

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 Canyon Lake Stream Gage

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

Projection Location – City: Corona

Project Location – County: Riverside

Project Location - Specific: The proposed site is located in the northwest corner of Temescal Canyon Lake just south of All American Way in Corona, CA 92879, and about 0.3 miles from the County gate at Sherborn St., along the levee access road. The project location is generally described by latitude and longitude coordinates of 33.867241, -117.530467, and is mapped on the United States Geological Survey Lake Mathews 7.5' quadrangle. The Project would be constructed and operated on property owned by the Riverside County, which granted permission for this Project.

Temescal Wash (or Temescal Creek) is an approximately 29-mile-long ephemeral stream in Riverside County originating from Lake Elsinore and connecting to the Santa Ana River. It flows primarily in a northwesterly direction.

The proposed gaging station would be installed on bare ground next to the levee access road with the bubbler line running down along the slope of the bank into the lake and the equipment box enclosure on top of the bank. Initial installation and subsequent maintenance would require technicians to briefly access Temescal Canyon Lake on foot.

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 would monitor water levels in Temescal Canyon Lake and collect data for analysis of groundwater recharge and flooding in the Upper Santa Ana Valley - Temescal groundwater basin.

The proposed project consists of installation of a 30 in. x 30 in. x 10 in. steel NEMA box 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 stage height of the lake. The bubbler conduit would run

parallel to the slope of the lake bank, secured in place by 0.5" diameter U-shaped rebar anchors. The conduit would extend into the lake in order to measure the stage height. Solar panels and a GPS antenna will be attached on top of a pole extending from the NEMA box as well as a Geostationary Operational Environmental Satellite (GOES) antenna. The NEMA box is mounted on two 2 in. diameter galvanized iron pipes embedded in a hole approximately 8 in. diameter and 2 ft. deep, filled with concrete using hand tools.

The installation would take no more than two to three days without the use of heavy equipment, would be minimally intrusive, and would result in minimal impact to habitats, wildlife, aesthetics, and to the waters of the State or the US. Handheld power tools would be used to dig the hole for the concrete pad.

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 may 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 Center 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 Resources

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 (CNDDDB). 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 habitat upon which the proposed project would be installed on is heavily disturbed and generally unsuitable for native flora and fauna. The local biota consists of typical wetland/riparian tree species of the Riverside region. The proposed project area contains mostly *Arundo donax*, an invasive species, on the lake bank. 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. A pre-construction survey for bird nests and burrowing owl would be conducted within 3 days prior to start of construction. No pedestrian or vehicle traffic restrictions would be necessary during the installation or operation of the proposed project. Impacts to biological, water, air, aesthetic and cultural resources would be minimal. There would be minimal impact to the lakebed of Temescal Canyon Lake. 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: Vic Nguyen **Date:** 6/8/2022 **Title:** Regional Manager, Southern R

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.