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SUNNYSLOPE COUNTY WATER DISTRICT
WORKSHEET FOR CEQA/NEPA DETERMINATION
PART 1 - CEQA EXEMPTIONS

(Prepared by Lead Agency – Notice of Exemption, findings, and additional sheets attached as needed)

GENERAL INFORMATION

1. Name of Project: SUNNYSLOPE COUNTY WATER DISTRICT, WATER SYSTEM CONSOLIDTION – "MEGA GRANT", URBAN COMMUNITY DROUGHT RELIEF PROJECT

2. Project Number: FUNDING AGREEMENT # 4600015432

3. Name of lead agency/water system: SUNNYSLOPE COUNTY WATER DISTRICT on behalf of the County of San Benito.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION *(fill in blanks or provide attachment, e.g., application description)*

1. Project location *(give description of the precise location and boundaries and attach a location map if available)*:
Work to be performed at 5 individual locations.
Segment A - Installation of pipeline extension, 12" PVC pipeline connecting to existing infrastructure, installed under the asphalt of the existing roadway beginning at the intersection of Ridgemark Dr. and Kinsley Dr., Hollister CA 95023 (36°48'36.00"N 121°21'49.80"W) and then north-easterly for distance of approximately 2,660' to an easement east of Joes Ln., Hollister CA 95023 (36°48'56.15"N 121°22'01.68"W) connecting with existing water system pipeline.
Segment B - Installation of pipeline extension, 12" PVC pipeline connecting to existing infrastructure, installed primarily under the asphalt of the existing roadway beginning at the tie-in with the Fairview Corners residential development at the most westerly end of Harbern Way, Hollister CA 95023 (36°49'11.26"N 121°21'16.62"W) and then easterly following the alignment of Harbern Way and Foxhill Cir. for a distance of approximately 8,900' to a connection with the existing Foxhill water tank, Hollister CA 95023 (36°49'10.38"N 121°20'12.53"W) connecting with existing water system.
Segment C - Installation of pipeline extension, 12" PVC pipeline connecting to existing infrastructure, installed primarily under the asphalt of the existing roadway beginning at the tie-in with the existing Foxhill water tank, Hollister CA 95023 (36°49'10.38"N 121°20'12.53"W) and then westerly following the alignment of Foxhill Cir. to Best Road, followed by the pipeline proceeding southerly along the alignment of Best Road to Highway 25, followed by the pipeline proceeding easterly along private

property, within the existing waterline easement of San Benito County Water District (SBCWD) parallel to Highway 25 within an active agricultural area, then crossing the Tres Pinos Elementary parking area and northerly to terminate at Sundown Ln., Tres Pinos, CA 95075 for a total distance of approximately 11,140' terminating in the street at (36°48'06.33"N 121°20'01.81"W) connecting with the existing infrastructure of the Stonegate community water system.

Segment D - Installation of pipeline extension, 12" PVC pipeline connecting to existing infrastructure, installed primarily under the asphalt of the existing roadway beginning at the tie-in with the existing Stonegate Community water system tank, Tres Pinos CA 95075 (36°47'34.00"N 121°18'57.00"W) and then southerly to Diablo Hills Rd. along the alignment of the access roadway, followed by the pipeline proceeding easterly along the alignment of Diablo Hills Rd. to Quien Sabe Rd., followed by the pipeline proceeding southerly along Quien Sabe Rd., within the roadway to a connection ending at the existing distribution system infrastructure of Tres Pinos Water District in Tres Pinos, CA 95075 for a total distance of approximately 3,080' terminating in Quien Sabe Road, south of the intersection with Highway 25 (36°47'15.61"N 121°19'00.00"W).

