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through 09/15/2019

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Deva Marie Proto, County Clerk

BY:   
Julianna Garfia, Deputy Clerk

**Notice of Exemption Doc No.49-08152019-347**

To:  Office of Planning and Research  
P.O. Box 3044, Room 212  
Sacramento, CA 95812-3044

From: Sonoma County Water Agency  
404 Aviation Blvd.  
Santa Rosa, CA 95403

Sonoma County Clerk  
585 Fiscal Drive, Room 103  
Santa Rosa, CA 95403

**Project Title:** Sonoma Aqueduct Creek Crossings Vegetation Management Project (Project)

**Project Location - Specific:** Sonoma County Water Agency's (Sonoma Water's) Sonoma Aqueduct channel crossings at three sites: 1) over Sonoma Creek in Kenwood near Turtle Creek Drive (Latitude/Longitude 38.418399, -122.561337); 2) over Sonoma Creek in Eldridge near Madrone Road (38.338162, -122.50498); and 3) over an unnamed seasonal creek in Eldridge near Loma Vista Drive (38.33022, -122.505138). Please see attached Figure 1.

**Project Location – City:** Kenwood and Eldridge      **County:** Sonoma

**Description of Nature, Purpose and Beneficiaries of Project:** The Sonoma Aqueduct (Aqueduct) is the primary source of drinking water for customers of the Valley of the Moon Water District and City of Sonoma. Sonoma Water maintains a facility easement along the approximately 16-mile long Aqueduct pipeline. Though mostly underground, the Aqueduct includes aboveground sections at the three channel crossing sites (described above) that are susceptible to damage by falling trees. Failure of the Aqueduct would be of critical public health and safety concern. This project would manage existing trees within the easement that could potentially damage the Aqueduct due to their proximity, size and flammability. The project would include the removal and pruning of up to 20 native trees (alder, ash, bay, box elder, oak, willow) ranging in size from approximately 4- to 30-inch diameter at breast height (DBH) and 5 non-native eucalyptus trees ranging in size from approximately 30- to 60-inch DBH. Follow-up vegetation management, as well as the removal of downed woody material, would be conducted as needed to maintain access and clearance. No heavy equipment would enter the active channel. Tree stumps and root structures would be left in place to avoid ground disturbance. Cut stumps may be treated with herbicide approved for use near water to prevent regrowth. Cut material would be mulched onsite or hauled offsite.

**Name of Public Agency Approving Project:** Sonoma County Water Agency

**Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project:** Sonoma County Water Agency

**Exempt Status:** (check one)

- Ministerial (Sec. 21080(b)(1); 15268);
- Declared Emergency (Sec. 21080(b)(3); 15269(a));
- Emergency Project (Sec. 21080(b)(4); 15269(b)(c));
- Categorical Exemption. State type and section number: Section 15301, Class 1(b): Existing Facilities.
- Statutory Exemptions. State code number:

**Reasons why project is exempt:** The project would consist of pruning and removing trees that present a hazard to the Aqueduct and involves no expansion of use. The project would involve the pruning and removal of select vegetation for the purpose of protecting and maintaining the Aqueduct pipeline to deliver safe and reliable drinking water to the people and businesses within Sonoma Water's Valley of the Moon Water District and City of Sonoma service areas. The vegetation pruning and removal would be limited to three isolated narrow lengths of channel and would not cause significant impacts to shade over the channel or to the surrounding riparian corridor. Removal would reduce the volume of flammable non-native vegetation in the project area, and is anticipated to help promote native tree recruitment and establishment onsite. No work would be conducted in the water and the project would not cause ground disturbance. This maintenance project is exempt under CEQA Guidelines, Section 15301, Class 1(b): Existing Facilities because the Aqueduct is a public facility and the proposed project involves no expansion of use.

**Lead Agency Contact Person:** Candace Messner

**Telephone:** 707-524-6424

**Signature:** 

**Title:** General Manager

**Date:** 8/13/2019

Signed by Lead Agency

Signed by Applicant

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

AUG 15 2019

STATE CLEARINGHOUSE