Notice of Exemption

To:

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

County Clerk
Riverside County

From:

State of California Department of Water Resources
770 Fairmont Ave, Suite 200
Glendale, CA 91203-1035

Project Title: Installation and Operation of Temescal Wash Stream Gage – Corona South

Project Applicant: State of California Department of Water Resources (DWR)

Projection Location – City: Corona **Project Location – County:** Riverside County

Project Location - Specific: The proposed site location is in the Temescal Wash about 0.3-miles downstream of the Cajalco Road bridge crossing in Corona, CA 92881, along the levee access road and east of the adjacent Calajco-Temescal Storage & RV Center. The Project location is generally described by latitude and longitude coordinates of 33.827369, -117.510563 and is within the United States Geological Survey 7.5' quadrangle "Corona South" and the Public Land Survey System T4S R6W S16, San Bernardino Baseline and Meridian. The Project would be constructed and operated on property owned by Temescal Canyon RV and the Riverside-Corona Resource Conservation District, both of which have granted permission for this Project.

Temescal Wash is an approximately 29-mile-long watercourse in Riverside County. It flows primarily in a northwestern direction and hydrologically connects the San Jacinto River and Lake Elsinore watersheds to the Santa Ana watershed. Temescal Wash is ephemeral for most of its length for it flows through an arid rain shadow zone of the Santa Ana Mountains and is used for groundwater recharge.

The proposed gaging station would be installed between the existing levee access road and Temescal Wash. The conduit runs down the top of the levee and over the streambed into the Temescal Wash.

Description of Nature, Purpose, and Beneficiaries of Project: Under the hydrological data collection objective of the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA), the Department of Water Resources proposes to deploy a network of stream gages in high and medium priority groundwater basins to reduce data gaps in the existing stream gage network. The improved network would provide essential data needed to improve water management and to help protect fish and wildlife. The proposed station will monitor water levels in the Temescal Wash and collect data for analysis of groundwater recharge and flooding in the basin.

The proposed project consists of installation of a NEMA 30" Weigmann enclosure, which contains the Data Collection Platform to store the data, radio to transmit the data, battery to power the unit, desiccant container, and a gas purge compressor that generates a steady pressure of air through the

bubbler line that is used to calculate the stream height when surface water is flowing. The bubbler conduit would run parallel to the slope of the streambank, laying on top of the existing riprap protecting the streambank, secured in place by 0.5" diameter U-shaped rebar anchors. The conduit would meet the streambed and extend less than 1' across into the streambed to its endpoint. Solar panels, a GPS antenna on top of the NEMA box, and a Geostationary Operational Environmental Satellite (GOES) antenna would sit atop the pole carrying the solar panel. The NEMA Box itself would be mounted on two 2" diameter galvanized iron pipes which would be embedded in a hole approximately 8" diameter by 2' deep, filled with concrete during installation.

The installation would take no more than a few days, would take place mostly on existing developed portions of the drainage, would be minimally intrusive, and would result in minimal impact to habitats, wildlife, and or to the waters of the State or the US. Handheld power tools would be used to dig the hole embedding the galvanized iron pipes.

Department of Water Resources (DWR) staff would operate and maintain the gaging station, visiting the site for routine maintenance and repairs and to download data manually for verification purposes, up to six times in a year. Additionally, after initial installation, staff would visit the site after storm events to take depth and flow measurements necessary to develop a rating curve. The data collected from the station would be available publicly through the California Data Exchange and the Water Data Library and shared with local agency partners if requested.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: State of California Department of Water Resources

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: State of California Department of Water Resource-

Exempt Status: Categorical Exemption Information Collection, Class 6, 15306, Title 14 CCR

Reason why project is exempt: A list of special status plant and wildlife species with the potential to occur within the project area has been compiled based on a literature search of the California Department of Fish and Wildlife's (CDFW) California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB). A Field survey was conducted to identify potential biological resources within the project vicinity and determined a minimal probability of special status species on the proposed Project site. The nearby encompassing area has the potential to serve as suboptimal habitat for *Vireo bellii pusillus*, *Empidonax traillii*, *Empidonax traillii extimus*, *Polioptila californica californica*, and *Bombus croutchii*. Most of the proposed activities would take place on developed portions of the drainage. The conduit may lay across a mixture of invasive *Bromes* and thistles (*Salsola tragus, Centaurea solstitialis)* well as some typical wetland/riparian plants like *Baccharis salicifolia*, *Encelia farinosa*, *Artemisia californica*, and *Lotus scoparius* in the streambed, but no existing native vegetation would be removed. The installation of the stream gage would not significantly disturb the local ecology. No large machinery equipment would be utilized, and ground disturbance would be minimal. The proposed construction activities would take place outside of nesting season (February 15 to September 15) to mitigate impact to the local and migratory bird population. Impacts to plants, wildlife, or cultural resources would be minimal. There would be minimal impact to the streambed and streambank in the Temescal Wash. Therefore, no environmental regulatory permits would be required.

Lead Agency Contact Person: Albert Lu

Area Code/Telephone/Extension: (818) 549-2330

If filed by applicant:

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

Signature: Thang Nguyen **Date:** 7/29/2021 **Title:** Manager, Southern Region Office

☑ Signed by Lead Agency ☐ Signed by Applicant

Date Received for filing at OPR: _____

Authority Cited: Sections 21083 and 21110, Public Resources Code.
Reference: Sections 21108, 21152, and 21152.1, Public Resources Code.