualized* number of housing units in large Mixed Use projects.¹⁴⁶

The case-by-case detailed estimate for housing units affected by CEQA litigation in 2022 and 2023 is shown in Appendices C1 and C2 and is summarized in the table below. As shown, the sum of Housing-Only and Mixed Use Projects indicates an estimated total of 4,366 units affected by CEQA litigation in 2022, and 5,404 units affected in 2023. When compared to total residential building permits issued in California in 2022 and 2023 (detailed in Appendix C3), the number of units affected by legal challenges represented just 3.6% of units permitted statewide in 2022, and 4.8% of units permitted in 2023. This percentage is dramatically lower than the percentage that critics of CEQA have asserted in other contexts.

Table 5: Summary of Housing Units Challenged Under CEQA Compared to Permits Issued

	2022	2023	Total for Period
Units in Housing-Only Projects Affected by CEQA Litigation	1,152	2,081	3,233
Units in Mixed-Use Projects Affected by Litigation (a)	3,214	3,323	6,537
Total Number of Units	4,366	5,404	9,770
Total CA Housing Permits Issued	119,667	111,760	231,427
% of Permits Represented by Units Affected by CEQA Litigation	3.6%	4.8%	4.2%

a) Several Mixed-Use cases converted to annualized estimates. See Appendix C2 for details.

Sources: US Census, Building Permits Survey, The Housing Workshop, 2025.

¹⁴⁶ This Report’s annual average unit estimate, based on Mountain House yearly production, is supported by data for top-selling annual sales of master-planned communities (MPCs) in California for 2019 and 2021. See G. Logan and K. Pischke, *Interactive Map of the Top-Selling Master-Planned Communities* (RCLCo, Aug. 9, 2022), <https://www.rclco.com/publication/interactive-map-of-the-top-selling-master-planned-communities-2013-2022/>. This source shows an average of 365 new home sales in the 12 top-selling MPCs in California in 2019, and an average of 411 new home sales for the 13 top-selling MPCs in California in 2021. Data for 2020 was not analyzed due to pandemic economic decline. Data for more recent years is not available from this source.

Economic Factors Affecting Housing Production

Like much of the nation, California is experiencing a shortage of new housing construction. Building permit data (shown in Appendix C) shows that housing construction has slowed dramatically since it peaked in California in the 1980s. More recently, the multi-year pandemic caused additional slowdowns, with modest recovery in 2021-2023 followed by a decline again for 2024 that was likely due to continued high interest rates. This section addresses the economic factors hindering the production of housing.¹⁴⁷

CEQA's critics routinely insist that the Act itself is the main cause of California's housing shortage — an assertion this Report examines and ultimately refutes. The two predecessors of this Report also show that this assertion does not withstand scrutiny. Unsupported attacks on CEQA ignore the complex factors that caused California's housing shortage and the impact that macro-economic conditions unrelated to environmental review have on housing production. For instance, high interest rates, high land costs, high construction costs, and labor shortages all erect barriers to housing production.¹⁴⁸

Due to these economic factors, many housing projects remain unbuilt even though they have received all of their entitlements and completed any required CEQA process. For example, in the City of San Francisco, there are now nearly 50,000 entitled housing units that remain unbuilt.¹⁴⁹ CEQA delays cannot conceivably have caused this situation.

Notably, housing starts peaked in the nation in 2006, before the global financial crisis 2008, and have not recovered since.¹⁵⁰ In California, housing production reached a peak in 2004, then declined dramatically during the 2008 crisis, and has not recovered since, echoing the national pattern. Tellingly, CEQA regulations have not tightened since 2008; instead, multiple streamlining measures and exemptions have *loosened* requirements under the Act.¹⁵¹ As one analyst explained, "Since zoning regulations didn't suddenly get tighter in the second half of the 2000s, this building boom scrambles the thesis that public

¹⁴⁷ This Report does not analyze the effect of restrictive zoning on housing production. Researchers at the University of California provided an in-depth analysis of this issue in 2022. See Moira O'Neill Hutson, et al., *Examining Entitlement in California to Inform Policy and Process: Advancing Social Equity in Housing Development Patterns* (California Air Resources Board and California Environmental Protection Agency, Mar. 18, 2022), https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3956250.

¹⁴⁸ Friedrich, M., *The Case Against Yimbyism* (The New Republic, March 15, 2024), <https://bit.ly/TheNewRepublic2024Yimbyism>; Schwartz, A., *The false narrative around CEQA and the California housing crisis* (Los Angeles and San Francisco Daily Journal, July 25, 2024), <https://www.dailyjournal.com/articles/379899>; 2021 Rose Report at iii-iv, 31-33; Smith-Heimer and Hitchcock 2019 at iv.

¹⁴⁹ San Francisco Planning Department, Housing Balance Report No. 19, 2015 Q1- 2024 Q4 (Apr. 1, 2025) at 5 (showing 49,366 entitled, unbuilt units), <https://citypln-m-extnl.sfgov.org/SharedLinks.aspx?accesskey=24b3cf1d6a10f7bae1b21b48e0c020619cafd794b501ab6ff e70bc3c60e5b5a&VaultGUID=A4A7DACP-B0DC-4322-BD29-F6F07103C6E0>.

¹⁵⁰ S. Vaheesan, *The Real Path to Abundance* (Boston Review, May 22, 2025), <https://www.bostonreview.net/articles/the-real-path-to-abundance/>.

¹⁵¹ See, e.g., 2023 Report at 39-41 (listing CEQA streamlining measures enacted in 2021-2022) and the following section of this Report (listing CEQA streamlining measures enacted in 2023-2024).

land use controls are the root cause of today’s housing crisis.”¹⁵²

Other analysts have highlighted the role of income inequality in undercutting efforts to increase housing affordability. A recent study in the National Bureau of Economic Research found that the most important factor impacting the price of housing is the income and wealth of people residing in a city.¹⁵³ This factor far outweighs constraints such as environmental regulations. The study concludes, “These results challenge the prevailing view of local housing and labor markets and suggest that easing housing supply constraints may not yield the anticipated improvements in housing affordability.”¹⁵⁴

Critically, in the state’s major cities, the desirability of both California’s robust job market and its locational advantages have driven up the cost of land available for housing development. California now has the second most expensive land in the nation, second only to the severely land-constrained state of Hawaii. Construction costs in San Francisco — along with those in New York City — are the highest anywhere in the world. Meanwhile, corporate consolidation of home ownership has significantly increased since the financial crisis of 2008, when companies began to buy up the nation’s glut of foreclosed homes.¹⁵⁵

Blaming CEQA for the state’s shortage of affordable housing is unfortunate, as it distracts policy leaders from devising real solutions to the problem, such as bolstering subsidies for public housing and investing in community land trusts. Given that most infill housing is already exempt from CEQA, California will not solve its housing crisis by further weakening the Act.

CEQA Streamlining for Housing Projects

As our previous reports explained, CEQA has been amended on numerous occasions to exempt or streamline a wide range of housing projects, or to allow ministerial approval of certain housing developments.¹⁵⁶ This Report updates that analysis. We find that CEQA amendments adopted in 2023, 2024, and 2025 provide robust new streamlining procedures and enact exemptions for qualifying residential projects. Meanwhile, public agencies are utilizing SB 35 and SB 423 to accelerate approvals for much-needed affordable housing. Our research also shows that very few cases in 2022 and 2023 challenged the use of CEQA exemptions for Housing-Only and Mixed Use projects with a residential component.

¹⁵² S. Vaheesan, *The Real Path to Abundance* (Boston Review, May 22, 2025), <https://www.bostonreview.net/articles/the-real-path-to-abundance/>.

¹⁵³ S. Louie, J. Mondragon, J. Wieland, *Supply Constraints Do Not Explain House Price And Quantity Growth Across U.S. Cities* (National Bureau of Economic Research, Mar. 2025) at 23, https://www.nber.org/system/files/working_papers/w33576/w33576.pdf.

¹⁵⁴ *Id.* at Abstract.

¹⁵⁵ B. Christopher, *What you need to know about California housing and corporate landlords* (CalMatters, Mar. 7, 2024), <https://calmatters.org/housing/2024/03/institutional-investors-corporate-landlords/>.

¹⁵⁶ 2021 Report at 11-14, 33-36, Appx. A; 2023 Report at 39-41.

New CEQA Streamlining Measures and Exemptions

Since the 2023 Report, California has enacted significant new streamlining measures as well as CEQA exemptions. They include:

- AB 1449, passed in 2023, exempts from CEQA affordable housing projects in infill areas. Qualifying projects must consist of multifamily residential uses only, or a mix of multifamily residential and nonresidential uses, with 2/3 of the area designated for residential. All of the residential units must be dedicated to lower income households.
- AB 1307, passed in 2023, provides that EIRs for residential or mixed use housing projects of public higher education institutions are not required to analyze alternatives to the location of the proposed housing site under specified circumstances. The bill further provides that, for residential projects subject to CEQA, the effect of noise generated by project occupants and their guests on human beings is not a significant effect on the environment.
- SB 4, passed in 2023, allows a housing development project to constitute a “by right” use, and thus not a “project” under CEQA, if the property is owned by a non-profit, independent higher education institution or a religious institution. The development must include affordable housing as specified and be located in a qualifying urban area.
- SB 423, passed in 2023, extends SB 35 (2017), which allowed for ministerial approval (exempt from CEQA) of qualifying multifamily housing projects in jurisdictions that have not met regional housing needs. SB 423 makes SB 35 applicable within the coastal zone, extends SB 35 to jurisdictions that lack a compliant housing element, and limits SB 35’s exclusion for areas within very high fire hazard severity zones.
- SB 684, passed in 2023, allows for the ministerial approval (exempt from CEQA) of subdivisions for 10 or fewer housing units, provided the site is no larger than five acres, is “substantially surrounded by qualified urban uses,” and is zoned for multifamily residential.
- AB 2243, passed in 2024, loosens restrictions on housing streamlined under AB 2011, including affordability requirements and limits on building housing near freeways.
- AB 3035, passed in 2024, expands a CEQA exemption for farmworker housing.
- AB 2553, passed in 2024, expands the definition of “major transit stop” to enable more housing projects to qualify for CEQA exemptions available for infill sites and transit priority projects.
- AB 1893, passed in 2024, expands the Housing Accountability Act’s streamlining of housing developments by reducing the affordability requirement for builder’s remedy projects from 20% lower income units to 13%. The bill also allows use of the builder’s remedy to avoid locally adopted inclusionary ordinances and to build at lower density near transit and in infill areas.
- AB 3057, passed in 2024, exempts from CEQA the adoption of a city or county ordinance that facilitates junior accessory dwelling units.
- SB 1361, passed in 2024, provides an exemption from CEQA for local agency contracts for services to people experiencing homelessness.
- SB 1395, passed in 2024, provides an exemption from CEQA for local agency actions to facilitate homeless shelters, such as actions to lease land for low barrier navigation centers.
- AB 1801, passed in 2024, allows supportive housing projects qualifying for an exemption from

CEQA to include administrative office space.

- AB 130, passed in June 2025, provides a broad exemption for urban infill housing on sites 20 acres or smaller, provided the project meets certain density minimums, is not located on sensitive land, and complies with other requirements.
- SB 131, passed in June 2025, provides that if a housing development project would be exempt from CEQA but for a single condition, then the environmental review for the project will be limited to the impacts associated with that “missed” condition. SB 131 also provides an exemption for rezoning actions that implement the schedule of actions contained in an approved housing element.¹⁵⁷

Update on Public Agencies’ Use of SB 35/423

The 2021 and 2023 Reports demonstrated that the CEQA streamlining measures are working well and are being utilized to approve new housing units, particularly in affordable categories, to add to California’s housing supply.¹⁵⁸ SB 35 — a key streamlining law passed in 2017 — provides both a density bonus and a ministerial approval process for multifamily projects meeting certain levels of affordable housing and certain eligibility requirements (e.g., not located in an environmentally sensitive area). This law eliminates environmental review if the project is eligible.

SB 35 was due to sunset in 2026, but SB 243 (2023) extended and broadened its provisions to enable expanded ministerial housing project approvals that are exempt from CEQA. SB 243 will sunset on January 1, 2036. For these reasons, data reporting on SB 35’s use is now termed “SB 35/423.” It should be noted that these companion laws are structured to benefit many 100% affordable projects as well as mixed-income projects with certain levels of affordable inclusionary units. These laws are designed to foster accelerated development of both market-rate and affordable (e.g., “rent restricted”) unit production in jurisdictions that are not meeting Housing Element goals.

The 2021 and 2023 Reports reviewed then-available data from California’s Housing and Community Development Department (HCD) regarding use of SB 35 statewide.¹⁵⁹ The table below updates this analysis, indicating that SB 35/423 is growing in use and represents an important initiative to streamline permitting for certain types of affordable housing projects. At the same time, we note that not all “approved” projects, whether 100% affordable or mixed-income, are actually built. While the reasons for this situation are multi-faceted, the primary challenge to affordable housing production is lack of sufficient subsidy dollars, not issues related to project approval.

At this point, policy leaders should carefully monitor SB 35/423 and the other newly adopted CEQA exemptions to determine how they are implemented. California communities depend on CEQA to ensure that new development incorporates effective measures protecting their health and safety, and the environment. The Legislature should take the time to assess how existing exemptions are working — and their possible deficiencies — before adopting new ones. This is particularly advisable in light of AB 130,

¹⁵⁷ SB 131 and AB 130 were passed as budget trailer bills and thus took effect immediately. This Report does not describe other CEQA streamlining bills proposed through the normal legislative process in 2025.

¹⁵⁸ 2021 Report at 34-36; 2023 Report at 39-41.

¹⁵⁹ 2021 Report at 35; 2023 Report at 41.

which represents the largest housing exemption ever adopted by the state. As noted, the Legislature should bear in mind that the principal impediments to production of new affordable housing in California are economic, not CEQA lawsuits.

Table 7: Use of SB 35/423 for Project Approval by Household Income Level of Units (2018-2023)

	2018 (a)	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Total
Very low Income	1,221	1,194	1,610	490	2,556	2,609	9,680
Low Income	1,638	1,576	3,168	2,556	3,549	3,764	16,251
Moderate Income	614	123	362	387	479	1,157	3,122
Market-Rate	3,055	991	783	1,973	884	337	8,023
Total SB35/423 Units Approved	6,528	3,884	5,923	5,406	7,468	7,867	37,076
<i>Total California Multifamily Permits (b)</i>	<i>50,031</i>	<i>47,452</i>	<i>43,215</i>	<i>49,507</i>	<i>52,772</i>	<i>49,324</i>	<i>292,301</i>
<i>% SB35/423 of Total Multifamily Permits</i>	<i>13.0%</i>	<i>8.2%</i>	<i>13.7%</i>	<i>10.9%</i>	<i>14.2%</i>	<i>15.9%</i>	<i>12.7%</i>

a) 2018 had a high use of SB35 due to one project, Valleco (redevelopment of large shopping mall in Cupertino, CA)

b) Although not a directly comparable metric, due to differing years for approval and building permit issuance, this comparison is shown for context. Multifamily is projects with 5+ units.

Sources: HCD Dashboard, 2025; US Census Building Permit Survey, 2025; The Housing Workshop, 2025.

Lawsuits Challenging CEQA Exemptions Used for Housing Projects

Use of CEQA exemptions for Housing-Only and Mixed Use projects including a residential component appears to go largely unchallenged. For 2022-2023, only 32 cases involved challenges to such projects.¹⁶⁰ These cases account for just 11.3% of the CEQA cases in the past two years. Moreover, in 23 of the 32 cases, the petitioners alleged that the project violated other state and/or local laws.¹⁶¹ Thus, these cases

¹⁶⁰ 2025 Report, Appx. A.

¹⁶¹ *Friends of Northwest Sebastopol v. City of Sebastopol*, Sonoma County Superior Court case no. SCV-270053; *Encinitas Residents for Responsible Development v. City of Encinitas*, San Diego County Superior Court case no. 37-2022-00003664; *Holt Partners v. City of Los Angeles*, Los Angeles County Superior Court case no. 21STCP03836; *Ptashkin et al. v. City of West Hollywood*, Los Angeles County Superior Court case no. 22STCP01276; *Jin Ser Park v. City of Pasadena*, Los Angeles County Superior Court case no. 22STCP01352; *USC Forward v. City of Los Angeles*, Los Angeles County Superior Court case no. 22STCP04203; *The Silver Lake Heritage Trust v. City of Los Angeles*, Los Angeles County Superior Court case no. 22STCP04323; *Segal v. City of Santa Cruz*, Santa Cruz County Superior Court case no. 22CV02838; *Coalition for Safe Coastal Development v. City of Los Angeles*, Los Angeles County Superior Court case no. 22STCP00162; *Westwood Neighbors for Sensible Growth v. City of Los Angeles*, Los Angeles County Superior Court case no. 22STCP00646; *Responsible Urban Development Initiative v. City of Los Angeles*, Los Angeles County Superior Court case no. 22STCP02534; *Citizens Protecting San Pedro v. City of Los Angeles*, Los Angeles County Superior Court case no. 22STCP03522; *1000 Friends Protecting Historic Benicia v. City of Benicia*, Solano County Superior Court case no. FC059252; *Friends of South Carthay v. City of Los Angeles*, Los Angeles County Superior Court case no. 22STCP04426; *Louviere v. County of Kern*, Kern County Superior Court case no. BCV-23-100007; *Crane Boulevard Safety Coalition v. City of Los Angeles*, Los Angeles County Superior Court case no. 23STCP02375; *Laguna Beach Coalition for Environmental Protection v. City of Laguna Beach*, Orange County Superior Court case no. 30-2023-01349628; *Pacifica San Juan Community Association v. City of San Juan Capistrano*, Orange County Superior Court case no. 30-2023-0135855; *Friends of Equestrian Bridge v. City of Burbank*, Los Angeles County Superior Court case no. 23STCP03836; *Grano v. Hi Point M, LLC v. City of Los Angeles*, Los Angeles County Superior Court case no. 23STCP04569; *Citizens Against Market Place Apartment/Condo Development v. City of San Ramon*, Contra Costa

might well have been brought even if CEQA could not be used.

Housing-Related Litigation (2022-2023): Case Studies

Finally, this Report undertakes three case studies showing the type of housing projects that were challenged in 2022-2023 and the ultimate outcome of these lawsuits. Here, petitioners used CEQA litigation mainly to compel more careful consideration about the environmental effects of where new housing is located. Although Californians need more housing, CEQA petitioners pointed out that these additional housing units can be of little value if they place people in grave danger or are built in unsustainable places. In each of our case studies, the courts agreed, ruling for groups in challenges to housing projects located in dangerous high fire hazard zones and very sensitive biological resource areas. As these cases demonstrate, CEQA resulted in safer, more environmentally protective housing development throughout California.

Exclusive Development in Remote Area with Significant Safety Risks (Lake County)

In Lake County, environmental petitioners used CEQA as a tool to ensure better decision-making around where housing is sited. As the 2023 Report detailed, the Center for Biological Diversity and California Native Plant Society engaged in litigation with Lake County regarding its approval of a sprawling new ultra-luxury resort and residential development just north of Napa County in an area rife with wildfires.¹⁶² The state Attorney General joined the lawsuit in 2021.¹⁶³

Prior to project approval, the Guenoc Valley Mixed Use Planned Development Project site had repeatedly burned and was placed under an evacuation order.¹⁶⁴ The 16,000-acre project site contains oak woodlands, wildlife corridors, and habitat for sensitive wildlife species including Golden Eagles, Yellow-legged Frogs and Western Pond Turtles. The project proposed to bring thousands of new residents and visitors to this isolated corner of Lake County, resulting in more than 30,000 metric tons of new greenhouse gas emissions every year.¹⁶⁵ The project proposal included luxury amenities such as polo grounds designed to attract “high net worth individuals.”¹⁶⁶

In January 2022, the court held that the county had failed to consider the project’s effect on community

County Superior court case no. N23-0770; *Supporters Alliance for Environmental Responsibility v. City of Long Beach*, Los Angeles County Superior Court case no. 23LBCP00344; *Livable Ventura v. City of San Buenaventura*, Ventura County Superior Court case no. 2023CUWM013832.

¹⁶² *Center for Biological Diversity v. County of Lake*, Lake County Superior Court case no. CV421152, Verified Petition for Writ of Mandate and Complaint for Declaratory and Injunctive Relief (Aug. 20, 2020) (*CBD v. Lake County Complaint*) at 1.

¹⁶³ AG press release (Feb. 1, 2021), <https://oag.ca.gov/news/press-releases/attorney-general-becerra-files-motion-intervene-lawsuit-challenging-development>.

¹⁶⁴ Draft EIR’s Appendix FIRE, the Guenoc Wildfire Prevention Plan, <https://www.biologicaldiversity.org/programs/urban/pdfs/Guenoc-Valley-Fire-History-Map.pdf> (wildfire history); Center for Biological Diversity, <https://www.biologicaldiversity.org/resourcespace/pages/view.php?ref=13482&k=25f252f71f> (LNU Complex Fire Evacuation map).

¹⁶⁵ *CBD v. Lake County Complaint* at 4-6.

¹⁶⁶ *Id.* at 1.

safety and wildfire evacuation in the highly fire-prone area.¹⁶⁷ In particular, the court concluded that the county's findings on wildfire evacuation routes were not supported by substantial evidence and its environmental review did not comply with CEQA.¹⁶⁸ In January 2023, the Attorney General's office announced a settlement of its case with the county after requiring improvements to the development that would reduce its risk of sparking a wildfire.¹⁶⁹

In 2024, an appellate court went further and found that the EIR's conclusory discussion of the project's potential to exacerbate wildfire risks, including ignition rates, violated CEQA.¹⁷⁰ The appellate court's opinion made clear that a new EIR was needed to adequately inform the public and decisionmakers about the heightened wildfire ignition risk.¹⁷¹ As this case shows, CEQA can be used as a powerful instrument to ensure that agencies carefully consider housing projects and the potential fire risks they bring if not sited in appropriate places.

In 2025, the environmental groups reached a settlement agreement¹⁷² with the developer that secured several thousand acres onsite for permanent conservation and provides funding for greenhouse gas emissions reduction projects in the County.

Bringing More Residents to a Fire Risk Rural Area (Butte County)

In 2023, environmental groups challenged the City of Chico's approval of the "Valley Edge Specific Plan," a massive residential/commercial development that had a multitude of potential effects on public safety and the environment. The project proposed to bring nearly 5,700 residents to a moderate fire hazard severity zone adjacent to the town of Paradise, the location of the extremely destructive 2018 Camp Fire.¹⁷³ Notably, the 1,400-acre project site had previously burned in 1999, 2007, and 2018.¹⁷⁴ The environmental petitioners' lawsuit raised a number of CEQA claims, including the city's failure to adequately analyze wildfire conditions and evacuation routes.¹⁷⁵ The project also would impact special status species, groundwater supply, vernal pools, and wildfire risk.¹⁷⁶

¹⁶⁷ *Center for Biological Diversity v. County of Lake*, Lake County Superior Court case no. CV421152, Ruling and Order on Petitions for Writ of Mandate (Jan. 4, 2022) at 5-8, <https://www.biologicaldiversity.org/programs/urban/pdfs/Guenoc-Valley-ruling.pdf>.

¹⁶⁸ *Id.* at 7-8.

¹⁶⁹ AG press release (Jan. 13, 2023), <https://oag.ca.gov/news/press-releases/attorney-general-bonta-announces-settlement-address-wildfire-ignition-risks-and>.

¹⁷⁰ *People ex rel. Bonta v. County of Lake* (2024) 105 Cal.App.5th 1222, 1227.

¹⁷¹ *Id.*

¹⁷² Center for Biological Diversity Press Release (August 7, 2025), https://biologicaldiversity.org/w/news/press-releases/habitat-conservation-climate-benefits-secured-in-lake-county-agreement-2025-08-07/?_gl=1*1pix3x1*_gcl_au*MzI3NzA3Njk1LjE3NTYyMjgxNjQ.

