Print Form

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: Inyo
P.O. Drawer F
Independence, CA 93526

From: (Public Agency): Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (LADWP)
111 North Hope Street, Room 1044
Los Angeles, CA 90012
(Address)

Project Title: Pleasant Valley Dam Seismic Stability Study

Project Applicant: Los Angeles Department of Water and Power, 111 N. Hope St., Rm. 1044, Los Angeles, CA 90012

Project Location - Specific:

Pleasant Valley Dam and Power Plant, 37°24'52.6"N 118°31'28.1"W

Project Location - City: Mesa (Nearest City) Project Location - County: Inyo

Description of Nature, Purpose and Beneficiaries of Project:

The scope of this project is to conduct a stability study to evaluate the seismic performance of the dam at Pleasant Valley Power Plant. In order to perform the study, field investigation to collect soil boring and samples is necessary. The investigation will consist of several borings with diameters typically between 3-4 inches. Depth of boreholes range from 20-50 feet. Investigation locations are on the crest and toe of the dam, inside the LADWP power facility. All boreholes are to be backfilled after the sampling is completed. The investigation is planned for June-July 2021. Additional information attached below.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: LADWP

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: LADWP

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: 15306, Class 6 (Information Collection)
- ☒ Statutory Exemptions. State code number: 15262 (Feasibility and Planning Studies)

Reasons why project is exempt:

See Enclosure A for additional information.

Lead Agency
Contact Person: James R. Howe Area Code/Telephone/Extension: (213) 367-0414

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: Nadia J Parker Date: 06/04/2021 Title: Manager, Environmental Planning and Assessment
Charles C. Holloway

▪ 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: _____

ENCLOSURE A
Supplemental Project Description and CEQA Exemption Information

Project Description:
Pleasant Valley Reservoir has been operating at a restricted level due to the presence of a seepage layer within the Pleasant Valley Dam (Dam), and the purpose of the current study is to evaluate the feasibility of operating the reservoir at full capacity. Due to seismic stability concerns, the maximum reservoir level was restricted to 8 feet below the spillway, but a previous seismic stability study indicated that it is feasible to operate the reservoir at full capacity.

The current project includes two tasks. Task 1 includes a study of the seismic stability and overall integrity of the Dam considering the frozen soil layer and seepage near the right (west) abutment. Task 2 includes the installation of piezometers along the right abutment to monitor piezometric level for seepage assessment. The results will be used to evaluate the seismic performance of the Dam at full operational capacity.

