

Notice of Exemption

Fee Exempt per Government Code Section 6103

To: Office of Planning and Research
P.O. Box 3044, Room 113
Sacramento, CA 95812-3044

From: California Department of Water Resources
San Luis Field Division, 31770 Gonzaga Rd
Gustine, CA 95322

Lead Agency: California Department of Water Resources

Project Title: Romero Visitor Center Sewer Line Inspection

Project Location City & County: Merced County

Project Location – Specific: The Romero Visitor Center is located approximately 4.6 miles southwest of the unincorporated town of Santa Nella and approximately 2.3 miles northwest of the Department of Water Resources (DWR) San Luis Operations and Maintenance Center. Work will occur northeast of the Romero Visitor Center and to the east of its parking lot.

Description of Nature, Purpose, and Beneficiaries of Project: DWR's San Luis Field Division will inspect the existing septic tank and underground sewer line for the State Water Project's Romero Visitor Center. Waste from the septic tank will be pumped and taken offsite. A sewer pipe inspection robot with a camera will be inserted into the sewer line to trace its alignment. This will be done to determine if the sewer line's location matches the original blueprint of the sewer line. While the alignment of the sewer line is being traced, the line will also be inspected for any potential breaks or leaks. If any breaks in the sewer line are detected, soil sampling will be conducted within an approximately 131,966-square foot work area. Soil samples will be collected using a protocol developed by the San Luis Field Division. A hand auger will be used to drill test holes along the sewer line. The test holes will range between 6 to 10 inches in diameter and up to 7 feet below ground. If the soil is too hard to use a hand auger, a backhoe will be used to dig test holes up to 30 inches long by 30 inches wide and 7 feet deep. Soil samples will be collected from all test holes. Once soil sampling is completed, all test holes will be backfilled and compacted to the original grade. The soil samples will be analyzed offsite. The State Water Project will benefit.

Exempt/Suspend Status:

- Ministerial (§21080[b][1]; 15268)
- Declared Emergency (Proclamation of a State of Emergency Due to Drought)
- Emergency Project (Public Resources Code §21080[b][4]; California Code of Regulations §15269[c])
- Categorical Exemption: 15306 – Information Collection
- Statutory Exemptions:

Reasons Why Project Is Exempt: Work consists of using a sewer inspection robot and camera to collect information on the alignment and condition of an existing septic tank and sewer line. If potential breaks or leaks are identified, soil samples will be collected and analyzed to assess if further action is required. Work will not result in a disturbance to an environmental resource, Categorical Exemption 15306 applies.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: Department of Water Resources

Contact Person: Cody Nelson

Telephone: (209) 827-5190

Signature: Cody Nelson **Date:** 10/2/2023 **Title:** Planner/Scheduler/UC Supv.

Signed by Lead Agency

Signed by Applicant