¹⁷³ Center for Biological Diversity, *Lawsuit Challenges Sprawl Development in Northern California Wildfire Zone: Chico Project Would Put Thousands in Harm's Way* (Feb. 2, 2023), <https://biologicaldiversity.org/w/news/press-releases/lawsuit-challenges-sprawl-development-in-northern-california-wildfire-zone-2023-02-02/>.

¹⁷⁴ *Id.*

¹⁷⁵ Petition at 13-14.

¹⁷⁶ *Sierra Club et al. v. City of Chico*, Butte County Superior Court case no. 23CV00376, Verified Petition for Writ of Mandate (Jan. 17, 2020) (Petition) at 6, 11, 13-14.

A referendum successfully challenged the project, resulting in rescission and vacation of the project approvals, but not decertification of the EIR. The city insisted the case was moot in light of the referendum, but the petitioners argued that they should still have the opportunity to litigate the adequacy of the EIR, which the city and developer could use when considering a new or scaled down project. The court agreed that the case was not moot: “It would indeed be surprising if the developers of the former Valley’s Edge Project did not bring back a new and possibly scaled back project given the passage of Measures O and P by the voters. … The issues from this case are not likely to go away.”¹⁷⁷ Here again, the CEQA process disclosed the dangers associated with approving development in fire hazard severity zones and refused to let the government entity avoid them.

High Fire-Risk Housing Inconsistent with General Plan (San Diego County)

In 2024, environmental petitioners successfully argued that a mixed use housing community proposed in the City of Santee, on the outskirts of San Diego County in a very high fire hazard severity zone, was inconsistent with the county’s general plan and violated CEQA.¹⁷⁸ Known as the Fanita Ranch project, this development proposed to bring “nearly 10,000 new residents to an area that has burned 65 times in the past 100 years.”¹⁷⁹ The project site is also considered a “biologically diverse hotspot” that hosts a number of sensitive species.¹⁸⁰

The city had previously repealed project approvals that took place in 2022 following the environmental groups’ earlier CEQA challenge based on the city’s failure to properly evaluate the project’s wildfire evacuation and safety,¹⁸¹ leaving the project applicant to revise and resubmit its proposal. However, before this resubmission, Santee citizens qualified a referendum and approved an initiative that would each place Fanita Ranch on the ballot.¹⁸² Despite the clear legal requirement to put the project to the voters, the city refused, revised its environmental review of the resubmitted project, and issued a new approval.

In court, environmental petitioners successfully argued that the project was inconsistent with the general plan and that the city had failed to disclose and analyze that inconsistency in its CEQA documents, forcing the developer to go back to the drawing board.¹⁸³ In this way, CEQA protects public health and safety by compelling cities and counties to disclose when risky development projects are incompatible with the municipality’s adopted long term planning goals.

¹⁷⁷ *Sierra Club et al. v. City of Chico*, Butte County Superior Court case no. 23CV00376, Ruling and Order After Hearing; Reinstatement of Stay of the Proceedings (Jan. 16, 2025) at 2, 6.

¹⁷⁸ *Preserve Wild Santee et al. v. City of Santee*, San Diego County Superior Court case no. 37-2022-00041478, Ruling on Submitted Matter (Aug. 9, 2024) (Ruling) at 8-9.

¹⁷⁹ Center for Biological Diversity, *City Approval of Fanita Ranch Ruled Invalid* (Aug. 12, 2024), <https://biologicaldiversity.org/w/news/press-releases/california-court-deals-another-blow-to-san-diego-sprawl-project-2024-08-12/>.

¹⁸⁰ *Id.*

¹⁸¹ *Preserve Wild Santee et al. v. City of Santee*, San Diego County Superior Court case no. 37-2020-00038168 (challenging Fanita Ranch project).

¹⁸² Center for Biological Diversity, *City Approval of Fanita Ranch Ruled Invalid* (Aug. 12, 2024), <https://biologicaldiversity.org/w/news/press-releases/california-court-deals-another-blow-to-san-diego-sprawl-project-2024-08-12/>.

¹⁸³ Ruling at 8-9.

Summary

As this chapter details, neither the data nor the theories claiming that CEQA impedes housing production withstand close examination. The perception that CEQA is blocking residential development is false for at least four reasons.

First, less than one quarter of the 2022-2023 CEQA lawsuits challenged housing developments. The number of units at issue was equivalent to only 4.2% of total housing units permitted statewide in those years.

Second, at the present time powerful economic factors, not CEQA, are hindering housing production. High interest rates, expensive land costs, ever-rising construction costs, and the problematic relationship between relatively flat rents/sale prices and bottom-line profits are all delaying or precluding the construction of fully approved projects.

Third, even though CEQA is not among the root causes of California's housing crisis, the Legislature continues to adopt streamlining measures and exemptions to expedite the approval of housing in urban, infill areas. In 2025, the state passed the broadest housing exemption in California history, an action that represents a sea change for housing developers. Further, as the 2021 and 2023 Reports and the present Report show, CEQA exemptions are working as envisioned to expedite the approval of qualifying housing projects. These exemptions, however, mean that projects may proceed without adequate mitigation for potential public health and environmental impacts. Given the rapid pace of these legislative changes and the breadth of AB 130's exemption, legislators should allow time to see how these laws operate before adopting further major measures of this sort.

Fourth, the case studies presented in this Report show that CEQA does not stop housing development, but rather informs the public and decisionmakers of projects' environmental and public safety impacts. For example, CEQA litigation in 2022-2023 exposed the safety hazards of proposed housing developments located in remote, fire-prone areas.

5. Cost of CEQA Review

CEQA requires lead agencies to disclose a proposed project's potentially significant environmental impacts and to identify effective measures to reduce those impacts to a level of insignificance. The law also encourages robust public participation in the land use approval process. As a result of the CEQA process, decisionmakers and the public are apprised of a project's environmental and public health effects before it is approved, and significant effects are mitigated to the extent feasible. Despite these benefits, critics have complained about the cost of CEQA compliance, including the direct cost of preparing environmental documents and the indirect cost of time delays.

Our 2016 and 2021 Reports analyzed these issues, using case studies supplied by PlaceWorks, one of the largest planning and environmental review consulting firms in California. The 2016 Report found that the direct environmental review costs for five exemplar projects ranged from 0.025 to 0.6 percent of the total project costs, and that environmental review periods ranged from 10 to 29 months.¹⁸⁴ The 2021 Report found that the direct environmental review costs for three exemplar projects ranged from 0.15 to 0.5 percent of the total project costs, while environmental review periods ranged from 6 to 29 months.¹⁸⁵

Building on these previous reports, this Report presents two new case studies. As before, the projects studied are diverse in terms of project type and location in California. For each of these projects, we show the direct CEQA compliance costs as well as the time required to complete the required environmental review. PlaceWorks served as the prime CEQA compliance consultant for all of the profiled projects, managing its own environmental review analysts and any technical subconsultants needed for in-depth studies of specific issues. As the prime consultant, PlaceWorks possessed relevant information regarding the total direct environmental review cost, key project dates, and estimated project construction costs.

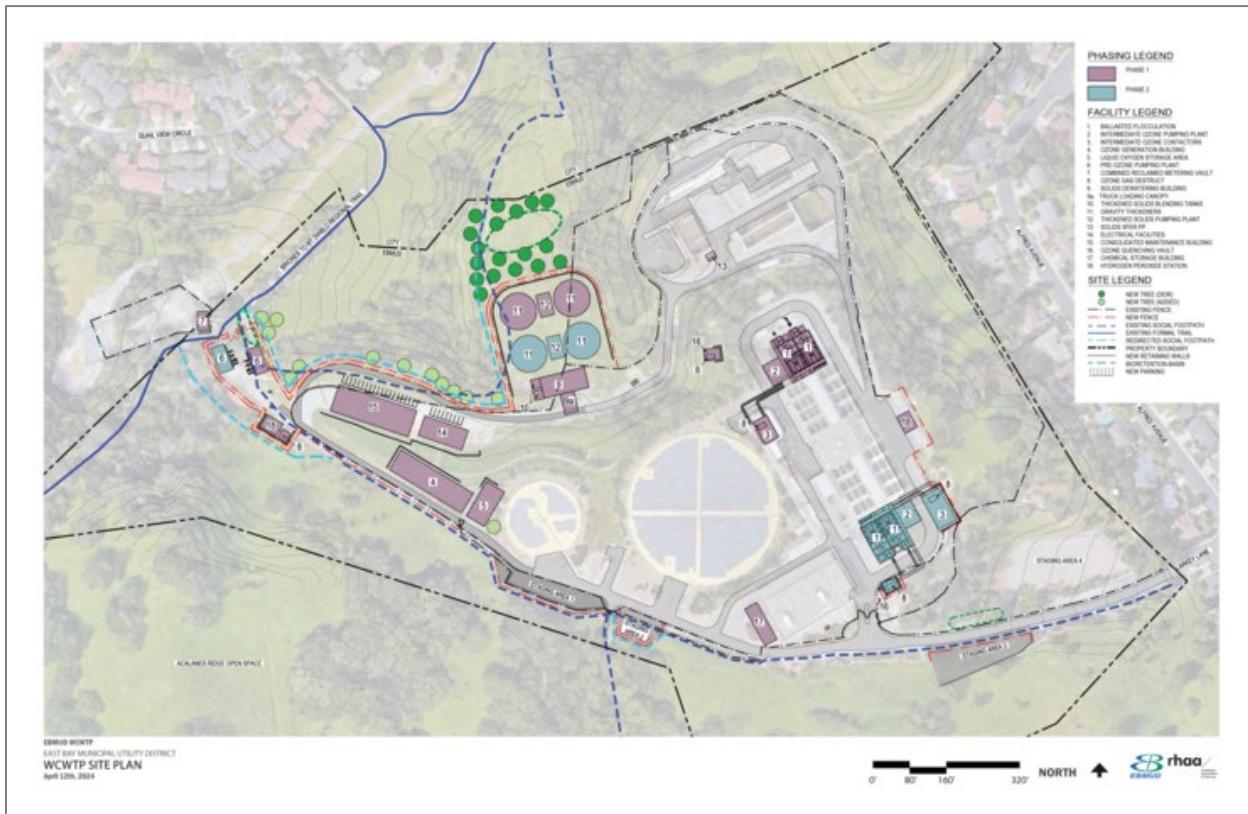
The 2016, 2021 and 2025 Reports demonstrate that the direct cost of environmental review is a tiny fraction of a project's total cost, less than 1%. The time associated with environmental review varies among projects and generally overlaps with other aspects of the approval process.

Notably, no study has attempted to estimate a dollar amount for the time delays caused by CEQA compliance. Such a calculation would prove difficult because, again, other permitting processes and pre-development activities can occur simultaneously with environmental review. Likewise, this Report does not estimate the cost *savings* that CEQA mitigation provides by reducing environmental and public health harm.

¹⁸⁴ 2016 Report at 28-41. The Report did not include a time period for one of the five projects because review was ongoing. *Id.* at 38.

¹⁸⁵ 2021 Report at iii.

Water Treatment Plant Pretreatment Project, Walnut Creek

**Total Project Timeline:**

Approximately 15 years

Total Environment Review Period:

28 months

Environmental Review Cost:

\$300,000 – \$600,000

Total Project Cost:

\$420 million

Environmental Review as % of Project Cost:

0.07% to 0.1%

The East Bay Municipal Utility District's (EBMUD) Walnut Creek Water Treatment Plant (WTP) is the primary source of water for a quarter-million customers. The 1967 facility in the East Bay hills was designed to treat high-quality water from the Sierra foothills. The plant, however, lacks the capability of pretreating water from lower-quality sources often relied upon in drought and outage conditions; and these water sources are increasingly impacted by heavy rainfall runoff, wildfires, chemicals and algae blooms.

In 2021, EBMUD began planning the 2-phase Walnut Creek WTP Pretreatment Project. The project will add a series of facilities to better treat water from a range of sources. It will also increase plant capacity from 115 to 160 million gallons per day. New physical facilities include gravity filtration thickeners, ozone treatment facilities, thickened solids pump stations, and maintenance buildings. The \$420 million project will also include pipeline modifications to nearby Lafayette WTP, resulting in improved hydraulics at the Walnut Creek WTP.

The environmental review process for this project commenced with the release by EBMUD of a Notice of Preparation (NOP) of a Draft EIR in February 2022. The Draft EIR was completed in September 2023, supported by a range of technical reports, assessments, analyses, and modeling.

The Draft EIR identified potentially significant impacts related to scenic vistas, air quality, special-status species, cultural resources, hazardous materials, water quality, noise, traffic and wildfire. In all but three cases, EBMUD's existing Standard Construction Specifications were found to be sufficient to reduce the impact to a less-than-significant level. Noise, traffic plan, and traffic hazards impacts required new mitigation measures.

EBMUD facilitated a 45-day public review period of the Draft EIR from September 29, 2023 to November 13, 2023. The agency also held a virtual comment meeting on October 19, 2023. The Final EIR was released about six months later, in May 2024. Comments from regional park and water districts, private residents, and nearby homeowners' associations echoed input received during the earlier non-CEQA public outreach about the project. These included concerns about the construction staging area, visual impacts of planned sound barriers, and impacts to views from a nearby regional trail. EBMUD responded with increased detail about uses and storage on the staging area, improved noise analyses, and new mitigation requiring daily noise monitoring and improved visual simulations.

The EBMUD Board approved the FEIR on July 9, 2024. A Notice of Determination (NOD) was filed the following day. Phase 1 of the project will consist of a three-year design process until 2027, followed by four years of construction ending in 2031. Assuming a similar timeline for Phase 2, the entire project is expected to be completed in 2035. No litigation was filed to challenge this project.

555 Kelly Affordable Housing Project, Half Moon Bay



Total Project Timeline:

7 years

Total Environment Review Period:

4-5 months

Environmental Review Cost:

\$40,000 - \$70,000

Total Project Cost:

\$43,000,000

Environmental Review as % of Project Cost:

0.09%-0.1%

In November 2021, the City Council of Half Moon Bay directed staff to pursue development of affordable housing on a City-owned property in the City's Workforce Housing Overlay zone. About eight months later, the non-profit housing developer Mercy Housing and the non-profit social wellness group ALAS (Ayudando Latinos a Sonar) formally initiated 555 Kelly Avenue, a project composed of 40 units of housing for seniors and farmworkers. All the units would be deed-restricted to serve extremely-low and very-low income households, with a new Farmworker Resource Center operated by ALAS on the ground floor of the building.

Project planning and outreach continued for the next two years. The project team conducted multiple community input meetings throughout 2023, soliciting comments from over 100 community members and revising the project as needed. The City completed air quality, geotechnical, noise and land use studies throughout early 2024. These studies, combined with the site characteristics, supported the project's eligibility for a CEQA exemption under Section 15332 (In-Fill Development Projects) of the CEQA Guidelines. The City filed the one-page exemption with the State on May 21, 2024.

Despite the In-Fill Exemption to CEQA, the project was met with some community resistance. Some of the community concerns mirrored previously received feedback made through the City's earlier Housing Element Update process, with residents from the surrounding neighborhood stating that 555 Kelly was too big, too dense, out of context, lacking in adequate parking, and inconsistent with "small town charm." Following two meetings of the Planning Commission where no vote was taken, Governor Gavin Newsom threatened legal action against the City if there was further delay, while California HCD pledged formal support for the project.

The Planning Commission conditionally approved the project at a third meeting on May 14, 2024. Residents responded with three appeals of the decision to the City Council. The appeals cited an inadequate public review process, excess influence by the State, unlawful density bonus allowances, inconsistency with the Coastal Act and Public Resources Code, and insufficient parking planning. Only one appeal cited CEQA, claiming site conditions disqualified the project as "infill."

The City of Half Moon Bay City Council ultimately approved the project on June 26, 2024. According to Mercy Housing's most recent project timeline, construction will start in 2026, with occupancy expected in 2028. No litigation was ever filed to challenge the project. Any delays during the approval process resulted from community resistance to the project, not from CEQA compliance.

Summary

These two project examples — a major infrastructure project and a smaller 100% affordable project — illustrate the various pathways and processes that CEQA environmental review can follow. Importantly, they also illustrate the relationship between the cost of environmental review and the total project cost. In both cases, environmental review cost no more than 0.1% of construction cost, and the CEQA process resulted in a better project. The environmental review in these cases took between four and 28 months. As noted above, the time spent on environmental review typically overlaps with other steps in the permitting process and with pre-development steps such as civil engineering for preliminary subdivision, design review, and/or arranging financing.

6. CEQA Protects California's Environment and Communities

This chapter examines CEQA's vital role in advancing environmental justice, combatting global climate change, and preserving California's valuable natural resources. Using case studies, the 2021 and 2023 Reports documented how environmental groups and the California Attorney General have used CEQA to mitigate the impacts of industrial projects on the state's most vulnerable communities, and to require projects to reduce their climate-harming greenhouse gas emissions.¹⁸⁶ The earlier reports also described CEQA's significant role in protecting many of the state's iconic natural resources and landscapes.¹⁸⁷

This 2025 Report's review of recent cases confirms that CEQA continues to serve as an effective mechanism for groups fighting environmental injustice and climate change. And the law continues to help safeguard California's treasured natural areas. Sources used in compiling the case studies below include court filings, press releases and articles, and settlement agreements where applicable.

CEQA's Role in Promoting Environmental Justice

Over the last decade, evidence of environmental injustice, in California and elsewhere, has continued to mount. As the 2021 and 2023 Reports explained, low-income and minority communities bear the brunt of the environmental pollution caused by our society’s industrial developments, transportation systems, and other large-scale commercial and governmental projects.¹⁸⁸ For example, the American Lung Association concluded that people of color are more likely to be exposed to air pollution and more likely to suffer harm to their health from air pollution than white people.¹⁸⁹ This disproportionate burden causes widespread public health problems and exacerbates longstanding socioeconomic impacts.

California has adopted strong policies to promote environmental justice throughout the state. The Attorney General's website states, "Every Californian should have the opportunity to live in a community that is healthy and safe. This is especially true for low-income communities and communities of color, who suffer disproportionate exposure to pollution and the corresponding health impacts from that exposure."¹⁹⁰ The state Legislature defines "environmental justice" as "the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of people of all races, cultures, incomes, and national origins with respect to the development, adoption, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies."¹⁹¹

¹⁸⁶ 2021 Report at 77-93; 2023 Report at 54-60; *see also* 2016 Report at 15-16 (discussing CEQA's role in promoting environmental justice).

¹⁸⁷ 2021 Report at 68-74; 2023 Report at 60-64.

¹⁸⁸ 2021 Report at 77-85; 2023 Report at 54-60.

¹⁸⁹ American Lung Association, *State of the Air, Health Impact* (2024), <https://www.lung.org/research/sota/health-risks#peopleatrisk>.

¹⁹⁰ Office of the California Attorney General.

Office of the California Attorney General,
<https://oag.ca.gov/environment/justice#:~:text=Under%20state%20law:%20%E2%80%9C%5BE,public%20health%20and%20environmental%20protections.>

¹⁹¹ Gov't Code § 65040.12(e).

The Attorney General and environmental justice groups have increasingly relied on CEQA to protect disadvantaged groups from the impacts of pollution caused by large-scale industrial projects and other development. On January 24, 2024, 109 environmental organizations urged the state Legislature and the Governor to protect and preserve CEQA, emphasizing the law's role in advancing environmental justice:

CEQA is an essential tool for California's low-income communities and communities of color, who already suffer from excessive pollution and inadequate infrastructure. CEQA requires developers to disclose hard data about how industrial projects will impact people living, working, and going to school in these vulnerable communities. The CEQA process allows members of the public to demand that additional harm to their communities be avoided or significantly reduced.¹⁹²

Likewise, the Attorney General ranks CEQA as the top state law used to combat pollution that disproportionately affects vulnerable communities.¹⁹³ His website states, "CEQA requires government agencies in California to consider potentially significant environmental impacts on communities already burdened with pollution when reviewing and permitting new projects."¹⁹⁴ It also provides a case example, in which the Attorney General's office challenged a large warehouse project in a low-income community in San Bernardino County already suffering from some of the highest pollution levels in California.¹⁹⁵

Since the release of the 2023 Report, the Attorney General and environmental organizations have continued to use CEQA in defense of communities' health and safety in the face of polluting development. The five case studies below illustrate CEQA's essential role.

¹⁹² Letter dated January 30, 2024 to members of the State Senate and Assembly and Governor Newsom from 109 environmental justice, land use, and conservation groups, <https://tinyurl.com/2024-Letter-Legislature-Gov>.

¹⁹³ Office of the California Attorney General, <https://oag.ca.gov/environment/justice#:~:text=Under%20state%20law:%20%E2%80%9C%5BE,public%20health%20and%20environmental%20protections>.

¹⁹⁴ *Id.*

¹⁹⁵ *Id.*

Warehouse Development Would Displace Over 100 Households and Pollute an Environmentally Overburdened Community (San Bernardino County)

In 2022, a coalition of community and environmental groups challenged San Bernardino County's approval of the Bloomington Business Park Specific Plan under CEQA and several fair housing laws.¹⁹⁶ The proposed 213-acre project was a warehouse development of over 3.2 million square feet.¹⁹⁷ Each day, the project would have generated nearly 1,300 heavy-duty diesel truck trips through Bloomington, a predominantly working-class Latino community.¹⁹⁸



Unincorporated Bloomington CA showing land waiting development as warehouses (Source: LA Times, 7-23-24)

The Inland Empire's explosive boom in new warehouses, designed largely to service goods shipped through the Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach, has transformed the historically rural Bloomington area into an industrial landscape whose overall pollution burden ranks higher than 94% of the State.¹⁹⁹ In this case, the proposed project would be located only 11 feet away from the nearest residence and would

¹⁹⁶ *People's Collective for Environmental Justice et al. v. County of San Bernardino, et al.*, San Bernardino County Superior Court case no. CIVSB2228456, Verified Second Amended Petition for Writ of Mandate and Complaint for Declaratory & Injunctive Relief (May 20, 2024).

¹⁹⁷ Earthjustice, *Judge Orders San Bernardino County to Redo Environmental Review of Bloomington Business Park* press release (Sept. 24, 2024), <https://earthjustice.org/press/2024/judge-orders-san-bernardino-county-to-redo-environmental-review-of-bloomington-business-park>; Ruling on Petition for Writ of Mandate (Sept. 17, 2024) (Ruling) at 2.

¹⁹⁸ *Id.*

¹⁹⁹ Earthjustice, *Community Fights for Clean Air, Challenges Bloomington Warehouse in Court* (June 21, 2024), <https://earthjustice.org/press/2024/community-fights-for-clean-air-challenges-bloomington-warehouse-in-court>.

displace over 100 households.²⁰⁰

In 2024, a lengthy trial court opinion found the EIR inadequate on several CEQA grounds.²⁰¹ The court held that the county failed to consider a reasonable range of alternatives²⁰² and that no substantial evidence supported the finding of an alternative's infeasibility.²⁰³ The court held that the county had failed to sufficiently explain why it could not analyze the health risks associated with the project's significant and unavoidable air quality impacts.²⁰⁴ Moreover, the county had not supported its finding that zero-emission trucks are an economically infeasible and commercially unavailable mitigation measure.²⁰⁵ The court also found that the EIR's greenhouse gas analysis was internally contradictory²⁰⁶ and that the EIR did not analyze renewable energy options that might be available or appropriate for the project.²⁰⁷

Finally, the court held that no substantial evidence supported the cumulative energy impact analysis and that the EIR did not include reasoned analysis for choosing the noise threshold applied to measure construction noise impacts.²⁰⁸ As a result, the court directed the county to set aside certification of the EIR and related project approvals, and enjoined any action to construct the project until the county complies with CEQA.²⁰⁹

While the Bloomington project may ultimately be reapproved in some form, CEQA will have ensured that serious impacts to the local community will first be adequately evaluated and mitigated.

