

State of California
Governor's Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES)

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

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

FROM: Office of Emergency Services
3650 Schriever Ave
Mather, CA 95655

PROJECT TITLE: Seismic Monitoring Station

COUNTY: Merced

PROJECT APPLICANT: UC Berkeley Seismological Lab

PROJECT LOCATION: Piedra Azul, a private property (BK.AZUL), Lat/Long: at 36.81104, -120.98441, Dot Map ID: NS0072

DESCRIPTION OF PURPOSE AND NATURE OF THE PROJECT:

This new station will contribute to the CA Earthquake Early Warning System (CEEWS) designed to potentially save thousands of lives during a large earthquake, prevent critical infrastructure damage and expedite recovery following a large earthquake. The network to which this sensor is connected will contribute real-time data to accurately record and warn people of strong shaking due to earthquakes in the region, and help provide records of ground motion that would be of immense scientific, engineering and public safety value.

Under a five-year lease with property owner, UC BSL plans to install and operate an outdoor seismic monitoring station at the Lat/Long location noted above. Three-day installation will take place in a roughly 36-sq.-ft. area, to install two small structures: 1. 4'x3'x10" sensor vault set on a 6" concrete base, with two attached PVC-pipe postholes (10" diameter) running from center of vault, to a maximum of 10' into the ground, leading to two seismometers (1 strong motion accelerometer and 1 broadband seismometer); 2. 4'x3'x6" concrete base on which a battery box, solar panel equipment, antenna mounts, and communications equipment are housed; and 3. 10'x15'x5' fence around site, with fence posts placed 1' deep in 4" diameter holes. A flexible conduit 1' deep and 5" wide will connect the two structures. Grounding rods will be inset next to the equipment to protect the site from lightning strikes. Holes for the vault, solar panel mount, and antenna and fence poles will be dug by a small backhoe or hand-operated auger. Access to site is entirely by existing roads and trails. There are no hazardous substances involved. If needed, a small generator (~8 KW) will be used to power a hand-loaded concrete mixer and any other tools needed for the work.

PUBLIC AGENCY APPROVING PROJECT: Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES)

DIVISION OR UNIT CARRYING OUT PROJECT: CA Earthquake Early Warning Program

EXEMPT STATUS:

Categorical Exemption. Class 3, CEQA Guidelines Section 15303 (New Construction), Class 4 Section 15304 (Minor Alterations to Land) and Class 6 Section 15306 (Information Collection).

REASONS WHY PROJECT IS EXEMPT:

This project is exempt in accordance with Class 3 as described above; construction of new small weatherproof enclosures to operate seismic sensor equipment for the purpose of data collection (Class 6). In accordance with Class 4, the project described above consists of minor public or private alterations in the condition of land and/or vegetation which do not involve removal of healthy, mature, scenic trees. None of the exceptions to a notice of exemption apply.

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SIGNED BY LEAD AGENCY:

Signature: _____

Title: Program Manager II

Date: 6/26/2023