

**Notice of Intent to Adopt a Proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration for the 2023 Storm Damage
Department of Water Resources Levee Rehabilitation Repair Site 23-081 Project**

The California Department of Water Resources (DWR) has completed preparation of an Initial Study/proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) for the 2023 Storm Damage Levee Rehabilitation Repair Site 23-081 project (proposed project) and intends to adopt the MND.

Project Location: The proposed project is located along the right bank (east levee) of the Eastside Bypass in Merced County, the community of El Nido is located to the east of the site and the San Joaquin River is located to the west and south of the site. The repair would cover approximately 2.4 miles, and the project area would include about 20.9 acres for work limits, with 12.7 acres of repair, a 7-acre landside staging and laydown area and designated haul routes (APNs: 074-100-036-000, 074-060-026-000, 074-130-032-000).

Project Description: The proposed project consists of repair and rehabilitation to maintain the east (waterside) levee of the Eastside Bypass. The repair would consist of installing temporary fencing, clearing and grubbing existing vegetation at the repair site and laydown/staging area, excavating eroded soil, filling the excavated area with clean earthfill, placing geotextile fabric on top of the earthfill, and placing launch rock on top of the geotextile fabric. In-water construction would not occur. Following the levee repair, all equipment and materials would be removed from the repair site and laydown/staging area. The proposed project would use aggregate base to restore the unpaved levee crown road that is degraded or affected by construction-related activities to pre-construction conditions. Once the repair is completed, all areas would be cleared and left in a safe condition.

Potentially Significant Environmental Impacts: The IS/MND identifies impacts on environmental resources as less than significant with mitigation incorporated, less than significant, or no impact. The proposed project would result in no significant impacts or no potentially significant impacts that cannot be mitigated. The proposed project would have impacts that are less than significant with mitigation incorporated on the following resources: Air Quality, Cultural Resources, Geology and Soils, Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Hydrology and Water Quality, Recreation, and Tribal Cultural Resources. The proposed project would have less than significant impacts on the following resources: Aesthetics, Agriculture and Forestry Resources, Biological Resources, Energy, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, Noise, and Transportation and Traffic. The proposed project would have no impact on the following resources: Land Use and Planning, Mineral Resources, Population and Housing, Public Services, Utilities and Service Systems, and Wildfire. The project site is not included on the list of hazardous waste sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5, also known as the Cortese list.

Public Review Period: The IS/MND is now available for a 30-day public review and comment period. The comment period is from January 30, 2026, to March 2, 2026. The IS/MND may be reviewed during walk-in business hours at: California Department of Water Resources, Flood Maintenance and Operations Branch, 3310 El Camino Avenue, Sacramento, CA 95821. The IS/MND may also be reviewed at: <https://water.ca.gov/News/Public-Notices/2026/Jan-26/Comment-Period-for-Merced-County-Levee-Repair-Project>. Written comments should be received by the close of business on March 2, 2026 and sent to Kristin Ford via email at: kristin.ford@water.ca.gov. Comments can also be mailed to:

California Department of Water Resources, Division of Flood Management, Flood Maintenance and Operations Branch
Environmental Support Section

Attn: Kristin Ford

P.O. Box 219000

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Mitra Emami

Principal Engineer

1/26/2026

Signature

Title

Date