

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: Riverside

From: (Public Agency): California Department of Fish and Wildlife
3602 Inland Empire Blvd #C-220
Ontario, CA 91764

(Address)

Project Title: Santa Rosa Plateau Pond Creation Project Phase II - Water well drilling

Project Applicant: California Department of Fish and Wildlife

Project Location - Specific:

Santa Rosa Plateau Ecological Reserve

Project Location - City: Murrieta

Project Location - County: Riverside

Description of Nature, Purpose and Beneficiaries of Project:

In November 2017, three ponds were created on the SRPER as climate and drought refugia for a suite of regionally declining aquatic and semi-aquatic species, including western pond turtle, California red-legged frog and coast range newt. The ponds are currently filled with municipal water which contains chemicals that can be harmful to amphibians. To address water quality and quantity issues, this project proposes to drill a ground water well to be exclusively used to fill the ponds created in 2017. The project will result in permanent impacts to roughly 1,600 square feet of non-native annual grassland to support the well, solar panels and associated infrastructure. Surveys for rare, threatened and endangered species have been conducted multiple times in the area and none have been detected. Additional surveys will be conducted prior to starting the project and the footprint will be adjusted to avoid impacts to sensitive species.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: California Department of Fish and Wildlife

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: The Nature Conservancy

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: Minor Alterations to Land. 14 CCR §15304 (d)
- ☐ Statutory Exemptions. State code number: _____

Reasons why project is exempt:

This project will result in habitat improvements for wildlife on an officially designated CDFW ecological reserve. Avoidance measures will be implemented to avoid all impacts to sensitive species.

Lead Agency

Contact Person: Richard Kim

Area Code/Telephone/Extension: (760) 518 - 1333

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: [Signature] Date: March 10, 2021 Title: Senior Environmental Scientist

■ 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: _____