

# **DRAFT**

# **Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration**

## **Smith Reservoir Replacement Project**

December 2023

194-0200-0033

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**Prepared for**



**Serrano Water District**

18021 Lincoln Street  
Villa Park, CA 92861

**Prepared by**



17885 Von Karman Avenue, Suite 500  
Irvine, CA 92614

# SMITH RESERVOIR REPLACEMENT PROJECT

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## PROPOSED MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION AND NOTICE OF INTENT TO ADOPT THE PROPOSED MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION

This serves as the Notice of Intent by the Serrano Water District to adopt a Mitigated Negative Declaration for the Smith Reservoir Replacement Project; prepared in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and its guidelines.

**Name of Project:** Smith Reservoir Replacement Project (“Project”).

**Project Location:** The approximately 1.7-acre Project site is located approximately southwest of the intersection of Taft Avenue and Sycamore Street in the City of Villa Park.

**Lead Agency:** Serrano Water District  
18021 Lincoln Street  
Villa Park, California 92861

### **Project**

**Description:** The Project consists of replacing the existing 6-million-gallon (MG) Smith Reservoir and Pump Station which has reached the end of its useful life. The replacement reservoir will include: two below grade cast-in-place concrete tanks of the same size as the existing below grade tanks; a replacement pump station with increased maximum pumping capacity from 7,400 gallons per minute (gpm) to 8,400 gpm and with modernized with instrumentation and controls as well as improvements to facilitate maintenance; and construction of a valve vault and connection into existing City of Orange system in Cannon Street, at intersection of Taft Avenue and Cannon Street. . The Project will provide storage capacity to meet operational, fire, and emergency water demands for the District.

The Project site is not designated a hazardous waste property, nor is it a hazardous waste disposal site as defined under Section 65962.5 of the California Government Code.

**NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT** the Serrano Water District proposes to adopt a Mitigated Negative Declaration for the above-cited Project. This Mitigated Negative Declaration is based on the finding that, by implementing the identified mitigation measures, the Project’s potential impacts will be maintained at a less than significant level. The reasons to support such a finding are documented by the Initial Study prepared by Tetra Tech, Inc. The proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration and supporting materials are available for review at the Serrano Water District located at 18021 Lincoln Street, Villa Park, California, 92861 and on the Serrano Water District website at <https://serranowater.org/>.

For questions regarding the Mitigated Negative Declaration, please contact:

<b>NAME:</b>	Jerry Vilander	<b>PHONE:</b>	714.538.0079
<b>TITLE:</b>	General Manager	<b>EMAIL:</b>	info@serranowater.org
<b>ADDRESS:</b>	Serrano Water District 18021 Lincoln Street Villa Park, California 92861		

**Public Review Period:** 30 days      **Begins:** 12/12/2023      **Ends:** 1/10/2024

**Public Meeting:** Adoption of the Mitigated Negative Declaration will be considered at a public hearing by the District which is scheduled to take place on January 23, 2024 at 8:30 a.m. at the Serrano Water District located at 18021 Lincoln Street, Villa Park, CA 92861.

In accordance with CEQA Guidelines, any comments concerning the findings of the proposed Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration must be submitted in writing and **received by the Serrano Water District no later than 5:00 p.m. on January 10, 2024**, in order to be considered prior to the final determination on the Project by the District. Please submit your written comments to Jerry Vilander, General Manager, Serrano Water District, 18021 Lincoln Street, Villa Park, CA 92861. or via email to [info@serranowater.org](mailto:info@serranowater.org).