China Shipping Container Terminal at the Port of Los Angeles Would Pollute Surrounding Neighborhoods

In a decades-long dispute, environmental justice and community groups have used CEQA to address life-threatening air pollution from the 142-acre China Shipping Container Terminal at the Port of Los Angeles. In 2019, these groups challenged a supplemental EIR for the continued operation of the project and called for the implementation of a series of air quality mitigation measures, such as requiring ships to lower their emissions while docked at the terminal and limiting the speed of ships approaching the terminal. As petitioners alleged, the EIR failed to ensure that these measures were legally enforceable; it also omitted other feasible mitigation measures like a pilot program for electric yard tractors.

In 2022, the trial court ruled for petitioners on these issues. However, because the court merely ordered the Port to set aside its supplemental EIR and did not require it to take any action to enforce the mitigation, the groups appealed. In 2023, the Court of Appeal ruled for petitioners, declaring that the trial court "mistakenly limited its options for fashioning a remedy that reinforces CEQA's environmental

²⁰⁰ *Id.*

²⁰¹ The fair housing claims are still being litigated on a bifurcated timeline.

²⁰² Ruling at 23.

²⁰³ *Id.* at 26-27.

²⁰⁴ *Id.* at 42-43.

²⁰⁵ *Id.* at 51.

²⁰⁶ *Id.* at 59.

²⁰⁷ *Id.* at 71-72.

²⁰⁸ *Id.* at 83.

²⁰⁹ *Id.* at 98.

purposes.”²¹⁰ Subsequently, the trial court issued a landmark order requiring that the lease between the Port and China Shipping include enforceable measures to improve air quality and safeguard public health.²¹¹ The CEQA process thus protects communities from nearby industrial projects.

A Settlement Addressing the Dangerous Expansion of an Urban Refinery (Los Angeles County)

In 2022, Communities for a Better Environment, East Yard Communities for Environmental Justice, and Center for Biological Diversity sued under CEQA, challenging the approval authorizing the completion of the conversion of an oil refinery into a biofuels processing facility. The refinery, which began operating in the 1930s, is located in the City of Paramount and lies within a high-density, mostly Latino area and adjacent to a high school and two elementary schools.²¹² The project proposed a nearly seven-fold increase in the processing of biofuels at the refinery and would also involve installing a 3.7 mile pipeline.²¹³

The complaint alleged numerous violations of CEQA, including the EIR’s failure to employ a stable project description, to use an accurate baseline for its analysis, and to evaluate various environmental impacts from the expanded production of biofuels, including the potential for runaway reactions and flaring.²¹⁴ The trial court partially granted the petition, directing the issuance of a peremptory writ of



²¹⁰ *NRDC et al. v. City of Los Angeles et al.* (2023) 98 Cal.5th 1176, 1239.

²¹¹ NRDC news story, *NRDC et al. v. City of Los Angeles et al. (China Shipping)* (July 31, 2024), <https://www.nrdc.org/court-battles/nrdc-et-v-city-angeles-et-china-shipping#:~:text=And%20in%20May%202024%2C%20after,quality%20and%20safeguard%20public%20health>.

²¹² Center for Biological Diversity, *Lawsuit Challenges California Biofuel Refinery Expansion* (May 16, 2022), <https://biologicaldiversity.org/w/news/press-releases/lawsuit-challenges-california-biofuel-refinery-expansion-2022-05-16/>.

²¹³ *Id.*

²¹⁴ *Communities for a Better Environment et al. v. City of Paramount*, Los Angeles Superior Court Case No. 22STCP01875, Verified Petition for Writ of Mandate and Complaint for Declaratory and Injunctive Relief (filed May 16, 2022), ¶ 5.

mandate.²¹⁵

The parties then agreed to enter a mediation process that ended with a lengthy settlement agreement.²¹⁶ Under the settlement, the refinery owner agreed to provide public video monitoring the use of flares at the refinery and to prepare a flare minimization plan.²¹⁷ The owner committed to efforts to detect and reduce leaks at the refinery, including evaluation of installing leakless valves,²¹⁸ and to replace fossil-fueled yard equipment with available, fully electric alternatives.²¹⁹ Other provisions limit the sale of hydrogen from the facility, require evaluation of technology to detect hydrogen leaks,²²⁰ and subsidize access to electric passenger vehicles by residents of the region.²²¹

Finally, a significant settlement provision commits the owner to conducting odor patrols around the facility every six hours, and to responding to complaints about odors within three hours of receiving the complaint.²²² In the end, CEQA allowed residents to secure important environmental protections that will limit the refinery's impacts on the community.

Warehouse Settlement Reduces Air Pollution Affecting Residents and Schoolchildren (Riverside County)

In 2022, the Center for Community Action and Environmental Justice and the Sierra Club sued the City of Moreno Valley over its approval of a 390,000 square foot warehouse development across the street from homes and schools.²²³ The predominately Latino neighborhoods abutting the project suffer from some of the worst air quality in the state, and emissions from diesel trucks contribute significantly to this pollution. The developer proposed two light industrial warehouses that together would generate more than 220 heavy duty truck trips every day.²²⁴ Nevertheless, the city approved the project on a mitigated negative declaration, refusing to prepare an EIR.

Petitioners objected to the project on the grounds that affiliated trucks would pass directly in front of residential neighborhoods and more than a half-dozen schools, exposing residents and children to potentially significant diesel emissions and related impacts.²²⁵ The mitigated negative declaration largely ignored these concerns; it materially underestimated truck-related emissions and never acknowledged that the project could impact schools along the city's designated truck routes.²²⁶ In late 2023, the trial court

²¹⁵ *Communities for a Better Environment et al. v. City of Paramount*, Los Angeles Superior Court Case No. 22STCP01875, Order Granting Petition for Writ of Mandate (Jan. 17, 2024) at 42.

²¹⁶ *Communities for a Better Environment et al. v. City of Paramount*, Los Angeles Superior Court Case No. 22STCP01875, Joint Stipulation and Order Regarding Settlement (May 24, 2024), Exhibit 1.

²¹⁷ *Id.* at 3.

²¹⁸ *Id.* at 4.

²¹⁹ *Id.* at 5.

²²⁰ *Id.* at 7-8.

²²¹ *Id.* at 8.

²²² *Id.* at 9

²²³ *Center for Community Action and Environmental Justice et al. v. City of Moreno Valley*, Riverside Superior Court Case No CVRI2200683, Verified Petition for Writ of Mandate (Feb. 17, 2022), ¶¶ 27-28.

²²⁴ *Id.* at ¶ 32.

²²⁵ *Id.* at ¶ 36.

²²⁶ *Id.*

agreed with petitioners and granted their petition in full.²²⁷

Following an appeal from the project developer, the parties entered settlement discussions and ultimately entered an agreement that will significantly reduce the impacts of project trucks on the surrounding community. Most significant, all project-affiliated trucks, regardless of ownership, will be fully electric within three years from the date that the first warehouse receives its final certificate of occupancy.²²⁸ Medium and light-duty vehicles must also be fully electric within seven years.²²⁹ The developer may delay electrification of the heavy-duty truck fleet only if electric trucks are not available for purchase for less than 150% of the cost of an equivalent diesel truck, and the developer must fully electrify the fleet within six months after compliant trucks become available.

The settlement also requires the developer to route trucks to avoid area schools and minimizes the number of diesel trucks passing in front of neighboring homes.²³⁰ To further reduce impacts to neighbors, all project buildings must be fully electrified and incorporate rooftop solar and battery storage.²³¹ The developer also committed to electrifying all equipment used on site, including forklifts, pallet jacks, and landscaping equipment.²³² While the warehouses will still be built, the CEQA process empowered the community to demand much-enhanced mitigation for the project's most significant impacts.

An Oil and Gas Permitting Ordinance Threatens Public Health, Water Supplies, and Farmland (Kern County)

The 2023 Report described lawsuits brought in 2021 against Kern County's reapproval of a sweeping ordinance to narrowly circumscribe environmental review and ease permitting for nearly 2,700 new oil and gas production wells annually.²³³ This 2025 Report describes the final court decision in that litigation — a victory for the local community and the environment.



²²⁷ *Center for Community Action and Environmental Justice et al. v. City of Moreno Valley*, Riverside Superior Court Case No CVRI2200683, Judgment Granting Peremptory Writ of Mandate (Dec. 8, 2023).

²²⁸ *Center for Community Action and Environmental Justice et al. v. City of Moreno Valley*, Riverside Superior Court Case No CVRI2200683, Settlement Agreement (Dec. 16, 2024), Exhibit 1, ¶ 20.

²²⁹ *Id.*

²³⁰ *Id.* at ¶ 13.

²³¹ *Id.* at ¶¶ 15, 4.

²³² *Id.* at ¶ 15.

²³³ 2023 Report at 56-57.

This consolidated litigation involved two lawsuits: one by community environmental justice organizations, including lead petitioner Committee for a Better Arvin, and traditional environmental groups;²³⁴ and a second by a concerned local farming entity, V Lions Farming, LLC.²³⁵ The county's ordinance allowed operators to receive over-the-counter permits for new drilling based on a cursory "ministerial" review of environmental and health consequences, even for wells located close to homes and schools.²³⁶ Proximity to oil and gas drilling and production is associated with a wide range of negative health consequences, especially decreased respiratory function and adverse birth outcomes.²³⁷ In Kern County, as elsewhere, these burdens fall heavily on low-income communities and people of color.²³⁸

The county's approval of the ordinance in 2021 followed a successful challenge to the inadequate EIR prepared for a prior version of the ordinance brought by the same petitioners.²³⁹ In the prior challenge, the Court of Appeal ruled that the EIR did not provide adequate analysis, mitigation measures, or both, addressing the ordinance's impacts on water supplies, air quality, noise, and farmland.²⁴⁰ The court also faulted the county for failing to seek adequate public comment on a health risk assessment that purported to disclose the cumulative dangers of drilling multiple wells near a sensitive location like a home or school.²⁴¹ Following remand from the Court of Appeal and the trial court's issuance of a writ of mandate, the county prepared a Supplemental Recirculated EIR (SREIR) and reapproved the ordinance in largely the same form.

In their subsequent 2021 challenges, the Arvin coalition and the local farming concern argued that the county had failed to remedy — and in some cases had exacerbated — flaws in the prior EIR identified by the Court of Appeal.²⁴² In June 2022, the trial court issued a ruling granting in part the two petitions.²⁴³ It held that the SREIR persisted in relying on an ineffective and arbitrary approach to mitigating emissions of dangerous fine particulate matter air pollution and neglected to disclose the magnitude of impacts on

²³⁴ *Committee for a Better Arvin, et al. v. County of Kern*, Kern County Superior Court case no. BCV-21-100536, Verified Petition for Writ of Mandate and Complaint for Injunctive Relief (Mar. 10, 2021) (Committee for a Better Arvin Complaint).

²³⁵ *V Lions Farming, LLC v. County of Kern*, Kern County Superior Court case no. BCV-21-100533, Verified Petition for Writ of Mandate and Complaint for Injunctive Relief (Mar. 10, 2021) (VLF Complaint). V Lions Farming, LLC (VLF) was known as "King and Gardiner Farms, LLC" until March 24, 2022, when the court granted its application to change its name on the pleadings to VLF.

²³⁶ Committee for a Better Arvin Complaint at 1-5.

²³⁷ See, e.g., California Oil & Gas Public Health Rulemaking Scientific Advisory Panel, "Public Health Dimensions of Upstream Oil and Gas Development in California: Scientific Analysis and Synthesis to Inform Science-Policy Decision Making" (June 21, 2024) at ES-2 to ES-3, ES-8, www.conservation.ca.gov/calgem/Documents/Public%20Health%20Panel%20Final%20Report_20240621.pdf.

²³⁸ *Id.* at ES-6, ES-9; see also Committee for a Better Arvin Complaint at 4, 11-12.

²³⁹ *King and Gardiner Farms, LLC v. County of Kern*, Cal. Ct. App., 5th Dist. case no. F077656, Opinion (Feb. 25, 2020), as modified (Mar. 20, 2020); partially published at (2020) 45 Cal.App.5th 814.

²⁴⁰ *King and Gardiner Farms*, 45 Cal.App.5th 814 at 829-30; slip op. at 2-4.

²⁴¹ *King and Gardiner Farms*, 45 Cal.App.5th 814 at 830; slip op. at 4

²⁴² Committee for a Better Arvin Complaint at 1-5; VLF Petition at 1-3.

²⁴³ See generally *Committee for a Better Arvin, et al. v. County of Kern*, Kern County Superior Court case no. BCV-21-100536, Ruling on Petitions for (Third) Writ of Mandate (June 7, 2022) (Ruling on Petitions).

drinking water supplies in disadvantaged communities.²⁴⁴ The court also ruled that the county improperly rejected proposals to better mitigate unused oil equipment left on farmland.²⁴⁵ However, the court allowed the county to “correct” these violations through an abbreviated addendum, rather than a revised EIR, and authorized oil and gas permitting to resume.²⁴⁶

The Arvin coalition and farmer appealed the trial court’s rulings²⁴⁷ and quickly sought interim relief from the Court of Appeal, which issued a stay of permitting in January 2023.²⁴⁸ In March 2024, the Court of Appeal held that the county’s actions violated CEQA in several significant ways.²⁴⁹ The court faulted the County for its “erroneous” view that it need not analyze or provide mitigation for significant water supply impacts in low-income or disadvantaged communities.²⁵⁰ The court also held that the county’s study of cancer risks from drilling multiple wells near a home or school was deficient. The study had only assessed the impacts of drilling 1,000 feet to one mile away from a sensitive location, even though the county intended to allow drilling to occur much closer, as near as 210 feet from a home and 300 feet from a school.²⁵¹ Finally, the Court of Appeal ruled that county officials improperly rejected feasible mitigation: the use of agricultural conservation easements to combat the oil and gas industry’s conversion of farmland for drilling.²⁵²

Because of these significant deficiencies, the Court of Appeal directed the county to set aside the ordinance and SREIR, and prohibited it from issuing oil and gas drilling permits until it complies with CEQA.²⁵³ Subsequently, the county reapproved its permitting ordinance, but only after conducting the additional environmental review required by the court and committing to adequately mitigate the adverse health, water supply, and farmland impacts of oil and gas drilling in Central Valley communities.²⁵⁴ This is another instance where CEQA served as the principal check on environmental injustice.²⁵⁵

²⁴⁴ *Id.*; see also Earthjustice press release (June 8, 2020), <https://earthjustice.org/press/2022/court-ruling-deems-kern-countys-oil-and-gas-review-violated-the-law>.

²⁴⁵ Ruling on Petitions at 13-15.

²⁴⁶ *Committee for a Better Arvin, et al. v. County of Kern*, Kern County Superior Court case no. BCV-21-100536, Ruling on Remedies and Relief (Oct. 4, 2022); Order Discharging the Third Peremptory Writ of Mandate (Nov. 2, 2022).

²⁴⁷ *Committee for a Better Arvin, et al. v. County of Kern*, Kern County Superior Court case no. BCV-21-100536, Notices of Appeal (Aug. 8, Oct. 17, and Nov. 4, 2022); *V Lions Farming, LLC v. County of Kern, et al.*, Kern County Superior Court case no. BCV-21-100533, Notices of Appeal (Aug. 8, Oct. 14 and Nov. 4, 2022).

²⁴⁸ *V Lions Farming, LLC v. County of Kern*, Cal. Ct. App., 5th Dist. case nos. F084763, F085102, F085220, Order (Jan. 26, 2023).

²⁴⁹ *V Lions Farming, LLC v. County of Kern*, Cal. Ct. App., 5th Dist. case nos. F084763, F085102, F085220, Opinion (Mar. 7, 2024), partially published at (2024) 100 Cal.App.5th 412.

²⁵⁰ *V Lions Farming*, 100 Cal.App.5th at 420; slip op. at 4-5.

²⁵¹ *V Lions Farming*, 100 Cal.App.5th at 419-20; slip op. at 4.

²⁵² *V Lions Farming*, 100 Cal.App.5th at 419; slip op. at 3-4.

²⁵³ *V Lions Farming*, 100 Cal.App.5th at 438; slip op. at 105-06.

²⁵⁴ On Sept. 19, 2025, the Governor signed Senate Bill 237, which provides that the county’s revised EIR is “deemed sufficient for full compliance with [CEQA] for purposes of consideration and adoption of [the permitting ordinance].” California Legislative Information, Senate Bill 237,

https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill_id=202520260SB237.

²⁵⁵ Earthjustice press release (Mar. 7, 2024), <https://earthjustice.org/press/2024/california-court-rules->

CEQA's Role in Combatting Climate Change

CEQA is also playing a major role in the state's efforts to combat global climate change, an issue more urgent than ever. As the 2021 Report explained, the State of California's Fourth Climate Change Assessment, last updated in early 2019, confirms that the threat to California is stark.²⁵⁶ The Assessment projects that climate-related heat waves, precipitation extremes, wildfires, sea level rise, and impacts to public health will continue to worsen, potentially costing the state tens of billions of dollars and many lost lives.²⁵⁷ Diminished snowpack, drought, and increasing heat also pose serious risks, including to California's water supply and its critical agricultural sector.²⁵⁸ In addition, the Assessment found that climate change will exacerbate public health impacts to disadvantaged communities, who already bear a disproportionate share of pollution in California.

To combat these threats, California has taken a series of actions to reduce climate-harming greenhouse gas emissions. In 2005, Governor Schwarzenegger's Executive Order S-3-05 outlined emissions reduction goals for 2020 and 2050.²⁵⁹ The next year, the California Global Warming Solutions Act (AB 32)²⁶⁰ codified the goal of reducing statewide emissions to 1990 levels by 2020.²⁶¹ In 2016, the Legislature adopted a new goal of reducing emissions to 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030.²⁶² California now has a goal to reduce emissions by at least 85% below 1990 levels, and achieve net-zero emissions, by 2045.²⁶³

CEQA plays a critical role in the state's efforts to meet its emissions reduction goals. Indeed, CEQA is the only state law that requires quantification of greenhouse gas emissions from proposed development projects, and mitigation of any significant emissions. Specifically, the CEQA Guidelines require lead

[kern-county-oil-gas-permitting-scheme-illegal](#)

²⁵⁶ 2021 Report at 85. The Governor's Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation has begun preparing the Fifth Climate Change Assessment, which it anticipates will be completed in mid-2026. See <https://lci.ca.gov/climate/icarp/climate-assessment/>.

²⁵⁷ Bedsworth, Louise, Dan Cayan, Guido Franco, Leah Fisher, Sonya Ziaja. (California Governor's Office of Planning and Research, Scripps Institution of Oceanography, California Energy Commission, California Public Utilities Commission). 2018. Statewide Summary Report. California's Fourth Climate Change Assessment. Publication number: SUM- CCCA4- 2018- 013, pp. 8-11, https://www.energy.ca.gov/sites/default/files/2019-11/Statewide_Reports-SUM-CCCA4-2018-013_Statewide_Summary_Report_ADA.pdf.

²⁵⁸ See *id.* at 11-12.

²⁵⁹ Wikipedia, *California Executive Orders*, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/California_Climate_Executive_Orders.

²⁶⁰ Health & Safety Code § 38550.

²⁶¹ Under AB 32, the California Air Resources Board (CARB) must prepare a “scoping plan” for “achieving the maximum technologically feasible and cost effective reductions” in greenhouse gas emissions, and must update the plan at least every five years. The most recent Scoping Plan, revised in 2022, outlines a strategy to achieve California's current goals of reducing anthropogenic emissions to 85 percent below 1990 levels, and achieving carbon neutrality, by 2045. CARB, *2022 Scoping Plan for Achieving Carbon Neutrality* (Nov. 16, 2022), <https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/resources/documents/2022-scoping-plan-documents>.

²⁶² Health & Safety Code § 38566.

²⁶³ Health and Safety Code § 38562.2.

agencies to “make a good-faith effort, based to the extent possible on scientific and factual data, to describe, calculate, or estimate the amount of greenhouse gas emissions resulting from a project.”²⁶⁴ CEQA also requires agencies to adopt feasible, enforceable mitigation measures to reduce emissions from the projects they approve or carry out.²⁶⁵

Further, the Guidelines were amended to require that transportation impacts be analyzed in terms of vehicle-miles traveled (VMT) — a measure that better captures climate impacts — rather than solely in relation to traffic congestion.²⁶⁶ The Guidelines also identify ways to streamline greenhouse gas analyses for projects that are consistent with an adopted climate action plan.²⁶⁷

Importantly, CEQA also helps agencies address climate-related threats like wildfire risks. For example, the CEQA Guidelines require agencies to analyze whether a project would be located in or near a very high fire severity zone, how the project will impact the zone’s emergency response and evacuation plans, and whether the project will increase wildfire risk and expose occupants to danger.²⁶⁸

Set forth below are four case studies illustrating CEQA’s crucial role in combatting climate change. The outcome of some of the cases also addressed environmental justice issues.

State Oil Regulators Failed to Analyze Climate Impacts of Seventeen Oil and Gas Wells in Los Angeles and Kern Counties

In 2022, the Center for Biological Diversity (Center) sued the California Geologic Energy Management Division (CalGEM), the state oil regulator, for approving extensive new oil and gas drilling in Los Angeles and Kern counties.²⁶⁹ The Center alleged that CalGEM failed to conduct the required environmental review for drilling that will emit significant climate-harming greenhouse gas emissions and degrade the health of nearby residents and schoolchildren.²⁷⁰

The challenged project consisted of two sets of approvals. The first permitted nine new oil and gas wells in Santa Clarita located near residential neighborhoods, a high school, and Placerita Canyon State Park. The second permitted eight new wells in the Elk Hills oilfield in Kern County, an area that already has some of the worst air quality in the nation.

The Center alleged that CalGEM improperly relied on outdated environmental review documents for the drilling project. The agency approved the Santa Clarita wells based on a 30-year-old negative declaration that claimed oilfield expansion would result in no significant environmental harm. For the Elk Hills wells,

²⁶⁴ CEQA Guidelines § 15064.4.

²⁶⁵ CEQA Guidelines § 15126.2; *see also* 2022 Scoping Plan, Appendix D at 27-28 (discussing CEQA mitigation strategies for reducing greenhouse gas emissions that align with state goals).

²⁶⁶ CEQA Guidelines § 15064.3; Pub. Resources Code § 21099.

²⁶⁷ CARB, *Climate Action Planning*, <https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/our-work/programs/local-actions-climate-change/climate-action-planning> (citing Guidelines §§ 15183.5).

²⁶⁸ CEQA Guidelines, Appx. G (XX)

²⁶⁹ *Center for Biological Diversity v. California Geologic Energy Management Division*, Alameda County Superior Court case no. 22CV023134.

²⁷⁰ *Id.*, Verified Petition for Writ of Mandate (Dec. 1, 2022) at 2-3.

it relied on a 1997 EIR.²⁷¹ Neither of these studies even considered the drilling project's effect on climate change or nearby residents.

On July 14, 2023, the court approved the parties' settlement of the case, declaring the litigation moot.²⁷² Two months earlier, CalGEM had rescinded the permits for the Santa Clarita wells, canceled the permits for the Elk Hills wells, and declared the associated determinations made under CEQA void.²⁷³

In the event that oil companies propose these drilling projects in the future, the environmental review must quantify greenhouse gas emissions and mitigate any significant cumulative impacts on climate change. It must also mitigate impacts on public health. CEQA is the only state law that could produce this result.

