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: Tehama
727 Oak Street
Red Bluff, CA 96080

From: (Public Agency): Tehama County
727 Oak Street
Red Bluff, CA 96080
(Address)

Project Title: New Well and Water System Improvements Project

Project Applicant: Norcal Water Works

Project Location - Specific:
North of Los Molinos; along Riverview Ave & 4th Ave; APNs 047-230-020, 047-120-03

Project Location - City: North of Los Molinos Project Location - County: Tehama

Description of Nature, Purpose and Beneficiaries of Project:
The proposed Project involves the replacement of an existing Norcal Water Works system well, storage tank, and distribution pipeline to address ongoing source and storage capacity issues as well as aging and leaking distribution infrastructure. The Project would support the managerial consolidation of a water system that currently lacks adequate oversight. The system was put on a boil water notice in March 2020; in June 2024, attempted repairs revealed that the well was improperly constructed and rehab was infeasible. Replacing the well and other system infrastructure is necessary to restore safe, reliable drinking water and to facilitate improved long-term management of the water system

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: Tehama County

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: Norcal Water Works

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: 15302 (c), Replacement or Reconstruction
- ☐ Statutory Exemptions. State code number:

Reasons why project is exempt:
Class 2(c) consists of replacement or reconstruction of existing utility systems and/or facilities involving negligible or no expansion of capacity. The proposed Project involves the replacement of an existing well, storage tank, and water pipeline within the small water system. The replacement well and infrastructure would not increase system capacity and is intended to restore the existing level of service while addressing water source and quality deficiencies. No expansion of use or capacity would occur as a result, and the Project would not have a signficiant effect on the environment.

Lead Agency Contact Person: Tia Brantun Area Code/Telephone/Extension: 530.527.8020

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: Date: 8/27/2026 Title: Director | RCEHS

▪ 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:

FILED
AUG 27 2026 #34
SEAN HOUGHTBY
TEHAMA COUNTY CLERK & RECORDER
BY Briana Tepede

Revised 2011

PROVOST&PRITCHARD
CONSULTING GROUP

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www.provostandpritchard.com

MEMORANDUM

To:	Norcal Water Works and County of Tehama
From:	Provost & Pritchard: Amy Wilson, Principal Planner
Subject:	Norcal Water Works – New Well and Water System Improvements Project
Date:	August 18, 2026

NORCAL WATER WORKS CATEGORICAL EXEMPTION
NEW WELL AND WATER SYSTEM IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT

THE PROJECT DESCRIBED HEREIN IS DETERMINED TO BE CATEGORICALLY EXEMPT FROM THE PREPARATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTS PURSUANT TO SECTIONS 15302 (REPLACEMENT OR RECONSTRUCTION) OF THE STATE CEQA GUIDELINES.

APPLICANT: Norcal Water Works
PUBLIC AGENCY: Tehama County

PROJECT LOCATION: North of the City of Los Molinos on Assessor Parcel Numbers 047-230-020 and 047-120-035 as well as along Riverview Avenue and 4th Avenue

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:
The proposed Project involves the replacement of an existing Norcal Water Works system well to address ongoing source and storage capacity issues and support the managerial consolidation of a water system that currently lacks adequate oversight. Since 2018, the system has failed to submit required water quality test results, leading to a boil water notice in March 2020. In June 2024, attempted repairs revealed that the well was improperly constructed without a sanitary seal and had significant casing deterioration, making rehabilitation infeasible. Replacing the well and its appurtenant infrastructure is necessary to restore safe, reliable drinking water and to facilitate improved long-term management of the water system.

The Project will also replace aging distribution and storage infrastructure at the Norcal Water Works water system in Tehama County. The Project will include the installation of a 30,000-gallon storage tank, install approximately 900 linear feet of six-inch water main, and replace approximately 20 residential water service laterals. The Project will include all appurtenances to provide an operable water distribution system including booster pumps, electrical components, chlorination injection, and fencing around the storage tank yard. The Project is a replacement of existing infrastructure based on infrastructure age and no additional service connections are being added.

This project is exempt under Section 15302 of the State CEQA Guidelines.

EXPLANATION: The Project is exempt under Section 15302 of the State CEQA Guidelines based on the following determinations:

15302. REPLACEMENT OR RECONSTRUCTION

Class 2 consists of replacement or reconstruction of existing structures and facilities where the new structure will be located on the same site as the structure replaced and will have substantially the same purpose and capacity as the structure replaced, as identified in:

c) Replacement or reconstruction of existing utility systems and/or facilities involving negligible or no expansion of capacity.