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## Acronyms and Abbreviations

§	section
AB	Assembly Bill
AQMD	Air Quality Management District
AQMP	Air Quality Management Plan
Basin	South Coast Air Basin
BMP	best management practice
BP	before present
CAAQS	California Ambient Air Quality Standards
CARB	California Air Resources Board
CEQA	California Environmental Quality Act
CH <sub>4</sub>	methane
CLSM	controlled low-strength material
CNEL	Community Noise Equivalent Level
CO <sub>2</sub>	carbon dioxide
CO <sub>2</sub> e	carbon dioxide equivalent
CRHR	California Register of Historical Resources
dBA	A-weighted sound level
DDW	California State Water Resources Control Board, Division of Drinking Water
District	Serrano Water District
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
FTA	Federal Transit Administration
GHG	greenhouse gas
gpm	gallon per minute
HWL	high water level
L <sub>eq</sub>	equivalent sound level
MG	million gallon
mgd	million gallons per day
MLD	most likely descendant
NAAQS	National Ambient Air Quality Standards
NAHC	Native American Heritage Commission
N <sub>2</sub> O	nitrous oxide

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NPDES	National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System
O <sub>3</sub>	ozone
OCFA	Orange County Fire Authority
PM <sub>10</sub>	inhalable particulate matter
PM <sub>2.5</sub>	fine particulate matter
PRC	Public Resources Code
Project	Smith Reservoir Replacement Project
RCPG	Regional Comprehensive Plan and Guide
REL	Reference Exposure Level
SCAB	South Coast Air Basin
SCADA	supervisory control and data acquisition
SCAG	Southern California Association of Governments
SCAQMD	South Coast Air Quality Management District
SCCIC	South Central Coastal Information Center
SCE	Southern California Edison
SR	State Route
TAC	toxic air contaminant
Tetra Tech	Tetra Tech, Inc.
VCP	vitrified clay pipe
VdB	vibration decibels
VFD	variable frequency drive
WHWFP	Walter E. Howiler, Jr. Water Filtration Plant



## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Serrano Water District (District) proposes to replace the existing 6-million-gallon (MG) Smith Reservoir and Pump Station (Project) in Orange County, California. The replacement will include a below grade cast-in-place concrete reservoir that will provide storage capacity to meet operational, fire, and emergency water demands for the District.

Following an initial review of the proposed Project, the District has determined that it is subject to the guidelines and regulations of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). This Initial Study addresses the environmental effects of the Project, as proposed.

### 1.1 Statutory Authority and Requirements

This Mitigated Negative Declaration has been prepared by the District with technical assistance from Tetra Tech, Inc. (Tetra Tech) to evaluate if implementation of the Project would have a significant effect on the environment. Pursuant to Section 15070 of the *Guidelines for Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act* (14 California Code of Regulations Sections [§§] 15070-15075), a public agency shall prepare or have prepared a proposed negative declaration or mitigated negative declaration for a project subject to CEQA when:

- (a) *The initial study shows that there is no substantial evidence, in light of the whole record before the agency, that the project may have a significant effect on the environment, or*
- (b) *The initial study identifies potentially significant effects, but:*
  - (1) *Revisions in the project plans or proposals made by, or agreed to by the applicant before a proposed mitigated negative declaration and initial study are released for public review would avoid the effects or mitigate the effects to a point where clearly no significant effects would occur, and*
  - (2) *There is no substantial evidence, in light of the whole record before the agency, that the project as revised may have a significant effect on the environment.*

### 1.2 Required Content

CEQA Guidelines Section 15071 indicate that a Negative Declaration circulated for public review shall include:

- (a) *A brief description of the project, including a commonly used name for the project, if any;*
- (b) *The location of the project, preferably shown on a map, and the name of the project proponent;*
- (c) *A proposed finding that the project will not have a significant effect on the environment;*
- (d) *An attached copy of the Initial Study documenting reasons to support the finding; and*
- (e) *Mitigation measures, if any, included in the project to avoid potentially significant effects.*

## 2.0 PROJECT INFORMATION

Project title:	Smith Reservoir Replacement Project
Lead agency name and address:	<b>Serrano Water District</b> 18021 Lincoln Street Villa Park, California 92861
Contact person and phone number:	<b>Jerry Vilander, General Manager</b> 714-538-0079
Project location:	The Project is located approximately southwest of the intersection of Taft Avenue and Sycamore Street in the City of Villa Park in Orange County. See Figure 2-1, Project Vicinity Map for more details.
Project sponsor's name and address:	<b>Serrano Water District</b> 18021 Lincoln Street Villa Park, California 92861
General Plan Designation:	Estate Low Density Residential 1.75 DU/AC
Zoning Designation:	Public Institution
Surrounding land uses:	The surrounding land uses consist of residential uses. State Route 55 is located approximately 1.7 miles to the west, and State Route 91 is located approximately 2.4 miles to the north.