Expansion of Enormous Dairy Farm in Fresno County Will Create Massive Greenhouse Gas Impacts

The Attorney General's office is using CEQA to lessen the impacts of an enormous dairy farm in Fresno County. In 2023, the Van Der Kooi family proposed an enormous expansion of their dairy farm, located about 10.6 miles southeast of the City of San Joaquin. The expansion would increase the farm's milk cow herd size by 1,800, for a total of 5,000 milk cows, and the dry cow herd size by 120, for a total of 600 dry cows. The Attorney General's office objected to the county's reliance on a negative declaration for this project, arguing that an EIR was required because "there is a fair argument that the Project will have a significant impact on the environment."²⁷⁴

The Attorney General noted that the county's negative declaration failed to adequately evaluate the project's significant impacts on greenhouse gas emissions. The project would generate 16,084.989 MT CO₂e per year, which is equivalent to almost 3,600 gasoline-powered passenger vehicles driven per year. The county erred in concluding that cumulative GHG impacts would be less than significant simply because the project included a digester.²⁷⁵ First, the San Joaquin County Air Pollution Control District has not approved digesters as a "best performance standard." Second, there is no evidence that digesters can mitigate methane emissions from sources other than manure (such as enteric emissions from the cows themselves) or from other greenhouse gas emissions caused by the project (such as from the increase in trucks visiting the farm).²⁷⁶

In addition, the county used outdated methods to analyze the project's air quality impacts, and relied on flawed analysis to minimize its water quality impacts.²⁷⁷ These issues are particularly concerning

²⁷¹ *Id.* at 2.

²⁷² *Center for Biological Diversity v. California Geologic Energy Management Division*, Alameda County Superior Court case no. 22CV023134, Stipulated Request for Dismissal and Order (July 14, 2023) at 2, 5, https://www.biologicaldiversity.org/programs/climate_law_institute/energy_and_global_warming/pdfs/Stipulation_and_Order_Stipulated_Request_for_Dismissal-Placerita-and-Elk-Hills-Oil-Fields.pdf?gl=1*1dgi2x2*gcl_au*MjQ2NzU4NTM3LjE3NDA3Njk4ODE.

²⁷³ *Id.*

²⁷⁴ Letter dated May 13, 2024 from Rob Bonta to Fresno County, p. 8, <https://oag.ca.gov/system/files/media/05-13-24-van-der-kooi-dairy-project.pdf>

²⁷⁵ Digester is technology that captures methane from manure to create biogas. *Id.* at 3, fn. 9.

²⁷⁶ *Id.* at 11.

²⁷⁷ *Id.* at 12.

because the Van Der Kooi farm is located in the San Joaquin Valley region, which has some of the worst air quality in the nation.²⁷⁸

According to the county planner assigned to this project, the county is preparing an EIR for this project.²⁷⁹ This document will ensure that this project's impacts on greenhouse gases and air quality will be fully disclosed and mitigated, thereby protecting communities and our climate.

City of San Diego's Climate Action Plan Lacked Mechanisms to Ensure Emissions Reduction Goals Are Met

In 2022, Climate Action Campaign and Coastal Environmental Rights Foundation challenged the City of San Diego's environmental review for its Climate Action Plan (CAP)²⁸⁰ and related thresholds of significance.²⁸¹ As petitioners explained, the city already suffers from the impacts of climate change in the form of drought, air pollution, extreme heat, species stress, negative health effects, wildfires, and floods.²⁸² The groups sought to strengthen the city's CAP by ensuring that the plan's greenhouse gas reduction targets could realistically be achieved. They complained that the city's CAP was not supported by an effective implementation plan; specifically, the city lacked any mechanism to ensure achievement of the CAP's promises that it would reduce emissions by 40% by 2030 and zero out emissions by 2035.²⁸³

On the eve of trial, the parties reached a settlement. It calls for regular reporting on the City of San Diego's progress towards achieving the CAP goals, as well as an objective trigger to reopen the CAP should the city fail to adequately reduce its greenhouse gas emissions.²⁸⁴ With the settlement, the environmental groups ensured the city will make meaningful progress in implementing the CAP and be able to change course if necessary before it is too late.

Nicole Capretz, founder and CEO of petitioner Climate Action Campaign, declared, "This settlement finally requires the city to take action and correct course if they are off-track on meeting their pollution reduction goals."²⁸⁵ Mayor Todd Gloria noted that the settlement reaffirms the city's commitment to its climate plan.²⁸⁶ He stated, "Confronting the climate crisis is crucial to protecting our quality of life and economic vitality, and I appreciate the efforts of local advocates and stakeholders that keep San Diego on

²⁷⁸ *Id.* at 4.

²⁷⁹ Email to Janet Smith-Heimer from county planner Alyce Alvarez, Nov. 14, 2025.

²⁸⁰ As part of its efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in California, CARB recommends that each local jurisdiction prepare a climate action plan. CARB, *Climate Action Planning*, <https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/our-work/programs/local-actions-climate-change/climate-action-planning>. The climate action plan provides a framework for quantifying, tracking, and reducing emissions within the area governed by the jurisdiction. *Id.* Development projects consistent with an adopted climate action plan are eligible for streamlined environmental review under CEQA. *Id.*

²⁸¹ *Climate Action Campaign et. al. v. City of San Diego*, San Diego Superior Court Case No. 37-2022-00036430-CU-TT-CTL.

²⁸² *Id.*, Verified Petition for Writ of Mandate (Sept. 12, 2022) at 2.

²⁸³ *Id.* at 8-10.

²⁸⁴ *Id.*, Settlement and Release Agreement (Feb. 13, 2024) at 6-8.

²⁸⁵ Climate Action Campaign, press release (Feb. 13, 2024),

https://www.climateactioncampaign.org/_files/ugd/91c4c2_7f70c5cb258f42e5b38c7ed7860ce9b0.pdf.

²⁸⁶ A. Keatts, *City, enviros settle lawsuit over San Diego climate plan* (Axios San Diego, Feb. 15, 2024), <https://www.axios.com/local/san-diego/2024/02/15/san-diego-climate-plan-lawsuit-fees>.

the leading edge of climate action.”²⁸⁷

Because the CAP serves as a CEQA streamlining tool for future development projects in the second-most populous city in the state, its implementation is critical to meeting the state’s greenhouse gas reduction goals. The settlement was a crucial step toward ensuring that the city satisfies its commitment to reduce emissions and transition to a clean energy future.

General Plan Update Would Generate Massive Increases in Greenhouse Gas Emissions Without Adequate Mitigation (Riverside County)

In 2021, the Sierra Club sued the City of Moreno Valley over its adoption of a general plan update that would cause massive greenhouse gas emissions and of a climate action plan that lacked effective strategies to reduce those emissions.²⁸⁸ The Attorney General later intervened in the lawsuit.²⁸⁹ The general plan update replaced the city’s existing general plan, adopted in 2006, and was intended to guide the city’s development through 2040.²⁹⁰ The climate action plan sought to streamline environmental review of climate impacts for future development projects in the city.²⁹¹

The general plan update incorporated all of the land use changes that the city had approved since 2006, including changes to support over 40 million square feet of new industrial warehouse and logistics space.²⁹² These warehouses and other development would generate emissions far exceeding California’s 2040 greenhouse gas reduction targets. Thus, rather than reducing greenhouse gas emissions, the city’s plan would increase emissions by over 50 percent, from 866,410 metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent per year to 1,325,101.²⁹³ The warehouses would also emit large quantities of other harmful air pollutants in an area that already suffers from some of the worst air quality in the country.²⁹⁴ Additionally, the city planned for more warehousing in the western Moreno Valley Edgemont neighborhood in close proximity to people’s homes.²⁹⁵

After lengthy settlement negotiations ultimately proved unsuccessful, the court held that the EIR’s analysis and mitigation of the project’s climate impacts violated CEQA in a two ways.²⁹⁶ First, by claiming the project was “self-mitigating,” the EIR improperly combined into a single discussion its analysis of greenhouse gas impacts and mitigation measures. The court held that because the project will

²⁸⁷ *Id.*

²⁸⁸ *Sierra Club v. City of Moreno Valley*, Riverside County Superior Court case no. CVRI2103300.

²⁸⁹ AG Press release (June 30, 2022), <https://oag.ca.gov/news/press-releases/attorney-general-bonta-moreno-valley-general-plan-would-exacerbate-pollution>.

²⁹⁰ *Sierra Club v. City of Moreno Valley*, Riverside County case no. CVRI2103300, Judgment (May 6, 2024) (Judgment), Exhibit A, Statement of Decision Regarding Hearing on Peremptory Writ of Mandate (Statement of Decision) at 2.

²⁹¹ Moreno Valley Climate Action Plan, at ES-1 (adopted June 15, 2021; rescinded June 25, 2024), https://moval.gov/city_hall/general-plan2040/MV-CAP.pdf.

²⁹² Statement of Decision at 2.

²⁹³ *Id.* at 22.

²⁹⁴ *Id.* at 17; *American Coatings Assn. v. South Coast Air Quality Management Dist.* (2012) 54 Cal.4th 446, 451.

²⁹⁵ Statement of Decision at 27.

²⁹⁶ *Id.* at 10-26.

increase greenhouse gas emissions by more than 50 percent, it must separately identify feasible mitigation that can minimize or avoid those impacts.²⁹⁷ Second, the court found no substantial evidence supporting the city's conclusion that the project's climate impacts would be less than significant. The court concluded: "[T]he City does not demonstrate how any particular [greenhouse gas] reduction strategy will be applied to any particular project."²⁹⁸

Further, the court found that the city's climate action plan did not qualify for tiering and streamlining environmental review of the greenhouse gas emission analysis for development proposed in the general plan. CEQA requires that emissions reduction measures included in a climate action plan be feasible and fully enforceable, but the strategies and performance standards in the city's plan were poorly defined and unclear.²⁹⁹

In addition to their climate claims, petitioners prevailed on arguments relating to the project's effects on vulnerable populations like children and seniors,³⁰⁰ and to the city's failure to properly analyze or mitigate the project's wasteful energy use.³⁰¹ The court also held that the city unlawfully destroyed records that CEQA required the city to retain.³⁰²

The court ordered the city to set aside its approvals of the general plan update and climate action plan until it corrects the deficiencies identified in the ruling.³⁰³ After preparing a legally adequate EIR and addressing the issues with its climate action plan, the city may ultimately reapprove the project. But CEQA will have ensured that the city properly discloses and mitigates the project's massive greenhouse gas emissions and other significant impacts on the city's residents.

²⁹⁷ *Id.* at 22-23.

²⁹⁸ *Id.* at 24.

²⁹⁹ *Id.* at 24-25.

³⁰⁰ *Id.* at 20-21.

³⁰¹ *Id.* at 25-26.

³⁰² *Id.* at 27-28.

³⁰³ *Id.*, Judgment at 3.

CEQA Protects Unique Natural Areas and Iconic Landscapes

For over 50 years, CEQA has protected California’s rivers, lakes, forests, agricultural lands, scenic landscapes, and important cultural resources. In 2005, the Planning and Conservation League Foundation and the California League of Conservation Voters published a study describing CEQA cases that protected resources in every corner of the state — areas ranging from the San Diego Backcountry, the Santa Monica Mountains, and Mono Lake to the Bahia Marsh in Marin County and the forests of the Sierra Nevada.³⁰⁴ As former Attorney General John Van de Kamp explained, these CEQA cases “result[ed] in cleaner air, cleaner water, preservation of habitat for animals and plant species, and above all, better planning.”³⁰⁵

Building on the PCL Study, the 2021 and 2023 Reports provided additional examples of places and resources protected by CEQA. They included:

- Banning Ranch, the largest remaining private coastal site in Southern California
- Dyer Mountain in Lassen County, sacred to the Maidu tribe.
- Headwaters Forest in Humboldt County, renowned for its old-growth redwoods
- McCloud River, one of the best trout-fishing rivers in the world
- Odello Ranch, stunning farmland just south of the Carmel River
- Rose Canyon, a sensitive resource in San Diego
- San Onofre Beach in northern San Diego County
- The Eel River in Sonoma County
- Wildlife habitat above Lake Arrowhead in the San Bernardino Mountains
- Lake Tahoe³⁰⁶

This 2025 Report describes three recent cases in which CEQA again safeguarded important natural areas and landscapes. Indeed, as development pressure intensifies in the state, CEQA’s role in protecting these resources has become more important than ever.

Discharges of Aquatic Herbicides Threaten Lake Tahoe

In 2024, California Sportfishing Protection Alliance and the Sierra Club prevailed in CEQA litigation challenging dangerous herbicide discharges into the Tahoe Keys lagoons, bodies of water connected to Lake Tahoe.³⁰⁷ The Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board (Board) had approved a permit

³⁰⁴ Planning and Conservation League Foundation & California League of Conservation Voters, *Everyday Heroes Protect the Air We Breathe, the Water We Drink, and the Natural Areas We Prize* (2005) (PCL Study) at 63, 77, 79, 83, 125, https://pcl.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/CEQA-Everyday-Heroes-full_report.pdf.

³⁰⁵ *Id.* at 1.

³⁰⁶ Discussions of these cases can be found in the 2021 CEQA Report at 68-74 and the 2023 Report at 60-64.

³⁰⁷ *California Sportfishing Protection Alliance et. al. v. Lahontan Regional Water Quality Board*, El

allowing the Tahoe Keys Property Owners Association to employ various test methods, including use of herbicides, to control aquatic weeds in the Tahoe Keys.³⁰⁸ The controversial project required an exemption from the Board’s prohibition on the use of pesticides in Lake Tahoe.³⁰⁹

Petitioners had warned that the EIR for this project was deeply flawed.³¹⁰ While the EIR considered herbicide impacts during the testing phase, it failed to include any analysis of the reasonably foreseeable repeat use of pesticides in future years.³¹¹ Although the project was a “one-time” test, the purpose of the test was to select the best method of aquatic weed control going forward.³¹² Invalidating the EIR, the court stated, “While Respondent emphasizes that the Project is for one-time use of pesticides, there is ample evidence in the record … that make[s] the repeat use of pesticides reasonably anticipated.”³¹³

Because the EIR failed to consider the project’s long-term project effects, the Board’s approval violated CEQA.³¹⁴ The court then prohibited the use of data from the project as a basis for determining future strategies to manage invasive plants in the Tahoe Keys lagoons.³¹⁵

The court’s forward-looking decision in this case could serve to prevent the widespread use of aquatic herbicides throughout the Lake Tahoe watershed without adequate environmental review and mitigation. Like the 2021 and 2023 Reports, the present case illustrates environmental groups’ use of CEQA to protect this world-class resource.³¹⁶

Ordinance Weakening Standards for Water Wells Threatens Rivers (Sonoma County)

In 2024, Russian Riverkeeper and California Coastkeeper prevailed in a landmark challenge to Sonoma County’s adoption of amendments to its construction standards for water wells in the county.³¹⁷ By allowing whole categories of new wells to be approved on a ministerial basis, the county’s action threatened to harm natural and scenic resources throughout the county. As the court explained, “Sonoma County contains several hundred miles of rivers and streams supporting fisheries, aquatic habitat, navigation, recreation, scientific study, and aesthetic enjoyment.”³¹⁸ Notably, the Russian, Gualala, and Petaluma Rivers and Sonoma Creek contain imperiled Coho Salmon and steelhead trout, and their

Dorado County case no. 22CV0841, Ruling on Submitted Matter (Nov. 21, 2024) (Ruling).

³⁰⁸ *Id.* at 4.

³⁰⁹ *Id.*

³¹⁰ *California Sportfishing Protection Alliance et. al. v. Lahontan Regional Water Quality Board*, El Dorado County case no. 22CV0841, Verified Petition for Writ of Administrative Mandate (June 15, 2022) at 2, 9-11.

³¹¹ *Id.*

³¹² *Id.* at 9-11.

³¹³ Ruling at 44.

³¹⁴ *Id.* at 45-46.

³¹⁵ *Id.* at 8.

³¹⁶ See 2023 Report at 60-62 (describing successful CEQA cases challenging a large resort expansion and a luxury second-home development near Lake Tahoe); 2021 Report at 70 (describing successful challenge to proposed development in Martis Valley, a key gateway to Lake Tahoe).

³¹⁷ *Russian Riverkeeper et al. v. County of Sonoma*, Sonoma County Superior Court case no. SCV-273415.

³¹⁸ *Russian Riverkeeper et al. v. County of Sonoma*, Sonoma County Superior Court case no. SCV-273415, Order After Hearing (August 21, 2024) (Order) at 3.

watersheds provide habitat for many other sensitive wildlife species, such as bobcats, bald eagles, golden eagles, tiger salamanders, and northern spotted owls.³¹⁹

The court found that the county violated CEQA by using an exemption from environmental review for its approval of the new well regulations.³²⁰ Specifically, it rejected the county’s claim that the project qualified for a “common sense” exemption because the regulations were designed to protect natural resources. The court bluntly stated, “This Amendment is fundamentally being adopted to allow construction of wells, not to protect the environment.”³²¹ Indeed, as the court noted, the regulations would permit wells impacting environmental resources as long as there is “*overriding public interest* in favor of ensuring adequate water supply.”³²² In addition, the court found that the project’s potentially significant cumulative impacts — such as reductions in streamflows due to cumulative groundwater use — precluded the county’s reliance on the exemption.³²³ No evidence before the court indicated that the county had “studied or addressed the issue at all.”³²⁴

This victory will have profound consequences for the natural environment of Sonoma County. County officials must now analyze the cumulative impacts of drilling more wells and mitigate those impacts in accordance with CEQA. As Don McEnhill, Executive Director of Russian Riverkeeper explained, “The decision should lead to science-based limitations on well-drilling and pumping where necessary to protect the flow of streams that fish depend on.”³²⁵ In the end, CEQA, together with a part of the decision employing the Public Trust Doctrine, ensured that Sonoma officials will manage groundwater in a manner that protects the ecological health and viability of the region’s rivers and associated habitat.

Geotechnical Investigations for Massive Dam Would Harm Wetlands and Disturb Wildlife (Santa Clara County)

In 2023, a coalition of environmental groups and the Amah Mutsun Tribal Band prevailed in their challenge to the Santa Clara Valley Water District’s failure to conduct environmental review for its extensive “investigatory” work in connection with construction of the controversial Pacheco Dam project.³²⁶ The nearly \$3 billion new dam would be located upstream of an existing dam and would create a reservoir 25 times larger than the existing Pacheco Reservoir.³²⁷ The project would flood 1,500 acres of

³¹⁹ *Russian Riverkeeper et al. v. County of Sonoma*, Sonoma County Superior Court case no. SCV-273415, Petition for Writ of Mandate and Declaratory and Injunctive Relief (May 24, 2023) at 9-14.

³²⁰ In addition, the court held that the county’s approvals violated the Public Trust Doctrine. Order at 11-16.

³²¹ *Id.* at 34.

³²² *Id.* at 36 (emphasis in Order).

³²³ *Id.* at 25, 37-38.

³²⁴ *Id.* at 38.

³²⁵ I. James, *Court faults Sonoma County on environmental safety*, https://edition.pagesuite.com/popovers/dynamic_article_popover.aspx?guid=fca2adb7-304e-46ac-a411-76fef19f29dc&v=sdk.

³²⁶ *Stop the Pacheco Dam Project Coalition et al. v. Santa Clara Valley Water District*, Santa Clara County Superior Court case no. 22CV399384, Order Granting Petition for Writ of Mandate (May 18, 2023) (Order) at 6.

³²⁷ *Stop the Pacheco Dam Project Coalition et al. v. Santa Clara Valley Water District*, Santa Clara County Superior Court case no. 22CV399384, Amended Verified Petition for Writ of Mandate (June 2, 2022) (Amended Petition) at 4.

important plant and wildlife habitat, and destroy cultural sites over 3,000 years old.³²⁸

The water district planned to conduct extensive geotechnical investigations over 8 to 17 months prior to constructing the dam.³²⁹ This investigatory work would involve drilling hundreds geotechnical borings, many of which required helicopters to deliver necessary equipment; digging dozens of test pits in sensitive areas like wetlands; and removing 32 trees.³³⁰ These activities would occur in a particularly fragile environment containing rare and imperiled plant and wildlife species. For example, bald and golden eagles, California tiger salamanders, and California red-legged frogs inhabit the area.³³¹

Despite the intensive nature of these planned investigations, the water district declared its project exempt from CEQA as a “minor alteration to land” and mere “information collection.”³³² Ruling for petitioners, the court emphatically rejected the district’s argument. As the court explained, “Just digging a handful of ‘test pits’ in ‘wetland areas’ … appears to the court to constitute a ‘serious’ disturbance to a wetland. … [H]elicopter flights the project calls for to move material into place may constitute a ‘serious’ disturbance to wildlife and there is evidence in the record suggesting this may have already occurred.”³³³

The court granted the petition for writ of mandate and directed the water district to vacate its notice of exemption.³³⁴ In August 2025, the district released its final environmental impact report analyzing the geotechnical investigations and their impact on the environment.³³⁵ Subsequently, the Valley Water Board of Directors suspended development of the reservoir expansion project.³³⁶ If the project is reactivated, the CEQA process will ensure that the water district discloses and mitigates the environmental impacts of the investigatory work for this massive project.

Summary

CEQA continues to serve as the primary tool used by environmental and community groups to achieve a sustainable future for California. CEQA requires agencies to disclose and mitigate projects’ polluting impacts on public health and the environment. Agencies must analyze the cumulative effect of greenhouse gas emissions on our climate and identify effective measures to reduce those emissions and conserve energy. CEQA allows members of the public to comment on projects’ harmful effects and requires agencies to respond to those comments, including those proposing feasible mitigation measures. CEQA is, in fact, the only state law ensuring robust public participation in the land use process. As a result, CEQA moves California forward in its efforts to advance environmental justice, combat climate change, and protect its most precious natural resources and landscapes.

³²⁸ *Id.*

³²⁹ *Id.* at 2.

³³⁰ *Id.* at 2, 9; Order at 4.

³³¹ Amended Petition at 9-10.

³³² Order at 2.

³³³ *Id.* at 5.

³³⁴ *Id.* at 6.

³³⁵ Santa Clara Valley Water District website, <https://scvwd.egnyte.com/f/VXHv6BCfBFjR#folder-link/Public%20FEIR%20Release?p=ac58a0fe-6788-48c4-a72c-46293e4858db>.

³³⁶ Santa Clara Valley Water District website, <https://www.valleywater.org/news-events/news-releases/valley-water-board-directors-suspends-development-pacheco-reservoir>.

Appendix A: Detail for CEQA Lawsuits Filed 2022-2023

Legend for Project Type: TRANS =Transportation; GP = Gener Plans/Specific Plans/Ordinances; MXD = Mixed Use Development; COM = Commercial; HO = Housing Only; ENGY = Energy Projects; AF = Agricultural/Forestry; AF-C = Agricultural/Forestry Subset Cannabis; WP = Water Plans & Projects; IND = Industrial; INST = Institutional; PRw = Parks/Recreation/Wildlife; DEMO = Demolition/Removal/Closure; Other = other (see report).

Legend for Petitioner: ENV - Environmental Org; COM = Community Org; EJ = Environmental Justice Org; HIS = Historic Preservation Org; TR = Tribe; LU = Labor Union; PA = Public Agency; BUS = Business; IND = Individual; OTHER = Other.