Segment E - Installation of pipeline extension, 6" PVC pipeline, installed primarily under the asphalt of the existing roadway beginning at the tie-in with the existing Tres Pinos Water District distribution system, Tres Pinos CA 95075 (36°47'25.00"N 121°19'23.37"W) and then south-westerly along the alignment with Southside Rd. to Bolado Rd. following the alignment of Bolado Rd. proceeding easterly along Bolado Rd. to a connection ending at the existing distribution system infrastructure of Tres Pinos Water District in Tres Pinos, CA 95075 for a total distance of approximately 2,900' (36°47'14.31"N 121°19'18.26"W).

Foxhill Tank Construction – Construction of new 275,000 gallon water storage tank, required for fire flow demand as calculated. Grading for pad adjacent to existing 122,000 gallon tank. (36°49'11.15"N 121°20'12.28"W).

Tres Pinos Tank Demo – Removal of existing Tres Pinos Water District Tank located at (36°47'21.22"N 121°19'03.70"W).

2. Facilities *(indicate whether they are **new, modifications, removals, or replacements**):*

a. Treatment facilities *(give size and capacities)*: N/A

b. Storage facilities

(1) Tanks *(physical dimensions and capacity)*:
New 275,000gal welded-steel storage tank, 50ft –

diameter x 25-ft height.

(2) Open reservoirs *(surface area and capacity)*: N/A

c. Transmission facilities *(give size of pumps and size and length of mains indicating if they are in rights-of-way)*: Minimum pipe diameter calculated to support existing water demand for existing connections only, new 12" PVC and 6" pipelines connecting to existing infrastructure, pipelines installed under the asphalt of the existing roadway as described above as segments A, B, C, D, and E connecting with existing water system infrastructure. All new piping will be installed under the existing roadway or within the disturbed areas of existing agricultural use and occupied public waterline easement.

d. Distribution facilities *(give size of booster pumps and size and length of pipelines)*: Existing distribution system of Tres Pinos Water District, Stonegate Community Water System and Venture Estates Water System to remain, with all pipeing consolidated into the SSCWD system.

e. Appurtenant structures: Only the removal of appurtenant structures which are no longer needed for operation are planned. No construction of new structures is required.

f. Parking facilities: N/A

g. Access roads: Existing only, no new roads.

h. Staging areas: All staging will occur in areas of existing asphalt, or in laydown areas previously disturbed by water system maintenance and operation.

3. Describe any grading or excavation work:

Grading will occur to create a pad for the new Foxhill water tank. Limits of disturbance are limited to cut slope pad and fill slope to balance fill. All other earth work is limited to excavation as needed for pipe installation, match existing grades, abandonment and removal of appurtenant structures. Excavation will only occur to minimum pipeline depths per SSCWD standard details.

REASONS WHY THE PROJECT IS CONSIDERED EXEMPT

Check appropriate boxes

1. CCR, Title 22, Section 60101 Specific Activities Within Categorical Exemption Classes

(a) Class 1: Existing Facilities

(1) Addition, deletion, or modification of:

1. Mechanical controls for:
   - a. ☐ Water treatment units
   - b. ☒ Water supply systems
   - c. ☐ Pump station buildings
2. Electrical controls for:
   - a. ☐ Water treatment units
   - b. ☒ Water supply systems
   - c. ☐ Pump station buildings
3. Hydraulic controls for:
   - a. ☐ Water treatment units
   - b. ☒ Water supply systems
   - c. ☐ Pump station buildings

(2) Maintenance, repair, replacement, or reconstruction to any water treatment process units, including:

1. ☐ Structures.
2. ☐ Filters
3. ☐ Pumps
4. ☐ Chlorinators

(b) Class 2: Replacement or Reconstruction.

(1) Repair or replacement of:

1. ☒ Water service connections
2. ☒ Meters
3. Valves for:
   - a. ☒ Backflow prevention
   - b. ☒ Air release
   - c. ☒ Pressure regulation
   - d. ☒ Shut-off
   - e. ☒ Blow-off
   - f. ☒ Flushing

(2) Replacement or reconstruction of:

1. ☒ Existing water supply distribution lines of substantially the same size. Describe any size increase: Minimum standard pipe diameter is 6" and all piping as designed is for existing water demand and fire flow demand as calculated.