## 2.1 Environmental Setting

The District's Smith Reservoir and Pump Station is located approximately southwest of the intersection of Taft Avenue and Sycamore Street, in the City of Villa Park in north Orange County (see Figure 2-1, Project Vicinity Map; Figure 2-2 Project Location).

### 2.1.1 Regional

Orange County, situated on the California south coastal plain, covers an area of approximately 782 square miles. It is bounded by Los Angeles and San Bernardino Counties to the north, Riverside County to the East, San Diego County to the south, and the Pacific Ocean to the west.

The city of Villa Park encompasses 2.1 square miles and is completely encircled by the city of Orange with the exception of a small area controlled by the County of Orange along Santiago Creek. The city of Villa Park is located in the low foothills on the west flank of the Santa Ana Mountains and is southeast of the Santa Ana River. Along its southeastern boundary runs a portion of Santiago Creek. North of the City of Villa Park are the Peralta Hills, exceeding a height of 1,500 feet. To the south is the Lomas de Santiago ridgeline with elevations as high as 1,700 feet (City of Villa Park 2019a). Land uses in Villa Park include single-family residential parcels ranging from 6,000 to over 20,000 square feet, a planned community district, a multiple family district, a sand and gravel extraction district, water reclamation and flood control facilities, and a small amount for professional use (City of Villa Park 2019b). Regional access to Villa Park is provided by State Route 55, which is approximately 0.5 mile west of the city. Villa Park is also accessible from adjacent communities via major arterial surface streets.

### 2.1.2 Project Site

The Project site is in the east-central side of Villa Park, with site access from Taft Avenue on the northern end of the site or Sycamore Street on the eastern end of the site. The site is surrounded by small estate residential zoning, with four large houses directly adjacent to the site on the west and south sides. In addition, a valve vault and connection into existing City of Orange system will be constructed in Cannon Street at the intersection of Taft Avenue and Cannon Street. The valve vault site is also surrounded by small estate residential zoning.

## 2.2 Project Description

### 2.2.1 Background

The District was established in 1876 and provides potable water to the city of Villa Park and a small portion of the city of Orange. The District receives its water supply from local surface water that is stored in Irvine Lake and groundwater from three wells located within the city of Villa Park. The District provides water for a population of 6,500 covering approximately 4.7 square miles, serving primarily large lot single family homes and one shopping center. The District has 43 miles of pipeline, three wells, a treatment plant, and two reservoirs. All of the District's water is treated at the Walter E. Howiler, Jr. Water Filtration Plant (WHWFP), which has an average production rate of 2.2 million gallons per day (mgd) (Serrano Water District 2023).

Half of the existing Smith Reservoir and the Pump Station were built in 1970. The reservoir comprises two below grade concrete tanks (east and west) having a total capacity of 6.0 MG, see Figure 2-3, Existing Site Plan. The 3.0 MG west tank was built first in 1970 and the east tank was built 15 years later in 1985 to provide an additional 3.0 MG of capacity to the reservoir. The east and west tanks have an approximate finished floor elevation of 371 feet and high-water level (HWL) of 390 feet. The pump station consists of three 1,000 gallons per minute (gpm) vertical turbine pumps, each equipped with 125 horsepower (HP) motors for the upper zone and three 1,650 gpm vertical turbine pumps with two 100 HP motors and one 125 HP motor for the lower zone.

In 2015 and 2016, the District evaluated the Smith Reservoir through two studies—the Smith Reservoir Structural Evaluation (Carollo Engineers 2015) and the Smith Reservoir Bypass Preliminary Design – East Tank Operation Report (Carollo Engineers 2016). The structural evaluation identified numerous seismic vulnerabilities and deficient conditions that would warrant either a retrofit/rehabilitation or complete replacement of the reservoir. The west tank has concrete spalling, cracking, and corroded columns, while the east tank has some cracks in the walls. Through these studies, it was determined that the structural deficiencies observed in the east tank are relatively minor compared to those in the west tank.

