

Notice of Exemption

Appendix E

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

From: (Public Agency): CA Dept. Water Resources
2440 Main Street
Red Bluff, CA 96080

Project Title: Igo-Ono Stream Gage Installation and Reactivation - CalSIP

Project Applicant: California Department of Water Resources (DWR)

Project Location - Specific:

5 Locations: N.F. Cottonwood Creek at Foster Road (40.396975, -122.527889), Igo Ono Diversion Tunnel Outlet(40.487506, -122.680412), Jerusalem Creek at Kelly Rock (40.48937, -122.72399); Rainbow Lake Outlet Pipes (40.499679, -122.697561); and Moon Fork Cottonwood Creek (40.499046, -122.700183). See attached Project Locations / Activities.

Project Location - City: near the town of Ono Project Location - County: Shasta

Description of Nature, Purpose and Beneficiaries of Project:

As part of the California Stream Gage Improvement Program, DWR is proposing to install and reactivate stream gages at five locations along the N.F. Cottonwood Creek and its tributaries. Proposed activities include the installation of either a radar water level sensor, bubbler gage or flow meter at each of the locations. A steel enclosure will be mounted outside the channel at each location to house a data logger, battery, and radio equipment with an antenna and solar panel attached above the enclosure. Conduit would be routed from the steel enclosure to the toe of the stream channel, radar water level sensor, or flow meter. At each location a staff gage would be attached to the existing bridge or tunnel structures or galvanized angle iron driven into the stream channel. See attached Project Locations / Proposed Activities for a detailed description of proposed activities at each location.

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);
- Declared Emergency (Sec. 21080(b)(3); 15269(a));
- Emergency Project (Sec. 21080(b)(4); 15269(b)(c));
- Categorical Exemption. State type and section number: 15304. Minor Alterations to Land,
15306. Information Collection
- Statutory Exemptions. State code number: _____

Reasons why project is exempt:

The purpose of the project is to provide real-time data and monitor hydrologic conditions within North Fork Cottonwood Creek and its tributaries. The proposed installation of conduit, steel posts to mount the steel enclosure, and staff gage will result in minor ground disturbance. Proposed activities qualify for categorical exemptions 15304. Minor Alterations to Land and 15306. Information Collection. Proposed activities will not result in a significant impact to the environment and none of the exceptions described in CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2 apply.

Lead Agency
 Contact Person: Brian Humphrey Area Code/Telephone/Extension: 530-317-8623

If filed by applicant:

1. Attach certified document of exemption finding.
2. Has a Notice of Exemption been filed by the public agency approving the project? ■ Yes No

Signature: Brian Humphrey Date: 3/26/2026 Title: Sr. Environmental Scientist

■ Signed by Lead Agency Signed by Applicant

Authority cited: Sections 21083 and 21110, Public Resources Code. Date Received for filing at OPR: _____
 Reference: Sections 21108, 21152, and 21152.1, Public Resources Code.

Igo-Ono Stream Gage Installation/Re-Activation – CalSIP

Project Locations / Proposed Activities

Project Location

The Project is located at five discontinuous sites located within Shasta County in the Cottonwood Creek watershed. The five sites detailed in this memorandum include:

- North Fork Cottonwood Creek at Foster Road (40.396975°, -122.527889°); *Elevation 555 feet*
- Igo Ono Diversion Tunnel Outlet (40.487506°, -122.680412°); *Elevation 1,850 feet*
- Jerusalem Creek at Kelly Rock (40.48937°, -122.72399°); *Elevation 2,055 feet*
- Rainbow Lake Outlet Pipes (40.499679°, -122.697561°); *Elevation 1,980 feet*
- Moon Fork Cottonwood Creek (40.499046°, -122.700183°); *Elevation 1,930 feet*

Each site represents the approximate location for the proposed installation of new stream gaging infrastructure. **Figure 1** presents an overview of the Project's locations.

