

Notice of Exemption

Fee Exempt per Government Code Section 6103

To: Office of Planning and Research
P.O. Box 3044, Room 113
Sacramento, CA 95812-3044

From: California Department of Water Resources
31770 Gonzaga Road
Gustine, CA 95322

Lead Agency: California Department of Water Resources

Project Title: Gabion Repair Near West Gale Avenue

Project Location City & County: Fresno County

Project Location – Specific: Work will occur in the Department of Water Resources (DWR) right of way (ROW) to an existing gabion in Reach 7 of the California Aqueduct (Aqueduct). The gabion is on the right side (R) of the Aqueduct at about milepost (MP) 158.38. The center of the work site is about 480 feet northwest of the intersection of the Aqueduct and West Gale Avenue, in Fresno County (coordinates: 36.18255, -120.05026).

Description of Nature, Purpose, and Beneficiaries of Project: The gabion at MP 158.38R is damaged and requires repair. The gabion is a rock structure held into place by a cage made of metal wiring. DWR San Luis Field Division (SLFD) will make the repair.

SLFD will first remove the vegetation that is growing on top of the gabion, along its base, and in the area between the gabion and the Aqueduct (gabion basin). Rocks and vegetation at the associated Aqueduct inlets will also be removed. All removed vegetation will be moved to an existing spoil pile adjacent to the gabion; the rocks removed from the inlets will be placed onto the Aqueduct embankment.

The material within the gabion caging has been pushed downward by water flows. Once the gabion is clear of vegetation, the gabion will be reshaped to original design. To do so, the existing material within the caging will be pressed upwards from the toe and back into place.

Any remaining voids within the gabion will be repaired. To make this repair, the wire caging over the voids will be removed and rock will be placed by hand to fill them. Approximately 35 to 50 tons of rock will be imported into the work site and staged within the gabion basin to be used to repair these voids; this rock will be similar size and materials as the existing rock within the gabion. After the voids are filled, new wire caging will be placed and secured over the repaired sites. Any excess rock or materials will be removed from the site and brought to the SLFD storage yard.

Repairs to the gabion will ensure the safety of the Aqueduct; the State Water Project will benefit.

Exempt/Suspend Status:

- ☐ Ministerial (§21080[b][1]; 15268)
- ☐ Declared Emergency (Proclamation of a State of Emergency Due to Drought)
- ☐ Emergency Project (Public Resources Code §21080[b][4]; California Code of Regulations §15269[c])
- ☒ Categorical Exemption: 15301 (Existing Facilities) and 15304 (Minor Alterations to Land)
- ☐ Statutory Exemptions:

Reasons Why Project Is Exempt: Work consists of repairing an existing gabion within the DWR ROW to return it to original design and removing vegetation and rocks from the gabion and adjacent Aqueduct inlet gate structures. There will be no expansion of existing or former use of the gabion, Aqueduct inlets, or the Aqueduct embankment, and no healthy, mature, scenic trees will be removed. Categorical Exemption 15301 (Existing Facilities) and 15304 (Minor Alterations to Land) applies.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: Department of Water Resources

Contact Person: Mark McDaniel

Telephone: 209-827-5190

Signature: Mark McDaniel **Date:** 10/7/2025 **Title:** Planner Scheduler/UC Supv.

☒ Signed by Lead Agency

☐ Signed by Applicant