

**SOUTH COAST WATER DISTRICT
Notice of Exemption**

To: Office of Planning and Research
1400 Tenth Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

From: SOUTH COAST WATER DISTRICT
31592 West Street
Laguna Beach CA 92651

Project Title: Joint Regional Water Supply System Chlorine Booster Station and Loop Pipeline System Improvements

Project Location – Specific: Joint Transmission Main (JTM) Easement, Old Pacific Highway, San Onofre
City: Camp Pendleton (nearest) **County:** San Diego

Description of Nature, Purpose and Beneficiaries of Project: The Joint Transmission Main (JTM) is a water pipeline that was constructed in 1961 to convey potable water from a Metropolitan Water District (MWD) connection in Irvine, California to cities in southern Orange County, ending in northern San Diego County at the San Onofre State Park San Onofre Bluffs Campground. Collectively, these facilities comprise the Joint Regional Water Supply System (JRWSS), a section of which is contract operated by South Coast Water District (“District”). Closure of the San Onofre Nuclear Generating Station (SONGS) has led to a significant reduction in water supplied by the JRWSS pipeline. The lower flow has resulted in a longer residency time and inconsistent chloramine residual at the downstream end of the JWRSS.

The District plans to install a chlorine booster station, re-circulating pump, and a loop pipeline (collectively, the “Project”) to maintain chloramine residual that meets State standards. A new 3-inch recirculating loop pipeline of approximately 5,460-feet in length would be installed within the existing and additional JRWSS 20-foot easement in Unnamed Loop Road and Old Pacific Highway as illustrated in Figure 1. The chlorine booster station and re-circulating pump would be on a mobile trailer located adjacent to the existing JRWSS pipeline as illustrated in Figure 2.

Initial work would include surveys and location of all water, sewer, electrical, gas service, and other utilities along the Project alignment. Following the installation of traffic controls, the new pipeline alignment would be excavated with an approximately 2.5-foot wide, 4-foot-deep trench in the road, and the pipe would be installed in a sequence to be determined by the construction contractor. Following pipeline installation, the pipeline trench would be backfilled, and the asphalt road surface would be restored. No trees or other vegetation would be removed for construction

Construction of the loop pipeline is expected to be completed in approximately 5 weeks with anticipated start of construction in the second quarter of 2022. Construction would be generally scheduled between 7 a.m. and 6 p.m., Monday through Friday.

Exempt Status (check one)

- Ministerial (Sec. 15073)
- Declared Emergency (Sec. 15071 (a))
- Emergency Project (Sec. 15073(b) and (c))
- Categorical Exemption. State type and section number: *Section 15302 (Class 2) (c) categorically exempt replacement or reconstruction of existing utility systems and/or facilities involving negligible or no expansion of capacity. Section 15304 (Class 4) categorically exempt minor alterations to land.*

Reason why project is exempt: See Attachment A

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: South Coast Water District

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: South Coast Water District

Lead Agency Contact Person: Marc Serna, Assistant General Manager

Area Code / Telephone / Extension: (949) 499-4555



Signature

1/12/22

Date

Title: Assistant General Manager

Signed by Lead Agency

Signed by Applicant

Date received for filing at OPR: _____

Attachment A Supplemental Information

Project Location

South Coast Water District (“District”) plans to install a chlorine booster station, re-circulating pump, and a loop pipeline (collectively, the “Project”) to maintain chloramine residual that meets State standards. A new 3-inch recirculating loop pipeline of approximately 5,460-feet in length would be installed within the existing and additional JRWSS 20-foot easement in Unnamed Loop Road and Old Pacific Highway as illustrated in Figure 1. The chlorine booster station and re-circulating pump would be on a mobile trailer located adjacent to the existing JRWSS pipeline as illustrated in Figure 2.

