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: Los Angeles
12400 Imperial Hwy,
Norwalk, CA 90650

From: (Public Agency):
California Department of WaterResources
1416 9th Street, Sacramento, CA 95814
(Address)

Project Title: Castaic Dam Piezometer Installation Project

Project Applicant: California Department of Water Resources

Project Location - Specific:

The project is located in the Castaic Lake State Recreation Area in Castaic, CA. The work will occur on the left abutment (the esatern side) of the Castaic Lake Dam (see Exhibit A).

Project Location - City: Castaic, CA Project Location - County: Los Angeles County

Description of Nature, Purpose and Beneficiaries of Project:

The proposed project includes the installation of piezometers and an inclinometer at six different locations on the left abutment of the Castaic Dam. This is proposed after an Engineering Report prepared on December 31, 2018 presented a stability analysis for the left abutment of the Castaic Dam and identified data gaps in the piezometric data. DWR concluded that the left abutment is stable but piezometric surfaces appear lower than assumed in previous stability analyses. As a result, the proposed project will address the need for more precise data of the hydrogeological setting at Castaic Dam's left abutment. (See Attachment A)

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: California Department of Water Resources

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: California Department of Water Resources

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

- ☐ Ministerial (Sec. 21080(b)(1); 15268);
- ☐ Declaration Emergency (Sec. 21080(b)(3);15269(a));
- ☐ Emergency Project (Sec. 21080(b)(4);15269(b)(c));
- ☒ Categorical Exemption. State type and section number: 15306 Information Collection
- ☐ Statutory Exemption. State code number:

Reasons why project is exempt:

The proposed project invloves collection of exploratory information to address the need for more precise data of the hydrogeological setting at Castaic Dam's left abutment. The exploratory work will provide an accurate capture of differences in piezometric pressure between areas in geologic formations that are considered critical to the dam's left abutment stability. The project would not result in any serious or major disturbance to an environmental resources.

Lead Agency Contact Person: Gina Radieve
Area Code/ Telephone/Extension: 916-712-6873

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: Jeanne M Kuttel Date: 8/6/2020 Title: Chief, DOE

☒ Signed by Lead Agency ☐ Signed by Applicant

Governor's Office of Planning & Research

Aug 10 2020

STATE CLEARINGHOUSE

Revised 2011

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: _____

CASTAIC DAM PIEZOMETER INSTALLATION
Categorical Exemption

Project Background

The Castaic Dam Piezometer Installation Project (proposed project) is located on the left abutment (the eastern side) of the Castaic Lake Dam. The proposed project includes the installation of piezometers and an inclinometer at six different locations on the left abutment of the Castaic Dam. This is proposed after an Engineering Report prepared on December 31, 2018 presented a stability analysis for the left abutment of the Castaic Dam and identified data gaps in the piezometric data obtained through report preparation. The Department of Water Resources' Division of Engineering staff concluded that the left abutment is stable but piezometric surfaces appear lower than assumed in previous stability analyses. As a result, the proposed project will address the need for more precise data of the hydrogeological setting at Castaic Dam's left abutment.

Project Description

The proposed project involves the drilling of six explorations for the installation of 12 open tube piezometers as five nested piezometer groups of two to three, and one replacement inclinometer. The six locations for the piezometers and inclinometer (Site SI-510) are provided in **Exhibit A**. Each individual piezometer would include the installation of one 2-inch monitoring well and an electronic logging pressure transducer. A data telemetry system would be installed for remote viewing and downloading of recorded data. The installation would allow for the accurate capture of differences in piezometric pressure between areas in geologic formations that are considered critical to the dam's left abutment stability.

Prior to drilling, each site will be evaluated for overhead and underground utilities. Underground utility locations will be marked as required by Underground Service Alert. Each piezometer location would be drilled with a mud rotary to specified depth and then reamed out to a larger diameter using air rotary casing hammer drills. This may be done with the same drill rig, or a different drill rig may be brought in, based on drilling difficulty. The drill holes would range in depth from approximately 70 feet to 300 feet. Construction equipment will include but is not limited to one truck or track mounted drill rig, one support truck (20-ton truck), one forklift, one backhoe, and one pickup truck. Each location with soil and grass cover may require minor grading to create a flat surface for drilling prior to starting the drilling operations. The current and proposed surface at each piezometer location are shown in Table 1.

TABLE 1

GROUND SURFACE IMPACTS

Piezometer	Current Ground Surface	Ground Surface Changes
508A/B	Asphaltic concrete	No pad required
509A/B	Graded, bare soil	No pad required
SI-510 (Inclinometer)	Graded, bare soil	No pad required
511A/B/C	Asphaltic concrete	No pad required
512A/B/C	Soil with grass cover	Approximate 10 foot by 20 foot concrete pad required. Area will need to be graded.
513A/B	Soil with grass cover	Approximate 10 foot by 20 foot concrete pad required. Area will need to be graded.

Waste material would include drill cuttings (shale and sandstone cuttings) mixed with drill mud (water and minor bentonite powder) and concrete washout. No additives are expected to be used in the drill mud. The cuttings/mud and concrete would be transported via a fork lift equipped with a hopper or drum carrier to roll-off bins (separate for cuttings/mud and concrete washout). The bins would be lined with plastic sheeting and the excess water within the cuttings would be allowed to evaporate off before transport off site.

The piezometer locations would be accessed via existing dirt and paved roads within the Castaic Dam Recreation Area. The piezometer installation process would take approximately 4 months and would occur during normal work hours generally between 7:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.

Standard best management practices (BMPs) will be employed to ensure that no significant environmental impacts would occur during the piezometer installation, including the following:

- Open trenches will be covered overnight or otherwise protected from occupation by small mammals.
- The Contractor shall inspect under and around all vehicles and heavy equipment for the presence of wildlife before the start of each workday.
- All hazardous/toxic materials and drilling materials will be staged 100 feet outside of the lake, stream channel, banks and wetland/riparian areas whenever possible and shall be prevented form contaminating the soil and/or entering the water.
- A spill kit will be onsite at all times.
- Equipment must be kept in proper working order and any petroleum or lubricant spills must be cleaned up immediately and reported to the DWR Geologist and environmental contact.
- Impacts to vegetation onsite will be minimized to the smallest footprint possible, no vegetation outside of the project impact area will be disturbed or removed.
- Vehicles and equipment use will be restricted to existing roads as much as feasible.
- Use BMPs for onsite erosion control, sediment capture, and dust suppression during and post drilling.

SOURCE: Mapbox

Castaic Lake Piezometer Installation Project

Exhibit A
Project Location Map

ESA