



STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE

GAVIN NEWSOM, Governor  
MEGHAN HERTEL, Director

Northern Region  
601 Locust Street  
Redding, CA 96001  
[wildlife.ca.gov](http://wildlife.ca.gov)

## **ATTACHMENT TO NOTICE OF EXEMPTION Crystal Lake Hatchery Emergency Waterline Repairs Project**

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), through its Northern Region Inland Fisheries Program has approved the Crystal Lake Hatchery (CLH) Emergency Waterline Repairs Project for purposes of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (Pub. Resources Code, § 21000 et seq.) that includes replacement of the bridge and waterline over Baum Lake that supplies water to CLH (collectively, the Project).

In the fall of 2025, California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) staff discovered that the hatchery's 24-inch main water supply line to the facility was in imminent threat of failure. Approximately 80 feet of the waterline is supported by a steel cable suspension bridge over Baum Lake. After inspection and evaluation, it was discovered that the suspension bridge structure partially failed as a result of a nearby earthquake that occurred in September 2023, causing the hanger rods to bend and increased the vertical load on the tower structures. This subsequently caused the waterline to shift near the south end of the cable bridge. To ensure the continued safe operation of the hatchery and maintain water supply, CDFW will be replacing the bridge structure and waterline suspended over Baum Lake. The method chosen is the full replacement of the bridge with an Acrow modular cantilever launch bridge. The project will include removal and replacement of the damaged pipe segments and associated mechanical pipe hangers, demolition of an abandoned 16-inch suspended pipeline, and removal of the two steel suspension towers that support the mechanical bridge structure. A new Acrow style bridge will be installed, and new 24-inch diameter pipe will run along the bridge deck. All work will be conducted without contact with the water surface or disturbance to Baum Lake. CDFW approved the Project relying on the Statutory Exemption for Emergency Repairs (CEQA Guidelines, §§ section 15269.) Each exemption relevant to the Project is discussed below.

### **Statutory Exemption**

CDFW finds the Project to be exempt pursuant to CEQA Guidelines section 15269 the exemption for "Emergency Project". Section 15269, as relevant here, consists of emergency repairs to publicly owned service facilities necessary to maintain service essential to the

February 23, 2026

Page 2

public or specific actions necessary to prevent or mitigate an emergency. The Project falls within the class because it involves immediate replacement of an existing waterline and bridge structure that have been damaged by a seismic event and the waterline is essential for delivering water for domestic, fire suppression, and fish rearing operations. The project entails specific actions necessary to prevent further emergency actions at CLH. The option to replace the bridge and waterline was chosen because it meets current codes and standards and would ensure the structure is resilient to future seismic activity.