Construction Methods

Initial work would include surveys and location of all water, sewer, electrical, gas service, and other utilities along the Project alignment. Following the installation of traffic controls, the new pipeline alignment would be excavated with an approximately 2.5-foot wide, 4-foot-deep trench in the road, and the pipe would be installed in a sequence to be determined by the construction contractor. Following pipeline installation, the pipeline trench would be backfilled, and the asphalt road surface would be restored. No trees or other vegetation would be removed for construction.

Construction of the loop pipeline is expected to be completed in approximately 5 weeks with anticipated start of construction in the second quarter of 2022. Construction would be generally scheduled between 7 a.m. and 6 p.m., Monday through Friday.

Vegetation and Habitat

Project construction would be conducted within the paved surface of the existing and additional JRWSS 20-foot easement in Unnamed Loop Road and Old Pacific Highway (Figures 1, 3, and 4). Adjacent vegetation and habitats consist of ruderal/disturbed vegetation and disturbed Coastal Sage Scrub.¹ No vegetation or habitat would be removed or disturbed during project construction. Examination of the project location indicates there are no unusual circumstances associated with the project that would require further environmental review.

Protection Measures

Project construction is within the paved road surface; however, the project includes preparation of a Storm Water Control Plan with specifications and measures to avoid potential water runoff and erosion from the construction work areas. These measures include implementation of Best Management Practices to prevent polluted discharges from entering streets, gutters, or storm drains.

Vegetation that is near the road presents the potential for wildfires. Prior to construction activities on the project site, the District will verify that the following measures are incorporated into construction contracts:

- No welding or similar activities will occur near vegetation surrounding the work sites.
- Each support vehicle (pick-ups and others) used on the project site must be equipped with a Class A fire extinguisher readily accessible for use in the event of a fire.
- The construction contractor must have a designated employee responsible for fire safety onsite during all construction activity.
- The construction contractor must closely monitor for ignited vegetation from equipment and tool use.
- The construction contractor must observe no-work days on Red Flag Days and during Fire Weather Watch warnings.
- The construction contractor must properly handle and store flammable materials, minimize potential ignition sources

¹ California State Lands Commission. 2019. Final EIR for the San Onofre Nuclear Generating Station Units 2 & 3 Decommissioning Project. Figure 4.4-1.

- The construction contractor must prohibit smoking at all work sites.
- The construction contractor must have spark arresters on gasoline, diesel, and propane-powered equipment.

Land Use and Site Access

Construction work will be temporary and there are no project activities that are incompatible with surrounding land uses. Prior to construction, the contractor will prepare Traffic Control Plans to maintain at least one open lane of traffic each direction on Unnamed Loop Road and Old Pacific Highway.

SONGS Access Driveways (entrances).

San Onofre Nuclear Generating Station (SONGS) has three access driveways: northern, middle, and southern. The driveways provide restricted access, through security gates, to the SONGS site. Prior to construction, the contractor will prepare a Traffic Control Plans to maintain unrestricted access to SONGS driveways.

Finding - CEQA (Exempt): The project is exempt from environmental review with the following findings:

- (a) CEQA Guidelines list classes of projects that have been determined to not have a significant effect on the environment and are therefore exempt from the provisions of CEQA.
 - Section 15302 (Class 2) (c) categorically exempt replacement or reconstruction of existing utility systems and/or facilities involving negligible or no expansion of capacity. The proposed recirculating pipeline will not change the capacity or operation of the existing JRWSS pipeline in any way.
 - Section 15304 (Class 4) categorically exempt minor alterations to land. The proposed project consists of only minor alterations to land. The surface of the roadway and work areas will be restored when work is completed.
- (b) The project pipeline alignment is within the paved surface of roads without natural or native vegetation that does not provide habitat for any sensitive species. No sensitive habitat or special status species would be adversely affected by the project.
- (c) Review by District staff indicates there are no unusual circumstances associated with the project or the pipeline alignment that would require further environmental review.