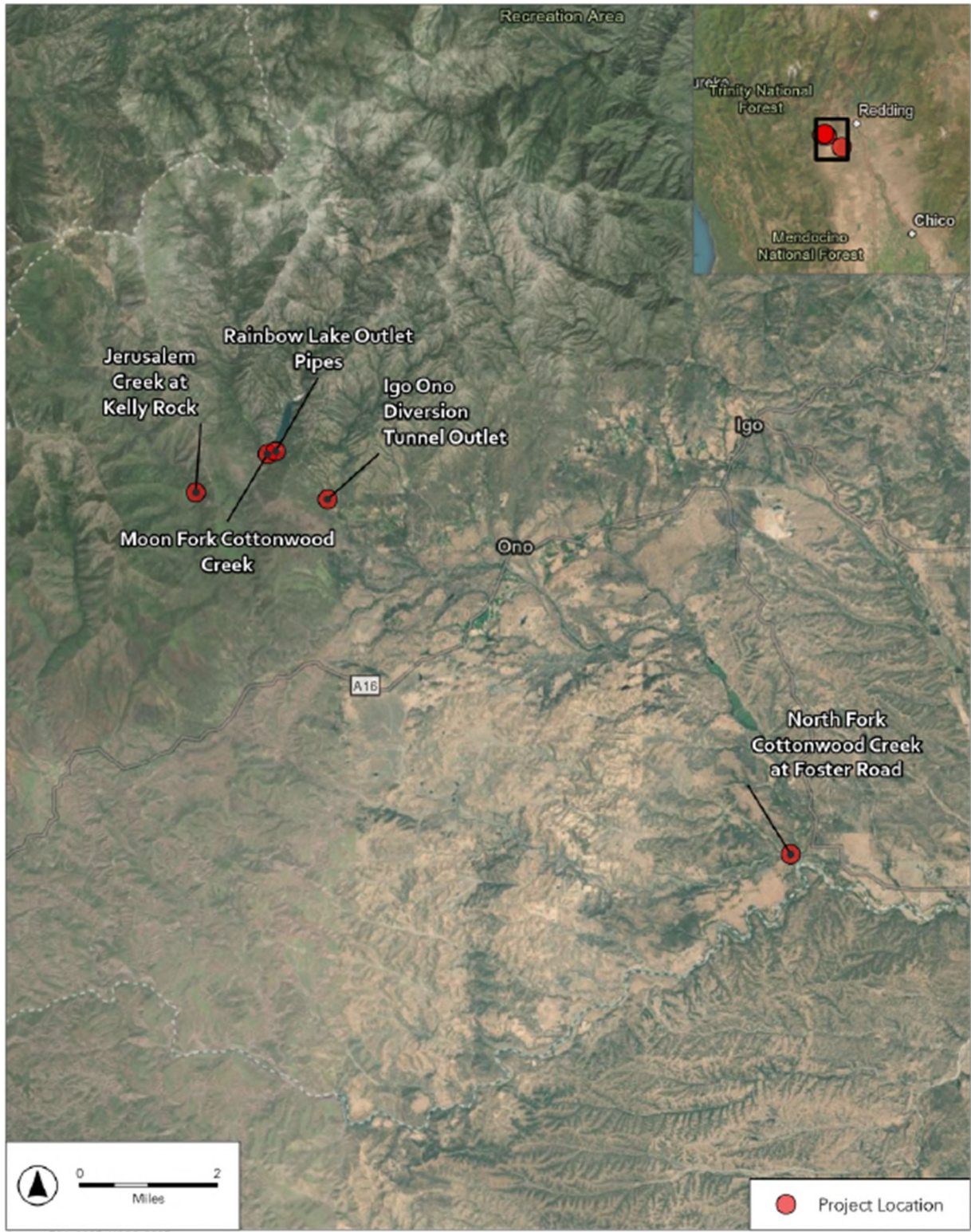
The North Fork Cottonwood Creek at Foster Road site is approximately 13 miles east of Cottonwood, in the southern portion of Shasta County near the border of Tehama County. The Moon Fork Cottonwood Creek, Igo Ono Diversion Tunnel Outlet, Rainbow Lake Outlet Pipes, and Jerusalem Creek at Kelly Rock sites are all located south of Rainbow Lake in the Shasta Cascades region near the unincorporated town of Ono in the southwestern portion of Shasta County, approximately 20 to 25 miles west of Anderson.

Project Description

CalSIP aims to improve stream gage infrastructure and data availability. Through CalSIP, DWR is actively improving California's stream gage network by upgrading existing gages, reactivating historical gages, and installing new gages on waterways across the state. Access to reliable, real-time information about the conditions and amount of water flowing into rivers and streams is critical to better manage water resources for public safety, water supply, and the conservation of freshwater species. Through the proposed stream gages and flow meters, DWR would be able to monitor water level and stream flow to better understand the watershed's hydraulics.

The descriptions below further describe the locations, construction activities, and types of stream gage technology and assembly (single stream gage assembly or flow meter assembly) that DWR proposes to install at each of the five locations listed above. Each individual stream gage installation would take approximately one day. There would be no potential for hazardous fluids such as fuel or flaked concrete to enter adjacent waterways.

Figure 1. Project Location Map



North Fork Cottonwood Creek at Foster Road

At this location, DWR would install a new stream gage assembly mounted to the existing Foster Road bridge over the North Fork Cottonwood Creek (Foster Road Bridge). Stream gage components at this location would consist of: (1) a remote terminal unit (RTU) that consists of a data logger, battery, and radio equipment housed in a steel enclosure, (2) radar water level sensor, and (3) a staff gage. The RTU enclosure would be mounted to the existing bridge structure. A solar panel and radio antenna would be mounted to the top of the RTU enclosure.

Conduit would be routed from the RTU enclosure, along the underside of the bridge deck, to approximately mid-span on the bridge where the radar sensor would be located. The radar sensor would be situated above the creek and would not touch the water. The staff gage would consist of a fiberglass or wooden board and be mounted directly to the existing bridge structure with wedge anchors.

The area of disturbance would be negligible as the stream gage assembly would be mounted to an existing bridge. There would be no earthwork nor vegetation removal proposed as part of this installation. Staging areas are not expected to be needed due to the minimal size of equipment and materials. All tools used for installation would be handheld.

