



CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

To: Sonoma County Clerk
2300 County Center Drive, Suite B-177
Santa Rosa, CA 95403

From: City of Healdsburg
Community Development Department
401 Grove Street
Healdsburg, CA 95448
Planning 707-431-3346

Office of Planning and Research
PO Box 3044, Room 113
Sacramento CA 95812-3044

Project Title: Water Reclamation Facility Flood Control Project
Project Applicant: City of Healdsburg, 401 Grove Street, Healdsburg, CA 95448
Project Location: 340 Foreman Lane, Healdsburg, CA 95448 (APN: 110-130-023, -029)

Description of nature, purpose and beneficiaries of project:

The flooding in late February 2019 resulted in more than \$1.6 million in damage City-wide and approximately \$710,000 in damages occurred at the Water Reclamation Facility. Equipment was damaged in the Filtrate Pumping Gallery, Solids Handling Pump Gallery, Industrial Group Office/tool storage, pump shop/spare part storage, Non-potable Water Pump Station, and Plant Drain Pump Station. Several inches of water entered the control building. Four feet of water entered the industrial group office and tool storage building. During the flood event wastewater treatment was halted for four days as the necessary equipment was not operational. During the four-day period untreated wastewater was held in the storage ponds. If the flood event had continued for a longer period untreated wastewater would likely have been discharged into the Russian River.

In late 2019, the City applied for and was granted funds (FEMA) in 2021 to construct a berm on the east side of the Water Reclamation Facility. The berm will mitigate the risk of flooding of the Water Reclamation Facility (WRF) buildings and grounds. The berm will be roughly 600 feet in length, curving around the east side of the facility grounds. It will create an earthen barrier approximately 2.5 feet taller than the current ground level (approximately one foot higher than the water level during the February flood). The inward edge will have a 2:1 slope and the outward edge will have a 3:1 slope. The top of the berm will be five feet. The berm will connect to the Reclamation Pond embankment to the north to the Equalization Pond embankment to the south. The berm and pond embankments will enclose three buildings (control building, industrial group office, and blower building) and three process areas (plant drain pump station / septage receiving, filtrate pump gallery, solids handling gallery). Borrow material for the berm will be sourced onsite for most of the berm. The berm at the WRF entry road will be constructed of imported aggregate base material. The reconstructed entry road will be paved with asphalt concrete.

A 200-foot-long section of the facility's existing concrete driveway would be removed, the berm would be built across the road footprint, and then the road would be reconstructed over the berm and paved with asphalt concrete. A new 36-inch diameter, 10-foot-deep dry well would be installed near the northeast corner of the berm to provide drainage. A slide gate will be installed on the culvert to the storm drain sump area and on the parking area drain sump. A concrete box will be required at both locations for installation of the slide gates.

Utility work would be limited to reconfiguring existing storm drain culverts through the berm with metal slide gates to control flow. Staging would be within the existing facility, either on paved or previously graded areas. The project area is surrounded by agricultural land uses. The total area of ground disturbance would be approximately 1.7 acres.

The on-site borrow area is on the southeast side of the WRF and has served as the site of spoils stockpiling for other City construction projects. The borrow area would be regraded, lowering the grade by approximately two feet on the west side of the borrow area and generally matching the existing grade on the east side.

Summary: The berm will protect the buildings and machinery that were flooded. This was an unusual flooding event that may be more common with an increase in severe climate events. The design of the berm will allow the facility to be protected from a large atmospheric river rainfall event. Interruptions in Wastewater Reclamation Facility operations impact the more than 12,500 residents of the City of Healdsburg, as well as a large population downstream of the Water Reclamation Facility, that could be impacted if the Facility is not able to provide treatment to the influent wastewater. Protecting the pumps and motors within the facility will provide continuous service to the people and businesses in the City and maintain water quality downstream. FEMA (Project HMGP 4434-43-11) determined that this project is Categorical Excluded from the need to prepare either an Environmental Impact Statement or Environmental Assessment as the project meets Categorical Exclusion N9 (Federal Assistance for Flood Hazard Reduction Action). FEMA also determined that the project will not occur within a regulatory floodway or floodplain or wetlands, therefore no impacts to these features are anticipated.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: City of Healdsburg

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: City of Healdsburg, Electric, Water and Wastewater Department

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: Type and Section Number:
- Statutory Exemption. Code Number: _____

Reasons project is exempt:

The project meets criteria for CEQA Exemption as the berm and related improvements are necessary to prevent or mitigate future flooding impacts at the existing wastewater treatment facility. Flooding may be more common with an increase in climate events.

Lead Agency Contact: Scott M. Duiven **Area**
Code/Telephone: 707-431-4463

Signature: Scott M. Duiven **Date:** 01/31/22 **Title:** Community Development Dir.

Signed by Lead Agency Signed by Applicant

If filed by applicant:

1 Attach certified document of exemption finding

2. Has NOE been filed by the public agency approving the project? Yes No