2. ☒ Storage tanks and reservoirs of substantially the same size. Describe any size increase: Foxhill tank increase required for fire demand flow and is required based on fire regulations updated since the time of construction of the existing tank.

(3) Replacement or reconstruction of:

1. ☒ Water wells of substantially the same capacity. Describe any capacity increase: Removal of existing well in exchange for use of existing well. No capacity increase is required.

2. ☐ Pump stations and related appurtenances of substantially the same capacity. Describe any capacity increase:

(c) Class 3: New Construction of Small Structures:

(1) ☒ Construction of water supply and distribution lines of less than sixteen inches in diameter and/or less than 1 mile,

(2) ☐ Construction of any water storage tanks and reservoirs of less than 100,000-gallon capacity.

(3) ☐ Installation of water meters

(d) Class 4: Minor Alterations to land.

(1) ☐ Minor alterations to land, water or vegetation on any officially existing designated wildlife management areas or fish production facilities for the purpose of reducing the environmental potential for nuisances or vector production.

(2) ☒ Any minor alterations to highway crossing for water supply and distribution lines.

2. CCR, Title 14 (CEQA Guidelines).

(a) ☐ Section 15262 Planning and Feasibility studies

(b) ☐ 15269 (a) statutory exemption for declared emergencies

(c) ☐ Section 15269 (b) statutory exemption for emergency repairs
(d) ☐ Section 15269 (c) statutory exemption for emergency prevention
(e) ☒ Section 15282 (k) statutory exemption for right-of-way pipelines <1mile
(f) ☐ Section 15282 (m) statutory exemption for water fluoridation facilities
(g) ☒ Other (list specific code reference) AB131, As Amended June 27, 2025 establishing exemption for specified projects undertaken by a public agency that primarily benefits a small disadvantaged community water system or a state small water system as provided.

Sec. 10 - *21080.48* exempts from CEQA, through January 1, 2030, specified community water system projects if the project receives funding from drought resiliency funding and results in long-term net benefits to climate resiliency. Project does not otherwise propose the damage of environmentally sensitive areas.

CEQA EXCEPTIONS

A. Location in an area of Critical Concern (For Categorical Exemption Classes 3, 4, 5, 6, and 11): *Could the project result in impacts to an environmental resource of hazardous or critical concern where designated, precisely mapped and officially adopted pursuant to law by federal, state, or local agencies? Discuss below all items checked yes (attach additional sheets as necessary). Some items are repeated under the Federal Crosscutters Section and may be referenced here if applicable.*

	Yes	No	
1.	☐	☒	Special status species.
2.	☐	☒	Critical habitat *(for special status species)*
3.	☐	☒	Unique habitat *(e.g., wildlife refuge, deer wintering range, etc.).*
4.	☐	☒	Important farmland
5.	☐	☒	Wetlands
6.	☐	☒	Wild and scenic rivers
7.	☐	☒	Officially designated scenic area
8.	☐	☒	Archeological sites.
9.	☐	☒	Floodplains
10.	☐	☒	Areas of hazardous concern
11.	☐	☒	Other

Discussion:

1) Special status species such as Tiger Salamander have been noted to exist on lands adjacent to this project. For this reason, all work is planned to be under existing roadways where no habitat is affected. Existing easements

are areas of active farmland or previously disturbed areas from other permitted operations.

2) No critical habitat is impacted by this project.

3) No unique habitat exists.

4) No farmland involved or impacted by this work.

5) No wetlands involved or impacted by this work.

6) None

7) None

8) None identified. All work to be completed under previously disturbed areas and areas of roadway fill.

