

Notice of Exemption

Appendix E

To: Office of Planning and Research
P.O. Box 3044, Room 113
Sacramento, CA 95812-3044

County Clerk

County of: San Bernardino

385 N. Arrowhead Ave., First Floor

San Bernardino, CA 92415-0187

From: (Public Agency): West Valley Water District

855 W. Base Line Road

Rialto, CA 92376

(Address)

Project Title: Pump Station 7-2 Project

Project Applicant: West Valley Water District

Project Location - Specific:

APN 023-911-226, City of Rialto, County of San Bernardino, California.

Project Location - City: Rialto

Project Location - County: San Bernardino

Description of Nature, Purpose and Beneficiaries of Project:

The project would construct a new pump station (PS 7-2) east of WVWD's existing PS 7-1 that would operate in parallel with the existing PS 7-1. The new facilities would provide additional flow capacity and redundancy in the event PS-1 is out of service for maintenance or repair.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: West Valley Water District

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: West Valley Water District

Exempt Status: **(check one):**

☐ Ministerial (Sec. 21080(b)(1); 15268);

☐ Declared Emergency (Sec. 21080(b)(3); 15269(a));

☐ Emergency Project (Sec. 21080(b)(4); 15269(b)(c));

☒ Categorical Exemption. State type and section number: Section 15301 (Class 1) and 15303 (Class 3)

☐ Statutory Exemptions. State code number: _____

Reasons why project is exempt:

See Attachment 1: Categorical Exemption Evaluation Report.

Lead Agency

Contact Person: Leo Chan

Area Code/Telephone/Extension: (909) 875-1804 x 349

If filed by applicant:

1. Attach certified document of exemption finding.

2. Has a Notice of Exemption been filed by the public agency approving the project? Yes No

Signature: [Signature]

Date: 4.24.25

Title: General Manager

▪ Signed by Lead Agency Signed by Applicant

Authority cited: Sections 21083 and 21110, Public Resources Code.
Reference: Sections 21108, 21152, and 21152.1, Public Resources Code.

Date Received for filing at OPR: _____

DATE FILED & POSTED

Posted On: 5.2.25

Removed On: 6.9.25

Receipt No: 36-05022025-294

Revised 2011

West Valley Water District

Attachment 1: Categorical Exemption Evaluation Report

West Valley Water District (WVWD) Pump Station 7-2 Project

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February 2025

West Valley Water District (District) proposes the Pump Station 7-2 Project (project). This Categorical Exemption Evaluation Report (Categorical Exemption Evaluation) documents the eligibility of the project as exempt from expanded environmental review pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), under Public Resources Code Section 21084 and California Code of Regulations, Title 14 (CEQA Guidelines) Sections 15061(b)(2) and 15300 et seq.

The project involves an approximately 1.2-acre portion of Assessor's Parcel Number (APN) 023-911-226 in the City of Rialto, California, less than a mile east of Interstate 15 (I-15), near the intersection of North Riverside Avenue and North Live Oak Drive. The project site includes an existing booster pump station (PS 7-1), four reservoir tanks, underground water lines, electrical conduit, transformer pads, and access areas paved with gravel and asphalt. A cactus garden is situated in the vicinity of the existing entrance from North Riverside Avenue, and a retaining wall approximately 3 feet in height is located behind the existing PS 7-1 building.

Based on a geotechnical report prepared for the project site on April 23, 2018¹, the site is not within any active fault zones and has very low potential to experience flooding, liquefaction, and ground subsidence.

The project would construct a new pump station (PS 7-2) east of PS 7-1 that would operate in parallel with the existing PS 7-1; refer to Exhibit 1, Conceptual Site Plan. These existing facilities would be protected-in-place and maintained in service during the construction of Pump Station PS 7-2. The new facilities would provide additional flow capacity and redundancy in the event PS-1 is out of service for maintenance or repair. The addition of the second pump station would not increase the capacity of the reservoirs, nor the amount of service connections.

First, minor clearing and grading would occur throughout the project perimeter to clear and prepare the site and create a more uniform, manageable slope, followed by the compacting of the soil. The existing well onsite would be removed and abandoned. Following removal, piping and electrical conduits would then be installed. Then, the new foundation for the pump station building would be constructed, followed by the building itself. The pump station and associated underground piping improvements, along with a new motor center would be installed. Fencing would be installed around the perimeter of the pump station, with access gates. Minor site improvements inclusive of lights, pavement, curbs, gutters, a retention basin, and placed rock would be constructed.

This analysis documents the project's eligibility as an exempt action under both CEQA Class 1 Categorical Exemption for Existing Facilities and a Class 3 Categorical Exemption for New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures, pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Sections 15301 and 15303, respectively. Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15304, the Class 1 Categorical Exemption permits the operation, repair, maintenance, permitting, leasing, licensing, or minor alteration of existing public or private structures,

¹ Petra Geosciences Inc., Preliminary Geotechnical Evaluation, *Proposed West Valley Water District Pump Station 7-2, Off N. Riverside Avenue, City of Rialto, San Bernardino County, California*, April 23, 2018.