The Project would continue to provide drinking water for existing customers by replacing aged and/or failing existing facilities with infrastructure that would serve the same existing connections with no additional service connections being added.

EXCEPTIONS TO THE EXEMPTIONS:

The following discussions explain why the application of the categorical exemption to the Project are not barred by the exceptions set forth in Section 15300.2:

> (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 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.

The Project is relying on a Class 2 exemption under the CEQA Guidelines Sections 15302 (c). The Project would be situated in a rural area. There are no hazardous areas in the vicinity. The land the Project would be located on is already heavily disturbed land and road rights-of-way.

> (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.

The Project would install a new well, new pipeline, a new storage tank, and new service laterals to replace those currently existing in order to provide residents of Norcal Water Works a reliable, clean water supply. The Project would increase noise and emissions from construction temporarily but would not cause a permanent impact to noise and air quality or contribute to adverse cumulative impacts. No significant impacts are anticipated. Additionally, best management practices would be utilized to protect nearby trees and vegetation outside of the existing roadway, thereby providing avoidance and buffer areas for nearby resources.

> (c) Significant Effect. A categorical exemption shall not be used for an activity where there is a reasonable possibility that the activity would have a significant effect on the environment due to unusual circumstances.

There is not a reasonable possibility that the Project would have a significant effect on the environment due to unusual circumstances. The Project, and Project activities, would not cause a significant impact to the environment as it would improve existing facilities and would occur on already-disturbed areas, including road right-of-way. There would be no expansion of capacity as a result of the Project.

> (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.

The Project site is not located near an officially designated state scenic highway. The nearest officially designated state scenic highway (State Route 151 near Shasta Dam) is approximately 50 miles north of the Project site. As such, the Project site is not visible from a state scenic highway.

(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.

According to the websites EnviroStor, maintained by the Department of Toxic Substances Control, and GeoTracker, maintained by the State Water Resources Control Board, the Project site is not included on any list described in Section 65962.5 of the Government Code. EnviroStor and GeoTracker were queried on August 13, 2026.

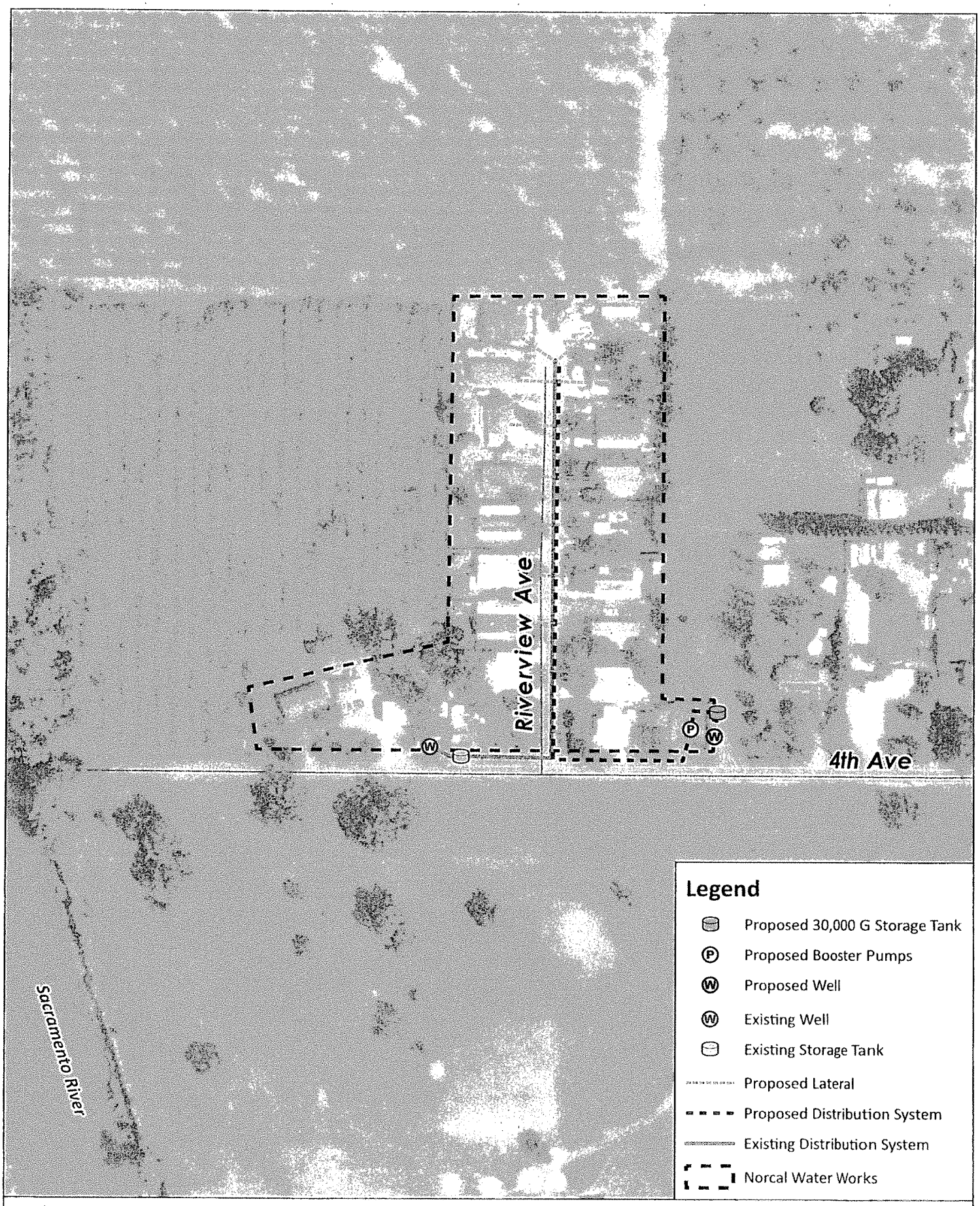
(f) Historical Resources. A categorical exemption shall not be used for a project which may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource.

