

Notice of Exemption

TO: Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation
State Clearinghouse
P.O. Box 3044, Room 113
Sacramento, CA 95812-3044

FROM: Central Valley Flood Protection Board
3310 El Camino Avenue, Suite 170
Sacramento, CA 95821
Jordan Robbins, (916) 524-3454
Jordan.Robbins@cvflood.ca.gov

State Clearinghouse Number: 2024050797

Project Title: Permit No. 19982- Iron Canyon Fish Passage Improvements in Big Chico Creek

Project Applicants: California Trout (CalTrout), Holly Swan, Project Manager, 435 Pacific Avenue Suite 200, San Francisco, CA 94133, (530) 228-5725, hswan@caltrout.org; and City of Chico Department of Public Works, Engineering, Tracy Bettencourt, Senior Planner, PO Box 3420, Chico, CA 95927, (530) 879-6903, tracy.bettencourt@chicoca.gov

Project Location: This project is located approximately 0.3 miles east of the intersection of Golf Course Road and Upper Park Road in Upper Bidwell Park along Big Chico Creek in the City of Chico, extending east 2.35 miles to Horseshoe Lake, California in Butte County.

Project Description: This project is designed to modify Big Chico Creek by altering the current existing instream configuration of boulders, incorporate minor grading of the stream channel for increased fish passage, and remove 17 dilapidated concrete and rebar fish ladder weirs (constructed in 1956) from the stream channel. Approximately 2,300 cubic yards of rock will be removed from the creek and disposed of offsite. A temporary access road with a looped turnaround and up to three crane pads measuring 30 feet by 30 feet will be constructed. A temporary dewatering system with coffer dams will be installed to bypass stream flows around the site during construction, and the site will be revegetated with native plants before completion.

Public Agency Approving Project: Central Valley Flood Protection Board (Board)

Lead Agency: City of Chico Department of Public Works, Engineering, Tracy Bettencourt, Senior Planner, PO Box 3420, Chico, CA 95927, (530) 879-6903, tracy.bettencourt@chicoca.gov

Exempt Status:

Statutory Exemption. State code number: Public Resources Code (PRC) 21080.56

Reasons Why Project is Exempt:

The Iron Canyon Fish Passage Project is statutorily exempt from CEQA pursuant to Section 21080.56 of the PRC, which exempts a project to restore or provide habitat for California native fish and wildlife meeting certain requirements. On January 5, 2024, the CDFW Director concurred with the City of Chico’s determination that the Project meets the qualifying criteria set forth in PRC Section 21080.56, subdivisions (a) to (d), inclusive. Specifically, the CDFW Director concurred with the City of Chico that the Project meets all of the following conditions: (1) the Project is exclusively to conserve, restore, protect, or enhance, and assist in the recovery of California native fish and wildlife, and the habitat upon which they depend; or is exclusively to restore or provide habitat for California native fish and wildlife; (2) the Project may have public benefits incidental to the Project’s fundamental purpose; (3) the Project will result in long-term net benefits to climate resiliency, biodiversity, and sensitive species recovery; and includes procedures and ongoing management for the protection of the environment; and (4) Project construction activities are solely related to habitat restoration. Pursuant to PRC Section 21080.56, subdivision (g), CDFW has posted the Concurrence on CDFW’s CEQA Notices and Documents webpage: <https://wildlife.ca.gov/Notices/CEQA>.

Chris Lief

2/27/2026

Signature Chris Lief, Executive Officer Date

Signed by Public Agency Signed by Responsible Agency