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## State Water Resources Control Board

### **Public Notice of Water Quality Certification Application for California Department of Transportation State Route 55 (Interstate 5 to State Route 91) Improvement Project (12-0K7201)**

State Water Resources Control Board  
Division of Water Quality  
Water Quality Certification Program  
**Date Posted: October 8, 2024**

**Affected County: Orange**

The following information is provided in satisfaction of the public notice requirements of Section 3858, title 23, of the California Code of Regulations, which govern the State's Water Quality Certification Program.

State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) staff are proposing to regulate this Project pursuant to section 401 of the Clean Water Act (33 USC 1341) and the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act. **Staff will consider all comments submitted in writing and received at this office during a 21-day comment period that begins on the first full date of issuance of this notice (October 9, 2024) and ends at 5:00 p.m. on the last day of the comment period (October 29, 2024).** To submit comments, or if you have questions, please contact the State Water Board staff person listed below.

**State Water Resources Control Board Contact:**

Aundrea Asbell, Environmental Scientist  
Wetlands Permitting and Enforcement Unit 1, Division of Water Quality  
State Water Resources Control Board  
1001 I Street, Sacramento, CA 95814  
Telephone: (916) 323-0887  
Email: [Aundrea.Asbell@waterboards.ca.gov](mailto:Aundrea.Asbell@waterboards.ca.gov)

**Note: No regulatory decision on the application is implied or intended in this public notice.**

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E. JOAQUIN ESQUIVEL, CHAIR | ERIC OPPENHEIMER, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

**Project Name: State Route 55 (Interstate 5 to State Route 91)  
Improvement Project (12-0K7201)**

(Reg. Meas. ID: 458324 and SWRCB ID: SB24086IN)

**Background:** On September 3, 2024, the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), District 12, and Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) jointly submitted an application for Clean Water Act section 401 water quality certification for the State Route 55 (SR-55) (Interstate 5 to State Route 91) Improvement Project (12-0K7201; Project).

**Project Description:** The primary goal of the proposed Project is to improve traffic operations and reduce congestion on SR-55 between Interstate 5 (I-5) and State Route 91 (SR-91) within the cities of Tustin, Santa Ana, Orange, and Anaheim in Orange County, California. The Project proposes to increase capacity on SR-55 between I-5 and State Route 22 (SR-22) and provide operational improvement between SR-22 and SR-91.

The Project would include the following operational improvements:

- An additional general-purpose lane in both directions between north of the I-5/SR-55 interchange to the SR-55/SR-22 interchange.
- Realignment of the median barrier between Fourth Street and 17th Street.
- An additional lane on the northbound (NB) Fourth Street off-ramp, southbound (SB) Fourth Street off-ramp, and SB Katella Avenue off- and on-ramps.
- Realignment of the SB SR-55 Lincoln Avenue off-ramp approximately 1,300 feet to the south, immediately north of the existing SB SR-55 Lincoln Avenue on-ramp.

Retaining walls are required at the following locations where the SR-55 mainline will be widened to accommodate the improvements:

- SB SR-55/I-5 Connector
- SB Fourth Street to 17th Street
- SB Between the SR-55 mainline and Lincoln Avenue hook off-ramp
- SB Lincoln Avenue hook off-ramp
- NB 17th Street on-ramp

The Project application reports impacts to waters of the state, including waters of the U.S., as shown in Table 1. Temporary impacts only (no permanent impacts) are proposed at the unvegetated, concrete-lined drainages.

Table 1: Total Project Fill/Excavation Impacts to Waters of the State

<b>Aquatic Resource type</b>	<b>Stream Channel</b>
Acres of temporary impact	0.09
Linear feet of temporary impact	2,211

Caltrans, District 12, acting as lead agency pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act, prepared an Initial Study Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) for the Project. The IS/MND is available at the Governor's Office of Planning and Research [CEQAnet Web Portal](https://ceqanet.opr.ca.gov/Project/2019099104) (<https://ceqanet.opr.ca.gov/Project/2019099104>).

**A Certification or Denial will be prepared by the State Water Board for the State Route 55 (Interstate 5 to State Route 91) Improvement Project (12-0K7201) in response to this application.**

**Applicants: Caltrans, District 12, and OCTA**

**Applicant Contact: Sarah Barrera**

**Telephone: (951) 231-4123**

**Email: [sarah@egpconsult.com](mailto:sarah@egpconsult.com)**

**Date of Application Submittal: September 3, 2024**

Pursuant to federal law (title 33, United States Code, section 1341; Clean Water Act section 401), applicants for a federal license or permit for activities which may discharge to waters of the U.S. must seek water quality certification from the state or Indian tribe with jurisdiction. Such Certification is based on a finding that the discharge will meet water quality standards and other applicable requirements. In California, Regional Water Quality Control Boards (Regional Water Boards) issue or deny Certification for discharges within their geographical jurisdiction. The State Water Board has this responsibility for projects affecting waters within multiple Regional Water Board jurisdictions.

***KEEP INFORMED OF PROJECT MILESTONES***

To be informed of milestones in the development of this proposed Water Quality Certification, any interested persons should enroll in the State Water Board's 401 Program e-mail notification service.

Click the [Submit](#) button after entering a valid email address under the [Subscribe to the 401 Water Quality Certification and Wetland Program Email List](#) banner on the [401 Water Quality Certification and Wetlands Program webpage](#) at:

[https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water\\_issues/programs/cwa401/](https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/cwa401/)

By enrolling in this list, you will receive notices for all current Certification applications, including the Project announced in this notice. You will need a valid e-mail address to use this service. If you do not have internet access or do not wish to participate in the email notification service, contact the staff person named in the notice to express your interest in receiving notices by other means. You can enroll or un-enroll at any time.