Plaintiff	Defendant	Case No.	Location (County)	Lawsuit Date	Agency or Private	CEQA Doc	Project Type	No. of Housing Units	Petitioner
SAVE REDLANDS ORANGE GROVES, an unincorporated association	CITY OF REDLANDS, and DOES 1-10, inclusive	CIVSB2200943	San Bernardino	1/7/2022	Private	MND	HO	28	COM
AIDS HEALTHCARE FOUNDATION, a California Nonprofit Corporation	CITY OF LOS ANGELES, a municipal corporation; LOS ANGELES CITY COUNCIL, governing body of the City of Los Angeles; LOS ANGELES DEPARTMENT OF CITY PLANNING, a local public agency; DOES 1-10	22STCP00090	Los Angeles	1/10/2022	Private	EIR	MXD	duplicate 323	COM
GLENDALE CANYON HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION	CITY OF GLENDALE	22STCP00114	Los Angeles	1/11/2022	Agency	EIR	ENGY		COM
COALITION FOR SAFE COASTAL DEVELOPMENT, a California non-profit corporation	CITY OF LOS ANGELES, a municipal corporation, and DOES 1-25	22STCP00162	Los Angeles	1/13/2022	Agency/Private	Exemption	MXD	140	COM
WEST BAY COMPANY, LLC	COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA; BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA; and DOES 1 through 10, inclusive	22CV00169	Santa Barbara	1/14/2022	Private	Improper reliance on prior EIR	AF-C		BUS
COUNTY OF COLUSA, a Political Subdivision of the State of California	CITY OF COLUSA, a California Municipal Corporation; and DOES 1 through 50, inclusive	CV24579	Colusa	1/20/2022	Private	Improper reliance on prior EIR	MXD	180	PA
YES IN MY BACKYARD, a California nonprofit corporation; and SONJA TRAUSS	CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO; SAN FRANCISCO BOARD OF SUPERVISORS; and DOES 1-25	CPF-22-517661	San Francisco	1/20/2022	Private	N/A	OTHER		OTHER
COUNTY OF COLUSA, a Political Subdivision of the State of California	CITY OF COLUSA, a California Municipal Corporation; and DOES 1 through 50, inclusive	34-2022-80003851-CU-WM-GDS	Colusa	1/20/2022	Private	ND	MXD	286	PA
ALBERT THOMAS PAULEK, FRIENDS OF THE NORTERN SAN JACINTO VALLEY	EASTERN MUNICIPAL WATER DISTRICT and DOES 1 through 20	CVRI2200305	Riverside	1/21/2022	Agency	No CEQA review	WP		COM
FRIENDS OF NORTHWEST SEBASTOPOL, a California nonprofit mutual benefit corporation	CITY OF SEBASTOPOL, acting by and through the Sebastopol City Council	SCV-270053	Sonoma	1/21/2022	Private	No CEQA review	HO	22	COM
CR&R ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES, INC.	CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF TOXIC SUBSTANCES CONTROL; MEREDITH WILLIAMS, in her capacity as Director of the Department of Toxic Substances Control; and DOES 1 through 100, inclusive	CVRI2200320	Riverside	1/25/2022	Agency	No CEQA review	ENGY		BUS
WONDERFUL CITRUS II LLC; and THE WONDERFUL COMPANY LLC	COUNTY OF TULARE; and TULARE COUNTY RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AGENCY	VCU290229	Tulare	1/26/2022	Private	Exemption	WP		BUS
NORTHCOAST ENVIRONMENTAL CENTER, a non-profit organization; REDWOOD REGION AUDUBON SOCIETY, a non-profit organization; CITIZENS FOR A SUSTAINABLE HUMBOLDT, a public benefit corporation; and MARY GATERUD	COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT, a political subdivision of the State of California; HUMBOLDT COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS, and DOES 1 to 10, inclusive	CV2101703	Humboldt	1/27/2022	Private	Improper reliance on prior MND	AF-C		ENV, COM
ENCINITAS RESIDENTS FOR RESPONSIBLE DEVELOPMENT, a not-for-profit fictitious business entity	CITY OF ENCINITAS; and DOES ONE through FIFTEEN, inclusive	37-2022-00003664-CU-WM-NC	San Diego	1/28/2022	Private	Exemption	HO	277	COM
SAVE THE FIELD, a California nonprofit public benefit corporation	CITY OF SAN DIEGO, and DOES 1 through 10, inclusive	37-2022-00005335-CU-TT-CTL	San Diego	2/8/2022	Agency	Focused EIR	INST		COM
TULARE LAKE CANAL COMPANY	STRATFORD PUBLIC UTILITY DISTRICT, ANGIOLA WATER DISTRICT	22C-0046	Kings	2/16/2022	Agency/Private	No CEQA review	WP		BUS
BALDWIN VISTA HILLSIDE NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION	COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES; LOS ANGELES COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION; and DOES 1-10, inclusive	22STCP00558	Los Angeles	2/16/2022	Agency	No CEQA Review	PRW		COM
BURBANK-GLENDALE-PASADENA AIRPORT AUTHORITY	CALIFORNIA HIGH-SPEED RAIL AUTHORITY; and DOES 1-10	34-2022-80003821	Sacramento	2/17/2022	Agency	EIR	TRANS		PA
CENTER FOR COMMUNITY ACTION AND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE and SIERRA CLUB	CITY OF MORENO VALLEY; CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF MORENO VALLEY; and DOES 1 through 10, inclusive	CVRI2200683	Riverside	2/17/2022	Private	MND	IND		ENV
The Heritage Preservation League of Folsom, a non-profit corporation	f	34-2022-80003820-CU-WM-GDS	Sacramento	2/17/2022	Private	Exemption	COM		HIS

CITY OF SANTA CRUZ, a California municipal corporation	THE REGENTS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, a California public corporation; MICHAEL V. DRAKE, M.D., in his capacity as President of the University of California; CYNTHIA K. LARIVE, in her capacity as Chancellor of the University of California at Santa Cruz; UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA AT SANTA CRUZ, and DOES 1-10	22CV00373	Santa Cruz	2/22/2022	Agency	EIR	INST		PA
WESTWOOD NEIGHBORS FOR SENSIBLE GROWTH, a California Nonprofit Public Benefit Corporation	CITY OF LOS ANGELES, a municipal corporation; and DOES 1 through 25, inclusive	22STCP00646	Los Angeles	02/24/2022	Private	Exemption	MXD	176	COM
DANA ZINDERMAN, an individual	CITY OF LOS ANGELES; The CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF LOS ANGELES; and DOES 1 through 20	22STCP00655	Los Angeles	2/25/2022	Private	Exemption	MXD	duplicate 176	IND
UNITED BROADWAY, LLC, a California limited liability company	CITY OF LOS ANGELES; and DOES 1 through 10, inclusive	22STCP00681	Los Angeles	2/28/2022	Private	SCEA - Sustainable Communities Environmental Assessment	MXD	363	BUS
FEATHER RIVER ACTION! and PROJECT COYOTE, a project of the EARTH ISLAND INSTITUTE, a California non-profit organization	COUNTY OF PLUMAS, and PLUMAS-SIERRA COUNTIES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE	CV22-0037	Plumas	3/1/2022	Agency	No CEQA review	OTHER		ENV
FRIENDS OF GUENTHER WILLOWS PARK and SHIRLEY LABRADOR	RIVERSIDE COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION and RIVERSIDE COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS	CVSW2201526	Riverside	3/4/2022	Private	MND	COM		COM
HOLT PARTNERS, an unincorporated association	CITY OF LOS ANGELES, a municipal corporation	21STCP03836	Los Angeles	3/15/2022	Private	Exemption	HO	80	COM
ARVIN-EDISON WATER STORAGE DISTRICT	PORTERVILLE IRRIGATION DISTRICT; PORTERVILLE IRRIGATION DISTRICT BOARD OF DIRECTORS, and DOES 1 through 50, inclusive	BCV-22-100617	Kern	3/16/2022	Agency	MND	WP		PA
SIERRA CLUB	CITY OF GLENDALE, a municipal corporation; GLENDALE CITY COUNCIL, governing body of the City of Glendale; GLENDALE WATER AND POWER, a local public agency; and DOES 1-20, inclusive	22STCP00983	Los Angeles	3/18/2022	Agency	EIR	ENGY		ENV
SCIND MASSACHUSETTS POINT, LLC, a Delaware limited liability company	CITY OF RIVERSIDE, a municipal corporation; and DOES 1 through 25, inclusive	CVR12200261	Riverside	3/18/2022	Agency	No CEQA review	GP		BUS
Glendale Residents Against Environmental Destruction, an unincorporated association	City of Glendale; City Council of the City of Glendale; and Glendale Water & Power	22STCP01021	Los Angeles	3/21/2022	Agency	EIR	ENGY		COM
SOUTH ELISEO NEIGHBORHOOD ALLIANCE, DIANA HEDRICK and MARK SCHULMAN	MARIN COUNTY COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AGENCY and MARIN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS	CIV2200788	Marin	3/23/2022	Private	Exemption	HO	50	COM
EAST OAKLAND STADIUM ALLIANCE, PACIFIC MERCHANT SHIPPING ASSOCIATION; HARBOR TRUCKING ASSOCIATION; CALIFORNIA TRUCKING ASSOCIATION; SCHNITZER STEEL INDUSTRIES, INC., and INTERNATIONAL LONGSHORE AND WAREHOUSE UNION	CITY OF OAKLAND, a municipal corporation; and CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF OAKLAND	22CV009325	Alameda	4/4/2022	Agency/Private	EIR	MX0	3,000	COM, LU
UNION PACIFIC RAILROAD COMPANY	CITY OF OAKLAND, CITY OF OAKLAND CITY COUNCIL, DOES 1-20	22CV009330	Alameda	4/4/2022	Private	EIR	MXD	duplicate 3,000	BUS
Robert KAILES; Guardians of Ballona Creek Ecosystem	County of Los Angeles	22STCP01221	Los Angeles	4/5/2022	Private	Exemption	WP		COM
GENERAL ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT OF RANCHO CORDOVA LLC; CLEAN EARTH ENVIRONMENTAL SOLUTIONS, INC. and STERICYCLE, INC.	CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF TOXIC SUBSTANCES CONTROL; MEREDITH WILLIAMS; and DOES 1-10	34-2022-80003867-CU-WM-GDS	Sacramento	4/11/2022	Agency	No CEQA Review	DEMO		BUS
FREAR STEPHEN SCHMID and ASTRID SCHMID	AIR EXCHANGE INC. and COUNTY OF SONOMA	SCV270568	Sonoma	4/11/2022	Private	No CEQA review	INST		IND
JERALD PTASHKIN, and NICK HOGENDYK	CITY OF WEST HOLLYWOOD; WEST HOLLYWOOD CITY COUNCIL, and DOES 1-100	22STCP01276	Los Angeles	4/12/2022	Private	Exemption	HO	79	IND
CITY OF SANTA CLARITA	COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES, and DOES 1 THROUGH 25	22STCP01395	Los Angeles	4/18/2022	Agency	Exemption	INST		PA
PROPERTY OWNERS CONCERNED OVER NEIGHBORING OPEN SPACE EASEMENT, and LEONARD STITZ	COUNTY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO; SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS; DOES 1 to 10, inclusive	22CV-0192	San Luis Obispo	4/18/2022	Private	Exemption	AF		COM
Jin Ser Park	City of Pasadena, the City Council of the City of Pasadena; and the Board of Zoning Appeals of the City of Pasadena; and DOES 1 through 20	22STCP01352	Los Angeles	4/19/2022	Private	Exemption	HO	1	
SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA ORGANIZATION FOR PLANNING AND THE ENVIRONMENT, AND ADVOCATES FOR THE ENVIRONMENT	COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES, LOS ANGELES COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS, LOS ANGELES COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF REGIONAL PLANNING	22STCP01433	Los Angeles	4/20/2022	Private	MND	HO	37	COM
SANTA CLARITA ORGANIZATION FOR PLANNING THE ENVIRONMENT, a California non-profit corporation	COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES; and DOES 1-20	22STCP01579	Los Angeles	4/28/2022	Agency	Exemption	GP		ENV

LINCOLN HEIGHTS COMMUNITY COALITION	CITY OF LOS ANGELES and CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF TOXIC SUBSTANCES CONTROL, and DOES 1-10	22STCP01636	Los Angeles	5/2/2022	Private	MND	MXD	372	COM
JUSTICE FOR OAKLAND STUDENTS	OAKLAND UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT; OAKLAND UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD OF EDUCATION; DOES 1-20	22CV011073	Alameda	5/10/2022	Agency	No CEQA review	DEMO		COM
COMMUNITIES FOR A BETTER ENVIRONMENT; EAST YARD COMMUNITIES FOR ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE; and CENTER FOR BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY	CITY OF PARAMOUNT, a municipal corporation; PARAMOUNT CITY COUNCIL, governing body of the City of Paramount; and DOES 1-20, inclusive	22STCP01875	Los Angeles	5/16/2022	Private	SEIR	ENGY		EMV, EJ
RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORS OF MOUNT ST. MARY'S UNIVERSITY, an unincorporated association, TIMOTHY D. REUBEN, an individual, and STEPHANIE BLUM REUBEN, an individual	CITY OF LOS ANGELES, a municipal entity	22STCP01883	Los Angeles	5/16/2022	Private	EIR	INST		COM
BRENTWOOD HOMEOWNERS' ASSOCIATION, an unincorporated association	CITY OF LOS ANGELES, a municipal corporation	22STCP01886	Los Angeles	5/16/2022	Private	EIR	INST		COM
TRACY BLUMENTHAL and DAVID BLUMENTHAL	COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES, BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES, and the LOS ANGELES COUNTY FLOOD CONTROL DISTRICT, and DOES 1-20	22STCP01873	Los Angeles	5/16/2022	Private	Exemption	WP		IND
WORKING FAMILIES OF MONTEREY COUNTY and EFRAIN AGUILERA	KING CITY PLANNING COMMISSION and KING CITY COUNCIL	22CV001375	Monterey	5/17/2022	Private	Exemption	COM		COM
PROJECT FOR OPEN GOVERNMENT	CITY OF SAN DIEGO; and DOES 1 through 100	37-2022-00018873-CU-WM-CTL	San Diego	5/18/2022	Private	ND	MXD	1,800	OTHER
KERN WATER BANK AUTHORITY, and WEST KERN WATER DISTRICT	BUENA VISTA WATER STORAGE DISTRICT BOARD OF DIRECTORS and DOES 1 through 100	BCV-22-101227	Kern	5/20/2022	Agency	EIR	WP		PA
STOP THE PACHECO DAM PROJECT COALITION, an unincorporated association	SANTA CLARA VALLEY WATER DISTRICT, a State Special District, and DOES 1 through 10	22CV399384	Santa Clara	6/2/2022	Agency	Exemption	WP		COM
EDDIE ARMANDO TORRES, an individual, and, LABORERS INTERNATIONAL UNION OF NORTH AMERICA, LOCAL UNION 294, an organized labor union	CITY OF VISALIA, a municipality; SITE PLAN REVIEW COMMITTEE FOR THE CITY OF VISALIA, a municipal body; CITY OF VISALIA PLANNING COMMISSION, a municipal body; PAUL BERNAL, in his official capacity; and DOES 1 - X, inclusive	VCU291968	Tulare	6/3/2022	Private	No CEQA review	IND		LU
NEIGHBORS OF PENMAN SPRINGS, an unincorporated association, and CHRISTINA MALDONADO, an individual	COUNTY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO; SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS; DOES 1 to 10, inclusive	22CVP-0154	San Luis Obispo	6/3/2022	Private	MND	AF-C		COM
LAGUNA BEACH HISTORIC PRESERVATION COALITION, PRESERVE ORANGE COUNTY, and VILLAGE LAGUNA	CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION	CPF22517789	San Francisco (transferred)	6/6/2022	Agency	No CEQA review	GP		COM
COMMUNITIES FOR A BETTER ENVIRONMENT and CENTER FOR BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY	COUNTY FOR CONTRA COSTA; BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF COUNTY OF CONTRA COSTA; CONTRA COSTA COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT; and DOES 1-20	CIVMSN22-1080	Contra Costa	6/7/2022	Private	EIR	ENGY		ENV. EJ
TAXPAYERS FOR MPUSD ACCOUNTABILITY	DIVISION OF STATE ARCHITECT, IDA CLAIR in her capacity as State Architect, DEPARTMENT OF GENERAL SERVICES, MONTEREY PENINSULA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT, DOES 1-500	22CV001578	Monterey	6/7/2022	Agency	No CEQA review	INST		COM
COMMUNITIES FOR A BETTER ENVIRONMENT and CENTER FOR BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY	COUNTY OF CONTRA COSTA; BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF CONTRA COSTA COUNTY; CONTRA COSTA COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT; and DOES 1-20	CIVMSN22-1091	Contra Costa	6/8/2022	Private	EIR	ENGY		ENV, EJ
FRIENDS OF FOLSOM PRESERVATION, an unincorporated association; DEBORAH GRASSL, an individual; TERRY SORENSEN, an individual; and STEPHEN WALSH, an individual	CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF FOLSOM; and CITY OF FOLSOM, a California municipality	34-2022-80003898	Sacramento	6/10/2022	Private	MND	IND		COM
EDDIE ARMANDO TORRES, an individual, and, LABORERS INTERNATIONAL UNION OF NORTH AMERICA, LOCAL UNION 294, an organized labor union	CITY OF VISALIA, a municipality; SITE PLAN REVIEW COMMITTEE FOR THE CITY OF VISALIA, a municipal body; CITY OF VISALIA PLANNING COMMISSION, a municipal body; PAUL BERNAL, in his official capacity; and DOES 1 - X, inclusive	VCU292111	Tulare	6/15/2022	Private	No CEQA review	MXD	0	LU
CALIFORNIA SPORTFISHING PROTECTION ALLIANCE; SIERRA CLUB	LAHONTAN REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARD	22CV0841	El Dorado	6/15/2022	Private	EIR	OTHER		ENV
CITY OF ONTARIO, a municipal corporation	INLAND EMPIRE UTILITIES AGENCY, a municipal water district, BOARD OF DIRECTORS FOR INLAND EMPIRE UTILITIES AGENCY, and DOES 1 through 100	CIVSB2211925	San Bernardino	6/17/2022	Agency	EIR	WP		PA

KERN DELTA WATER DISTRICT, KERN COUNTY WATER AGENCY, and NORTH KERN WATER STORAGE DISTRICT	ROSEDALE-RIO BRAVO WATER STORAGE DISTRICT, its BOARD OF DIRECTORS, and DOES 1-25	BCV-22-101616	Kern	6/28/2022	Agency	EIR	WP		PA
BUENA VISTA WATER STORAGE DISTRICT, a California Water Storage District	ROSEDALE-RIO BRAVO WATER STORAGE DISTRICT, a California Water Storage District; and DOES 1 through 25, inclusive	BCV-22-101624	Kern	6/29/2022	Agency	EIR	WP		PA
CITY OF BAKERSFIELD	ROSEDALE-RIO BRAVO WATER STORAGE DISTRICT, and DOES 1-30	BCV22103124	Kern	6/30/2022	Agency	EIR	WP		PA
RESPONSIBLE URBAN DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE, a California municipal community association	THE CITY OF LOS ANGELES, a municipal corporation; the CITY OF LOS ANGELES CITY PLANNING COMMISSION; and DOES 1 through 10, inclusive	22STCP02534	Los Angeles	7/6/2022	Private	Exemption	MXD	86	COM
LOS ANGELES WATERKEEPER and CENTER FOR BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY	COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES and BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES and LOS ANGELES COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS and LOS ANGELES FLOOD CONTROL DISTRICT	22STCP02608	Los Angeles	7/13/2022	Agency	EIR	WP		ENV
CITY OF MENIFEE	CITY OF PERRIS; CITY COUNCIL OF CITY OF PERRIS; and DOES 1 through 100, inclusive	CVRI2203040	Riverside	7/14/2022	Agency	ND	TRANS		PA
PANATTONI DEVELOPMENT COMPANY, INC., a California corporation; PDC SOCAL LPIC, LLC, a Delaware limited liability company; MENIFEE ISLAND PART 2 LLC, a California limited liability company; MENIFEE ISLAND 2 LLC, a California limited liability company; MENIFEE ISLAND 3 LLC, a California limited liability company; and MENIFEE ISLAND 5 LLC, a California limited liability company	CITY OF PERRIS, and the MAYOR and CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PERRIS, and DOES 1-50, inclusive	CVRI2203028	Riverside	7/15/2022	Agency	ND	TRANS		BUS
COASTAL RANCHES CONSERVANCY, a California non-profit corporation	CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF STATE PARKS AND RECREATION	22CV02818	Santa Barbara	7/22/2022	Agency	N/A	WP		ENV
SAVE PUBLIC ACCESS TO THE MILBURN AREA	CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES and DOES 1 through 10, inclusive	34-2022-80003919	Sacramento	7/29/2022	Agency	EIR	PRW		COM
EAST OAKLAND STADIUM ALLIANCE, PACIFIC MERCHANT SHIPPING ASSOCIATION, HARBOR TRUCKING ASSOCIATION, CALIFORNIA TRUCKING ASSOCIATION, SCHNITZER STEEL INDUSTRIES, INC., and INTERNATIONAL LONSHORE AND WAREHOUSE UNION	BAY CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION, a State Agency	22CV015323	Alameda	7/29/2022	Private	Environmental Analysis (functional equivalent of EIR)	MXD	duplicate 3,000	COM
FRIENDS OF THE SANTA CLARA RIVER, and SANTA CLARITA ORGANIZATION FOR PLANNING THE ENVIRONMENT	COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES; LOS ANGELES COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS; DOES 1 to 10, inclusive	22STCP02860	Los Angeles	8/1/2022	Agency	Exemption	WP		ENV, COM
SUPPORTERS ALLIANCE FOR ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY; a California nonprofit corporation	CITY OF LOS ANGELES, Aa municipality; CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF LOS ANGELES, a municipal body; LOS ANGELES DEPARTMENT OF CITY PLANNING, a municipal body; and DOES 1 through 10, inclusive	22STCP02859	Los Angeles	8/1/2022	Private	ND	MXD	108	COM
CENTRAL DELTA WATER AGENCY, SOUTH DELTA WATER AGENCY, and LOCAL AGENCIES OF THE NORTH DELTA	CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES, and DOES 1-10	34-2022-80003920-CU-WM-GDS	Sacramento	8/1/2022	Agency	Addendum to MND	WP		PA
MICHAEL P. GLOVER, CURTIS J. WILHELM	CITY OF CALISTOGA CITY COUNCIL; CITY OF CALISTOGA PLANNING COMMISSION; and DOES 1-20	22CV000871	Napa	8/2/2022	Private	Exemption	COM		IND
TODD DAVID and SAN FRANCISCO HOUSING ACTION COALITION	JOHN ARNTZ, Director of the San Francisco Department of Elections; CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO; and DOES 1-10	CPF22517840	San Francisco	8/8/2022	Agency	Exemption	GP		COM
RUSSELL CHARPENTIER, and WILLIAM BAKER, individuals	CITY OF VALLEJO, CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF VALLEJO, and DOES 1-10, inclusive	FCS058765	Solano	8/9/2022	Private	Exemption	HO	48	IND
CONCERNED CITIZENS OF HEMET	CITY OF HEMET and DOES 1-5	CVSW2205531	Riverside	8/9/2022	Private	Exemption	COM		COM
SAVE OUR RURAL TOWN	COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES; LOS ANGELES COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS; DOES 1-20	22STCP03038	Los Angeles	8/12/2022	Agency	ND	GP		COM
CHARLES S. SYERS, an individual	CITY OF PETALUMA; MAYOR and CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PETALUMA, and DOES 1-50, inclusive	SCV-271500	Sonoma	8/24/2022	Agency	Exemption	GP		IND
CITY OF SAN DIMAS, a municipal corporation	METRO GOLD LINE FOOTHILL EXTENSION CONSTRUCTION AUTHORITY; and DOES 1 to 30, inclusive	22STCP03161	Los Angeles - Central District	8/28/2022	Agency	EIR	TRANS		PA
SAVE OUR ACCESS, a non-profit corporation	CITY OF SAN DIEGO, a public body corporate and politic, and DOES 1 through 5, inclusive	37-2022-00035094-CU-TT-CTL	San Diego - Central Division	8/31/2022	Agency	EIR	GP		COM
NEW FAZE DEVELOPMENT, INC., a California corporation	CITY OF VALLEJO, a California municipal corporation, and DOES 1 through 20, inclusive	FCS058776	Solano	9/7/2022	Agency	N/A	OTHER		BUS

