

Notice of Exemption

To: Office of Land Use and Climate
Innovation

From (Public Agency):
California Department of Water Resources
1416 9th Street Sacramento, CA 95814

Project Title: Panoche Creek Erosion Project

Project Applicant: California Department of Water Resources (DWR)

Project Location - Specific: The Project will occur in Fresno County located 150 feet north of the intersection of Fairfax Avenue and Milepost 108.87 of the California Aqueduct (36°42'29.93"N, 120°34'3.10"W).

Project Location - City: NA

Project Location - County: Fresno County

Description of Nature, Purpose and Beneficiaries of Project: DWR proposes to repair approximately 2000 square feet of erosion along the right bank of Panoche Creek at the siphon area. This work will prevent any further damage to the embankment of the Panoche Creek Siphon and integrity of the Aqueduct. DWR provides a service to State, federal, local agencies, and private entities through the State Water Project, and maintaining the integrity of the Aqueduct serves this purpose.

The project area includes the footprint of work area, staging areas, and access routes. The project area will be accessed from Jensen Road on the north bound lane of Fairfax Avenue south of the Aqueduct. An excavator, located outside of the creek bed, will be used to repair the erosion, existing soil will be used to backfill the erosion and the bank will be shaped back to its original state. The bank will then be compacted, and water from the water truck will provide moisture for the material to meet compact specifications. The water truck will also be used for dust mitigation around the project area. Dump trucks will haul in 35,000 cubic yards of 8-inch to 12-inch granite rocks, which will be used for armoring the compacted embankment to prevent further erosions from occurring. An excavator located outside of the creek will be used to place the granite rocks. After the repairs are made, the dirt roads and any disturbed soil will be returned to pre-construction conditions.

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: 15333. Small Habitat Restoration Projects.
- ☐ Statutory Exemptions. State code number: Click or tap here to enter text.

Reasons why project is exempt: Work activities will consist of repairing an erosion along the creek bank. Project activities are covered under Categorical Exemption Class 33 (5) Section 15333 (bank stabilization) of the California Environmental Quality Act. No sensitive biological or cultural resources have been identified in the area.

Lead Agency Contact Person: Harley Vanderweilen Pate

Area Code/Telephone/Extension: 209-827-5472

1. Signature: Ima Cleverger Date: 1/13/2026 Title: Utility Crafts Manager

☒ 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: _____