According to the California State Office of Historic Preservation, the Project site does not contain any resource deemed to be of historic value. The California State Office of Historic Preservation maintains a database of California Historical Landmarks, California Points of Historical Interest, California Register of Historical Resources, and National Register of Historic Places. The Project site, nor its nearby vicinity, contained a resource listed within said database.

Dated: August 13, 2026

Attachments:
Attachment A – Site map

Attachment A - Site Map



New Well and Water System Improvements

Norcal Water Works

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New Well and Water System Improvements Project

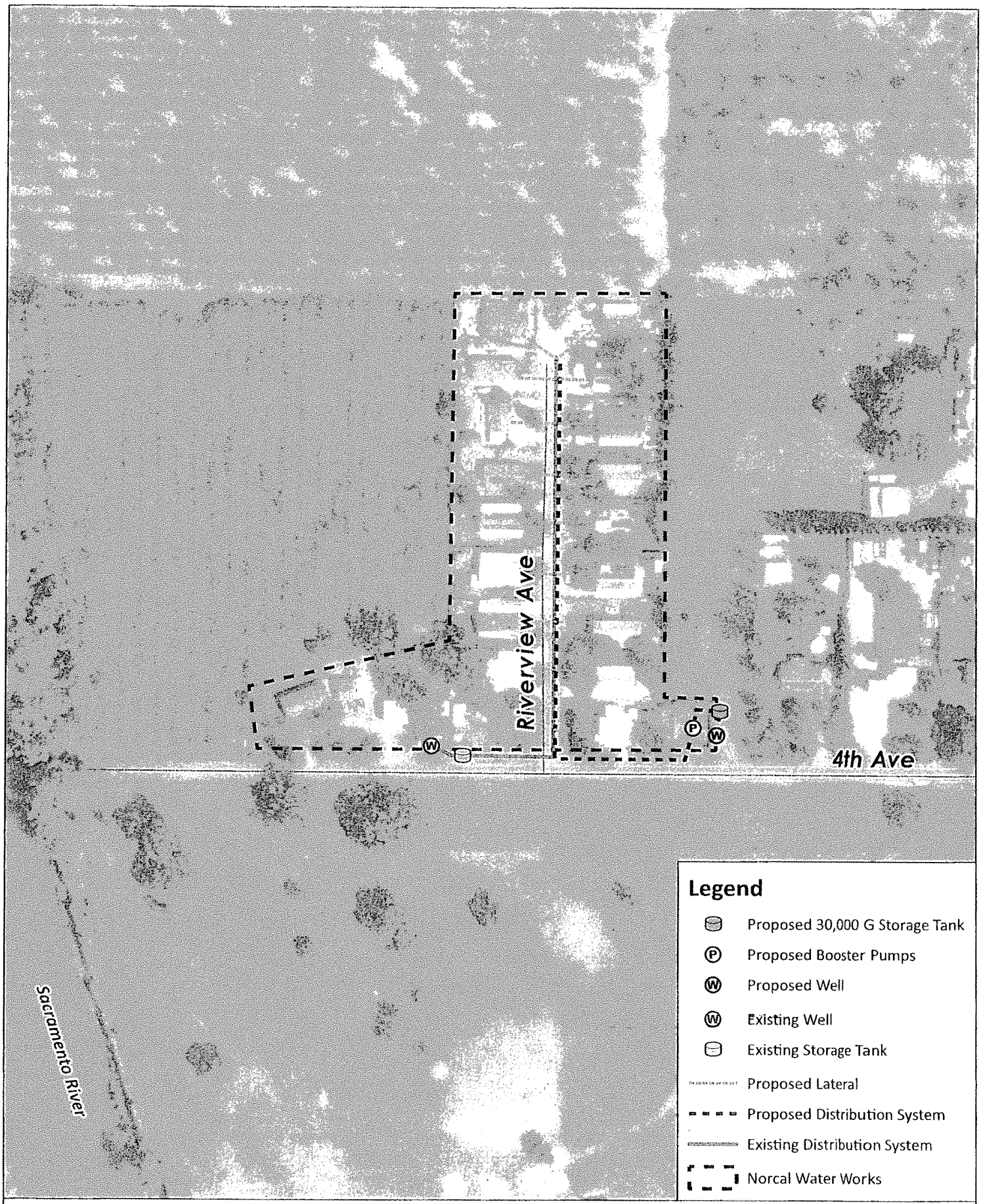
Norcal Water Works is a water system that currently serves 17 residences and approximately 45 customers. This system's existing well was constructed in 1965 and pumps water into an adjacent 5,000-gallon hydropneumatic tank that was constructed around the same time. The proposed Project involves the replacement of an existing well for the Norcal Water Works water system, located just to the west of 9451 Riverview Ave., as well as the system's existing distribution system and storage tank. This replacement well addresses the ongoing source and storage capacity issues of the well. Beginning in 2018, the system failed to submit required water quality test results, leading to citations of the former owner, a boil water notice in March 2020, and the issuance of an Administrator Order. In June 2024, attempted repairs by the Administrator revealed that the well was improperly constructed and did not have proper structural support. Additionally, there was significant casing deterioration which precluded the option of a sleeve to create a sanitary seal. Both of these factors made rehabilitation infeasible. As a result, the well does not have a sanitary seal and remains under a boil water notice. Replacing the well, and its appurtenant infrastructure, is necessary to restore safe, reliable drinking water.

