

**REPORT/RECOMMENDATION TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
OF BOARD GOVERNED COUNTY SERVICE AREAS
AND RECORD OF ACTION**

May 7, 2024

FROM

NOEL CASTILLO, Director, Department of Public Works – Special Districts

SUBJECT

California Environmental Quality Act Finding and Plans and Specifications for the County Service Area 82 Searles Valley – Sewer Improvement Project, in the Trona Area

RECOMMENDATION(S)

Acting as the governing body of County Service Area 82 Searles Valley:

1. Find that the County Service Area 82 Searles Valley – Sewer Improvement Project is exempt under the California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines, Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations Section 15301 Class 1 (Existing Facilities), and Section 15302 Class 2 (Replacement and Reconstruction).
2. Approve the County Service Area 82 Searles Valley – Sewer Improvement Project as defined in the Notice of Exemption.
3. Approve plans and specifications for the County Service Area 82 Searles Valley – Sewer Improvement Project.
4. Authorize the Director of the Department of Public Works – Special Districts to advertise the County Service Area 82 Searles Valley – Sewer Improvement Project for competitive bids.
5. Direct the Department of Public Works – Special Districts to file and post the Notice of Exemption in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act.

(Presenter: Noel Castillo, Director, 387-7906)

COUNTY AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER GOALS & OBJECTIVES

Promote the Countywide Vision.

Ensure Development of a Well-Planned, Balanced, and Sustainable County.

Provide for the Safety, Health and Social Service Needs of County Residents.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

Approval of this item will not result in the use of Discretionary General Funding (Net County Cost). Reimbursement of eligible expenditures for the County Service Area 82 Searles Valley – Sewer Improvement Project (Project) will be funded through an allocation from the County's American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery Fund for eligible costs. \$6,034,682 in funding for this Project was approved by the Board of Supervisors (Board) on March 28, 2023 (Item No. 65). Sufficient appropriation for the Project is included in the Department of Public Works – Special Districts (Department) ARPA Capital Improvement Program Fund 2023-24 budget and will be included in future recommended budgets, as necessary.

**California Environmental Quality Act Finding and Plans and
Specifications for the County Service Area 82 Searles Valley - Sewer
Improvement Project, in the Trona Area
May 7, 2024**

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

County Service Area 82 Searles Valley (District) was established by the San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors on June 28, 1976, to provide, among other things, sewer services for the communities of Trona and Pioneer Point, east of Ridgecrest and adjacent to the western boundary of Death Valley National Park. The Department's Water and Sanitation Division (Division) directly manages, operates, and maintains the District's sewer services.

The existing facilities consist of 12-inch primary sewer effluent line, which spans from Pioneer Point (north) to Trona (south), two septic tank treatment facilities, and fifty-two (52) manholes. The effluent line was constructed in 1979 and needs reconstruction and replacement of worn, damaged, and deleterious segments of 12-inch sewer effluent line and manhole structures. The Project proposes to replace segments of the 12-inch sewer and reconstruct manhole structures that have been identified as a priority by the Department. This Project is intended to replace in-kind the sewer pipe and the existing manholes within the road right-of-way and private property to ensure proper slope and drainage are being maintained in the sewer system.

Department staff reviewed the Project and determined that a categorical exemption in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines, Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations, Section 15301 Class 1 and Section 15302 Class 2 Categorical Exemption is appropriate. Class 1 exemption allows for repair and maintenance activities on existing sewer and similar public facilities that involve negligible or no expansion of use beyond that existing at the time of the lead agency's determination. Class 2 consist of replacement or reconstruction of an existing structures and facilities where the new structure will be located on the same site as the structure replaced and will have substantially the same purpose and capacity as the structure replaced. When the Board considers the environmental finding, the filing and posting of a Notice of Exemption, in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act, is recommended.

In addition to the CEQA finding, this item seems Board approval of the Project's plans and specifications and authorization to advertise for bids.

The Project aligns with the District and the Chief Executive Officer's goals and objectives of ensuring development of a well-planned, balanced, and sustainable County by preserving and improving the structural integrity of existing sewerage systems.

PROCUREMENT

Upon approval of this item, the Project will be advertised in accordance with Section 22037 of the California Public Contract Code. The Department anticipates returning to the Board in August 2024 for award of the construction contract.

REVIEW BY OTHERS

This item has been reviewed by County Counsel (Aaron Gest, Deputy County Counsel, 387-5455) on April 12, 2024; Finance (Jessica Trillo, Administrative Analyst, 387-4222 and Guy Martinez, ARPA Compliance Officer, 387-5428) on April 18, 2024; and County Finance and Administration (Paloma Hernandez-Barker, Deputy Executive Officer, 387-5423) on April 22, 2024.

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Specifications for the County Service Area 82 Searles Valley - Sewer
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Record of Action of the Board of Supervisors
Board Governed County Service Areas

APPROVED (CONSENT CALENDAR)

Moved: Joe Baca, Jr. Seconded: Curt Hagman
Ayes: Jesse Armendarez, Dawn Rowe, Curt Hagman, Joe Baca, Jr.
Absent: Col. Paul Cook (Ret.)

Lynna Monell, CLERK OF THE BOARD

BY 
DATED: May 7, 2024



cc: File - BGCSA/CSA 82 Searles Valley w/ CD
JLL 05/8/2024