In 2021, an evaluation (Brown and Caldwell 2021) concluded that the Smith Reservoir is reaching the end of its useful life and that the pump station experienced damage from a recent surge event causing yard piping to rupture at the reservoir site. The site is essential to the supply of reliable water through the District system. Therefore, replacement of the reservoir and pump station is required to be done in a timely manner while continuing to stay in operation to supply this need.

### **2.2.2 General Description**

The proposed Project includes the following primary components:

- Construction will occur in two phases: Phase 1 involves the East Tank and pump station; Phase 2 involves the West Tank. See Section 2.2.3.
- Demolition of portions of the existing below ground reservoir tanks and foundation. Existing west reservoir walls will be left in place to provide shoring.
- Two belowground (2.0 MG and 3.0 MG) cast-in-place concrete reservoirs with an HWL of 390 feet and associated pipelines including separate inlet and outlet pipelines, an overflow, a drain pipeline, bypass piping and associated valving.
- A replacement pump station equipped with four vertical-turbine, constant speed pumps for the Upper Zone and three vertical-turbine variable-frequency drive (VFD) pumps for the Lower Zone.
- Construction of a valve vault and connection into existing City of Orange system in Cannon Street, at intersection of Taft Avenue and Cannon Street.
- An emergency diesel generator.
- Site electrical service, controls, and telemetry improvements.

The 1.7-acre site will be completely enclosed by the existing 8-foot-high block wall on the east and north side and the proposed 10-foot-high block wall on the west and south sides. Secure access points to the site consist of the existing rolling gates along Sycamore Street, in addition to the proposed manual rolling gate at the northwest corner of the site on Taft Avenue. Although security cameras will

not be installed as part of this project, conduits will be supplied at critical surveillance points for future installation.

### 2.2.3 Construction Details

Construction will occur in two phases. Phase 1 will include construction of the East Tank and pump station and the valve vault and connection into existing City of Orange system. Phase 2 will include construction of the West Tank. Construction of Phase 1 is anticipated to begin in the fourth quarter 2024 and last approximately 14 months. Construction of Phase 2 is anticipated to begin in the fourth quarter of 2025 and last approximately 12 months.

Construction of the Project will include approximately 560 working days of construction during normal working days and hours (Monday through Friday, except federal holidays). The construction labor force will vary from 6 to 12 workers for the duration.

Staging and stockpiling will occur on-site within the Project site work zones for project construction. The Project contractor will be responsible for obtaining any additional staging and/or storage area if necessary.

Waste and excess debris will be hauled away for disposal. A traffic control plan will be prepared to accommodate any lane closures necessary along Taft Avenue, Sycamore Street, and/or Cannon Street.

The expected haul routes for equipment and material are as follows:

#### Inbound:

- State Route (SR)-55, exit on Katella Avenue, east on Katella Avenue to Wanda Road, north on Wanda Road to Taft Avenue, East on Taft Avenue to Sycamore Street
- Alternate route: SR-55, exit on Katella Avenue, east on Katella Avenue to Cannon Street, north on Cannon Street to Taft Avenue, west on Taft Avenue to Sycamore Street, south on Sycamore Street

#### Outbound:

- North on Sycamore Street to Taft Avenue, west on Taft Avenue to Wanda Road, south on Wanda Road to Katella Avenue, west on Katella Avenue to SR-55
- Alternate route: North on Sycamore Street to Taft Avenue, east on Taft Avenue to Cannon Street, south on Cannon Street to Villa Park Road/Katella Avenue, west on Katella Avenue to SR-55

Construction best management practices (BMPs) will be used including those for stormwater, erosion/sediment control, and spill prevention.

#### 2.2.3.1 Project Phasing

The existing west reservoir and pump station must remain in service during construction of the new facilities, which will require the construction to be phased. This will allow the maximum amount of space available for construction while providing access and maintenance to the existing facilities. The demolition of the existing reservoir and pump station and construction of replacement reservoir and pump station will be completed in two phases.

