

## 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 G23 – Indio Subbasin

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

**Projection Location – City:** Palm Desert

**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 City of Palm Desert in Riverside County. The drilling will occur in a graded dirt lot adjacent to the edge of a golf club and open space at the location 33.7770433 degrees North, -116.3327115 degrees West (WGS 1984). All proposed activities will occur on parcel APN 695-100-002 located at Section 35 of Township 4 South, Range 6 East of the “Myoma” 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. The duration of the construction of the well is anticipated to last about 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 300 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 100-275 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 cuttings 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. A California Natural Diversity Database and USFWS IPaC list indicated the known state special-status species with the potential to occur in the region: little willow flycatcher, southwestern willow flycatcher, desert pupfish, Coachella Valley fringe-toed lizard, desert tortoise, Peninsular bighorn sheep, and Least Bell’s vireo to exist within the “Myoma” USGS 7.5’ quad where the proposed project is located. The proposed Project site was scouted for potential activity of these listed species and none were found on the highly disturbed site. The possibility exists that the bighorn sheep species listed above 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.

DWR construction monitor will conduct a daily survey for nesting birds prior to proposed activities occurring during bird nesting season from February 15 – September 15. Trees exist adjacent to the site but are non-native with minimal bird habitat and distant from the project site. If evidence of nesting birds is found however, 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 from dripping onto the ground. Water, fluids, and hazardous materials would not be expected to contact the ground. The adjacent roadway has no vehicle traffic and will not require traffic control measures.

Overall, no significant impacts would be anticipated for biological resources, air quality, hazardous waste, visual impact, 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:** 4/9/2024 **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.