

Notice of Exemption

Appendix E

To: Office of Planning and Research
P.O. Box 3044, Room 113
Sacramento, CA 95812-3044

From: The Trustees of the California State
University
401 Golden Shore
Long Beach CA 90802-4210

Project Title: One Water Living Learning Laboratory

Project Applicant: San Diego State University (SDSU)

Project Location - Specific: San Diego State University, Mission Valley, West of
2025 River Park Rd., San Diego, CA 92108

Project Location City: San Diego

Project Location County: San Diego

Description of Nature, Purpose, and Beneficiaries of Project

The One Water Living Learning Laboratory (OWLLL) project will install a 480 square-foot modular building to be used for water research purposes. The project site totals approximately 6,000 square feet and includes outdoor space for hands-on demonstrations and education, to benefit SDSU students, faculty, K-12 students, and the general public. The project will be located at the west end of the SDSU Mission Valley River Park. Specifically, the modular lab will be installed on a raised area near an existing bioretention basin and an MTS Trolley viaduct. The project will be installed outside of the MTS Trolley easement. Due to proximity to the adjacent bioretention basin and existing sanitary sewer infrastructure, the lab’s location is optimal for water reuse research opportunities. Utilities will be extended from the existing infrastructure. No grading or disturbance of the bioretention basin will occur.

The OWLLL will contain spaces for staging field research in the San Diego River and its tributaries, a laboratory for preparing samples and training students in basic water quality analyses, and a real-world testbed for SDSU’s new water technologies. OWLLL will provide access points for stormwater sampling and wastewater sampling (with return of wastewater back to the sanitary sewer after sampling or treatment) and an outdoor area for hydrology demonstrations and training activities. The OWLLL would be operational and accessible at hours reasonably determined by the OWLLL’s operators and researchers.

Project implementation also involves an amendment to an existing agreement between the Board of Trustees of the California State University and the City of San Diego known as the “Agreement Regarding Maintenance and Management of the River Park and Storm Water Best Management Practice Structures”, recorded in the Official Records of the San Diego County Recorder’s Office on August 13, 2020, as Document No. 2020-0454907 (2020 Maintenance Agreement). The Board of Trustees on behalf of SDSU seeks to amend the 2020 Maintenance Agreement to provide for operation of the OWLLL as an allowed use under a limited-duration (10-year) easement, with options for three separate 10-year extensions of the term. The CSU will be responsible for operation and maintenance of the OWLLL, and,

upon termination of the easement, for restoration of the OWLLL site to substantially the same condition as existed on the effective date of the amended 2020 Maintenance Agreement. The 2020 Maintenance Agreement would otherwise remain in full force and effect.

The amendment will be recorded on title, once fully executed, and the site plan and conceptual floor plan for the OWLLL are on file with SDSU.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: The Trustees of The California State University

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: San Diego State University

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))
X	Categorical Exemption. Section 15303, Class 3: New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures; Section 15304, Class 4: Minor Alterations to Land
	Statutory Exemption. State code number:
X	Common Sense Exemption (15061(b)(3))

Reasons Why the Project is Exempt:

Consistent with the qualifying criteria for the Class 3 categorical exemption, the project consists of the construction and operation of a small modular structure of less than 2,500 square feet that will not involve the use of significant amounts of hazardous substances; all necessary public services and facilities are available in the project vicinity; and the surrounding area is not environmentally sensitive. Consistent with the qualifying criteria for the Class 4 categorical exemption, the project would result in minor alterations to the land, as the site of the facility has been previously graded and a sewer connection vault with plumbing and conduit from the vault already exists in the area. There will be no additional grading, and minimal trenching is required for utility connections. Furthermore, no removal of trees or established vegetation is necessary for this project. In addition, the project does not trigger any of the exceptions (a) through (f) to the use of categorical exemptions cited in Section 15300.2 of the CEQA Guidelines. Therefore, the project is exempt from CEQA pursuant to a Class 3 categorical exemption and a Class 4 categorical exemption.

In the alternative, moreover, and for the reasons stated above, it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the proposed project may have a significant effect on the environment, and therefore the project also qualifies for the “common sense” exemption to CEQA provided in Section 15061(b)(3) of the State CEQA Guidelines.

Lead Agency Contact Person: Kara Peterson, Director of Facilities Planning

Area Code/Telephone/Email: 619-594-6930/ kara.peterson@sdsu.edu

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 _____ N/A **X**

Signature: 

Mar 6, 2025

Title: Director of Facilities Planning

X Signed by Lead Agency Signed by Applicant

Authority cited: Public Resources Code Section 21083 and 21101.

References: Public Resources Code Section 21108, 21152, and 21152.1