

## 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 Road  
Gustine, CA 95322

**Lead Agency:** California Department of Water Resources

**Project Title:** Romero Visitor Center Pipeline Repair

**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 take place on a slope that is about 300 feet northeast of the Romero Visitor Center; the slope is located between the visitor center's parking lot and existing oxidization ponds. The total work area where repair will take place is approximately 131,966 square feet.

**Description of Nature, Purpose, and Beneficiaries of Project:** DWR's San Luis Field Division (SLFD) will perform repairs to a septic system pipeline from the Romero Visitor Center to nearby oxidation ponds. This pipeline is about eight to ten feet beneath the ground. First, a vacuum truck will be used to fully clean and remove any waste from the septic tank and pipeline. Then, to access the pipeline for repairs, two 15-foot by 15-foot by 8-foot areas will be excavated. One of these excavations will be located about 20 feet east of the existing paved parking lot. The second excavation will be about 380 feet northeast from the first excavation and is within the fenced area enclosing the oxidation ponds. Once exposed, the existing 4-inch cast iron pipe will be removed. Any still useable portions of the removed cast iron pipe will be cleaned and descaled. A hydraulic winch will then be used to push new, 4-inch, high density polyethylene (HDPE) pipe from the excavation east of the parking lot down to the excavation near the oxidation ponds; any reusable portions of the cast iron pipe may be incorporated. If necessary, a third 15-foot by 15-foot by 8-foot excavation will be made between the other two excavations to make installation of the new pipeline easier; this excavation would be about 250 feet southwest of the oxidation ponds. Following the repairs, all excavations will be backfilled and compacted. Work is necessary to maintain the operation and integrity of an existing pipeline; the State Water Project will benefit from this project.

### 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: 15301 – Existing Facilities
- Statutory Exemptions:

**Reasons Why Project Is Exempt:** Work involves repairing an existing pipeline, there will be no expansion of existing or former use of the pipeline or septic system. Categorical Exemption 15301 (Existing Facilities) applies.

**Name of Public Agency Approving Project:** Department of Water Resources

**Contact Person:** Cody Nelson

**Telephone:** 209-827-5190

**Signature:** Cody Nelson **Date:** 1/12/2024 **Title:** Planner Scheduler/UC Supv.

Signed by Lead Agency

Signed by Applicant