

Notice of Exemption

To:
Office of Planning and Research
[CEQA Submit](#)

From:
Department of Fish and Wildlife
Central Region
1234 East Shaw Avenue
Fresno, California 93710
R4LSA@wildlife.ca.gov



Project Title: Madera County Temporary Emergency Recharge Project (Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreement No. EPIMS-MAD-28804-R4)

Project Location (Merced County): The Project will occur at 18 locations within the Chowchilla Bypass and Eastside Bypass of the San Joaquin River, in western Madera County, beginning approximately seven miles east of Firebaugh and 13 miles west of the City of Madera, California; USGS 7.5 Minute Quads Firebaugh NE, Poso Farm, Bliss Ranch, and Santa Rita Bridge MDBM.

Project Description: Pursuant to Section 1602 of the Fish and Game Code, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife has issued Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreement No. EPIMS-MAD-28804-R4 (Agreement) to Madera County – Groundwater Sustainability Agency. The Project includes activities related to the diversion of noncontracted water from 18 points of diversion in the Chowchilla Bypass and Eastside Bypass. The water will be pumped at each point of diversion using a trailer mounted pump assembly for ease of rapid deployment. The water will be pumped out of the bypasses over up to 50 days during each diversion season of October 1 through May 31 and diverted into a temporary network of conveyance pipelines located in the uplands on the land side of the bypass banks. The conveyance pipeline network will convey diverted flows to recharge ponding areas and farm recharge ponds.

Public Agency Approving Project: CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE

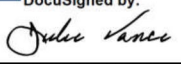
Person or Public Agency Carrying Out Project: Madera County – Groundwater Sustainability Agency

Exempt Status:

- ☐ Statutory Exemption.
☐ Categorical Exemption.
CEQA is suspended (see below)

Reasons why project is exempt: CDFW's issuance of an Agreement is generally subject to CEQA (Pub. Resources Code, § 21000 et seq.) and its implementing regulations; however, CEQA is suspended per Executive Order N-7-22 (EO) for purposes of CDFW's issuance of this Agreement. Paragraph 13 of the EO states that CEQA and its implementing regulations are suspended for the following, to the extent necessary to address the impacts of drought: (1) specified actions taken by state agencies and specified actions taken by a local agency where the Department of Water Resources concurs that local action is required; and (2) any permits necessary to carry out actions under (1). Actions under (1) are recharge projects under either Flood-Managed Aquifer Recharge or the Department of Water Resources Sustainable Groundwater Management Grant Program occurring on open and working lands to replenish and store water in groundwater basins that will help mitigate groundwater conditions impacted by drought. Because the Project to which this Agreement applies involves diversions of flood flows for application to open and working lands to replenish and store water in groundwater basins to help mitigate groundwater conditions impacted by drought, no environmental review for this Agreement pursuant to CEQA is required at this point in time. Consequently, CDFW has not reviewed a certified environmental impact report or adopted mitigated negative declaration evaluating this project, nor has CDFW adopted related findings pursuant to CEQA. Similarly, in applying for this permit, Permittee relied on the CEQA suspension provided by Paragraph 13 of the EO.

CDFW Contact Person: Jim Kitch, Environmental Scientist; (559) 580-3198; James.Kitch@wildlife.ca.gov

DocuSigned by:

Signature: _____ Date: 6/22/2023
FA83F09FE08945A
Julie A. Vance, Regional Manager

Date received for filing at OPR: _____