Igo Ono Diversion Tunnel Outlet

At this location, DWR would install a new stream gage assembly at the outlet of the existing Igo Ono Diversion Tunnel. Stream gage components at this location would consist of: (1) a RTU that consists of a data logger, battery, and radio equipment housed in a steel enclosure, (2) radar water level sensor, and (3) a staff gage.

The RTU enclosure would be mounted to two galvanized steel mast posts anchored to the top of the existing concrete headwall of the tunnel outlet. A solar panel and radio antenna would be mounted to the top of the steel mast posts at a maximum height of approximately 12 feet. A radar water level sensor would be mounted to the roof inside the diversion tunnel using stainless steel wedge anchors and would not touch the water. The staff gage would consist of a fiberglass or wooden board mounted to the existing concrete tunnel outlet structure with wedge anchors.

The area of disturbance would be negligible, as all components would be mounted to existing infrastructure. No earthwork or major vegetation removal is proposed. Staging areas are not expected to be needed due to the minimal size of equipment and materials. All tools would be handheld.

Jerusalem Creek at Kelly Rock

At this location, DWR would install a new stream gage assembly on the right bank of Jerusalem Creek. The stream gage assembly would include: (1) a RTU that consists of a data logger, bubbler unit, battery, and radio equipment housed in a steel enclosure, (2) conduit routed from the RTU to the toe of the streambank where it terminates at the streambed, and (3) a staff gage installed in the streambed adjacent the conduit.

The RTU enclosure would be mounted to two galvanized steel mast posts, spaced approximately 3 feet apart, and anchored in two concrete footings, each approximately 12 inches in diameter and 3 feet deep below ground surface on the streambank. Material

excavated for placement of the concrete footings, estimated at approximately 0.2 cubic yards, would be re-used to compact the area around the footings. A solar panel and radio antenna would be mounted to the top of steel mast posts at a height of approximately 12 feet.

Due to the rocky stream bank and bed, a new 2-inch-diameter, 50-foot-long galvanized rigid metal conduit would be surface mounted from the RTU enclosure down the stream bank slope to the toe of the streambank where it would terminate. The metal conduit would be fastened to the bank with steel stakes and/or concrete wedge anchors into rocks. The staff gage would consist of a piece of galvanized angle iron driven into the streambed to a depth of approximately 3 feet or until refusal.

The area of disturbance would be limited to the immediate vicinity of the RTU enclosure and along with the conduit alignment, with a potential for minimal vegetation removal to install the conduit. Staging areas are not expected to be needed due to the minimal size of equipment and materials. The largest equipment anticipated to be used is a handheld auger and all other tools would also be handheld.

Rainbow Lake Outlet Pipes

At this location, DWR would install a new flow meter assembly on each of the two existing Rainbow Lake outlet pipes on North Fork Cottonwood Creek. Two flow meter assemblies are proposed to be installed on the existing discharge pipes of Rainbow Lake and would include: (1) a RTU that consists of a data logger, battery, and radio equipment housed in a steel enclosure, and (2) two transit time flow meters strapped to the outside of the pipes.

The RTU enclosure would be mounted directly to the inside of the existing tunnel wall, with a solar panel and radio antenna installed outside of the tunnel to the existing concrete headwall. Conduit would be routed from the RTU to each of the two flow meters, which would be installed inside the tunnel and secured to the exterior of the existing 30-inch diameter steel discharge pipes.

The area of disturbance would be negligible, as all equipment would be mounted to existing infrastructure. No earthwork or vegetation removal is proposed. Staging areas are not expected to be needed due to the minimal size of equipment and materials. All tools would be handheld.

Moon Fork Cottonwood Creek

At this location, DWR would reactivate an existing stream gage on Moon Fork Cottonwood Creek near the confluence with North Fork Cottonwood Creek. The single stream gage assembly would include: (1) a RTU that consists of a data logger, bubbler unit, battery, and radio equipment housed in a steel enclosure, (2) conduit routed from the RTU to the toe of the streambank where it terminates at the streambed, and (3) a staff gage installed in the streambed adjacent the conduit.

The RTU enclosure would be mounted to two galvanized steel mast posts, spaced approximately 3 feet apart, and anchored in two concrete footings, each approximately 12 inches in diameter and 3 feet deep below ground surface on the streambank. Material excavated for placement of the concrete footings, estimated at approximately 0.2 cubic yards, would be re-used to compact the area around the footings. A solar panel and radio antenna would be mounted to the top of steel mast posts at a height of approximately 12 feet.

Approximately 10 feet of new 2-inch galvanized rigid metal conduit would connect the RTU enclosure to the existing rigid metal conduit that is surface mounted along the bank and terminates in the stream. The new 2-inch metal conduit would be threaded onto the existing conduit and surface-mounted along the bank, secured with metal stakes. The staff gage would consist of a galvanized angle iron driven into the streambed to a depth of about 3 feet or until refusal.

The area of disturbance would be limited to the immediate vicinity of the RTU enclosure, with no major vegetation removal anticipated. Staging areas are not expected to be needed due to the minimal size of equipment and materials. The largest equipment anticipated to be used is a handheld auger and all other tools would also be handheld.