

Notice of Intent to Adopt a Mitigated Negative Declaration



In accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (California Public Resources Code Sections 21000 et seq.) and CEQA Guidelines (Title 14, California Code of Regulations, Sections 15000 et seq.), Santa Clara Valley Water District (Valley Water), the lead agency under CEQA, has prepared a draft Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) for the Pacheco/Santa Clara Conduit Right-of-Way Acquisition Project to evaluate the environmental impacts associated with the project. Based on the IS/MND, potential significant impacts related to the project will be mitigated to less-than-significant. This is a Notice of Intent (NOI) to adopt a draft IS/MND for this project in accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15072.

Project Title:

Pacheco/Santa Clara Conduit Right-of-Way Acquisition Project

Project Description:

The project would include acquisition of easements and or installing/constructing one new path at the Santa Clara Conduit (SCC) Vault Site 8; and or installation/construction of gravel collars, driveways, gates, signs; and/or implementation of new travel routes near some of the 37 vaults on the existing PC and SCC conduits, as specified in the draft IS/MND.

Valley Water would obtain easements from private landowners near ten (10) vault locations and construct one new gravel path to provide all-weather access from the existing driveway at State Route 152 to SCC Vault Site 8. Valley Water also proposes implementation of 23 new off-road travel routes for more efficient travel and access to the vaults.

New gravel collars would be installed around the top (ground level) of 20 existing vaults to allow for safe access by maintenance personnel. The gravel collars would generally measure 32 feet by 32 feet or smaller.

Valley Water would construct five new driveways to provide access from public roads to the vault locations. Valley Water would construct one new sign. Sixteen new gates would also be constructed at 12 separate site locations near public roads to provide controlled access to vaults.

These improvements (obtaining easements and new construction) will allow new operational methods of pipeline and vault access and maintenance in areas where existing access is currently limited. The use of Valley Water all-terrain vehicles would reduce or minimize the impacts from larger vehicles during periods of wet or limiting conditions.

Project Location:

The Pacheco/Santa Clara Right-of-Way Acquisition Project is located within the unincorporated areas of Santa Clara and San Benito counties. It runs south of the Coyote Pump Station (City of Morgan Hill) along a path similar and near to the US Highway 101 freeway heading south into San Benito County and then runs east similar and near the State Route 152 in San Benito County and back into Santa Clara County heading towards San Luis Reservoir.

Project Review:

The Draft IS/MND will be posted electronically for review on the Valley Water's website at <https://www.valleywater.org/public-review-documents>. The NOI will also be posted at the County of Santa Clara Clerk Recorder Office, the County of San Benito County Clerk Recorder Office, and the State Clearinghouse. Due to the current shelter in place order, hard copies of the Draft IS/MND will not be available for public review.

The public comment period on the Draft IS/MND will run for 30 days upon Valley Water electronic posting of the document beginning **Friday, Jan. 8, 2021**. During this public review period, Valley Water will accept written hard copy and electronic comments on the project.

Comments on the Draft MND should be submitted via US mail or electronically. The public comment period closes at **5 p.m. on Monday, Feb. 8, 2021**.

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