

**Exempt per Gov't Code 6103**

RETURN TO: Jo Ann Corey  
Irvine Ranch Water District  
P.O. Box 57000  
15600 Sand Canyon Avenue  
Irvine, CA 92619-7000  
949-453-5300

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION  
(State Guidelines 15062)

County Clerk's Filing Stamp

TO: Orange County Clerk-Recorder  
12 Civic Center Plaza, Room 101  
Santa Ana, CA 92701

FROM: Irvine Ranch Water District (Applicant & Lead Agency)  
P.O. Box 57000  
15600 Sand Canyon Avenue  
Irvine, CA 92619-7000  
(949) 453-5300

Project Name: Santiago Creek Dam Outlet Tower & Spillway Geotechnical Investigation

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Project Location: At the Santiago Creek Dam at Irvine Lake  
Orange County, CA (see Figure 1)

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County: Orange

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Description of Nature, Purpose and Beneficiaries of Project:

Irvine Ranch Water District (IRWD) and Serrano Water District (SWD) jointly own and operate the Santiago Creek Dam, which impounds Irvine Lake. Santiago Creek Dam is a 136-foot-high rolled earth embankment located on Santiago Creek in Orange County, CA. Santiago Creek Dam forms Irvine Lake, which provides water supply to surrounding communities for both agricultural and municipal use. The outlet works and reinforced concrete spillway at Santiago Creek Dam were constructed in 1932. The dam and the reservoir are under the regulatory jurisdiction of the California Department of Water Resources, Division of Safety of Dams (DSOD).

IRWD and SWD are implementing a long-term plan to replace the dam spillway and the outlet tower. Geotechnical investigations of the site are needed to inform the upcoming design phase for those facilities.

The proposed geotechnical investigations will confirm the geotechnical and geologic conditions at the site and will provide a comprehensive understanding of the underlying geologic formations. The geotechnical investigations include provisions for geotechnical

borings in the dam, spillway, spillway chute, and in the lake adjacent to the outlet tower as well as exploratory test pits along the existing access road of the spillway chute.

For the borings that will be performed in the dam, spillway, and spillway chute, a lightweight drill rig will be used to core into the underlying soils and bedrock. The lightweight drill rig will access the spillway via an existing access road. For the borings that will be performed in the lake, barge-mounted drilling equipment will be used. Upon completion of the exploration, all boreholes, except for the boreholes performed in the lake, will be backfilled in accordance with DSOD requirements.

Exploratory test pits along the spillway will be excavated to investigate the shallow subsurface foundation conditions and to assess the depth of colluvium in the area. The test pit locations will be accessed by foot, and hand tools will be used to excavate the pits and to collect the samples.

A biological constraints assessment was conducted to ensure that no adverse effects would result from the implementation of the geotechnical investigations. The locations of all borings and test pits have been specifically selected to avoid any impacts to sensitive habitat.

Name of Public Agency Approving  
and Carrying out this Project:

Irvine Ranch Water District (IRWD)  
15600 Sand Canyon Avenue, Irvine, CA 92618

Contact Person: Jo Ann Corey, Environmental Compliance Specialist

Area Code

949

Phone 453-5326

Exempt Status: (check one)

- Ministerial (Sec 21080(b)(1); (State Guidelines Sec. §15268)
- Declared Emergency (Sec 21080(b)(3); State Guidelines Sec. §15269(a))
- Emergency Project (Sec 21080(b)(4); (State Guidelines Sec. §15269(b)(c))
- Categorical Exemption (State Guidelines Sec. §15301)
- Categorical Exemption (State Guidelines Sec. §15302)
- Categorical Exemption (State Guidelines Sec. §15303)
- Categorical Exemption (State Guidelines Sec. §15306)
- Statutory Exemption State code number (State Guidelines §15282)

Reasons why project is exempt:

This project is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), pursuant to the “categorical exemption rule.” The geotechnical investigations are categorically exempt under the “information collection rule”, which is outlined in CEQA Guideline 15306 and states that activities are exempt that consist 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.

Submission of this form is optional. Local agencies may file this form with the county clerk pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21152(b). The filing of the notice starts a 35-day statute of limitations on court challenges to the approval of the project under Public Resources Code Section 21167(d). Failure to file the notice results in the statute of limitations being extended to 180 days.