RICHARD HART, an individual	CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION, a State Agency; CITY OF LOS ANGELES; and DOES 1 through 10, inclusive	22STCP03349	Los Angeles	9/9/2022	Agency	EIR	PRW		IND
CLIMATE ACTION CAMPAIGN, a California non-profit public benefit corporation, COASTAL ENVIRONMENTAL RIGHTS FOUNDATION, a California non-profit public benefit corporation	CITY OF SAN DIEGO, a California municipal corporation; and DOES 1 through 20, inclusive	37-2022-00036430-CU-TT-CTL	San Diego - Central Division	9/12/2022	Agency	Addendum	GP		ENV, COM
BAYLANDS DEVELOPMENT, INC.	CALIFORNIA HIGH-SPEED RAIL AUTHORITY, and DOES 1-10	34-2022-80004009-CU-WM-GDS	Sacramento	9/15/2022	Agency	EIR	TRANS		BUS
CITY OF MILLBRAE	CALIFORNIA HIGH SPEED RAIL AUTHORITY, and DOES 1-100	34-2022-80004016-CU-WM-GDS	Sacramento	9/16/2022	Agency	EIR	TRANS		PA
MARLENE PEREZ; MARIA GUADALUPE ORTIZ; UNITE HERE LOCAL 11	CITY OF GARDEN GROVE, CITY OF GARDEN GROVE AS SUCCESSOR AGENCY TO THE AGENCY FOR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT; GARDEN GROVE HOUSING AUTHORITY; ALL PERSONS INTERESTED IN THE MATTER OF THE SEPTEMBER 13, 2022 APPROVALS OF DISPOSITION OR SALE OF 12291 AND 12311 THACKERY DRIVE AND THE DISPOSITION AND DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENT FOR SALE OR DEVELOPMENT OF 3.72 ACRES AND ALL RELATED APPROVALS FOR THE SITE B2 PROJECT; DOES 1 through 4	30-2022-01281816-CU-WM-CXC	Orange	9/22/2022	Private	MND	COM		LU
FRIENDS OF MUIR WOODS PARK; WATERSHED ALLIANCE OF MARIN	COUNTY OF MARIN, BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE COUNTY OF MARIN and DOES 1 through X	CIV2203094	Marin	9/27/2022	Private	MND	HO	duplicate 12	ENV, COM
CITIZENS PROTECTING SAN PEDRO, an unincorporated association	CITY OF LOS ANGELES, a municipal corporation	22STCP03522	Los Angeles	9/29/2022	Private	Exemption	MXD	100	COM
WHITTIER CONSERVANCY	CITY OF WHITTIER	22STCP03523	Los Angeles	9/29/2022	Private	MND	HO	52	COM
COALITION FOR SAFE COASTAL DEVELOPMENT, a California non-profit corporation	CITY OF LOS ANGELES, a municipal corporation, and DOES 1-25	22STCP03626	Los Angeles - Stanley Mosk Courthouse	10/5/2022	Agency/Private	Exemption	MXD	duplicate 140	COM
JOE KROVOZA and JANET KROVOZA	CITY OF DAVIS, a municipal corporation; CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF DAVIS; and DOES 1 through 20, inclusive	CV2022-1741	Yolo	10/5/2022	Agency	Exemption	PRW		IND
PARENTS AGAINST SANTA SUSANA FIELD LAB, an association; PHYSICIANS FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY/LOS ANGELES CHAPTER, INC., a non-profit public benefit corporation; PUBLIC EMPLOYEES FOR ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY, INC., a District of Columbia non-profit corporation	CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF TOXIC SUBSTANCES CONTROL, an agency of the State of California, CALIFORNIA REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARD, LOS ANGELES REGION, an agency of the State of California, LAWRENCE HAFETZ, in his official capacity	56-2022-00570675-CU-WM-VTA	Ventura	10/6/2022	Private	No CEQA review	IND		ENV, EJ, COM
CALIFORNIA PARK ASSOCIATION, and SIERRA SUNRISE VILLAGE PROPERTY OWNERS ASSOCIATION	CITY OF CHICO, and CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF CHICO	22CV02340	Butte	10/11/2022	Private	Exemption	COM		COM
PATRICK MCGIBNEY, an individual	COUNTY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO; SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS; DOES 1 to 10, inclusive	22CVP-0287	San Luis Obispo	10/13/2022	Private	MND	AF-C		IND
PRESERVE WILD SANTEE, CENTER FOR BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY, ENDANGERED HABITATS LEAGUE, and CALIFORNIA CHAPARRAL INSTITUTE	CITY OF SANTEE, CITY OF SANTEE CITY COUNCIL; and DOES 1 through 20, inclusive	37-2022-00041478-CU-MC-CTL	San Diego	10/14/2022	Private	EIR	MXD	duplicate 3,008	ENV, COM
CITY OF LOS ANGELES, a California municipal corporation, ACTING BY AND THROUGH ITS DEPARTMENT OF WATER AND POWER	GREAT BASIN UNIFIED AIR POLLUTION CONTROL DISTRICT; BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE GREAT BASIN UNIFIED AIR POLLUTION CONTROL DISTRICT; AIR POLLUTION CONTROL OFFICER of the GREAT BASIN UNIFIED AIR POLLUTION CONTROL DISTRICT in his official capacity; and DOES 1-100	22STCP03796	Los Angeles	10/18/2022	Agency	No CEQA review	OTHER		PA
ENVIRONMENTAL DEMOCRACY PROJECT, a non-profit corporation	CITY OF OAKLAND; CITY OF OAKLAND PLANNING AND BUILDING DEPARTMENT; CITY OF OAKLAND OFFICE OF THE CITY ADMINISTRATOR; and DOES 1 THROUGH 20	22CV020520	Alameda	10/21/2022	Private	Exemption	AF-C		EJ

VALLEY INVESTMENTS - REDWOOD LLC, a California limited liability company doing business as Barnhill Marina & Boatyard	CITY OF ALAMEDA; and DOES 1-10, inclusive	4:22-cv-6509	United States District Court Northern District of California - Oakland Division	10/25/2022	Agency	Exemption	GP		BUS
LIVABLE SAN DIEGO, an Unincorporated Association	CITY OF SAN DIEGO, a public entity; and DOES 1 through 5, inclusive	37-2022-00043368-CU-TT-CTL	San Diego	10/26/2022	Agency	EIR Addendum	GP		COM
SAN MATEO FARM BUREAU COALITION FOR A SCENIC LOS ANGELES, a California non-profit corporation dba COALITION FOR A BEAUTIFUL LOS ANGELES; CITIZENS FOR A BETTER LOS ANGELES, a California non-profit corporation	COUNTY OF SAN MATEO, and DOES 1 through 10 CITY OF LOS ANGELES, a municipal corporation, and DOES 1-10	22-CIV-04510 22STCP03909	San Mateo Los Angeles	10/27/2022 10/31/2022	Agency Private	Exemption ND	PRW TRANS		BUS ENV
FRIENDS OF THE SOUTH FORK GUALALA, an unincorporated association	CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FORESTRY AND FIRE PROTECTION, a state public agency, and DOES 1 through X, inclusive	SCV-271904	Sonoma	10/31/2022	Private	THP (functional equivalent of EIR)	AF		COM
CLEVELAND NATIONAL FOREST FOUNDATION, AND COASTAL ENVIRONMENTAL RIGHTS FOUNDATION	COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO and DOES 1-10, inclusive	37-2022-00044215-CU-WM-CTL	San Diego	11/2/2022	Agency	Exemption	TRANS		EMV, COM
LABORERS' INTERNATIONAL UNION OF NORTH AMERICA, LOCAL UNION 1130, an organized labor union	CITY OF PATTERSON, a municipality; and CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PATTERSON, a municipal body	CV-22-004270	Stanislaus	11/4/2022	Private	EIR	MXD	0	LU
WESTERN STATES PETROLEUM ASSOCIATION	CALIFORNIA AIR RESOURCES BOARD; STEVEN S. CLIFF, in his official capacity as Executive Officer of the California Air Resources Board; and DOES 1 through 10, inclusive	22CECG03603	Fresno	11/14/2022	Agency	Environmental Analysis (functional equivalent of EIR)	TRANS		BUS
ANIMAL PROTECTION AND RESCUE LEAGUE, INC., a California nonprofit corporation	CITY OF SAN DIEGO, and DOES 1-10	37-2022-00046172-CU-TT-CTL	San Diego	11/15/2022	Agency	Exemption	TRANS		COM
WARREN BLESOFSKY, an individual	CITY OF LONG BEACH, a municipal corporation	22STCP04144	Los Angeles	11/18/2022	Private	Exemption	INST		IND
LABORERS INTERNATIONAL UNION OF NORTH AMERICA, LOCAL UNION 294, an organized labor union	CITY OF FRESNO, a municipality; CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF FRESNO, a municipal body; CITY OF FRESNO PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT, a municipal body; and DOES 1 through 10, inclusive	22CECG03719	Fresno	11/18/2022	Private	ND	IND		LU
1000 FRIENDS PROTECTING HISTORIC BENICIA, a nonprofit corporation	CITY OF BENICIA	FCS059252	Solano	11/22/2022	Private	Exemption	MXD	138	HIS
BROOKE TERRACE SENIOR APARTMENTS, LLC, a California limited liability company	CITY OF HEMET, a California municipality; THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF HEMET, and DOES 1 THROUGH 20, inclusive	CVSW2207946	Riverside	11/23/2022	Private	Exemption	HO	96	BUS
EDDIE ARMANDO TORRES, an individual, and LABORERS INTERNATIONAL UNION OF NORTH AMERICA, LOCAL UNION 294, an organized labor union	COUNTY OF TULARE, a municipality; BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE COUNTY OF TULARE, a municipal body; TULARE COUNTY RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AGENCY, a municipal body; and DOES 1 - X, inclusive	VCU294433	Tulare	11/23/2022	Private	EIR Addendum	IND		LU
USC FORWARD	CITY OF LOS ANGELES; CITY COUCIL OF CITY OF LOS ANGELES; DOES 1 through 4	22STCP04203	Los Angeles	11/28/2022	Private	Exemption	HO	10	COM
COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION FOR THE MODOC PRESERVE	COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA, COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA BOARD OF SUPERVISORS, and DOES 1-20	22CV04768	Santa Barbara	12/2/2022	Agency	MND	TRANS		COM
CENTER FOR BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY, a non-profit organization	CALIFORNIA GEOLOGIC ENERGY MANAGEMENT DIVISION, a political subdivision of the State of California	22CV023134	Alameda	12/6/2022	Private	Improper reliance on prior EIRs and NDs.	ENGY		ENV
LONG BEACH UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT	CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF TOXIC SUBSTANCES CONTROL; MEREDITH WILLIAMS, in her capacity as Director of the Department of Toxic Substances Control; CITY OF AVALON; ALL PERSONS UNKNOWN, CLAIMING ANY LEGAL RIGHT, TITLE, ESTATE, LIEN, OR INTEREST IN THE PROPERTY DESCRIBED IN THE COMPLAINT ADVERSE TO PLAINTIFF'S TITLE THERETO and DOES 1 through 10, inclusive	22STCP04315	Los Angeles	12/8/2022	Agency	Exemption	WP		PA
AMAH MUTSUN TRIBAL BAND	COUNTY OF SAN BENITO and BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF COUNTY OF SAN BENITO	CU-22-00249	San Benito	12/9/2022	Private	EIR	COM		TR

CENTER FOR BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY, a non-profit organization	COUNTY OF SAN BENITO and BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF COUNTY OF SAN BENITO	CU-22-00247	San Benito	12/9/2022	Private	EIR	COM		ENV
BEVERLY WILSHIRE HOMES ASSOCIATION, INC., a California nonprofit corporation	CITY OF LOS ANGELES, a municipal corporation	22STCP04322	Los Angeles	12/9/2022	Private	EIR	COM		COM
THE SILVER LAKE HERITAGE TRUST, a California nonprofit public benefit corporation	CITY OF LOS ANGELES, a municipal corporation; LOS ANGELES DEPARTMENT OF CITY PLANNING; CITY PLANNING COMMISSION; and DOES 1 through 20, inclusive	22STCP04323	Los Angeles	12/12/2022	Private	Exemption	HO	70	COM
RIVERPARK COALITION, a California nonprofit corporation	CITY OF LONG BEACH, a municipal corporation	22STCP04393	Los Angeles	12/16/2022	Private	EIR	HO	226	COM
PEOPLE'S COLLECTIVE FOR ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE, CENTER FOR COMMUNITY ACTION AND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE, CENTER FOR BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY, AND SIERRA CLUB	COUNTY OF SAN BERNARDINO, and DOES 1-20	CIVSB2228456	San Bernardino	12/16/2022	Private	EIR	IND		ENV, EJ
NORMAL HEIGHTS COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION, a California Non-Profit Corporation	CITY OF SAN DIEGO, a public entity; and DOES 1 through 5, inclusive	37-2022-00050853-CU-PT-CTL	San Diego	12/19/2022	Private	Exemption	MXD	175	COM
FRIENDS OF SOUTH CARTHAY, an unincorporated association	CITY OF LOS ANGELES, a municipal corporation	22STCP04426	Los Angeles	12/21/2022	Private	Sustainable Communities Environmental Assessment	MXD	290	COM
MIAMI CREEK COALITION, an unincorporated association of Madera County residents	COUNTY OF MADERA and MADERA COUNTY COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT, and DOES No. 1-5, Respondents / ALMANAC HOLDINGS, LLC, a California Company, YOSEMITE BASECAMP, LLC, a California Company, and DOES No. 6-10, Defendants	MCV088338	Madera	12/26/2022	Private	No CEQA Review	COM		COM
SAVE CARMEL, an unincorporated association	CARMEL UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT; BOARD OF EDUCATION OF THE CARMEL UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT, and DOES 1-20	22CV004064	Monterey	12/28/2022	Agency	EIR	INST		COM
ANNE SEGAL	CITY OF SANTA CRUZ, a political subdivision of the State of California; and SANTA CRUZ CITY COUNCIL, and DOES 1 to 10, inclusive	22CV02838	Santa Cruz	12/29/2022	Private	Exemption	HO	76	IND
CITY OF MARINA, MONTEREY PENINSULA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT, MARINA COAST WATER DISTRICT, and MARINA COAST WATER DISTRICT GROUNDWATER SUSTAINABILITY AGENCY	CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION and DOES 1 - 10	22CV004063	Monterey	12/29/2022	Private	No CEQA review	WP		PA
Total Cases								131	
Total Cases Challenging Housing Units (non-duplicative)								29	
Total Housing Units Challenged (non-duplicative)								8,366	

Legend for Project Type: TRANS =Transportation; GP = Gener Plans/Specific Plans/Ordinances; MXD = Mixed Use Development; COM = Commercial; HO = Housing Only; ENGY = Energy Projects; AF = Agricultural/Forestry; AF-C = Agricultural/Forestry Subset Cannabis; WP = Water Plans & Projects; IND = Industrial; INST = Institutional; PRw = Parks/Recreation/Wildlife; DEMO = Demolition/Removal/Closure; Other = other (see report).

Legend for Petitioner: ENV - Environmental Org; COM = Community Org; EJ = Environmental Justice Org; HIS = Historic Preservation Org; TR = Tribe; LU = Labor Union; PA = Public Agency; BUS = Business; IND = Individual; OTHER = Other.

Plaintiff	Defendant	Case No.	Location (County)	Lawsuit Date	Agency or Private	CEQA Doc	Project Type	No of Housing Units	Petitioner
MICHELLE LOUVIERE	COUNTY OF KERN, BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE COUNTY OF KERN, LORELEI OVIATT, and Does 1 through 100, inclusive	BCV-23-100007	Kern	1/3/2023	Agency	Exemption	HO	50	IND
THE SEVEN HILLS SCHOOL, a public benefit corporation	COUNTY OF CONTRA COSTA, a political subdivision of the State of California; CONTRA COSTA COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT, a local public agency; DOES 1 through 10	N23-0051	Contra Costa	1/3/2023	Private	EIR	HO	454	BUS
SIERRA CLUB	CITY OF MORENO VALLEY	CVRI2300063	Riverside	1/5/2023	Private	MND	IND		ENV
SIERRA CLUB	CITY OF DESERT HOT SPRINGS	CVPS2300057	Riverside	1/5/2023	Private	Addendum to MND	IND		ENV
SAN JOAQUIN FACILITIES MANAGEMENT, INC., a California corporation	CALIFORNIA GEOLOGIC ENERGY MANAGEMENT DIVISION, a state agency; UDUAK-JOE NTUK, in his official capacity as Supervisor of the California Geologic Energy Management Division; and DOES 1 through 25, inclusive	BCV-23-100065	Kern	1/5/2023	Agency	n/a	OTHER		BUS
LABORERS INTERNATIONAL UNION OF NORTH AMERICA, LOCAL UNION 294, an organized labor union	CITY OF TULARE, a municipality; SITE PLAN REVIEW COMMITTEE FOR THE CITY OF TULARE, a municipal body; TRACI METERS, City of Tulare Community and Economic Development Director, in her official capacity; and DOES 1 through 10, inclusive	VCU295129	Tulare	1/6/2023	Private	No CEQA review	IND		LU
FRIENDS OF RIVERSIDE'S HILLS, a non-profit corporation, UNIVERSITY NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION, an unincorporated association	CITY OF RIVERSIDE, a public body corporate and politic, and DOES 1 through 5, inclusive	CVRI2300082	Riverside	1/6/2023	Private	MND	IND		COM
E & B NATURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT CORPORATION, a California corporation; HILLVREST BEVERLY OIL CORPORATION; E&B ENR I, LLC, a Delaware limited liability; and ELYSIUM BATURAL RESOURCES, LLC, a New York limited liability company	CITY OF LOS ANGELES, CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF LOS ANGELES, THE MAYOR OF THE CITY OF LOS ANGELES, and DOES 1 through 100, inclusive	23STCP00070	Los Angeles	1/10/2023	Agency	MND	ENGY		BUS
WARREN E&P.; WARREN RESOURCES OF CALIFORNIA, INC.; and WARREN RESOURCES, INC.	CITY OF LOS ANGELES; LOS ANGELES CITY COUNCIL; LOS ANGELES CITY PLANNING COMMISSION; KAREN BASS IN THE OFFICIAL CAPACITY AS THE MAYOR OF THE CITY OF LOS ANGELES; and DOES 1 through 20, inclusive	23STCP00060	Los Angeles	1/10/2023	Agency	MND	ENGY		BUS
SUPPORTERS ALLIANCE FOR ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY, a California nonprofit corporation	CITY OF DESERT HOT SPRINGS, a municipality; CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF DESERT HOT SPRINGS, a municipal body; and PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF DESERT HOT SPRINGS, a municipal body	CVPS2300062	Riverside	1/11/2023	Private	Addendum to MND	IND		COM
NATIVE OIL PRODUCERS AND EMPLOYEES OF CALIFORNIA, a California corporation; and WESTERN STATES PETROLEUM ASSOCIATION, a California corporation	CITY OF LOS ANGELES; CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF LOS ANGELES; and ROES 1 through 20, inclusive	23STCP00085	Los Angeles	1/11/2023	Agency	MND	ENGY		BUS
National Association of Royalty Owners-California, Inc., et al.	CITY OF LOS ANGELES, KAREN BASS in her official capacity as Mayor of the City of Los Angeles	23STCP00106	Los Angeles	1/12/2023	Agency	MND	ENGY		BUS
BRICKYARD BUSINESS PARK ASSOCIATION, INC.	COUNTY OF MADERA; BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE COUNTY OF MADERA; and DOES 1-10, Inclusive	MCV088459	Madera	1/17/2023	Private	MND	COM		BUS
Laguna Beach Historic Preservation Coalition and Catherine Jurca	City of Laguna Beach	30-2023-01303311-CU-TT-CXC	Orange	1/17/2023	Private	ND	HO	remodel 0	HIS
GROW MONROVIA, a California non-profit corporation	CITY OF BRADBURY, a municipal corporation	23STCP00128	Los Angeles	1/17/2023	Agency	MND	TRANS		COM
Sonoma Community Advocates for a Liveable Environment (SCALE), a California unincorporated association; and Sonoma County Tomorrow, a California non-profit organization	County of Sonoma	SCV-272539	Sonoma	1/18/2023	Agency	EIR	GP		COM
PAJARO COMMUNITY MATTERS, an unincorporated public interest group	COUNTY OF MONTEREY; MONTEREY COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS; DOES 1 to 10, inclusive	23CV000179	San Luis Obispo	1/18/2023	Private	MND	HO	45	COM
HEATHER FARMS HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION	CONTRA COSTA COUNTY and DOES 1-10	N23-0179	Contra Costa	1/20/2023	Private	EIR	HO	duplicate 454	COM
SUPPORTERS ALLIANCE FOR ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY, a California nonprofit corporation	CITY OF INGLEWOOD, a municipality; and CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF INGLEWOOD, a municipal body	23STCP00195	Los Angeles	1/20/2023	Private	MND	HO	440	COM
Sheryl White and Harvey White in their individual capacities; Sheryl White & Harvey White, Trustees of the Harvey and Sheryl White Trust dated April 10, 2002	City of Del Mar, City Council of Del Mar, and Doe Individuals 1-10, inclusive	37-2023-00004452-CU-TT-CTL	San Diego	1/20/2023	Private	Exemption	DEMO		IND
SIERRA CLUB; CENTER FOR BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY; and AQUALLIANCE	CITY OF CHICO; CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF CHICO, and DOES 1 to 20	23CV00376	Butte	2/9/2023	Private	EIR	MXD	2,777	ENV
RURAL ASSOCIATION OF MEAD VALLEY, an unincorporated association	COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE	CVRI2300730	Riverside	2/9/2023	Private	MND	IND		COM
GOLDEN STATE ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE ALLIANCE, a California not for profit corporation	CITY OF MANTECA, a California municipal corporation; CITY OF MANTECA CITY COUNCIL, a public entity; and DOES 1 through 100	STK-CV-UWM-2023-0001190	San Joaquin	2/10/2023	Private	MND	IND		COM

