

## Notice of Exemption

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

From:  
Department of Fish and Wildlife  
Watershed Restoration Grants  
Branch  
1010 Riverside Parkway  
West Sacramento, California  
95605



**Project Title:** Beaver Habitat Restoration Project 2024-2027 (Project) (Executed Grant Agreement No. Q2496023)

**Project Location:** The Project is located within the span of approximately 40 miles on the Salinas River within San Luis Obispo County from (35.335450, -120.50346) to (35.791139, -120.72409), on privately and publicly-owned lands.

**Project Description:** On September 26, 2024, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife made an award to the San Luis Obispo Beaver Brigade (Grantee) and on January 6, 2025, executed grant agreement number Q2496023, pursuant to Statutes of 2022, Chapter 249, Section 80, Item 3600-102-0001 (AB 179), which amended the California Budget Act of 2022, Public Resources Code Section 6217.1, and Fish and Game Code Section 1501.5 (b). The Project will protect beaver habitat and their associated wetlands in the upper Salinas River watershed. The Project includes: mapping of beaver-managed dams and wetlands, off-road vehicle stream crossings, and stands of invasive *Phragmites australis* and *Arundo donax*; convening of a Technical Advisory Committee to develop a watershed eradication plan for invasive *Phragmites australis* and invasive, non-native *Arundo donax*; formation and management of a volunteer river stewardship team, which will monitor beaver dams and establish temporary beaver dam protections; administration of a public outreach and education program; and release of an annual *State of the Beaver in the Upper Salinas River* report on the Grantee's public website (Project Activities).

**Public Agency Approving Project:** CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE

**Person or Public Agency Carrying Out Project:** San Luis Obispo Beaver Brigade

**Exempt Status:**

- Statutory Exemption: Public Resource Code section 15262 (Feasibility and Planning Studies)
- Categorical Exemption. Public Resources Code section 15304 (Minor Alterations to Land)

**Reasons why project is exempt:** CDFW determined that the Project fits the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) categorical exemption criteria for Minor Alterations to Land (Cal. Pub. Res. Code, § 15304). No exceptions to the exemption apply. CDFW has made this determination because some Project Activities will create minor public and/or private alterations in the condition of land and water, and do not include the removal of healthy, mature scenic trees. Specifically, 1) the volunteer river stewardship team will create, adaptively manage, and monitor temporary beaver dam protections, and 2) under the public outreach and education program, Grantee and/or their subcontractors will install permanent or semi-permanent interpretive bilingual panels at locations to be determined. Additionally, CDFW determined that the Project fits the CEQA statutory exemption for Feasibility and Planning Studies (Cal. Pub. Res. Code, § 15262). CDFW has made this determination because the Project also includes the mapping and development of a plan to control invasive *Phragmites australis* and invasive, non-native *Arundo donax* within the upper Salinas watershed.

**CDFW Contact Person:** Hilde Spautz, Senior Environmental Scientist, (916) 594-5364

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Signature: 613C2E6C801C4EB... Date: 1/6/2025

Matt Wells, Branch Chief, Watershed Restoration Grants Branch

Date received for filing at OPR: \_\_\_\_\_