

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: Drilling and Construction of Monitoring Well G10 – Indio Subbasin

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

Project Location – County: Riverside County

Project Location - Specific: The proposed project site is located on private property owned by the Coachella Valley Water District within the unincorporated Riverside County neighborhood of Thermal. The drilling will occur in a graded dirt lot adjacent to a small neighborhood with homes and a school nearby at the location with coordinates: 33.640647 degrees North, -116.143119 degrees West (WGS 1984). The proposed activities will occur on parcels APN 757-024-012 and APN 757-024-013 located at Section 22 of Township 6 South, Range 8 East of the “Indio” USGS 7.5’ quadrangle.

Description of Nature, Purpose, and Beneficiaries of Project: The Department of Water Resources Technical Support Services Program proposes to drill and install one single-completion monitoring well in the Indio Subbasin in cooperation with the landowner, Coachella Valley Water District. The purpose of the well is to fill data gaps within the groundwater monitoring network and provide hydrogeologic data. Construction of the well is anticipated to last 3 weeks.

Drilling will consist of initially setting a 16-inch by 50-foot permanent conductor casing to advance a 10-inch-diameter boring. The monitoring well will be drilled up to 200 feet below ground surface (bgs) in the shallow aquifer zone. Geophysical logging will be performed within the boring including: gamma ray; spontaneous potential; short-normal, long-normal and point electrical resistivity logs; vertical deviation; and a caliper survey. After the geophysical logs have been completed and formation samples evaluated, DWR will construct a target well screen of 85-160 feet bgs and seal for the location.

All drill cuttings will be stockpiled on-site with the potential for re-use. Fluid and drill cuttings are expected to be nonhazardous and will be sampled and analyzed for constituents for concern prior to disposal. Should soil testing within the drill cutting reveal contaminants of concern above threshold levels, cuttings are to be disposed of at a designated waste facility. All drilling fluids and borehole water will be containerized in plastic lined roll-off bins and disposed of at a designated waste facility unless otherwise specified by DWR or Coachella Valley Water District.

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 Exemptions: Information Collection, Class 6, 15306, Title 14 CCR.

Reason why project is exempt: The proposed Project is categorically exempt under Class 6, Section 15306 because it consists of basic data collection and resource evaluation activities that do not result in a significant impact to an environmental resource.

A preconstruction survey was conducted which revealed no sensitive resources on the proposed project site. The California Natural Diversity Database and USFW’s IPaC resource list indicated the known state-listed threatened and endangered species with the potential to occur in the region according to the Indio USGS 7.5’ quad: Yuma Ridgways rail, Coachella Valley fringe-toed lizard, desert tortoise, Peninsular bighorn sheep, and Least Bell’s vireo. The proposed project site was scouted for potential activity of these listed species or their habitat and none was found on the site. The possibility exists that Peninsular bighorn sheep species may be present in the nearby mountains and hills, but the construction activities would be a transitory disturbance and the animal would be able to avoid the construction area. The area is also a human-dominated location which would deter the species from entering.

Should the proposed activities occur during bird nesting season between February 15 – September 15, DWR construction monitor will conduct a daily survey for nesting birds. If evidence of nesting birds is found, construction will halt until the birds conclude nesting behavior or measures are implemented to avoid any impacts to the nesting birds. Proposed well drilling activities are not anticipated to affect nesting migratory birds, occupied nests, or eggs if they occur.

The Cortese List was reviewed, and the proposed project is not within or impacting any landfills, contaminated, or hazardous waste site. Visqueen or a similar type of plastic sheeting will be placed under all equipment to reasonably prevent minor equipment oil or fluids to drip onto the ground. Water, fluids, and hazardous materials would not be expected to contact the ground. All construction activities will occur on the parcels and not require traffic control measures on adjacent streets.

The project will adhere to the noise ordinance set by the county and implement noise barriers if needed to avoid impacts to the community. Overall, no significant impacts would be anticipated for biological, air quality, noise, visual, water quality, land surface, or historic and archaeological resources.

Lead Agency Contact Person: Vanessa Velasco

Area Code/Telephone/Extension: (916) 882-1452

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:** 3/19/2024 **Title:** Regional Manager, Southern Region C

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.