

Notice of Exemption

To: Office of Land Use and Climate
Innovation

From (Public Agency): California Department of Water
Resources –

Online posting

Project Title: Reach 7 Cap Drain Inlet Cleaning

Project Applicant: California Department of Water Resources (DWR)

Project Location - Specific: Work will occur in Fresno County and Kings County. The work site is in the DWR right of way (ROW) in Reach 7 of the California Aqueduct (Aqueduct) at nine drain inlets and associated drainage ditches. All work will be on the right side (R) of the Aqueduct. These inlets are at Aqueduct mileposts (MP): MP 165.38R, MP 166.04R, MP 166.90R, MP 167.27R, MP 167.78R, MP 168.62R, MP 169.72R, MP 170.83R, MP 171.48R. The northernmost inlet, MP 165.38R, is about 0.90 miles southeast of the intersection of the Aqueduct and Avenal Cutoff Road and the southernmost inlet, MP 171.48R, is about 0.98 miles south, southwest of the intersection of the Aqueduct and Quail Avenue.

Project Location - City: California

Project Location - County: Fresno and Kings Counties

Description of Nature, Purpose and Beneficiaries of Project:

DWR's San Luis Field Division will remove excess sediment and vegetation that has built up against the drain inlets and within the drainage ditches at MP 165.38R, MP 166.04R, MP 166.90R, MP 167.27R, MP 167.78R, MP 168.62R, MP 169.72R, MP 170.83R, and MP 171.48R. The excess material in the drainage ditch will be scooped from against the inlet gate to where the ditch ends within the DWR ROW boundary. This material will be placed onto the adjacent DWR ROW where it will be spread to match the surrounding grade. Each drainage ditch is approximately 10 feet wide, and the ditches vary in length from approximately 20 feet to 70 feet. After the excess material is removed, the drainage ditches will be graded to bring them back to design specifications.

The drain inlets and associated drainage ditches are currently blocked or partially blocked with sediment and vegetation. By removing these materials, the drains will prevent water from ponding against the Aqueduct. The State Water Project will benefit.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: California Department of Water Resources

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: California Department of Water Resources

Exempt Status: (check one):

☐ Ministerial (Sec. 21080(b)(1); 15268); Click or tap here to enter text.

☐ Declared Emergency (Sec. 21080(b)(3); 15269(a)); Click or tap here to enter text.

☐ Emergency Project (Sec. 21080(b)(4); 15269(b)(c)); Click or tap here to enter text.

☒ Categorical Exemption. State type and section number: 15301—Existing Facilities and 15304—Minor Alterations to Land

☐ Statutory Exemptions. State code number: Click or tap here to enter text.

Reasons why project is exempt:

Work will involve removing excess sediment and vegetation from existing drain inlets and drainage ditches and grading the ditches and adjacent DWR ROW to design specifications. Work will involve negligible or no expansion of existing or former use of these structures, and will not involve the removal of healthy, mature, or scenic trees. Categorical Exemptions 15301—Existing Facilities and 15304—Minor Alterations to Land applies.

Lead Agency Contact Person: Cody Nelson

Area Code/Telephone/Extension: (209) 827-5190

1. Signature: Cody Nelson Date: 1/7/2026 Title: UCW Supervisor

☒ Signed by Lead Agency

Authority cited: Sections 21083 and 21110, Public Resources Code.

Reference: Sections 21108, 21152, and 21152.1, Public Resources Code.

Date Received for filing at OPR: _____