

CITY OF SANTA CRUZ

Notice of Exemption

To: Clerk of the Board
County of Santa Cruz
Governmental Center
701 Ocean Street
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

Office of Planning and Research
1400 Tenth Street, Room 121
Sacramento, CA 95814

From: City of Santa Cruz Water Department, 212 Locust Street, Suite C, Santa Cruz, CA 95060

Project Title: Aquifer Storage and Recovery Demonstration Program at Beltz 12 Well

Project Address: 2750 Research Park Drive
Santa Cruz, CA 95073

Assessor's Parcel Number(s): 030-181-70

City of: Santa Cruz

County of: Santa Cruz

Project Description: The City of Santa Cruz (City) Water Department is proposing to conduct an extended pilot test, or demonstration test program, at the City's existing Beltz 12 well facility in line with the Aquifer Storage and Recovery (ASR) General Waste Discharge Requirements set forth by the State Water Resource Control Board (Water Quality Order 2012-0010). The City previously completed a pilot test program at the Beltz 12 well in 2019 to assess water quality impacts and well plugging rates from injection of excess surface water into the local groundwater basin (Mid-County Groundwater Basin) and subsequent recovery of injected water. The results of the prior pilot test were favorable and supportive of a long-term, full-scale ASR project at Beltz 12 well. The City is planning to continue the ASR pilot testing program in order to gain operational data to support planning and design of a permanent ASR program.

Implementation of the ASR demonstration program at Beltz 12 will require permitting with the Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) under Water Quality Order 2012-0010 and temporary modifications to the well and facility to prepare for ASR operations. Temporary injection piping will be installed to convey treated source water from the distribution system to the well. Injection drop tubes will be installed within the well to control injection flows downhole. Additionally, dedicated sampling pumps will be installed at the three existing nearby Cory Street monitoring wells to allow for collection of water quality samples during the program.

Injection would occur during the winter/spring months when excess flows are available, followed by storage and subsequent recovery of the injected water when necessary to meet customer demands during the summer/fall months. It is anticipated that the injection period would occur between January and April 2022, the storage period would occur between May and June 2022, and the recovery period would occur between July and September 2022.

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: City of Santa Cruz Water Department

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: City of Santa Cruz

Exempt Status: (check one)

- Ministerial Project (Public Resources Code §21080(b)(1); 14 Cal. Code Regs §15268).
- Categorically Exempt (14 Cal Code Regs §15306).
- Declared Emergency (Public Resources Code §21080(b)(3); 14 Cal Code Regs §15269(a)).
- Emergency Project (Public Resources Code §21080(b)(4); 14 Cal Code Regs §15269(b)(c)).
- Statutory Exemption (Code/Section NA).
- The project clearly will not have a significant effect on the environment (14 Cal Code Regs §15061(b)(3)).

Reasons why project is exempt:

The project is exempt under California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines §15306 for basic data collection, research, experimental management and resource evaluation activities that do not result in a serious or major disturbance to an environmental resource. The proposed project activities would occur within a previously disturbed site in a developed area of Santa Cruz County and would not affect sensitive or protected natural resources. None of the exceptions stipulated in CEQA Guidelines §15300.2 would preclude the project from the use of an exemption. The project would obtain all necessary approvals from the RWQCB for water quality monitoring and reporting prior to implementation. For these reasons, the proposed project is exempt under CEQA.

Lead Agency

Contact Person: Kevin Crossley

Phone: (831) 420-5356

Department: City of Santa Cruz Water Department

Address: 212 Locust Street, Suite C
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

Signature: 

Date: 10-13-21

Signed by Lead Agency

Title: Interim Deputy Director/Engineering Manager

Signed by Applicant

Date Received for Filing at County Clerk: _____

Date Received for Filing at OPR: _____