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Exempt per Gov't Code 6103

RETURN TO: Natalie Palacio
Irvine Ranch Water District
P.O. Box 57000
15600 Sand Canyon Avenue
Irvine, CA 92619-7000
949-453-5300

POSTED

AUG 04 2022

HUGH NGUYEN, CLERK-RECORDER

BY: DEPUTY

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION
(State Guidelines 15062)

County Clerk's Filing Stamp
FILED

TO: Orange County Clerk-Recorder
County Administration South
601 N. Ross Street
Santa Ana, CA 92701

AUG 04 2022

HUGH NGUYEN, CLERK-RECORDER

BY: DEPUTY

FROM: Irvine Ranch Water District (Applicant & Lead Agency)
P.O. Box 57000
15600 Sand Canyon Avenue
Irvine, CA 92619-7000
(949) 453-5300

Project Name: Syphon Reservoir Off-Site Riparian and Wetland Habitat Mitigation
Project Location: At the San Joaquin Marsh (Irvine)
Orange County, CA (see Figure 1)
County: Orange

Description of Nature, Purpose and Beneficiaries of Project:

The Irvine Ranch Water District (IRWD) is pursuing the Syphon Reservoir Improvement Project, which would increase the capacity of the existing Syphon Reservoir to serve recycled water demands. In January 2020, the IRWD Board certified an Environmental Impact Report for the Syphon Reservoir Improvement Project that identifies mitigation measures to address impacts. IRWD is currently coordinating with representatives from the United States Fish and Wildlife Service and California Department of Fish and Wildlife to develop a mitigation plan for the proposed Syphon Reservoir Improvement Project.

As part of the mitigation plan, IRWD is developing a conceptual design for a portion of the riparian and freshwater marsh mitigation to be provided off site at IRWD's property located south of Campus Drive as depicted in Figure 1. In order to inform the design for the Syphon Reservoir Off-Site Riparian and Wetland Habitat Mitigation, IRWD is installing wells to collect groundwater table elevations. This work will include groundwater well installation, water level monitoring, and well removal once monitoring is complete. Five monitoring wells will be installed and drilled to 15 feet below ground

surface. Prior to well installation, a biologist will preform a pre-activity survey and work with the well driller contractor to avoid impacts to sensitive vegetation and/or nesting birds (if any). Additionally, there will be on-site biological monitoring during installation of the wells.

Name of Public Agency Approving and Carrying out this Project:

Irvine Ranch Water District (IRWD)
15600 Sand Canyon Avenue, Irvine, CA 92618

Contact Person: Natalie Palacio, Water Resources Specialist

Area Code 949

Phone 453-5499

Exempt Status: (check one)

- Ministerial (Sec 21080(b)(1); (State Guidelines Sec. §15268)
- Declared Emergency (Sec 21080(b)(3); State Guidelines Sec. §15269(a))
- Emergency Project (Sec 21080(b)(4); (State Guidelines Sec. §15269(b)(c))
- Categorical Exemption (State Guidelines Sec. §15301)
- Categorical Exemption (State Guidelines Sec. §15302)
- Categorical Exemption (State Guidelines Sec. §15303)
- Categorical Exemption (State Guidelines Sec. §15306)
- Statutory Exemption State code number (State Guidelines §15282)

Reasons why project is exempt:

This project is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), pursuant to the "categorical exemption rule." The well installation for the purpose of groundwater monitoring to inform design for the Syphon Reservoir Off-Site Riparian and Wetland Habitat Mitigation is categorically exempt under the "information collection rule", which is outlined in CEQA Guideline 15306 and states that activities are exempt that consist 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. In addition, the installation of the wells does not have the potential to result in any significant impacts, based on the plans as specified, to avoid more than minimal damage to native vegetation and avoiding impacts to nesting birds or wildlife, and lies in a non-jurisdictional area.

Submission of this form is optional. Local agencies may file this form with the county clerk pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21152(b). The filing of the notice starts a 35-day statute of limitations on court challenges to the approval of the project under Public Resources Code Section 21167(d). Failure to file the notice results in the statute of limitations being extended to 180 days.

FILED

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Natalie Palacio, Water Resources Specialist
Staff Member Responsible for Preparation


District Secretary

8/4/2022
Date

Syphon Reservoir Off-Site Riparian and Wetland Habitat Mitigation

Location

Legend



AUG 04 2022

AUG 04 2022

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