

El Monte Dairy - Agricultural Well

Reasons Why Project is Exempt:

Mapping resources indicate the nearest well in the vicinity of the proposed well site is on APN 027-160-002, the same parcel as the proposed well. This well will be destroyed – the proposed agricultural well is intended to replace this well. The next closest well is on parcel 027-170-001, a neighboring property to the south, which is more than 2,500 feet to the south of the proposed well site and is owned by the applicant. Based on a review of the State Water Resources Control Board's Low-Threat Underground Storage Tank Case Closure Policy, a 1,000-foot separation from active production wells to contamination plumes is considered to be sufficient separation to pose a low threat to human health, safety, or the environment, and appropriate for no further action determination based on the groundwater-specific criteria specified. Under this assumption, wells separated by 1000 feet or more should have negligible effect on each other. This is further shown by modeling work done by Santa Barbara County demonstrating that a new or replacement well located more than 1,000 feet from an existing well is not likely to interfere with the production of that well. The modeling is based on hypothetical water well drawdown using conservative yet anticipated values for transmissivity, storage coefficient, and anticipated pumping yields to support field grown agriculture commodities.

In addition, because there is no direct instrumental evidence of subsidence occurring in the Fish Lake Valley, the potential for subsidence is considered to be low. Further, because groundwater extractions in the Fish Lake Valley area are distributed throughout the area rather than being concentrated in small zones, the effects of subsidence, if any, may be more area wide.