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facilities, mechanical equipment, or topographical features. This exemption is applicable if these activities do not involve significant expansion of use beyond what existed at the time of the lead agency's determination. The Class 3 Categorical Exemption allows for the new construction or conversion of small structures. This includes: construction of limited numbers of new, small facilities or structures; the installation of small new equipment and facilities in small structures; or, the conversion of existing small structures from one use to another. These projects are unlikely to have significant environmental impacts.

CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2 identifies the following exceptions to the use of a categorical exemption:

- a) Location. Classes 3, 4, 5, 6, and 11 are qualified by consideration of where the project is to be located—a project that is ordinarily insignificant in its impact on the environment may in a particularly sensitive environment be significant. Therefore, these classes are considered to apply in all instances, except where the project may impact on an environmental resource of hazardous or critical concern where designated, precisely mapped, and officially adopted pursuant to law by federal, State, or local agencies.
- b) Cumulative Impact. All exemptions for these classes are inapplicable when the cumulative impact of successive projects of the same type in the same place, over time is significant.
- c) Significant Effect. A categorical exemption shall not be used for an activity where there is a reasonable possibility that the activity will have a significant effect on the environment due to unusual circumstances.
- d) Scenic Highways. A categorical exemption shall not be used for a project which may result in damage to scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, historic buildings, rock outcroppings, or similar resources, within a highway officially designated as a State scenic highway. This does not apply to improvements which are required as mitigation by an adopted negative declaration or certified EIR.
- e) Hazardous Waste Sites. A categorical exemption shall not be used for a project located on a site which is included on any list compiled pursuant to Section 65962.5 of the Government Code.
- f) Historical Resources. A categorical exemption shall not be used for a project which may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource.

As evaluated below, none of the above exceptions apply to the proposed project. Therefore, the District, as CEQA lead agency is not precluded from categorically exempting the proposed project from CEQA.

- a) Location. The project site is located on a fully developed parcel containing the existing Pump Station 7-1 and associated facilities. The northern boundary of the project site is adjacent to North Riverside Avenue, while the southern boundary is bordered by West Via Bello Drive. Residential development is situated along the eastern and western boundaries of the project. As a pump station project located on a site already used as a pump station, the project is not considered to be located a particularly sensitive environment. The Geotechnical Study prepared for the project confirmed that the site is not prone to liquefaction, seiche, flooding, or ground subsidence. Further, the site is not within an Alquist-Priolo fault zone or San Bernardino County Fault Zone.² Thus, exception (a) does not apply.

² Ibid.

- b) Cumulative Impact. Once constructed, successive operation of the project site would be with the site's current use. The reservoirs would experience no change in water capacity; the second pump station would provide redundancy and improve service to existing customers. The project would not expand the site's existing use; thus, exception (b) is not applicable.
- c) Significant Effect. There are no features that distinguish this project from others in the exempt class; therefore, there are no unusual circumstances. The project involves the minor grading and construction of a second pump station and associated improvements, without significant alterations to the existing conditions of the land. Thus, there are no unusual circumstances and exception (c) does not apply.
- d) Scenic Highways. No designated California State Scenic Highways occur in the vicinity of the project site.³ Additionally, there are no scenic resources such as trees, historic buildings, or rock outcroppings located on the project site. Thus, damage to scenic resources would not occur and exception (d) does not apply.
- e) Hazardous Waste Sites. Per the California Environmental Protection Agency Cortese List online database, no hazardous waste site is located within or adjacent to the project site.⁴ The project site was previously graded in its entirety during the construction of Pump Station 7-1 and no major ground disturbing activities that could unearth potentially contaminated soils would occur; therefore, exception (e) does not apply.
- f) Historical Resources. The project site was previously graded during the construction of Pump Station 7-1, which is considered modern, having been built in the mid-1990s based on aerial imagery. The project would not alter any historic-age built environment features in this regard. Therefore, exception (f) does not apply.

In summation, the project site is not precluded from CEQA exemption, as exceptions (a) through (f) are not applicable to the project. Further, pursuant to the allowances of a Class 1 Categorical Exemption for Existing Facilities, the project would not involve expansion of the existing pump station facility, nor the existing service area. Further, project implementation would not increase the water capacity of the existing or proposed pump station. Moreover, the project proposes only minor modifications and improvements to the existing land use. Construction activities would be limited to the installation of small new equipment and facilities in small structures. Therefore, the proposed project activities would align with the provisions of a Class 3 Categorical Exemption for New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures.

³ California Department of Transportation, California State Scenic Highway System Map, <https://caltrans.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=465dfd3d807c46cc8e8057116f1aaca>, accessed February 3, 2025.

⁴ California Environmental Protection Agency, *Cortese List Data Resources*, <https://calepa.ca.gov/sitecleanup/corteselist/>, accessed January 31, 2025.