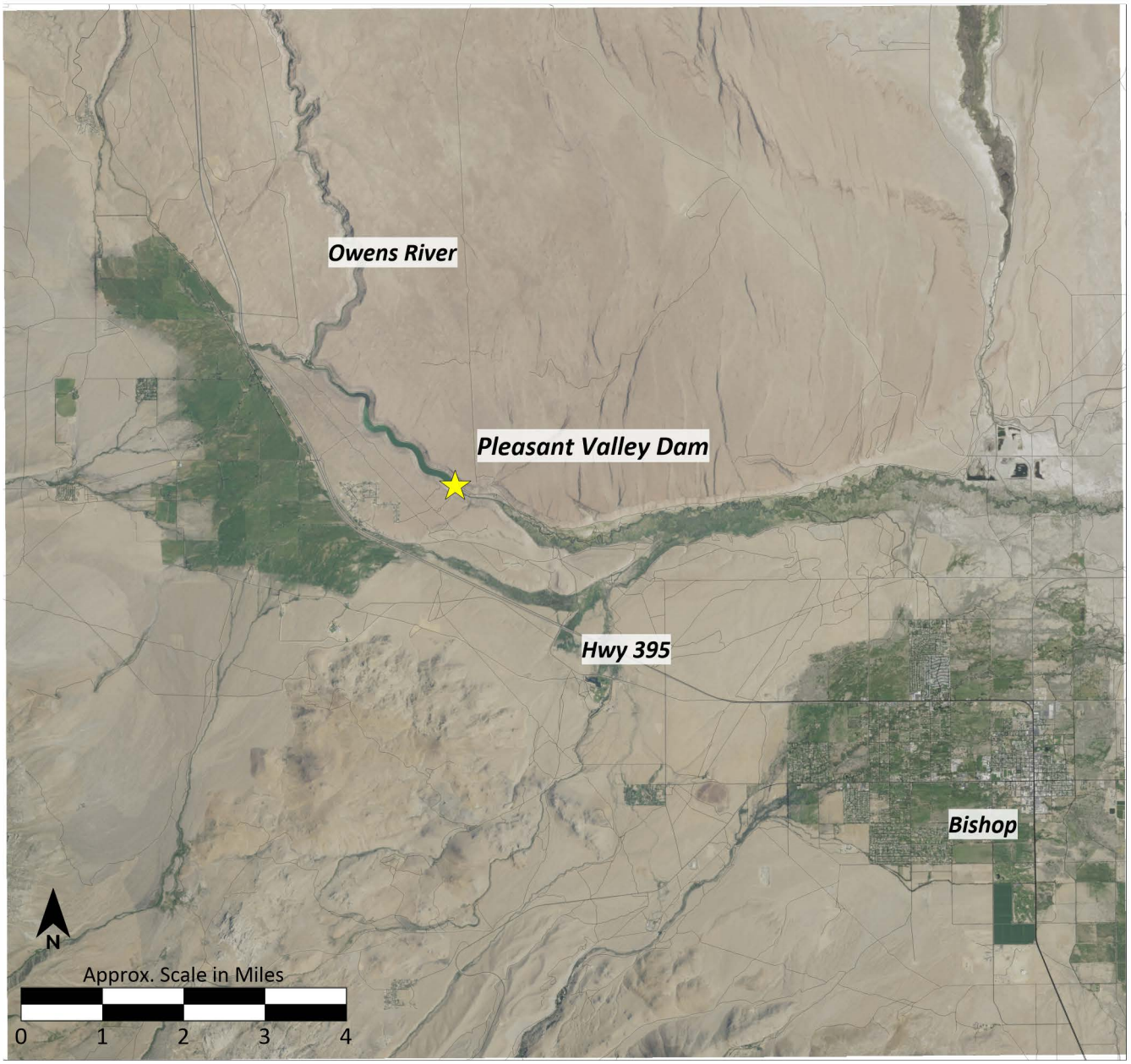
The overall purpose of the program is to collect geotechnical data required to perform a seismic stability evaluation of the Dam and to monitor groundwater and seepage conditions along the right abutment. Task 1 includes a phased field investigation located along (or near) the Dam centerline at the crest, access road, downstream berm, and downstream toe. The proposed three field investigation phases include: 4 sonic borings, 3 instrumented Becker penetration tests, and 2 potential mud rotary borings. These borings would extend through Dam embankment and Stream Bed Deposits.

Task 2 includes the installation of standpipe piezometers with associated vibrating wire piezometers (VPs) within 7 sonic borings to monitor piezometric levels for seepage assessment. The boreholes will be located along the right abutment from the crest to the downstream. The standpipe piezometers will be installed in these boreholes with filter zones installed within different foundation geologic units. VP sensors will be installed inside the standpipes to allow continuous monitoring of groundwater levels. Proposed standpipe piezometers will improve understanding and monitor seepage conditions in dam foundation materials.

Reasons why Project is Exempt:
Categorical Exemption, Section 15306, Class 6 (Information Collection): CEQA Guidelines Section 15306, Class 6, consists of basic data collection, research, experimental management, and resource evaluation activities which do not result in a serious or major disturbance to an environmental resource. These may be strictly for information gathering purposes, or as part of a study leading to an action which a public agency has not yet approved, adopted, or funded. Therefore, further review under CEQA is not required.

Statutory Exemption, Section 15262 (Feasibility and Planning Studies): CEQA Guidelines Section 15262 indicates that a project involving only feasibility or planning studies for possible future actions which the agency, board, or commission has not approved, adopted, or funded does not require the preparation of an EIR or negative declaration but does require consideration of environmental factors. This section does not apply to the adoption of a plan that will have a legally binding effect on later activities. Therefore, further review under CEQA is not required.

ENCLOSURE B:
Project Location and Map



Pleasant Valley Dam Vicinity Map

Project No.: 20069A	Project: Pleasant Valley Dam	Date: May 2021	