



STATE OF CALIFORNIA
DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE

GAVIN NEWSOM, Governor
MEGHAN HERTEL, Director

Permitting and Compliance/Northern Region/Inland Habitat Conservation Program

601 Locust Street

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To:

Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation

[CEQA Submit](#)

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

Project Title: New-Eel Russian Facility 60% Design (geotechnical investigation) (Notification of Lake or Streambed Alteration, No. EPIMS-MEN-64640-R1C)

Project Location (Mendocino): The project is located at Van Arsdale Reservoir located on the Eel River, in the County of Mendocino, State of California; Latitude 39.38660, Longitude -123.11700, and Latitude 39.38156, Longitude -123.09431.

Project Description: The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) has executed Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreement EPIMS Notification No. EPIMS-MEN-64640-R1C, pursuant to Section 1602 of the Fish and Game Code to the Sonoma County Water Agency.

The project is limited to subsurface exploration to advance the New Eel-Russian Facility (NERF) to a 60% Design. The project includes drilling 10 geotechnical boreholes, digging three test pits, and conducting three pebble counts in the Van Arsdale Reservoir.

Public Agency Approving Project: CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE

Person or Public Agency Carrying Out Project:

Grant Davis

Sonoma County Water Agency

General Manager

(707) 526-5370

grant.davis@scwa.ca.gov

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404 Aviation Blvd.
Santa Rosa, CA. 95403

Exempt Status: On February 10, 2026, the Sonoma County Water Agency, the Lead Agency, determined that the Project is categorically exempt pursuant to California Code of Regulations, Title 14, section 15306. The Lead Agency determined that the Project meets certain qualifying criteria for the exemption. Pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21080.1(a), the Lead Agency is responsible for determining whether the Project is exempt from CEQA and that determination shall be final and conclusive on all persons, including Responsible Agencies. As a result, CDFW, acting as a Responsible Agency, is bound by the Lead Agency's determination that the Project is exempt from CEQA.

CDFW Contact Person: Davis Ferguson (Senior Environmental Scientist, Specialist), (530) 761-0461, davis.ferguson@wildlife.ca.gov

Signature:  _____ Date: 4/14/2026

Jacqueline Matthews, Inland Habitat Conservation Program Manager, Acting

Date received for filing at LCI: