

**NOTICE OF EXEMPTION**  
Coachella Valley Water District  
Post Office Box 1058  
Coachella, California 92236

☒ County Clerk  
County of Riverside  
Post Office Box 751  
Riverside, CA 92502

☐ County of Imperial  
Imperial County Clerk/Recorder  
940 West Main Street, Suite 202  
El Centro, CA 92243

☒ State Clearinghouse  
Office of Planning and Research  
Post Office Box 3044, Room 113  
Sacramento, CA 95812-3044

☐ County of San Diego  
Recorder/County Clerk's Office  
1600 Pacific Highway, Suite 260  
Post Office Box 121750  
San Diego, CA 92112-1750

Project Title: Garfield Mitigation Site

Project Location: The mitigation site is located the northwest corner of a 136-acre parcel (assessor's parcel number [APN] 729-170-012), (NE ¼ of Section 36, Township 7 South, Range 9 East, San Bernardino Meridian) located near Garfield Street and 72nd Avenue. The mitigation site is in unincorporated Riverside County near the community of North Shore.

Description of Nature, Purpose and Beneficiaries of Project:

CVWD proposes to implement a wetland compensatory mitigation site (Garfield site) located on a CVWD owned parcel located between 72<sup>nd</sup> Avenue and Garfield Street near the Garfield Street drain and the community of North Shore. The Garfield site is outlined and detailed in the Project HMMP, which was approved by the USACE on December 12, 2023. CVWD received a final section 404 permit for Project on December 20, 2023. The USACE 404 Individual Permit requires that CVWD begin construction of the Garfield Site within 90 days of the start of construction of the Palm Desert Groundwater Replenishment Facility Phase 2. The Palm Desert Groundwater Replenishment Project Phase II (Phase II) consists of constructing a series of groundwater recharge basins within the Whitewater River Stormwater Channel (WRSC) in order to receive and infiltrate Colorado River water to replenish the underlying groundwater basin (Indio Subbasin).

The Garfield mitigation site will contain wetland marsh and intermixed riparian habitat complex, utilizing approximately 36 AFY of imported Colorado River Water supplied by CVWD. The Garfield Site will require a new 12-inch PVC irrigation pipeline, approximately 2,900 feet long, to provide irrigation for the constructed wetland. Water supply will include necessary appurtenances such as valves and meters for operation. A pipeline easement of 2,900 feet is required within portions of Assessor Parcel Nos. (APNs) 729-140-011 and 729-140-012. The purchase of the easements will be acquired from Anthony Vineyards, Inc. and installed in existing pre disturbed dirt roads. Anthony Vineyards is an existing grape and organic date farm orchard under current operation.

Project construction will take place over 1 year to complete and is anticipated to start in January 2025. Installation of the project is anticipated to be completed with minimal grading and excavation, and primarily established through hand labor and establishment of vegetation. The WRSC project will occur within the planning boundary of the Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan and Natural Community Conservation Plan (CVMSHCP/NCCP) but is not a part of any CVMSHCP/NCCP Conservation Area. The Garfield Mitigation site is located within the Coachella Valley Stormwater Channel and Delta Conservation Area. A Biological technical memorandum was prepared approved by the US Army Corps of

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Engineers for the mitigation site no impacts to listed species or habitat were identified. Standard Biological compliance measures and BMPs will be implemented on the project. An aquatic resource evaluation of the site was conducted and determined the site to be located in uplands, otherwise non-jurisdictional.

A Cultural Resources Report was conducted for the site, which concluded there were no known resources recorded within the project footprint or nearby vicinity. Standard cultural resource avoidance, minimization, and monitoring efforts will be included in the project construction implementation.

An evaluation of the site revealed no concerns for hazardous materials or specific impacts from noise, and traffic. A Stormwater Prevention Plan Pollution Plan and dust control measures are implemented as standard project BMP's.

**Lead Agency Approving Project and Contact:** Coachella Valley Water District; Diego Colorado, Senior Engineer / Phone: (760) 398-2651

Exempt Status:

- ☐ **Not a project:** State CEQA Guidelines §15378
- ☐ **Review for Exemption/Common Sense Exemption:** State CEQA Guideline §15061(b)(3)
- ☐ **Ministerial:** (Pub. Res. Code §21080(b)(1); State CEQA Guideline §15268)
- ☐ **Declared Emergency:** (Pub. Res. Code §21080(b)(3); State CEQA Guideline §15269(a))
- ☐ **Emergency Project:** 15269(b)
- ☐ **Statutory Exempt:** State CEQA Guidelines § 15277
- ☒ **Categorically Exempt:** State CEQA Guidelines: State CEQA Guidelines §15303, §15333

Reasons why project is exempt:

State CEQA Guidelines §15303 (New Construction and Conversion of Small Structures) consists of construction and location of limited numbers of new, small facilities or structures; installation of small new equipment and facilities in small structures; and the conversion of existing small structures from one use to another where only minor modifications are made in the exterior of the structure.

State CEQA Guidelines §15333 (SMALL HABITAT RESTORATION PROJECTS) this Class 33 exemption consists of projects not to exceed five acres in size to assure the maintenance, restoration, enhancement, or protection of habitat for fish, plants, or wildlife provided that there would be no significant adverse impact on endangered, rare or threatened species or their habitat pursuant to section 15065. There are no hazardous materials at or around the project site that may be disturbed or removed and the project will not result in impacts that are significant when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects. Examples of small restoration projects may include, but are not limited to wetland restoration, the primary purpose of which is to improve conditions for waterfowl or other species that rely on wetland habitat.

**Environmental Contact Person:** Carlos Huerta, CVWD Environmental Specialist, Phone (760) 398-2651

Date:

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Sylvia Bermudez

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Clerk of the Board

Authority cited: Sections 21083 and 21110, Public Resources Code.  
Reference: Sections 21108, 21152, and 21152.1, Public Resources Code.

File No.