Jo Ann Corey, Environmental Compliance Specialist  
Staff Member Responsible for Preparation

Leslie Bonkowski  
District Secretary

June 3, 2020  
Date

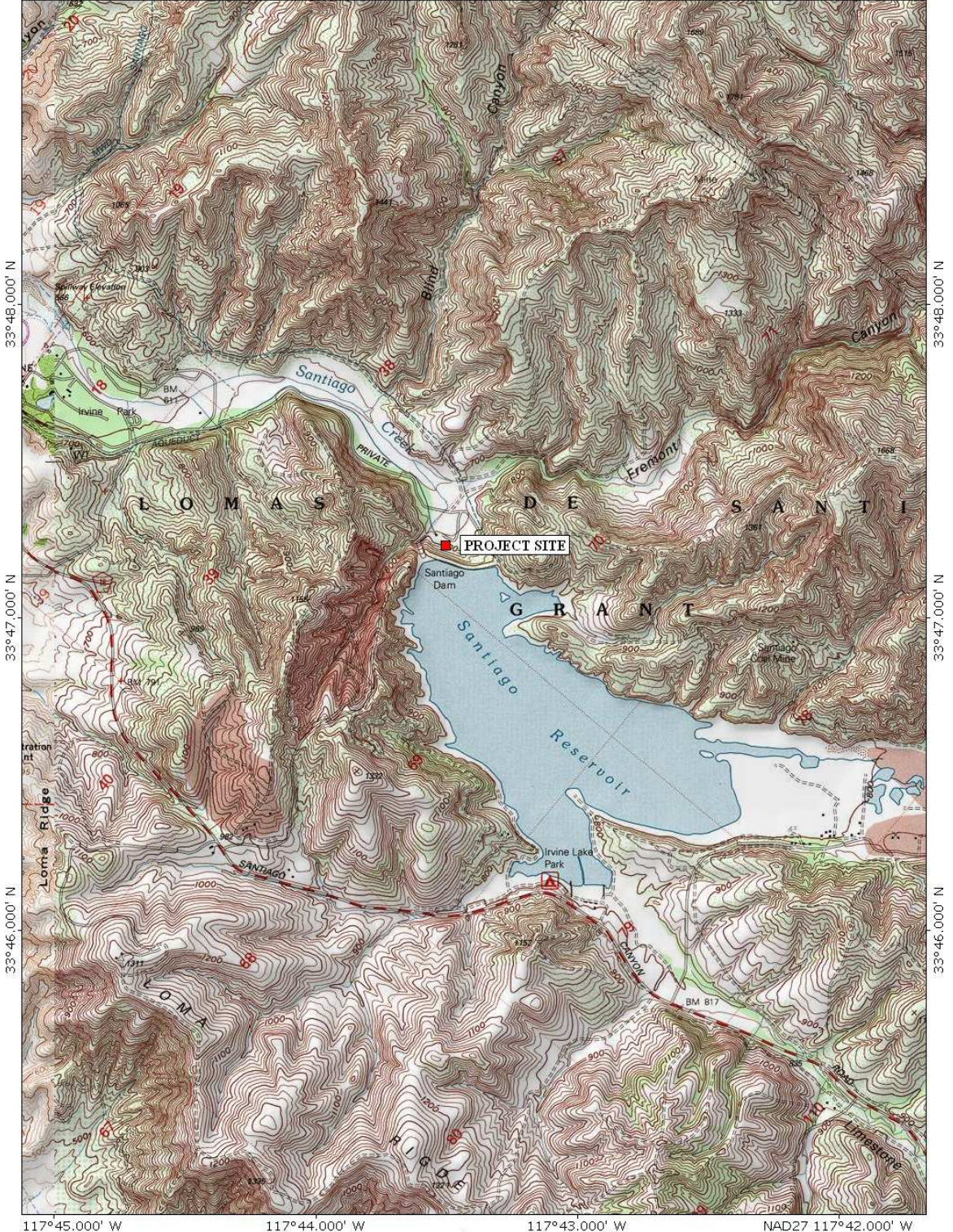


Figure 1: Project vicinity, Orange County, California.