

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION
Coachella Valley Water District
Post Office Box 1058
Coachella, California 92236

☒ County Clerk
County of Riverside
Post Office Box 751
Riverside, CA 92502

☐ County of Imperial
Imperial County Clerk/Recorder
940 West Main Street, Suite 202
El Centro, CA 92243

☒ State Clearinghouse
Office of Planning and Research
Post Office Box 3044, Room 113
Sacramento, CA 95812-3044

☐ County of San Diego
Recorder/County Clerk's Office
1600 Pacific Highway, Suite 260
Post Office Box 121750
San Diego, CA 92112-1750

Project Title:

Coachella Valley Stormwater Channel Improvement Project from Avenue 54 to the Thermal Drop Structure - Habitat Mitigation

Project Location:

The project location is within the Coachella Valley Stormwater Channel. The project area extends approximately 25 miles from the Washington Street bridge in La Quinta, California to the Salton Sea.

Description of Nature, Purpose and Beneficiaries of Project:

The Coachella Valley Water District proposes to conduct mitigation efforts for the Coachella Valley Stormwater Channel (CVSC). The channel was as-built in the 1970s to convey a Standard Project Flood (SPF), or a flow of approximately 82,000 cubic feet per second (cfs) which is now superseded.

The CVSC Improvement Project: Avenue 54 to Thermal Drop Structure (Project) was completed in early 2024. A Habitat Mitigation and Monitoring Plan (HMMP) was prepared for the Project in March of 2021 and was previously agreed upon and approved by the Coachella Valley Water District and the California Department of Fish & Wildlife (CDFW) as compensatory mitigation for impacts to the CVSC associated with the construction of the channel improvement project. Mitigation will be limited to materials that create low "roughness" or friction to water flow and yet add desired habitat value. A selection of grasses and forbs have been selected for revegetation (reseeding/replanting) with native plant species, and the preservation of naturally recruiting riparian trees (e.g. Fremont cottonwood, Goodding's willow, honey mesquite) to establish a chain of trees alternating on either side of the low-flow channel and at approximately 275-foot intervals north of the Airport Boulevard channel bottom lining to the north end of the Project mitigation site. The mitigation site encompasses 45.7 acres on both sides of the low-flow channel.

The Project is not located within a conservation area associated with the Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (CVMSHCP).

Lead Agency Approving Project and Contact:

Coachella Valley Water District; David Wilson, Engineering Manager / Phone: (760) 398-2651

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION (Continued)
Coachella Valley Water District

Exempt Status:

- ☐ **Not a project:** State CEQA Guidelines §15378
- ☐ **Review for Exemption/Common Sense Exemption:** State CEQA Guideline §15061(b)(3)
- ☐ **Ministerial:** (Pub. Res. Code §21080(b)(1); State CEQA Guideline §15268)
- ☐ **Declared Emergency:** (Pub. Res. Code §21080(b)(3); State CEQA Guideline §15269(a))
- ☐ **Emergency Project:** 15269(b)
- ☐ **Statutory Exempt:** State CEQA Guidelines § 15277
- ☒ **Categorically Exempt:** State CEQA Guidelines: State CEQA Guidelines §15301, §15307

Reasons why project is exempt:

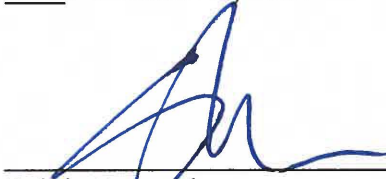
State CEQA Guideline §15301 (Existing Facilities) is a Class 1 exemption consisting of the operation, repair, maintenance, permitting, leasing, licensing, or minor alteration of existing public or private structures, facilities, mechanical equipment, or topographical features, involving negligible or no expansion of existing or former use which including maintenance of fish screens, fish ladders, wildlife habitat areas, artificial wildlife waterway devices, streamflows, springs and waterholes, and stream channels (clearing of debris) to protect fish and wildlife resources.

State CEQA Guideline §15307 (Actions by Regulatory Agencies for Protection of Natural Resources) is a Class 7 exemption consisting of actions taken by regulatory agencies as authorized by state law or local ordinance to assure the maintenance, restoration, or enhancement of a natural resource where the regulatory process involves procedures for protection of the environment. Examples include but are not limited to wildlife preservation activities of the State Department of Fish and Game. Construction activities are not included in this exemption.

Environmental Contact Person:

Carlos Huerta, CVWD Environmental Specialist, Phone (760) 398-2651

Date: October 22, 2024



Sylvia Bermudez
Clerk of the Board

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

File No. 0121.238