The current well site is too small to have the required 50-foot and 100-foot setbacks from structures and contamination sources and does not meet current California standards (CCR 22 § 64560). The Administrator was informed by DDW that, because of the lack of compliance with current code, this well, even if rehabilitated, would likely not receive clearance from DDW for the necessary permits. The proposed replacement well site is across the street (see attached figure), approximately 400 feet east of the current failing well, on land owned by two different owners. Half of this land is landscaped and essentially an extension of the owner's backyard area, and the other half is currently used by neighbors for semi-truck parking.

In addition to the new well, the Project will replace aging distribution and storage infrastructure at the Norcal Water Works water system. The Project will include the installation of a 30,000-gallon storage tank, install approximately 900 linear feet of six-inch water main, and replace approximately 20 residential water service laterals. The Project will include all appurtenances to provide an operable water distribution system including booster pumps, electrical components, chlorination injection, and fencing around the storage tank yard. The Project is a replacement of existing infrastructure based on infrastructure age and no additional service connections are being added.

A Class 2 exemption, in compliance with CEQA, consists of replacement or reconstruction of existing utility systems and/or facilities involving negligible or no expansion of capacity. As

mentioned, the proposed Project involves the replacement of an existing well and other existing system infrastructure within the small water system boundaries. The replacement well would not increase system capacity and is intended to restore the existing level of service while addressing water source and quality deficiencies. No expansion of use or capacity would occur as a result of the Project. Moreover, this Project would not have a significant effect on the environment.



New Well and Water System Improvements

Norcal Water Works

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