CITY OF OXNARD	RIO SCHOOL DISTRICT, RIO SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD OF TRUSTEES, and DOES 1 through 20, inclusive	56-2023-00575575-CU-WM-VTA	Ventura	2/10/2023	Agency	EIR	INST		PA
Gabriel Jacobs	CITY OF VISTA, a public body, corporate and politic, and DOES 1 through 5, inclusive	37-2023-00006068-CU-WM-NC	San Diego	2/14/2023	Private	MND	HO	46	IND
COASTAL ENVIRONMENTAL RIGHTS FOUNDATION, a California non-profit public benefit corporation	CITY OF SAN DIEGO, a California municipal corporation; and DOES 1 through 20, inclusive	37-2023-00006754-CU-TT-CTL	San Diego	2/14/2023	Agency	EIR	GP		ENV
MT. WOODSON HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION, a California Nonprofit Mutual Benefit Corporation	COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO; BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO; COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT; and DOES 1-10, inclusive	37-2023-00007281-CU-TT-CTL	Central Division	2/21/2023	Agency	MND	PRW		COM
WATSONVILLE PILOTS ASSOCIATION, a non-profit corporation	CITY OF WATSONVILLE, CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WATSONVILLE, and DOES 1 THROUGH 15	23CV00425	Santa Cruz	2/22/2023	Private	MND	IND		OTHER
ADVOCATES FOR THE ENVIRONMENT	CITY OF HESPERIA	CIVSB2301831	San Bernardino	2/24/2023	Private	EIR	IND		ENV
SUPPORTERS ALLIANCE FOR ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY, a California nonprofit corporation	CITY OF PICO RIVERA, a municipality; CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PICO RIVERA, a municipal body; and PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF PICO RIVERA, a municipal body	23STCP00583	Los Angeles	2/24/2023	Private	MND	MXD	255	COM
ACE 4 SAFE TRAILS, a California public benefit non-profit corporation	CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION and DOES 1-20	34-2023-80004086	Sacramento	2/26/2023	Agency	ND	TRANS		ENV
THE PROTECT OUR COMMUNITIES FOUNDATION, a California nonprofit corporation	COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO, a municipal corporation	37-2023-00008265-CU-TT-CTL	San Diego	2/27/2023	Agency	No CEQA review	ENGY		ENV
COALITION FOR A SCENIC LOS ANGELES, a California non-profit corporation dba COALITION FOR A BEAUTIFUL LOS ANGELES; CITIZENS FOR A BETTER LOS ANGELES, a California non-profit corporation	LOS ANGELES COUNTY METROPOLITAN TRANSIT AUTHORITY, DOES 1-10	23STCP00626	Los Angeles	2/28/2023	Agency	EIR	TRANS		ENV
JAMES IRRIGATION DISTRICT, a California Irrigation District	MCMULLIN AREA GROUNDWATER SUSTAINABILITY AGENCY, a joint powers authority	23CV417565	Santa Clara	2/28/2023	Agency	no CEQA review	WP		PA
ORINDANS FOR SAFE EVACUATION	CITY OF ORINDA	N23-0579	Contra Costa	3/3/2023	Agency	EIR	GP		COM
Strategic Actions for a Just Economy	City of Los Angeles, a Municipal Corporation, City Council of the City of Los Angeles, and DOES 1 to 100	23STCP00702	Los Angeles	3/3/2023	Private	Improper reliance on prior EIR	COM		EJ
KOI NATION OF NORTHERN CALIFORNIA	CITY OF CLEARLAKE, a California municipal corporation; CITY OF CLEARLAKE CITY COUNCIL; and DOES 1 through 100, inclusive	CV 423786	Lake	3/3/2023	Private	MND	COM		TR
FIBER FIRST LOS ANGELES; MOTHERS OF EAST LA; UNION BINACIONAL DE ORGANIZACIONES DE TRABAJADORES MEXICANOS EXBRACEROS 1942-1964; BOYLE HEIGHTS COMMUNITY PARTNERS; UNITED KEETOOWAH BAND OF CHEROKEE INDIANS IN OKLAHOMA; CALIFORNIA FIRES & FIREFIGHTERS; MALIBU FOR SAFE TECH; EMF SAFETY NETWORK; CALIFORNIANS FOR SAFE TECHNOLOGY; 5G FREE CALIFORNIA; and CHILDREN'S HEALTH DEFENSE	COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES; COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES BOARD OF SUPERVISORS; COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION; COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES DEPARTMENT OF REGIONAL PLANNING; COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS; and DOES 1-10, inclusive	23STCP00750	Los Angeles	3/7/2023	Agency	Exemption	GP		ENV, COM, EJ, HIST, TR
SAVE OUR HIGHLANDS	THE COUNTY OF SAN MATEO, a public entity; THE COUNTY OF SAN MATEO PLANNING COMMISSION, a public entity; THE PLANNING/BUILDING DEPARTMENT OF THE COUNTY OF SAN MATEO, a division/ department of a public entity; and DOES 1 to 10, inclusive.	23-CIV-01024	San Mateo	3/7/2023	Private	Addendum	HO	11	COM
BESS BAIR; TRISHA LEE LOTUS, JEFFREY HEDIN, THE CENTER FOR BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY, ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION INFORMATION CENTER, CALIFORNIANS FOR ALTERNATIVES TO TOXICS, AND FRIENDS OF DEL NORTE	CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION and TONY TAVARES	CV2300375	Humboldt	3/8/2023	Agency	Addendum to EIR	TRANS		ENV
YES IN MY BACK YARD, a California nonprofit public benefit corporation	CITY OF SAUSALITO and DOES 1-20	CIV2300652	Marin	3/8/2023	Agency	Exemption	GP		OTHER
ROSCOE/FALLBROOK NEIGHBORHOOD COALITION, an incorporated association	CITY OF LOS ANGELES, a municipal corporation	23STCP00870	Los Angeles	3/20/2023	Private	MND	IND		COM
THE TERMO COMPANY, a California company	COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES, COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES BOARD OF SUPERVISORS, and DOES 1 through 100, inclusive	23STCP00893	Los Angeles	3/21/2023	Agency	Exemption	ENGY		BUS
MATRIX OIL CORPORATION, a California corporation; RMX RESOURCES, LLC, a Texas limited liability company; and ROYALE ENERGY, INC., a Delaware corporation	COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES; and BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES; and DOES 1 through 10, inclusive	23STCP00882	Los Angeles	3/21/2023	Agency	Exemption	ENGY		BUS
NATIVE OIL PRODUCERS AND EMPLOYEES OF CALIFORNIA, a California corporation; and the WESTERN STATES PETROLEUM ASSOCIATION, a California corporation	COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES; and BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES; and ROES 1 through 20, inclusive	23STCP00884	Los Angeles	3/21/2023	Agency	Exemption	ENGY		BUS
COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE, a political subdivision of the State of California	CITY OF MORENO VALLEY, a municipal corporation; and DOES 1-20, inclusive	CVRI2301559	Riverside	3/27/2023	Private	MND	TRANS		PA
MARCH JOINT POWERS AUTHORITY	CITY OF MORENO VALLEY, and DOES 1 through 20, inclusive	CVRI2301582	Riverside	3/27/2023	Private	MND	TRANS		PA

CENTER FOR BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY	CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION, an agency of the State of California; and CALIFORNIA STATE PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION	34-2023-80004109-CU-WM-GDS	Sacramento	4/3/2023	Agency	EIR	PRW		ENV
SUPPORTERS ALLIANCE FOR ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY, a California nonprofit corporation	CITY OF RIALTO, a municipality; CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF RIALTO, a municipal body; and DOES 1 through 10, inclusive	CIVSB2303227	San Bernardino	4/4/2023	Private	Exemption	IIND		COM
WESTIA, an unincorporated association, and MARTA BULAICH	CITY OF WATSONVILLE, CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WATSONVILLE, JIMMY DUTRA, in his official capacity as Councilmember of the City of Watsonville, and DOES 1 THROUGH 15	23CV00800	Santa Cruz	4/5/2023	Private	No CEQA review	INST		COM
CITIZENS FOR A BETTER EUREKA	CITY OF EUREKA; CITY OF EUREKA CITY COUNCIL, and DOES 1 to 10, inclusive	CV2300565	Humboldt	4/6/2023	Agency	Addendum	GP		COM
LIVABLE SAN DIEGO, an unincorporated association	CITY OF SAN DIEGO, a public body corporate and politic, and DOES 1 through 5, inclusive	37-2023-00014623-CU-TT-CTL	San Diego	4/7/2023	Agency	Improper reliance on prior EIR	GP		COM
HABITAT AND WATERSHED CARETAKERS, DON STEVENS, RUSSELL B. WEISZ, HAL LEVIN, HARRY D. HUSKEY and PETER L. SCOTT	THE REGENTS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA AT SANTA CRUZ, and DOES 1-XX	23CV00880	Santa Cruz	4/17/2023	Agency	Improper reliance on prior EIR	INST	duplicate 3000	COM
CITIZENS AGAINST MARKET PLACE APARTMENT/CONDO DEVELOPMENT, an unincorporated association	CITY OF SAN RAMON, by and through the CITY COUNCIL OF SAN RAMON; PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF SAN RAMON; and LAUREN BARR, an individual, in his official capacity as Zoning Manager of the City of San Ramon, and DOES 1 through 10, inclusive	N23-0770	Contra Costa	4/19/2023	Private	Exemption	MXD	44	COM
CENTER FOR BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY	CITY OF AMERICAN CANYON, CITY COUNCIL OF AMERICAN CANYON; and DOES 1 through 20, inclusive	23CV000511	Napa	4/21/2023	Private	EIR	IND		ENV
CITY OF VALLEJO	CITY OF AMERICAN CANYON, BY AND THROUGH THE CITY COUNCIL; and DOES 1 through 100, inclusive	23CV000517	Napa	4/21/2023	Private	EIR	IND		PA
UNITED BROADWAY, LLC, a California limited liability company	CITY OF LOS ANGELES; and DOES 1 through 10, inclusive	23STCP01352	Los Angeles	4/26/2023	Private	Sustainable Communities Environmental Assessment & Addendum	MXD	363	BUS
WEST ADAMS HERITAGE ASSOCIATION, and ADAMS SEVERANCE COALITION	CITY OF LOS ANGELES	23STCP01363	Los Angeles	4/27/2023	Private	No CEQA review	HO	52	COM
ROP WMCC LLC, a California limited liability company and Resident Owned Parks, Inc., a California corporation	TOWN OF WINDSOR, TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF WINDSOR, and DOES 1-50, inclusive	SCV-273272	Sonoma	5/2/2023	Agency	Exemption	GP		BUS
CITIZENS FOR A BETTER EUREKA	CITY OF EUREKA, CITY OF EUREKA CITY COUNCIL, and DOES 1 to 10, inclusive	CV2300712	Humboldt	5/5/2023	Agency	Exemption	OTHER		COM
CENTER FOR BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY, a non-profit organization	CALIFORNIA GEOLOGIC ENERGY MANAGEMENT DIVISION, a political subdivision of the State of California, and DOES 1-20, inclusive	23CV033371	Alameda	5/11/2023	Private	Improper reliance on prior EIRs	ENGY		ENV
SUPPORTERS ALLIANCE FOR ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY, a California nonprofit corporation	CITY OF ORANGE, a municipality; and CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ORANGE, a municipal body; and DOES 1 through 10, inclusive	30-2023-01325043-CU-TT-CXC	Orange	5/12/2023	Private	MND	MXD	225	COM
SUPPORTERS ALLIANCE FOR ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY, a California nonprofit corporation	CITY OF LOS ANGELES, a municipality, CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF LOS ANGELES, a municipal body, and DOES 1 through 10, inclusive	23STCP01664	Los Angeles	5/12/2023	Private	ND	COM		COM
RUSSIAN RIVERKEEPER, a California non-profit corporation, and CALIFORNIA COASTKEEPER, a California non-profit corporation	COUNTY OF SONOMA, a legal subdivision of the state of California, DOES 1-10	SCV-273415	Sonoma	5/24/2023	Agency	Exemption	WP		ENV
THE CITY OF NEWPORT BEACH	STATE WATER RESOURCES CONTROL BOARD, REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARD - SANTA ANA REGION, and DOES 1 through 20, inclusive	30-2023-01330211-CU-TT-CXC	Orange	5/30/2023	Agency	Substitute environmental review document	WP		PA
EL RICO BSA, a public agency	COUNTY OF KINGS, BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE COUNTY OF KINGS, AND DOES 1 THROUGH 50 INCLUSIVE	23CU0202	Kings	5/30/2023	Agency	No CEQA review	WP		PA
SIERRA CLUB	CITY OF MORENO VALLEY; CITY OF MORENO VALLEY CITY COUNCIL	CVRI2302833	Riverside	5/31/2023	Private	ND	IND		ENV
MICHAEL ABATTI, an individual; and WORTHY AND HOLLY SANDERS, a married couple	COUNTY OF IMPERIAL; IMPERIAL IRRIGATION DISTRICT; AND DOES 1-10	ECU002948	Imperial	5/31/2023	Private	MND	ENGY		IND
FIX THE CITY, INC., a California nonprofit public benefit corporation	CITY OF LOS ANGELES; LOS ANGELES CITY COUNCIL; LOS ANGELES DEPARTMENT OF CITY PLANNING; and DOES 1 through 100, inclusive	23STCP01978	Los Angeles	6/5/2023	Agency	EIR	GP		COM
LAUREL CANYON ASSOCIATION, a California non-profit corporation	CITY OF LOS ANGELES, a municipal Corporation	23STCP01972	Los Angeles	6/5/2023	Agency	EIR	GP		COM
VOTERS FOR A SUPERIOR HOLLYWOOD PLAN, an unincorporated association	CITY OF LOS ANGELES, a municipal corporation, and DOES 1-25	23STCP01968	Los Angeles - Stanley Mosk Courthouse	6/5/2023	Agency	EIR	GP		COM
SUPPORTERS ALLIANCE FOR ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY, a California nonprofit corporation	CITY OF LOS ANGELES, a municipality, CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF LOS ANGELES, a municipal body, and DOES 1 through 10, inclusive	23STCP01979	Los Angeles	6/6/2023	Private	Exemption	HO	120	COM
FRIENDS OF PUTAH CREEK	SOLANO COUNTY WATER AGENCY; BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE SOLANO COUNTY WATER AGENCY; and, DOES 1 through 20	CU23-01953	Solano	6/12/2023	Agency	EIR & MND	WP		ENV
STONE CREEK RESIDENTS FOR SMART GROWTH, an unincorporated association	CITY OF RANCHO CORDOVA	23WM000026	Sacramento	6/14/2023	Private	Exemption	IND		COM

WESTIA, AN UNINCORPORATED ASSOCIATION, and MARTA BULAICH	CEIBA COLLEGE PREPARATORY ACADEMY, BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF CEIBA COLLEGE PREPARATORY ACADEMY, and DOES 1 THROUGH 15	23CV01379	Santa Cruz	6/14/2023	Private	No CEQA review	INST		COM
BACKCOUNTRY AGAINST DUMPS, LAWRENCE COX RANCHES, LAWRENCE W. COX, DONBEE FARMS INC., and DONNA TISDALE	IMPERIAL COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS, and DOES I-XX	ECU002971	Imperial	6/15/2023	Private	EIR	ENGY		COM
FRIENDS OF HAUKE PARK	CITY OF MILL VALLEY, and DOES 1 through 10	CV0000005	Marin	6/18/2023	Agency	EIR	GP		COM
SOUTHBAY ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ASSOCIATION, an unincorporated association	CITY OF TORRANCE, a municipal corporation	23STCP02144	Los Angeles	6/20/2023	Private	Exemption	IND		COM
TREE STOCKTON FOUNDATION, an unincorporated association	CITY OF STOCKTON, a municipal corporation	STK-CV-UWM-2023-0006306	San Joaquin	6/20/2023	Agency	Exemption	DEMO		COM
CITY OF EL CENTRO, a California municipal corporation	IMPERIAL LOCAL AGENCY FORMATION COMMISSION, a California municipal corporation, and DOES 1 through 10	ECU002984	Imperial	6/21/2023	Agency	ND	INST		PA
THE COMMITTEE TO PRESERVE THE PARADISE COVE SALT MARSH, TIDELANDS AND NEIGHBORHOOD SAFETY	TOWN OF TIBURON	CV0000086	Marin	6/23/2023	Agency	EIR	GP		COM
CITY OF PERRIS, a municipal corporation	CITY OF MENIFEE, a municipal corporation	CVRI2303456	Riverside	7/6/2023	Agency	MND	IND		PA
CRANE BOULEVARD SAFETY COALITION, an unincorporated association	CITY OF LOS ANGELES, a municipal corporation	23STCP02375	Los Angeles	7/7/2023	Private	Exemption	HO	1	COM
KOI NATION OF NORTHERN CALIFORNIA	CITY OF CLEARLAKE, a California municipal corporation; CITY OF CLEARLAKE CITY COUNCIL; and DOES 1 through 100, inclusive	CV 424401	Lake	7/14/2023	Agency	MND	INST		TR
COUNTY OF YOLO	CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES and DOES 1-50, inclusive	CV-2023-1465	Yolo	7/18/2023	Agency	EIR	WP		PA
SOUTH COLTON FAMILIES FIRST, an unincorporated association AND MARLENE SALAZAR PONGS, an individual	CITY OF COLTON, a municipal corporation; ROES 1 through 10	CIVSB2317228	San Bernardino	7/21/2023	Private	Improper reliance on prior EIR	COM		COM
WESTERN STATES PETROLEUM ASSOCIATION	CALIFORNIA AIR RESOURCES BOARD; STEVEN S. CLIFF, in his official capacity as Executive Officer of the California Air Resources Board; and DOES 1 through 10, inclusive	23CECG02976	Fresno	7/21/2023	Agency	Substitute environmental review document	ENGY		BUS
Pacific Bay Inn, Inc., a California corporation	City and County of San Francisco, a California municipal corporation; Board of Supervisors for the City and County of San Francisco, its elected governing body; and Does 1-20 inclusive	CPF-23-518214	San Francisco	7/21/2023	Private	Addendum	MXD	266	BUS
WESTERN STATES TRUCKING ASSOCIATION	CALIFORNIA AIR RESOURCES BOARD; and STEVEN S. CLIFF, in his official capacity as Executive Officer of the California Air Resources Board	23CECG02964	Fresno	7/21/2023	Agency	Substitute environmental review document	ENGY		BUS
SUNSTAR ENTERPRISES CO, INC.	CITY OF ROSEMEAD and DOES 1 through 10	23STCP02674	Los Angeles	7/23/2023	Private	MND	MXD	93	BUS
ST. HELENA CITIZENS FOR A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE and WATER AUDIT CALIFORNIA	CITY OF ST. HELENA, CITY COUNCIL OF ST. HELENA, and DOES 1 through 20	23CV000938	Napa	7/27/2023	Private	EIR	HO	76	ENV, COM
ZEKA RANCH, ONE, LLC; ZEKA RANCH, THREE, LLC; ZEKA RANCH, FOUR, LLC; ZEKA RANCH, FIVE, LLC; and ZEKA GROUP, INC.	CITY OF ANTIOCH; CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ANTIOCH; and DOES 1-10, Inclusive	N23-1578	Contra Costa	7/31/2023	Private	Improper reliance on prior EIR	MXD	440	BUS
FRIENDS OF NEWPORT HARBOR, a limited liability company	CITY OF NEWPORT BEACH, a municipal corporation, NEWPORT BEACH CITY COUNCIL, governing body of the City of Newport Beach, and DOES 1-10	30-2023-01340626-CU-WM-CXC	Orange	8/2/2023	Agency	Improper reliance on prior EIR	WP		COM
RECLAMATION DISTRICT 1600	CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES and DOES 1-20, inclusive	CV2023-1669	Yolo	8/11/2023	Agency	EIR	WP		PA
SUPPORTERS ALLIANCE FOR ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY, a California nonprofit corporation	CITY OF LONG BEACH, a municipality; CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF LONG BEACH, a municipal body; and DOES I-X, inclusive	23LBCP00344	Los Angeles	8/17/2023	Private	Exemption	MXD	390	COM
DELICATO VINEYARDS, LLC, d.b.a. DELICATO FAMILY WINES	CITY OF MANTECA, MANTECA CITY COUNCIL, and DOES 1 through 20	STK-CV-UWM-2023-0008966	San Joaquin	8/17/2023	Agency	EIR	GP		BUS
SAN DIEGO COUNTY WATER AUTHORITY, a county water authority	SAN DIEGO COUNTY LOCAL AGENCY FORMATION COMMISSION, a political subdivision of the State of California; FALLBROOK PUBLIC UTILITY DISTRICT, a Public Utility District pursuant to Division 7 of California Public Utilities Code; RAINBOW MUNICIPAL WATER DISTRICT, a municipal water district organized under Section 7100 of the California Water Code; EASTERN MUNICIPAL WATER DISTRICT, a municipal water district organized under Section 7100 of the California Water Code; DOES 1 through 50, inclusive	37-2023-00036018-CU-TT-CTL	San Diego	8/21/2023	Agency	Exemption	WP		PA
PROTECT ROSEVILLE NEIGHBORHOODS, an unincorporated association; and PASEO DEL NORTE HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION, a California Corporation	CITY OF ROSEVILLE; CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ROSEVILLE; and DOES 1 to 20	S-CV-0051108	Placer	8/21/2023	Private	Exemption	COM		COM
2700 SLOAT HOLDING, LLC, a limited liability company	CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO, a municipal entity; and DOES 1-25, inclusive	CGC-23-608567	San Francisco	8/22/2023	Private	No CEQA review	OTHER		BUS
DISCOVERY BUILDERS, INC., a California corporation; and WCHB DEVELOPMENT, LLC, a California limited liability company	CITY OF BRENTWOOD, a California general-law city; CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BRENTWOOD, the elected decision-making body of the City of Brentwood; and DOES 1-10, Inclusive	N23-1645	Contra Costa	8/24/2023	Private	Exemption	COM		BUS
CENTER FOR COMMUNITY ACTION AND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE, a California non-profit corporation	CITY OF FONTANA, a municipal corporation	CIVSB2320394	San Bernardino	8/25/2023	Private	Addendum	HO	255	EJ

