

Public Notice
Notice of Exemption



To: Santa Clara County
Clerks Office, Business Division
70 West Hedding Street
San Jose, CA 95110

From: Santa Clara Valley Water District
5750 Almaden Expressway
San Jose, CA 95118-3686
Telephone (408) 265-2600

Project Title: Research Agreement between Valley Water and The Regents of The University of California, on behalf of its Davis Campus.

Project Location-Specific: Santa Clara Valley Water District

Project Location-City: San Jose, Cupertino

Project Location-County: Santa Clara County

Project Purpose: The proposed project is a collaborative research study between UC Davis and Valley Water. The purpose of the study is to evaluate and discover potential actions that can be taken to reduce GHG emissions from Valley Water's managed reservoirs. The work would consist of field data collection and laboratory analyses done jointly between Valley Water and UC Davis, and a quantitative and interpretive report completed by UC Davis with collaboration and review by Valley Water.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: Santa Clara Valley Water District (Valley Water)

Name of Agency or Person Carrying Out Project: Valley Water

Exempt Status: (check one)

- Ministerial [§21080(b)(1); 15268]
- Declared Emergency [§21080(b)(3); 15269(a)]
- Emergency Project [§21080(b)(c); 15269(b)(c)]
- Categorical Exemptions [§15306, Information Collection]
- Statutory Exemptions

Reasons Why Project is Exempt: The project qualifies for a Categorical Exemption under California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines §15306:

"Class 6 consists of basic data collection, research, experimental management, and resource evaluation activities which do not result in a serious or major disturbance to an environmental resource. These may be strictly for information gathering purposes, or as part of a study leading to an action which a public agency has not yet approved, adopted, or funded."

The proposed project includes field data collection and laboratory analyses done jointly between Valley Water and UC Davis. Therefore, the proposed project meets the requirements of CEQA Guidelines §15306 and is eligible for a CE. As described below, the proposed project does not include any factors that would preclude the project's eligibility for a CE per CEQA Guidelines §15300.2.

Description of Project

Ongoing research between Valley Water and UC Davis has led to the development of an approach to estimate the seasonal sediment gas storage and directly measure diffusive atmospheric GHG flux rates in Valley Water manage reservoirs. UC Davis would use this approach to assist Valley Water in studying the GHG production

process in the Uvas, Chesbro, and Stevens Creek Reservoirs. Data collected, along with modeling efforts in an integrated approach, will help provide an estimate for the GHG emissions, which has implications for global climate models.

Furthermore, UC Davis researchers would develop a method for measuring ebullitive CH₄ fluxes that would be incorporated into future monitoring efforts. The proposed work would consist of field data collection and laboratory analyses done jointly between Valley Water and UC Davis, and a quantitative and interpretive report completed by UC Davis with collaboration and review by Valley Water. UC Davis may seek to use the data and analyses for publications in scientific journals in consultation with Valley Water. Valley Water is viewed as a cooperative partner on this project as they are helping guide the research and work directly in the field during the sampling.

Valley Water's primary objective is to evaluate and discover potential actions that can be taken to reduce GHG emissions from its managed reservoirs. The UC Davis team would implement and deploy a variety of monitoring techniques and devices. This includes the use of an eddy-covariance station and gas-flux chambers on Uvas Reservoir to monitor CO₂ and CH₄ flux rates. Additionally, thermistor chains and DO moorings would be installed at each of the three reservoirs that were previously studied (Uvas, Chesbro, and Stevens Creek Reservoirs). The UC Davis team would then analyze the sediment, water, and dissolved gas samples during their laboratory analyses. All the primary data recorded will be made available to Valley Water prior to the end of the contract period.

A Technical Report or Peer-Reviewed Journal Publications will be provided as the final interpretive product. The type of documentation will be decided upon analysis of the study results. Valley Water and UC Davis will agree whether to pursue additional journal publications at that time.

Agency Contact Person: Christopher Hall, Valley Water

Area Code/Telephone/Extension: (408) 630-2317

Signature: Christopher Hall

Date: 6/26/24

Title: Christopher Hall
Assistant Environmental Planner

cc: CEQA Administrative Record