9) None

10) None

Unusual Circumstances *(For All Categorical Exemptions)**: Evaluate the following elements to determine if there are any unusual circumstances. For any "Yes" answers discuss the possibility of significant environmental impact resulting from the unusual circumstance. Consider all facilities; conveyance lines; storage, points of diversion; staging areas; and affected service area as applicable. Use attachments if necessary.*

	Yes	No	
1.	☐	☒	In an area of undisturbed, unique, or high-quality habitat.
2.	☐	☒	On or adjacent to wildlife migration routes.
3.	☐	☒	In an area of unique recreational facilities or resources.
4.	☐	☒	On or adjacent to a unique stream or water body.
5.	☐	☒	Involves removal of mature, scenic trees *(class 4)*.
6.	☐	☒	Involves grading in a waterway or wetland *(class 4)*.
7.	☐	☒	Involves a substantial alteration of ground contours.
8.	☐	☒	Involves new or increased use of a critically depleted groundwater basin or groundwater basin subject to salinity intrusion.
9.	☐	☒	In an area with important mineral resources.
10.	☐	☒	Involves production of significant amounts of solid wastes or litter.
11.	☐	☒	Involves substantial new or increased emission of dust, ash, smoke, fumes, odors, or other pollutants.
12.	☐	☒	Involves substantial change in noise or vibration levels in vicinity *(beyond the property line)*.
13.	☐	☒	In an area of sensitive noise receptors.
14.	☐	☒	On slopes of 10 percent or more or on highly erodible soil.
15.	☐	☒	In an officially mapped area of severe geologic hazard
16.	☐	☒	Involves new or increased use or disposal of hazardous materials, flammables, or explosives.
17.	☐	☒	Involves substantial change in demand for municipal services.
18.	☐	☒	Involves traffic impacts in an area with traffic problems.

19. ☐ ☒ Involves substantial increase in fuel consumption *(electricity, oil, natural gas, etc.)*.

Discussion: 17) The addition of 206 customers to the SSCWD results in a 0.03% increase in municipal service for the district. This is insignificant to district operations.

B. Cumulative Impacts for All Categorical Exemptions

	Yes	No	
1.	☐	☒	Does the project involve cumulative impacts associated with successive projects of the same type in the same place? If yes, discuss the significance of the impacts.

Discussion:

C. Scenic Highways (For All Categorical Exemptions): *Will the project result in damage to any of the following scenic resources within a highway officially designated as a state scenic highway (excluding improvements required as mitigation by an adopted Negative Declaration or certified EIR)*

	Yes	No	
1.	☐	☒	Trees
2.	☐	☒	Historic buildings
3.	☐	☒	Rock outcroppings
4.	☐	☒	Other similar resources

D. Hazardous Waste Sites (For All Categorical Exemptions)

	Yes	No	
1.	☐	☒	Is the project located on a site that is included on any list compiled by Department of Toxic Substances Control pursuant to Section 65962.5 of the Government Code?

E. Historical Resources *(For All Categorical Exemptions)*

	Yes	No	
1.	☐	☒	Is there a potential for the project to cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource? Basis for determination: No historical resources are included in this project.

SUNNYSLOPE COUNTY WATER DISTRICT
WORKSHEET FOR CEQA/NEPA DETERMINATION
PART 2 - WORKSHEET FOR NEPA EXCLUSIONS

Pursuant to the Safe Drinking Water State Revolving Fund Rule, any applicable Categorical Exclusion (CE) from the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), can be applied by the State of California, Safe Drinking Water Program pursuant to 40 CFR 35.3580(a).