Phase 1 will include the following tasks as shown on Figure 2-4, Phase 1 Demolition Site Plan and Figure 2-5, Phase 1 Site Plan:

- Remove and dispose of or abandon cap-interfering portions of existing yard piping in the area north of the existing east reservoir.
- Remove and dispose of:
  - existing Upper and Lower Zone pressure relief valve vaults north of the existing East Reservoir
  - portion of existing block wall by the northeast rolling gate (this will expand temporary construction access to the site along Sycamore Street)
  - existing block wall by the northwest corner of the site (this will provide temporary construction access to the site along Taft Avenue)
  - north wall and portions of foundation, and all of the roof slab and columns of the existing east reservoir
  - existing 4-inch perforated vitrified clay pipe (VCP) subdrain beneath the existing East Reservoir
- Cap existing slide gate between the East and West tanks.
- Construct:
  - 2.0 MG cast-in-place concrete reservoir, using the remaining existing east reservoir walls as shoring
  - pump, electrical and generator building
  - new yard piping for the new east reservoir with connections to existing filtration plant main, Lockett transmission main, and Upper and Lower Zone pipelines
  - valve vaults
  - surge tanks
  - supervisory control and data acquisition (SCADA) antenna
  - new SCE transformer
- Place structural fill within north end of the east reservoir prepare sub-grade for proposed building.
- Install new emergency standby generator in generator room.
- Place new east reservoir and pump station into service.
- Construct valve vault and connection into existing City of Orange system at intersection of Taft Avenue and Cannon St.

Phase 2 will include the following tasks as shown on Figure 2-6, Phase 2 Demolition Site Plan and Figure 2-7, Phase 2 Site Plan:

- Remove and dispose of:
  - roof slab and all existing columns within the west reservoir
  - existing pump station
  - existing valve vaults
  - interfering portions of existing yard piping
  - existing generator, generator building, and diesel fuel storage tank
  - existing Southern California Edison (SCE) transformer

- existing aboveground portions of block wall along the west and south sides of the site. Only the aboveground portions of block wall will be removed to avoid encroaching too far within residential property and minimize the impact to residents' improvements.
- Acquire residential access to regrade and clear and grub any vegetation in preparation for new 10-foot-high block wall.
- Construct:
  - 3.0 MG cast-in-place concrete reservoir, using the existing west reservoir walls as shoring
  - new yard piping to connect new west reservoir to Phase 1 yard piping
  - new 10-foot-high block wall along the west and south sides of the site
- Install:
  - new manually operated rolling gate at the temporary site access point at the northwest corner of the site
  - new SCE transformer
- Place new west reservoir into service.
- Replace and finish site paving.

Additional Project information for both phases is shown in Figure 2-8, Reservoir Sections; Figure 2-9, Yard Piping Plan; Figure 2-10, Drain Piping Plan; Figure 2-11, Pump Building Overall Plan; Figure 2-12, Pump Room Mechanical Plan; and Figure 2-13, Orange Flow Control Valve Vault Site Location. Under both phases, asbestos-containing materials will be removed as part of the demolition of existing reservoir tanks and pump station building. The project manual will include an asbestos abatement specification including requirements for obtaining an Air Quality Management District (AQMD) permit.

### **2.2.3.2 Project Grading**

The Project will involve interim and final grading. Interim grading will be performed once portions of the existing north wall and footing of the East tank are demolished in Phase 1. Subgrade preparation for the proposed pump building will consist of new controlled low-strength material (CLSM) fill. During both Phases 1 and 2, interim grading will include temporary construction access ramps at a 2:1 slope to construct the proposed East and West tanks, respectively. The proposed interim grading and construction access is shown on Figure 2-14, Phase 1 Interim Grading and Construction Access Plan and Figure 2-15, Phase 2 Interim Grading and Construction Access Plan.

Under final grading, the site will have three points of vehicle access: the existing 27-foot-wide entrance in the northeast corner of the site, the existing 30-foot-wide to the southeast, and the proposed 30-foot-wide entrance to the northwest. The high point will be located at the northeast corner with the low point, grate inlets, catch basins, and sumps towards the southwest corner. The final grading is shown on Figure 2-16.

### **2.2.4 Mitigation Measures**

The following mitigation measures have been incorporated into the scope of work for the proposed Project and will be fully implemented by the District to avoid or minimize adverse environmental impacts identified in this Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration. These mitigation measures will



be included in the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Plan prepared for this Project (see Appendix A).

### **Mitigation Measures:**

**CUL-1: Environmental Training** – Prior to construction of the Project, a qualified archaeologist will provide a cultural resource briefing that includes all applicable laws and penalties pertaining to disturbing cultural resources, a brief discussion of the prehistoric and historic regional context and archaeological sensitivity of the area, types of cultural resources found in the area, instruction that Project workers will halt construction if a cultural resource is inadvertently discovered during construction. If requested, a local tribal representative(s) shall be invited to participate in the environmental training to discuss or provide text from a tribal cultural perspective regarding the cultural resources within the region.

**CUL-2: Native American Consultation/Coordination:** The Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) Sacred Lands Search results was positive. The NAHC recommended coordinating with the Juaneño Band of Mission Indians Acjachemen Nation – Belardes tribe and the NAHC listed tribes as they may have information regarding known and recorded tribal cultural resource sites within or near the Project. Prior to determining that an application for a project is complete or a decision by the District to undertake the Project, the District shall consult or coordinate with the NAHC listed tribes to ensure tribal cultural resources are considered. Native American government to government consultation is part of the lead CEQA agency’s responsibilities under Assembly Bill (AB) 52.

**CUL-3: Inadvertent Discovery of Archaeological Resources During Construction** – During Project-level construction, should subsurface archaeological resources be discovered, all activity within 50 feet of a “find” shall stop and a qualified archaeologist shall be contacted to assess the significance of the find according to CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5 and/or NRHP criteria (as applicable). The archaeologist (shall have the authority to halt any Project-related construction activities that could impact potentially significant resources. If any find is determined to be significant, the archaeologist shall determine, in consultation with the implementing agencies and any local Native American groups expressing interest, appropriate avoidance measures or other appropriate mitigation. Ground-disturbing activities shall not continue until the discovery has been assessed by the archaeologist. The archaeologist shall be afforded the necessary time to assess the find. With monitoring, construction activities may continue on other areas of the Project site during evaluation and treatment of historic or unique archaeological resources. Under CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.4(b)(3), preservation in place is the preferred means to avoid impacts to archaeological resources qualifying as historical resources. Methods of avoidance may include, but shall not be limited to, (i) Project re-route or re-design, (ii) Project cancellation, or (iii) identification of protection measures such as capping or fencing. Consistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.4(b)(3)(C), if it is demonstrated that resources cannot be avoided, the qualified archaeologist shall develop additional treatment measures, such as data recovery or other appropriate measures, in consultation with the implementing agency and any local Native American representatives expressing interest in prehistoric or tribal resources. If an archaeological site does not qualify as an historical resource but meets the criteria for a unique archaeological resource as defined in Section 21083.2, then the site shall be treated in accordance with the provisions of Section 21083.2.



**GEO-1: Inadvertent Discoveries of Paleontological Resources** — If the construction staff or others observe previously unidentified paleontological resources during ground disturbing activities, they will halt work within a 200-foot radius of the find(s), delineate the area of the find with flagging tape or rope (may also include dirt spoils from the find area), and immediately notify a qualified Paleontologist. Construction will halt within the flagged or roped-off area. The Paleontologist will assess the resource as soon as possible and determine appropriate next steps in coordination with the District. Such finds will be formally recorded and evaluated. The resource will be protected from further disturbance or looting pending evaluation.

### **2.3 Other Public Agencies Whose Approval Is Required**

Other public agencies whose approval is expected to be required in the form of permits, financing approval, or participation agreements are as follows:

- South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) – construction permit
- California State Water Resources Control Board, Division of Drinking Water (DDW) – design plans
- Santa Ana Regional Water Quality Control Board – Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan for construction activities and development discharge
- Orange County Fire Authority (OCFA) – Fire Master Plan
- City of Villa Park – encroachment permit, grading permit
- City of Orange – encroachment permit

### 3.0 ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST

#### 3.1 Environmental Factors Potentially Affected

The environmental factors checked would be potentially affected by this Project, involving at least one impact that is a “Potentially Significant Impact” as indicated by the checklist on the following pages.

- Aesthetics
- Agriculture & Forestry Resources
- Air Quality
- Biological Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Energy
- Geology/Soils
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Hazards & Hazardous Materials
- Hydrology/Water Quality
- Land Use/Planning
- Mineral Resources
- Noise
- Population/Housing
- Public Services
- Recreation
- Transportation
- Tribal Cultural Resources
- Utilities/Service Systems
- Wildfire
- Mandatory Findings of Significance

#### 3.2 Determination: (To be completed by the Lead Agency)

On the basis of this initial evaluation:

- I find that the proposed project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment, and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.
- I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, there will not be a significant effect in this case because revisions in the Project have been made by or agreed to by the project proponent. A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.
- I find that the proposed project MAY have a significant effect on the environment, and an ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required.
- I find that the proposed project MAY have a “potentially significant impact” or “potentially significant unless mitigated” impact on the environment, but at least one effect 1) has been adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and 2) has been addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis as described on attached sheets. An ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT (EIR) is required, but it must analyze only the effects that remain to be addressed.
- I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, because all potentially significant effects (a) have been analyzed adequately in an earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION pursuant to applicable standards, and (b) have been avoided or mitigated pursuant to that earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION, including revisions or mitigation measures that are imposed upon the proposed project, nothing further is required.

Jerry Vilander  
Signature

12/11/23

Date

Jerry Vilander  
Print Name

### 3.3 Evaluation of Environmental Impacts

- (1) A brief explanation is required for all answers except “no impact” answers that are adequately supported by the information sources a lead agency cites in the parentheses following each question. A “no impact” answer is adequately supported if the referenced information sources show that the impact simply does not apply to projects like the one involved (e.g., the project falls outside a fault rupture zone). A “no impact” answer should be explained if it is based on project-specific factors as well as general standards (e.g., the project would not expose sensitive receptors to pollutants, based on a project-specific screening analysis).
- (2) All answers must take account of the whole action involved, including off-site as well as on site, cumulative as well as project-level, indirect as well as direct, and construction as well as operational impacts.
- (3) Once the lead agency has determined that a particular physical impact may occur, the checklist answers must indicate whether the impact is potentially significant, less than significant with mitigation, or less than significant. “Potentially significant impact” is appropriate if there is substantial evidence that an effect may be significant. If there are one or more “potentially significant impact” entries when the determination is made, an EIR is required.
- (4) “Negative declaration: less than significant with mitigation incorporated” applies when the incorporation of mitigation measures has reduced an effect from a “potentially significant impact” to a “less than significant impact.” The lead agency must describe the mitigation measures and briefly explain how they reduce the effect to a less than significant level.
- (5) Earlier analyses may be used if, pursuant to tiering, program EIR, or other CEQA process, an effect has been adequately analyzed in an earlier EIR or negative declaration (Section 15063[c][3][D]). In this case, a brief discussion should identify the following:
  - a. Earlier analysis used. Identify and state where earlier analyses are available for review.
  - b. Impacts adequately addressed. Identify which effects from the above checklist were within the scope of and adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards and state whether such effects were addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis.
  - c. Mitigation measures. For effects that are “less than significant with mitigation incorporated,” describe the mitigation measures that were incorporated or refined from the earlier document and the extent to which they address site-specific conditions for the project.
- (6) Lead agencies are encouraged to incorporate into the checklist references to information sources for potential impacts (e.g., general plans, zoning ordinances). Reference to a previously prepared or outside document should, when appropriate, include a reference to the page or pages where the statement is substantiated.
- (7) Supporting information sources. A source list should be attached and other sources used or individuals contacted should be cited in the discussion.
- (8) This is only a suggested form, and lead agencies are free to use different formats; however, lead agencies should normally address the questions from this checklist that are relevant to a project’s environmental effects in whatever format is selected.

- (9) The explanation of each issue should identify:
- a. The significance criteria or threshold, if any, used to evaluate each question, and
  - b. The mitigation measure identified, if any, to reduce the impact to a less than significant level.

### 3.4 Environmental Impact Analysis

#### 3.4.1 Aesthetics

		Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Except as provided in Public Resources Code Section 21099, would the project:					
a.	Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?				X
b.	Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within along a state scenic highway?				X
c.	In non-urbanized areas, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings? (Public views are those that are experienced from publicly accessible vantage point). If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality?			X	
d.	Create a new source of substantial light or glare that would adversely affect daytime or nighttime views in the area?			X	

#### Existing Conditions

The Project site is located in an urban setting characterized by views of single-family residential, municipal, and commercial uses.

The nearest state-designated scenic highway is a 4.2-mile segment of SR-91 from STR-55 east to the city limits of Anaheim (Caltrans 2023). The Project site is located approximately 2.5 miles southeast.

The Project site contains the existing reservoir facility surrounded by a five to six foot high cement block perimeter wall with gated entrance on the east side. Street trees (pines and palm trees) and ground covering line the northern and eastern boundaries of the Project site. The existing reservoir pump station is visible through the security gate and slightly visible above the wall.

#### Discussion

##### a. Would the project have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?

**No Impact.** Direct views of the Project site are from surrounding residential uses and adjacent roadways. No scenic vistas are identified in the Project vicinity; therefore, implementation of the proposed Project would not block any scenic vistas and no impact would occur.

**Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation is required.

##### b. Would the project substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?

**No Impact.** The Project site is not in the viewshed of any designated or eligible state scenic highway. No impact to a scenic highway will occur.

**Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation is required.



- c. Would the project in non-urbanized areas, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings? (Public views are those that are experienced from publicly accessible vantage point). If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality?**

**Less Than Significant Impact.** The proposed Project would involve both temporary and permanent changes to the visual character of the site. Temporary changes are associated with construction activities, including construction equipment, staging, and Project construction. These visual impacts would be short-term in nature and are not considered to be significant.

Implementation of the proposed Project would result in long-term/permanent changes to the visual character of the site due to the replacement of the existing reservoir facilities and perimeter wall. Most of the perimeter landscaping will remain. Where landscaping is removed to facilitate construction, it will be replaced with vegetation similar to existing conditions. Most of the replacement facilities will only be visible through the security entrance gate and will not be visible from most of the surrounding area due to the new cement block perimeter wall. This wall will vary from approximately 7 to feet in height above ground surface on the west and south sides and 6 to 7 feet above ground surface on the north and east sides of the Project site. The roofs of the new reservoir tanks will be the same height or slightly lower than the east and south walls and will be the same height or slightly higher than the west and north walls.

While these buildings will be more prominent than existing facilities, the proposed Project improvements would be visually consistent with the existing Project site. The vault and connection into existing City of Orange system in Cannon Street will be mostly underground and will not be visible post construction. Vault air vents and a small electrical control cabinet will be above ground will be similar to other utility equipment in the area and not demand attention. The proposed Project would not result in the removal or degradation of any significant visual resources and would be consistent in character to the existing site. For this reason, impacts are considered to be less than significant.

**Mitigation Measures:** No mitigation is required.

- d. Would the project create a new source of substantial light or glare would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?**

**Less Than Significant Impact.** There are two primary sources of light: light emanating from building interiors that pass through windows, and light from exterior sources (e.g., street lighting, parking lot lighting, building illumination, security lighting, and landscape lighting). Light introduction can be a nuisance to adjacent uses and diminish the view of the clear night sky. Currently, light and glare in the Project vicinity is produced by vehicle headlights, street lighting, and lighting from the adjacent residential uses.

The Project lighting would be similar to existing conditions. The amount of light produced at the site would be the minimum required for safety and security purposes. The lights on the site would be designed to direct the light toward the site to reduce spillage into the surrounding streets and buildings. Furthermore, since the structures would not include shiny finishes, the Project is not