

Notice of Exemption

To: Office of Planning and Research
P.O. Box 3044, Room 212
Sacramento, CA 95812-3044

From: Sonoma County Water Agency
404 Aviation Blvd.
Santa Rosa, CA 95403

Sonoma County Clerk
585 Fiscal Drive, Room 103
Santa Rosa, CA 95403

Project Title: Emergency Sebastopol Road Well Activation Project

Project Location - Specific: 5590 Sebastopol Road (Highway 12), 0.4 mile west of Llano Road, Sonoma County, California (Figure 1)

Project Location – City: Unincorporated

County: Sonoma

Description of Nature, Purpose and Beneficiaries of Project: The Sonoma County Water Agency (Sonoma Water) is proposing a drought emergency project to bring an existing groundwater well at the Sebastopol Road Well Station (Well Station) into operation and to increase regional and community drought resiliency. The Well Station is located along the Russian River-Cotati Intertie Aqueduct (underground pipeline). The purpose of the project is to provide supplemental water from the existing well to support agriculture and public water retailers (cities and water districts) during the drought emergency. The project will consist of installing additional piping and associated equipment from the well to the underground pipeline to ensure chlorine contact time regulatory requirements are met for potable water use. The new piping and appurtenances would be installed primarily beneath the existing graveled hardscape and disturbed areas adjacent to the Aqueduct and well. Approximately 250 feet of 36-inch-diameter pipe would be installed. In addition, a discharge pipe would be installed from two new holding tanks to a permanent connection to the existing underground recycled pipeline located approximately 15 feet from the Well Station fence line. The holding tanks are primarily used for chlorine analyzer discharge and well operations flush water, which will be de-chlorinated prior to discharge to the underground recycled pipeline. Project activities would be contained within the 0.13-acre work area and 0.12-acre staging area. All disturbed areas would be returned to pre-existing conditions. The proposed project would not change the existing capacity of the Aqueduct or impact mature trees or native vegetation.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: Sonoma County Water Agency

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: Sonoma County Water Agency

Exempt Status: (check one)

- Ministerial (Sec. 21080(b)(1); 15268);
- Declared Emergency (Sec. 21080(b)(3); 15269(a));
- Emergency Project (Sec. 21080(b)(4); and State CEQA Guidelines 15269(b)(c)): Specific actions necessary to prevent or mitigate an emergency.
- Categorical Exemption: CEQA Guidelines §15301(b)(f), Existing Facilities
- Exemption under Governor's April 21, 2021 emergency proclamation (Section 6b): Government Code section 8571
- Statutory Exemptions. State code number: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Reasons why project is exempt: The proposed action is statutorily exempt under California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Statute 21080(b)(4), which provides that specific actions necessary to prevent or mitigate an emergency are exempt from CEQA; categorically exempt from CEQA under the State CEQA Guidelines Section 15301(b)(f); and under Section 6b of Governor's April 21, 2021, emergency drought proclamation for the Russian River Watershed.

On March 5, 2021, the Secretary of the United States Department of Agriculture designated 50 California counties, including Sonoma County, as primary natural disaster areas due to drought. This Secretarial disaster designation makes farm operators eligible to be considered for certain assistance from the Farm Service Agency. On April 21, 2021, Governor Newsom issued a Proclamation of a State of Emergency in Sonoma and Mendocino counties due to drought conditions in the Russian River Watershed (Governor's Drought Proclamation). The Governor has continued that

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proclamation for Sonoma and Mendocino counties through further drought proclamations on May 10, July 8, and October 19, 2021. On April 27, 2021, the Board of Supervisors for the County of Sonoma proclaimed a local emergency for the Sonoma County Operational Area due to drought conditions, which was most recently continued on March 1, 2022. On June 16, 2021, the General Manager of Sonoma Water determined that due to drought conditions, an emergency exists that poses a clear and imminent danger, requiring immediate action to prevent or mitigate the loss or impairment of life, health, property, or essential public services, necessitating immediate action pursuant to the authority of the County of Sonoma Resolution #06-0649. On June 18, 2021, the Sonoma Water Board of Directors adopted a resolution ratifying the General Manager's emergency determination and declaring the need to do emergency work related to drought and that such projects are exempt for the requirements of CEQA. The Board of Directors has since continuously renewed the emergency determination every two weeks.