DAVID CURTIS	COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ, BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ, and DOES 1 THROUGH 15	23CV02150	Santa Cruz	9/7/2023	Private	MND	HO	7	IND
LIVABLE VENTURA, an unincorporated association	CITY OF SAN BUENAVENTURA, a municipal corporation; CITY OF SAN BUENAVENTURA PLANNING DEPARTMENT; and CITY OF SAN BUENAVENTURA CITY COUNCIL; DOES 1-10	2023CUWM013832	Ventura	9/8/2023	Private	Exemption	MXD	94	COM
WESTLAKE SOUTH NEIGHBORS, an unincorporated association	CITY OF LOS ANGELES, a municipal Corporation	23STCO03294	Los Angeles	9/11/2023	Private	Exemption	HO	294	COM
Residents Concerned About Gallagher Square Noise	City of San Diego, Padres, L.P.	37-2023-00039670-CU-WM-CTL	San Diego	9/13/2023	Private	N/A	OTHER		COM
GRIFFITH J. GRIFFITH CHARITABLE TRUST and FRIENDS OF GRIFFITH PARK	CITY OF LOS ANGELES, CITY OF LOS ANGELES DEPT. OF PUBLIC WORKS, BUREAU OF ENGINEERING and CITY COUNCIL OF CITY OF LOS ANGELES	23STCP03390	Los Angeles	9/13/2023	Agency	EIR	INST		COM
LAGUNA BEACH COALITION FOR ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION, an unincorporated association	CITY OF LAGUNA BEACH, DOES 1 through 10, inclusive	30-2023-01349628-CU-WM-CXC	Orange	9/13/2023	Private	Exemption	HO	1	COM
CITRUS HEIGHTS WATER DISTRICT and FAIR OAKS WATER DISTRICT	SAN JUAN WATER DISTRICT, and DOES 1 through 100	23WM000080	Sacramento	9/14/2023	Agency	no CEQA review	WP		PA
SAVE OUR RURAL TOWN	COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES, LOS ANGELES COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS; and DOES 1 to 20, inclusive	23STCP03422	Los Angeles	9/15/2023	Private	Exemption	ENGY		COM
SHAKOURI INVESTMENT GROUP, LLC, a California limited liability company	CITY OF LAKWOOD, a municipal corporation	23STCP03423	Los Angeles	9/15/2023	Private	Exemption	COM		BUS
STOP IGNORING CEQA!, an unincorporated association	COUNTY OF SAN BERNARDINO, and DOES 1-10, inclusive	CIV SB 2322791	San Bernardino	9/20/2023	Private	MND	COM		COM
ENDANGERED HABITATS LEAGUE	CITY OF ENCINITAS, and DOES 1-10	37-2023-00041290-CU-TT-CTL	San Diego	9/25/2023	Private	EIR	HO	149	ENV
Nicholas Robert Constant	THE CITY OF LOS ANGELES; the CITY COUNCIL OF LOS ANGELES; LOS ANGELES DEPT. OF PUBLIC WORKS, BUREAU OF ENGINEERING; and DOES 1 through 50	23STCV23194	Los Angeles	9/25/2023	Agency	EIR	GP		IND
SUPPORTERS ALLIANCE FOR ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY; a California nonprofit corporation	CITY OF SAN GABRIEL, a municipality; CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SAN GABRIEL, a municipal body; and DOES 1 through 10, inclusive	23STCP03548	Los Angeles	9/26/2023	Private	Exemption	COM		COM
ADVOCATES FOR THE ENVIRONMENT	CITY OF JURUPA VALLEY	CVRI2305138	COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE	9/26/2023	Private	EIR	MXD	1,196	ENV
PALOMINO PLACE, LLC and J. DAVID TAORMINO	CITY OF DAVIS and the DAVIS CITY COUNCIL; DOES 1 through 10, inclusive	CV2023-2059	Yolo	9/29/2023	Private	N/A	OTHER		BUS
CENTER FOR BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY	CITY OF LONG BEACH, a municipal corporation; LONG BEACH CITY COUNCIL, CALIFORNIA STATE LANDS COMMISSION, and DOES 1 through 20	23STCP03581	Los Angeles	9/29/2023	Private	No CEQA review	ENGY		ENV
COMMITTEE FOR TRANSPARENT LOCAL GOVERNMENT, et al.	SONOMA COUNTY LAFCO, et al.	23CV00801	COUNTY OF SONOMA	10/2/2023	Private	Exemption	INST		COM
FRIENDS OF CALWA, INC. and FRESNO BUILDING HEALTHY COMMUNITIES	CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION, TONY TAVARES, in his official capacity as Director of the California Department of Transportation; and DOES 1-20	23CECG04109	Fresno	10/2/2023	Agency	EIR	TRANS		EJ
CITIZENS FOR A BETTER EUREKA	CITY OF EUREKA, ET AL.	CV2301562	COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT	10/4/2023	Agency	Exemption	HO	28	COM
CITIZENS FOR A BETTER EUREKA	CITY OF EUREKA, ET AL.	CV2301563	COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT	10/4/2023	Agency	Exemption	HO	28	COM
SAN JOAQUIN TRIBUTARIES AUTHORITY	CALIFORNIA STATE WATER RESOURCES CONTROL BOARD	23CECG04201	COUNTY OF FRESNO	10/6/2023	Agency	No CEQA review	WP		PA
MODESTO IRRIGATION DISTRICT	CALIFORNIA STATE WATER RESOURCES CONTROL BOARD	23CECG04124	COUNTY OF FRESNO	10/6/2023	Agency	No CEQA review	WP		PA
MERCED IRRIGATION DISTRICT	CALIFORNIA STATE WATER RESOURCES CONTROL BOARD	23CECG04199	COUNTY OF FRESNO	10/6/2023	Agency	No CEQA review	WP		PA
GUARDIANS OF THE PINES, an unincorporated association	CITY OF BURBANK, a municipal corporation	23STCP03707	Los Angeles	10/9/2023	Agency	No CEQA review	DEMO		COM
SAVE OUR CAPITOL!	CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF GENERAL SERVICES	23WM000094	COUNTY OF SACRAMENTO	10/12/2023	Agency	EIR	INST		HIS
PACIFICA SAN JUAN COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION	CITY OF SAN JUAN CAPISTRANO; and DOES 11 through 100	30-2023-01358551-CU-WM-CJC	Orange	10/16/2023	Private	Exemption	HO	1	COM
Friends and Families for MOVE Culver City	City of Culver City et al.	23STCP03833	LOS ANGELES	10/17/2023	Agency	Exemption	TRANS		IND
ANANT AHUJA, et al.	CITY OF PIEDMONT, et al.	23CV047492	ALAMEDA	10/18/2023	Agency	Exemption	PRW		COM
SUPPORTERS ALLIANCE FOR ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY	CITY OF LONG BEACH, ET AL.	23STCP03847	LOS ANGELES	10/18/2023	Private	Exemption	MXD	390	COM
FRIENDS OF THE EQUESTRIAN BRIDGE	CITY OF BURBANK, a municipal corporation	23STCP03836	Los Angeles	10/18/2023	Private	Exemption	HO	23	ENV
350 SACRAMENTO	CITY OF RANCHO CORDOVA, ET AL.	23WM000101	SACRAMENTO	10/19/2023	Agency	ND	GP		LU
AMERICAN FEDERATION OF STATE, COUNTY, AND MUNICIPAL EMPLOYEES LOCAL 3299	THE REGENTS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA	37-2023-00045816-CU-TT-CTL	SAN DIEGO	10/20/2023	Agency/Private	Addendum	INST		IND
SANDIA PEARSON, ET AL.	MORAGA-ORINDA FIRE DISTRICT	N23-2201	CONTRA COSTA	10/25/2023	Agency	Exemption	GP		COM

MATTHEW DONALDSON and CAROL DONALDSON	COUNTY OF MONTEREY; COUNTY OF MONTEREY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS, AND DOES 1-50 inclusive	23CVF003599	Monterey	11/2/2023	Private	MND	MXD	1	IND
PECHANGA BAND OF INDIANS; and SOBOBA BAND OF LUISENO INDIANS	CITY OF CORONA	CVRI2306028	Riverside	11/8/2023	Agency	N/A	WP		TR
LA JOLLA TRUST	SAN DIEGO ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS, ET AL.	23-2023-00052377-CU-MC-CTL	COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO	11/13/2023	Agency	EIR	TRANS		OTHER
JED KUBRIN; MARISA KURBIN	CITY OF LOS ANGELES; CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF LOS ANGELES	23STCP04249	Los Angeles	11/17/2023	Private	Exemption	COM		IND
BRENT SMITTCAMP, CHELSEY JUAREZ and VIKTOR ZAYTSEV	CITY OF FRESNO, CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF FRESNO; and ROES 1 through 10	23CECG04800	Fresno	11/20/2023	Private	Exemption	COM		IND
CITY OF IRVINE	ORANGE COUNTY TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY; BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE ORANGE COUNTY TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY, DOES 1 THROUGH 20	30-2023-01366419-CU-WM-CXC	Orange	11/20/2023	Agency	MND	TRANS		PA
ANDERSON/MILLVILLE RESIDENTS	COUNTY OF SHASTA, ET AL.	23CV-0203713	COUNTY OF SHASTA	11/21/2023	Private	MND	COM		COM
BIODIVERSITY FIRST!, INC., a California Non-Profit Corporation	CITY OF ATASCADERO, a California municipal corporation; CITY COUNCIL FOR THE CITY OF ATASCADERO; ATASCADERO PLANNING COMMISSION; and DOES 1-15, inclusive	23 CVP-0363	San Luis Obispo	11/27/2023	Private	Exemption	COM		ENV
FRIENDS OF THE WEST SHORE, et al.	COUNTY OF PLACER, et al.	S-CV-0051686	COUNTY OF PLACER	11/29/2023	Agency	Addendum to EIR	GP		ENV
DPML BEAR HOLLOW, LLC, a Delaware limited liability company and DPML STONECREEK, LLC, a Delaware limited liability company	CITY OF RANCHO CORDOVA, CITY COUNCIL OF CITY OF RANCHO CORDOVA, and DOES 1 through 25, inclusive	23WM000122	Sacramento	11/29/2023	Agency	Exemption	GP		BUS
ROBERT DELP	CITY OF FOLSOM, ET AL.	23WM000125	COUNTY OF SACRAMENTO	12/4/2023	Private	MND	MXD	2	IND
LABORERS INTERNATIONAL UNION OF NORTH AMERICA, LOCAL UNION 294,	CITY OF FRESNO, ET AL.	23CECG04982	COUNTY OF FRESNO	12/4/2023	Private	MND	COM		LU
CITY OF VALLEJO	CITY OF AMERICAN CANYON, BY AND THROUGH THE CITY COUNCIL; and DOES 1 through 100, inclusive	23CV001600	Napa	12/7/2023	Private	EIR	GP		PA
STUDIO CITY RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION, ET AL.	CITY OF LOS ANGELES	23STCP04483	COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES	12/13/2023	Private	EIR	INST		COM
SAVE WEDDINGTON INC	CITY OF LOS ANGELES	23STCP04501	COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES	12/14/2023	Private	EIR	INST		COM
ADVOCATES FOR THE ENVIRONMENT	CITY OF FONTANA	CIVSB2332312	San Bernardino	12/14/2023	Private	EIR	IND		ENV
SIERRA CLUB	CITY OF FONTANA, ET AL.	CIVSB2332421	COUNTY OF SAN BERNARDINO	12/15/2023	Private	EIR	IND		ENV
FRIENDS OF THE RIVER, ET AL.	SITES PROJECT AUTHORITY, ET AL.	CV2023-2626	COUNTY OF YOLO	12/19/2023	Agency	EIR	WP		ENV
ANDREA GRANO, an individual	CITY OF LOS ANGELES, a municipal corporation, and DOES 1-25	23STCP04569	Los Angeles	12/20/2023	Private	Exemption	HO	Duplicate 20	IND
Total Cases		153							
Total Cases Challenging Housing Units (non-duplicative)		33							
Total Housing Units Challenged (non-duplicative)		8,617							

Appendix B: Detail for CEQA Litigation Rate Estimate

This Appendix describes the analysis undertaken to determine the total number of projects in California that required an EIR, a MND, or a Negative Declaration (collectively, “CEQA Review Document”) between 2013 and 2023. This number serves as the “denominator” in our calculation of CEQA litigation rates for those years.

For five sample jurisdictions, researchers for the 2016 Report compared the number of EIRs, MNDs, and Negative Declarations reported to CEQAnet between 2013 and 2015 to the total number of such documents prepared by the sampled jurisdictions during that period. As noted previously, prior to 2022, only projects with a statewide significance or state funding sources were required to be submitted to CEQAnet, so CEQAnet does not show all projects requiring CEQA Review Documents. Nevertheless, CEQAnet provided a baseline dataset from which to extrapolate the total number of projects statewide that required CEQA Review Documents.

Our research for this Report showed that the pattern of CEQAnet projects from 2013 to 2015 (the 2016 Report’s study period) and that for the 2016-2023 period has remained stable. Accordingly, the percentage of CEQA Review Documents reported to CEQAnet estimated for the 2013-2015 period could be applied to the subsequent time period.

The table below shows the number and type of submittals to CEQAnet for the 2013-2023 study period.

Appendix B1: CEQAnet Filings 2013-2023

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Total	Average
	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Total	2013-2023
CEQAnet Filings Re: CEQA Review Documents													
Negative Declarations	478	460	426	401	351	327	223	186	215	220	161	3,448	313
Mitigated Negative Declarations	1,054	1,272	1,240	1,213	1,214	1,139	1,163	1,177	1,160	1,345	1,278	13,255	1,205
EIRs	348	406	363	386	354	352	322	293	308	285	282	3,699	336
Subtotal	1,880	2,138	2,029	2,000	1,919	1,818	1,708	1,656	1,683	1,850	1,721	20,402	1,855
Other Environmental Filings in CEQAnet													
Notice of Exemptions	4,475	4,576	4,870	5,054	7,174	7,642	7,677	6,197	7,160	6,674	7,880	69,379	6,307
Other (a)	2,937	3,296	3,272	3,235	3,095	3,532	4,421	3,656	3,534	3,796	3,608	38,382	3,489
Subtotal	7,412	7,872	8,142	8,289	10,269	11,174	12,098	9,853	10,694	10,470	11,488	107,761	9,796
Total CEQAnet Filings	9,292	10,010	10,171	10,289	12,188	12,992	13,806	11,509	12,377	12,320	13,209	128,163	11,651
CEQAnet Review Docs as % of Total	20%	21%	20%	19%	16%	14%	12%	14%	14%	15%	13%	16%	16%

Notes:

a) CEQA Filings with Review Document represents the same subcategory of filings with CEQAnet that is used to estimate the total number of CEQA projects reviewed on a statewide basis (the denominator of the litigation rate formula). See the following table for the derivation of subsequent assumptions.

b) The Other category captures all other documents available on CEQAnet, including all notices, response to comments, tribal actions, revised/supplemental documents and addendums, and determinations/findings of no significant impact.

Sources: Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation, 2025; The Housing Workshop, 2025.

Appendix C: Detail for Housing-Related Lawsuits' Unit Counts

Appendix C1: Housing-Related CEQA Lawsuits' Unit Counts, 2022

Case Name (a)	Housing-Only Projects	Mixed Use Projects - Total Housing Units	Mixed Use Projects - Number of Housing Units (Annualized) (b)	Total Units Affected by Lawsuits
EAST OAKLAND STADIUM ALLIANCE, PACIFIC MERCHANT SHIPPING ASSOCIATION; HARBOR TRUCKING PROJECT FOR OPEN GOVERNMENT v. City of San Diego		3,000	400	400
LINCOLN HEIGHTS COMMUNITY COALITION v. City of Los Angeles, CA Department of Toxic Substances Control		1,800	400	400
UNITED BROADWAY, LLC v. City of Los Angeles		372	372	372
FRIENDS OF SOUTH CARTHAY v. City of Los Angeles		363	363	363
COUNTY OF COLUSA v. City of Colusa		290	290	290
COUNTY OF COLUSA v. City of Colusa		286	286	286
DANA ZINDERMANN v. City of Los Angeles		180	180	180
NORMAL HEIGHTS COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION v. City of San Diego		176	176	176
COALITION FOR SAFE COASTAL DEVELOPMENT v. City of Los Angeles		175	175	175
1000 FRIENDS PROTECTING HISTORIC BENICIA v. City of Benicia		140	140	140
SUPPORTERS ALLIANCE FOR ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY v. City of Los Angeles		138	138	138
CITIZENS PROTECTING SAN PEDRO v. City of Los Angeles		108	108	108
RESPONSIBLE URBAN DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE v. City of Los Angeles		100	100	100
ENCINITAS RESIDENTS FOR RESPONSIBLE DEVELOPMENT v. City of Encinitas	277		86	86
RIVERPARK COALITION v. City of Long Beach	226			226
BROOKE TERRACE SENIOR APARTMENTS, LLC v. City of Hemet	96			96
HOLT PARTNERS v. City of Los Angeles	80			80
JERALD PTASHKIN, and NICK HOGENDYK v. City of West Hollywood	79			79
ANNE SEGAL v. City of Santa Cruz	76			76
THE SILVER LAKE HERITAGE TRUST v. City of Los Angeles	70			70
WHITTIER CONSERVANCY v. City of Whittier	52			52
SOUTH ELISEO NEIGHBORHOOD ALLIANCE, DIANA HEDRICK and MARK SCHULMAN v. Marin County Community	50			50
RUSSELL CHARPENTIER, and WILLIAM BAKER v. City of Vallejo	48			48
SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA ORGANIZATION FOR PLANNING AND THE ENVIRONMENT, AND ADVOCATES FOR THE	37			37
SAVE REDLANDS ORANGE GROVES v. City of Redlands	28			28
FRIENDS OF NORTHWEST SEBASTOPOL v. City of Sebastopol	22			22
USC FORWARD v. City of Los Angeles	10			10
Jin Ser Park v. City of Pasadena	1			1
Total Housing Units Affected by 2022 Lawsuits	1,152	7,214	3,214	4,366
Total CA Housing Permits Issued in 2022 (c)				119,667
% of Housing Permits Represented by CEQA Lawsuits				3.6%

Note: These cases and unit counts are based on the full petition detail shown in Appendix A.

a) All unit counts shown are for unique projects. If more than one lawsuit was filed for the same project, the units are only counted once to avoid duplication.

b) For the very large mixed-use projects, unit counts were "annualized" for purposes of comparison to annual CA building permit data. This is because very large residential projects undergo CEQA review in total as a built-out project, but permits and actual unit construction are typically phased over many years.

c) See Appendix E3 for full residential building permit data.

Sources: US Census, Census of Building Permits; THW, 2025.

Appendix C2: Housing-Related CEQA Lawsuits' Unit Counts, 2023

Case Name (a)	Housing-Only Projects	Mixed Use Projects - Total Housing Units	Mixed Use Projects - Number of Housing Units (Annualized) (b)	Total Units Affected by Lawsuits
SIERRA CLUB; CENTER FOR BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY; and AQUALLIANCE v. City of Chico		2777	400	400
ADVOCATES FOR THE ENVIRONMENT v. City of Jurupa Valley		1,196	400	400
ZEKA RANCH, ONE, LLC; ZEKA RANCH, THREE, LLC; ZEKA RANCH, FOUR, LLC; ZEKA RANCH, FIVE, LLC; and ZEKA GROUP, INC. v. City of Antioch		440	400	400
SUPPORTERS ALLIANCE FOR ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY v. City of Long Beach		390	390	390
SUPPORTERS ALLIANCE FOR ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY v. City of Long Beach		390	390	390
UNITED BROADWAY, LLC v. City of Los Angeles		363	363	363
Pacific Bay Inn, Inc. v. City and County of San Francisco		266	266	266
SUPPORTERS ALLIANCE FOR ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY v. City of Pico Rivera		255	255	255
SUPPORTERS ALLIANCE FOR ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY v. City of Orange		225	225	225
LIVABLE VENTURA v. City of San Buenaventura		94	94	94
SUNSTAR ENTERPRISES CO, INC. v. City of Rosemead		93	93	93
CITIZENS AGAINST MARKET PLACE APARTMENT/CONDO DEVELOPMENT v. City of San Ramon		44	44	44
ROBERT DELP v. City of Folsom		2	2	2
MATTHEW DONALDSON and CAROL DONALDSON v. Monterey County		1	1	1
THE SEVEN HILLS SCHOOL v. Contra Costa County		454		454
SUPPORTERS ALLIANCE FOR ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY v. City of Inglewood		440		440
WESTLAKE SOUTH NEIGHBORS v. City of Los Angeles		294		294
CENTER FOR COMMUNITY ACTION AND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE v. City of Fontana		255		255
ENDANGERED HABITATS LEAGUE v. City of Encinitas		149		149
SUPPORTERS ALLIANCE FOR ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY v. City of Los Angeles		120		120
ST. HELENA CITIZENS FOR A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE & WATER AUDIT CALIFORNIA v. City of St. Helena		76		76
WEST ADAMS HERITAGE ASSOCIATION, and ADAMS SEVERANCE COALITION v. City of Los Angeles		52		52
MICHELLE LOUVIERE v. Kern County		50		50
Gabriel Jacobs v. City of Vista		46		46
PAJARO COMMUNITY MATTERS v. Monterey County		45		45
CITIZENS FOR A BETTER EUREKA v. City of Eureka		28		28
CITIZENS FOR A BETTER EUREKA v. City of Eureka		28		28
FRIENDS OF THE EQUESTRIAN BRIDGE v. City of Burbank		23		23
SAVE OUR HIGHLANDS v. San Mateo County		11		11
DAVID CURTIS v. Santa Cruz County		7		7
CRANE BOULEVARD SAFETY COALITION v. City of Los Angeles		1		1
LAGUNA BEACH COALITION FOR ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION v. City of Laguna Beach		1		1
PACIFICA SAN JUAN COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION v. City of San Juan Capistrano		1		1
Laguna Beach Historic Preservation Coalition and Catherine Jurca v. City of Laguna Beach		0		0
Total Housing Units Affected by 2023 Lawsuits	2,081	6,536	3,323	5,404
Total CA Housing Permits Issued in 2023 (c)				111,760
% of Housing Permits Represented by CEQA Lawsuits				4.8%

Note: These cases and unit counts are based on the full petition detail shown in Appendix A.

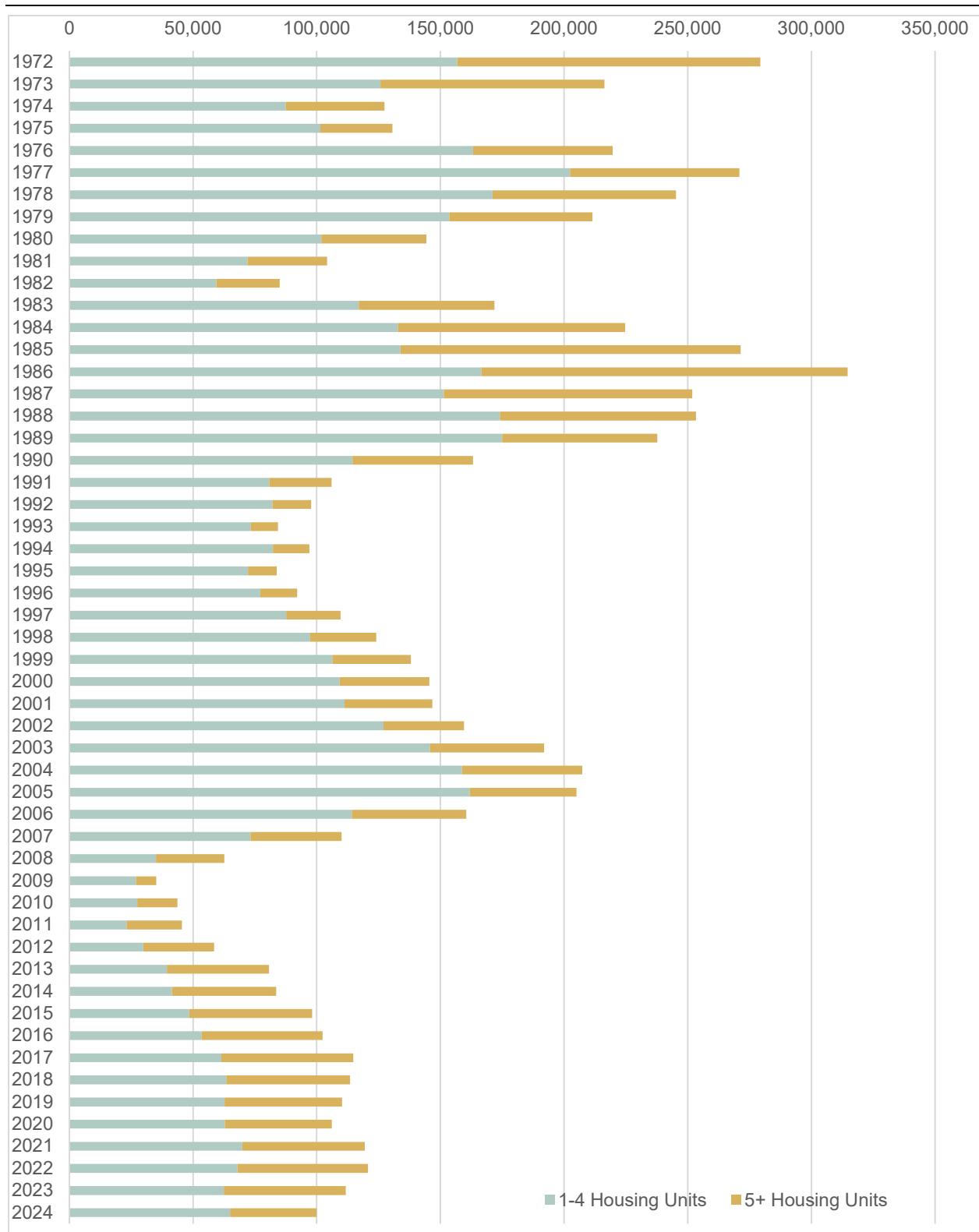
a) All unit counts shown are for unique projects. If more than one lawsuit was filed for the same project, the units are only counted once to avoid duplication.

b) For the very large mixed-use projects, unit counts were "annualized" for purposes of comparison to annual CA building permit data. This is because very large projects undergo CEQA review in total as a built-out project, but permits and actual unit construction are typically phased over many years.

c) See Appendix E3 for full residential building permit data.

Sources: US Census, Census of Building Permits; THW, 2025.

Appendix C3: California Residential Building Permits 1972-2024



Source: US Census Building Survey 2024