QUALIFYING CRITERIA FOR A NEPA EXCLUSION
Check all boxes that apply

☒ Minor Rehabilitation of Existing Facilities
This includes, but is not limited to, equipment rehabilitation at existing water treatment plants, pump and storage facilities. It also includes the replacement of existing water lines constructed in already disturbed areas within the existing system service area, intended to serve existing customers. A modest growth of less than 10% expansion is acceptable. *NOTE: This category does not include actions that involve new or relocated discharges to surface or ground water; will likely result in the substantial increase in the volume or the loading of pollutant to the receiving water.*

☐ Minor Upgrades or Expansion of Existing Facilities of Less than 10 Percent
This includes the installation of additional filters, pumps, treatment units, chemical storage areas, additional storage tanks and reservoirs to meet fire flow for contact time. Security fencing, gates, landscaping sound walls or noise barriers and equipment for security and monitoring for existing buildings. *NOTE: This category does not include actions that involve or relate to upgrading or extending infrastructure systems primarily for the purposes of future development. The total project area will disturb no more than one acre of land.*

☒ Functional replacement of equipment
This includes equipment replacement or modification at existing water plant, pumping or storage facilities with no significant change in capacity. It also includes the replacement of new treatment processes or equipment with no generation of hazardous material.

☒ Ancillary facilities adjacent or appurtenant to existing facilities
This includes new water lines and meters to be located in previously disturbed areas within approximately one-half mile of existing distribution system and storage facilities for the purpose of system reliability and serving primarily existing residential or commercial users. This category also includes the installation of booster stations, interties, backflow devices or new water meters within an existing distribution system.

EXTRAORDINARY CIRCUMSTANCES

Check (✓) yes or no for each extraordinary circumstance below. If any receive a "Yes" check (✓), an EA must be prepared

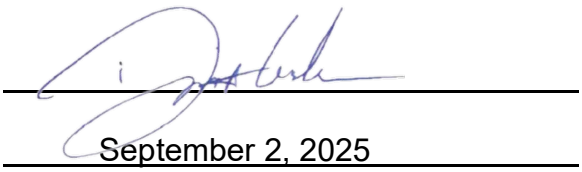
YES	NO	Will the project have:
□	✓	1. Significant environmental impacts on the quality of human environment individually or cumulatively over time.
□	✓	2. Disproportionately high and adverse public health/safety or environmental effects on any community, including minority, low-income, or federally-recognized Indian tribal communities.
□	✓	3. Any adverse effect on species which are federally listed, or proposed for listing, as threatened, endangered, or their designated critical habitat.
□	✓	4. Significant adverse effects on national natural landmarks or any property with nationally significant historic, architectural, prehistoric, archeological, or cultural value, including but not limited to, property listed on or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places; or ceremonial use of Indian sacred sites on Federal lands, access by their religious practitioners, or the physical integrity of such sacred sites.
□	✓	5. Significant adverse effects on environmentally important natural resources such as significant agricultural lands, coastal zones, wild and scenic rivers, wetlands, floodplains, sole source aquifers, aquifer recharge zones, barrier islands, and other ecologically significant areas under Federal jurisdiction.
□	✓	6. Significant adverse effects on air quality.
□	✓	7. Significant effects on land use pattern and type (industrial, commercial, agricultural, recreational, residential), growth and distribution, or population, including altering the character of existing residential areas, inconsistency with local, state, or federally-recognized Indian tribe approved land use plans or federal management plans.
□	✓	8. Possibility to cause significant public controversy about potential environmental impacts of proposed action.
□	✓	9. Precedent for future actions or represent a decision in principle, including providing financial assistance, with potentially significant environmental effects.
□	✓	10. Possibility to conflict with federal, state or local government, or federally-recognized Indian tribe environmental, resource-protection, or land-use laws or regulations.

<u>Sunnyslope County Water District as Lead Agency</u> on behalf of the County of San Benito, Tres Pinos Water District, Venture Estates Mutual Water Co.

Project plans prepared by:
Wallace Group, San Luis Obispo – Job #0557-0007
Titled – Sunnyslope County Water District, Water System Consolidation Project, Sunnyslope County Water District, Hollister, CA. ("Mega Grant")

CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that the statements furnished above and in the attached exhibits present the data and information required for this initial evaluation to the best of my ability, and that the facts, statements, and information presented are true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Signature: 

Date: September 2, 2025

Name: Drew A. Lander P.E.

Position: SSCWD General Manager