Sonoma Water staff are proposing work necessary to bring an existing groundwater well at the Sebastopol Road Well Station into operation and to increase regional and community drought resiliency. CEQA Guidelines Section 15301 provides, generally, that the operation of existing facilities involving negligible or no expansion of use beyond that existing at the time of the lead agency's determination is categorically exempt from CEQA. Item b exempts existing facilities, including public utility services. Item f, specifies that health protection devices for use in existing facilities are exempt under CEQA. The proposed project would add chlorination to provide safe potable water that meets chlorine contact time regulatory requirements.

Lead Agency Contact Person: Dave Cook

Telephone: 707-322-8176

Signature: _____

Title: General Manager

Date: 3/10/2022

Signed by Lead Agency

Signed by Applicant

Date received for filing at OPR: _____

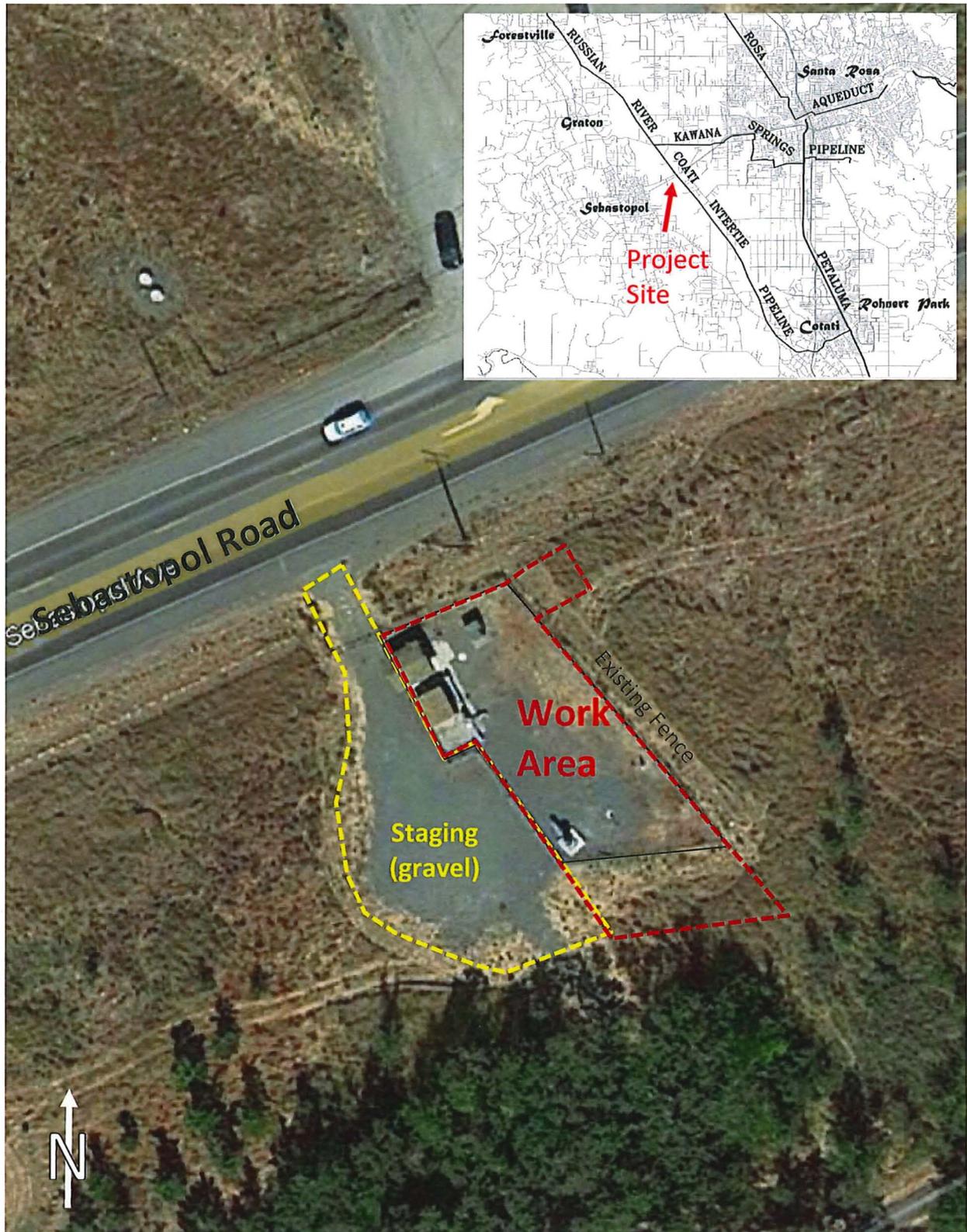


Figure 1: Emergency Sebastopol Road Well Activation Project location.