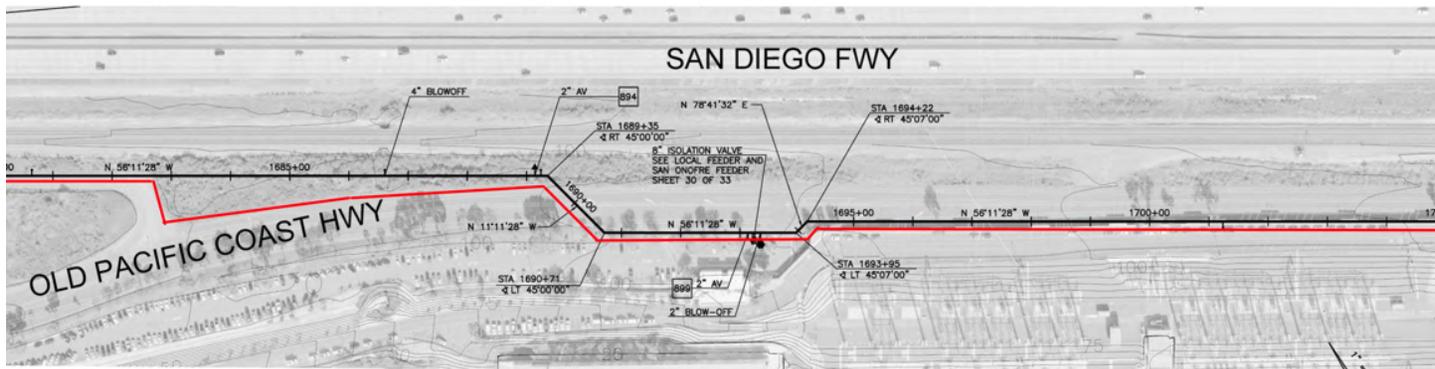
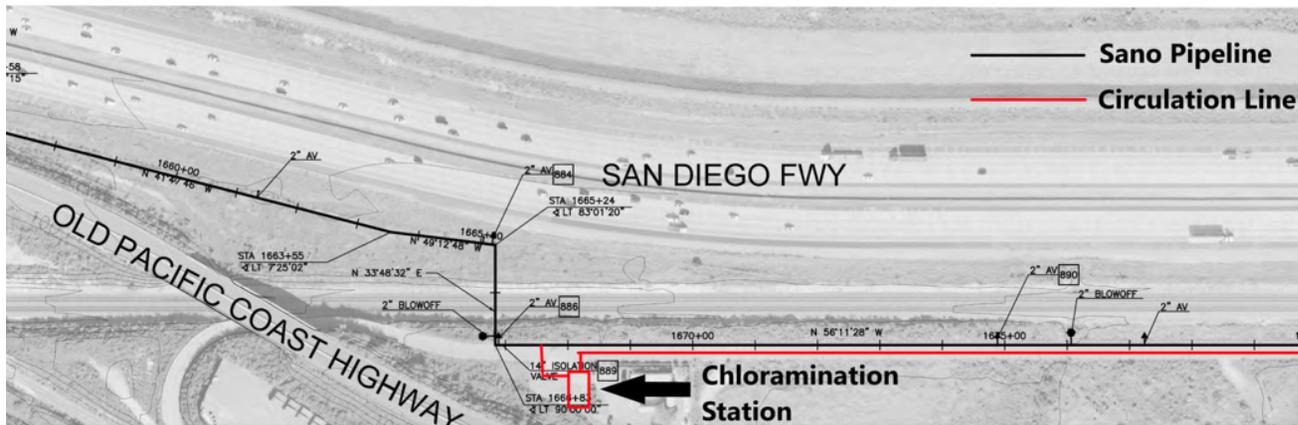


Figure 1. Proposed alignment of new 3-inch recirculating loop pipeline within the existing JRWSS 20-foot easement in Unnamed Loop Road and Old Pacific Highway.



Figure 2. Photograph of proposed location of chlorine booster station and recirculating pump, adjacent to Unnamed Loop Road.



Figure 3. Photograph of proposed location of recirculating loop pipeline within Unnamed Loop Road.



Figure 4. Photograph of proposed location of recirculating loop pipeline within Old Pacific Highway.