

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: Big Chico Creek Headgates Stream Gage Installation - CalSIP

Project Applicant: California Department of Water Resources (DWR)

Project Location - Specific:

Big Chico Creek Headgates Structure at the Lindo Channel and Sycamore Channels diversion located within the Five-Mile Recreation Area in Upper Bidwell Park in the City of Chico, CA (39.761800, -121.792580).
 See Figure 1 of attachment.

Project Location - City: Chico Project Location - County: Butte

Description of Nature, Purpose and Beneficiaries of Project:

As part of the California Stream Gage Improvement Program, DWR is proposing to install a stream gage on the upstream side of the existing Big Chico Creek Headgates structure to monitor water level, stream flow, and water temperature. An existing handrail and fence structure is attached to the top of the headgates structure. A radar gage, data logger, battery, and radio equipment will be housed within a steel enclosure attached to the existing handrail and fence structure on the upstream side of the headgate. An antenna and solar panel would also be attached to the steel enclosure or existing handrail and fence structure. Proposed activities will not result in ground disturbance, vegetation removal, in-water work, or drilling into the existing concrete headgate structure. See attached Project Description.

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: 15306. Information Collection
- Statutory Exemptions. State code number: _____

Reasons why project is exempt:

The proposed stream gage installation would provide real-time data and monitor hydrologic conditions of Big Chico Creek upstream of the Headgates structure. The proposed stream gage assembly would be attached to the existing steel handrailing and fence structure with no ground disturbance, vegetation removal, in-water work, or drilling into the concrete headgate structure. Proposed activities qualify for categorical exemption 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: 4/23/2026 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.

Big Chico Creek Headgates

Stream Gage Installation – CalSIP

Proposed Project Location and Activities

Project Location

The proposed project would install a stream gage on Big Chico Creek at the Sycamore and Lindo Channels Diversion on the Big Chico Creek Headgates Structure, located within the Five-Mile Recreation Area in Upper Bidwell Park in the City of Chico in Butte County (39.761800°, -121.792580°), see Figure 1.

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.

Proposed Activities

The stream gage assembly would include a remote terminal unit (RTU) enclosure housing a data logger, radar sensor (contactless), battery, solar panel, and radio telemetry equipment affixed to the existing galvanized steel handrailing which is attached to the top of the upstream headwall of the Structure.

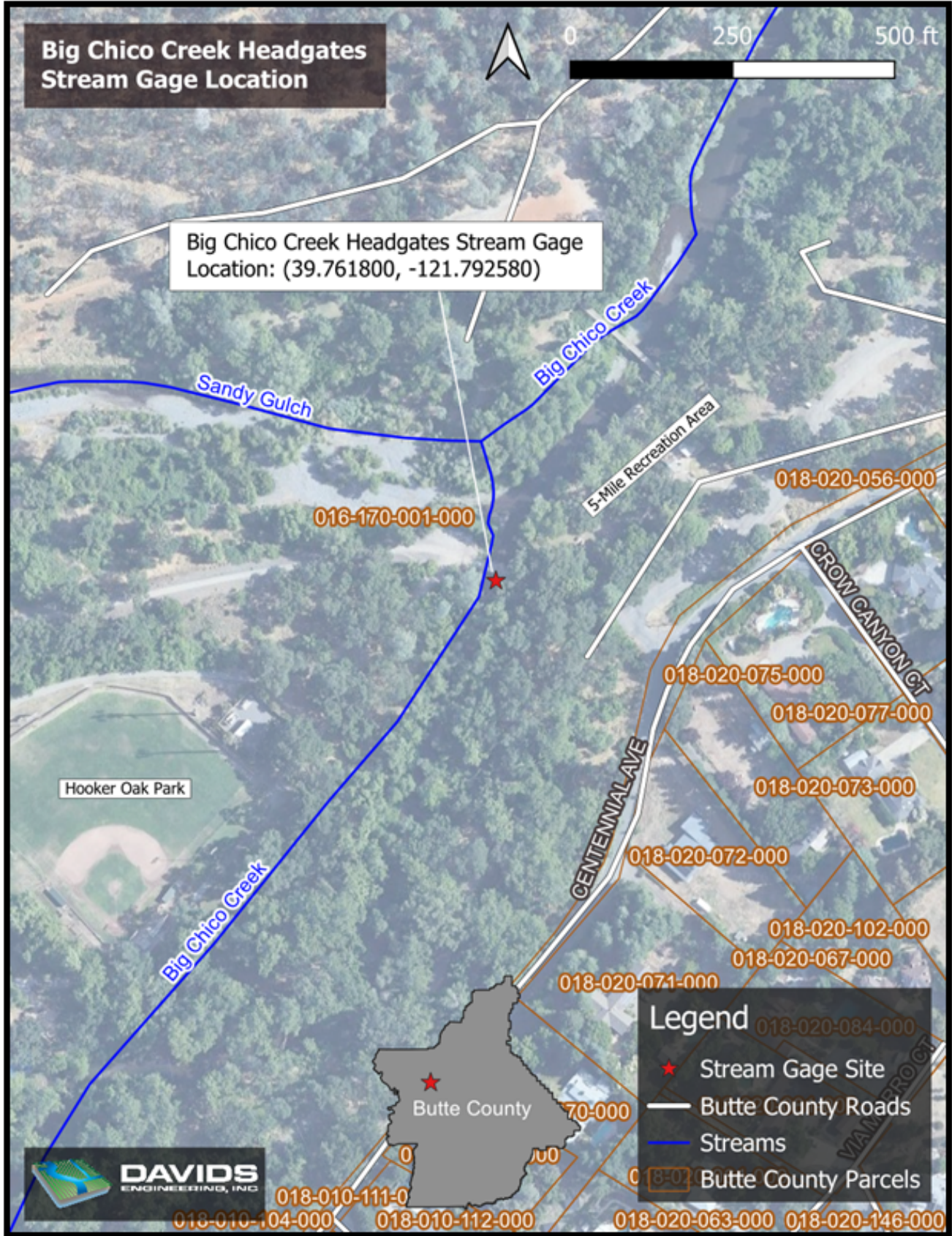
The area of disturbance is essentially zero as the proposed gage will be mounted to existing infrastructure. There will be no earthwork, drilling into concrete, nor vegetation removal. It is anticipated all installation work can be done from the top of the Structure, meaning no in-water work is necessary.

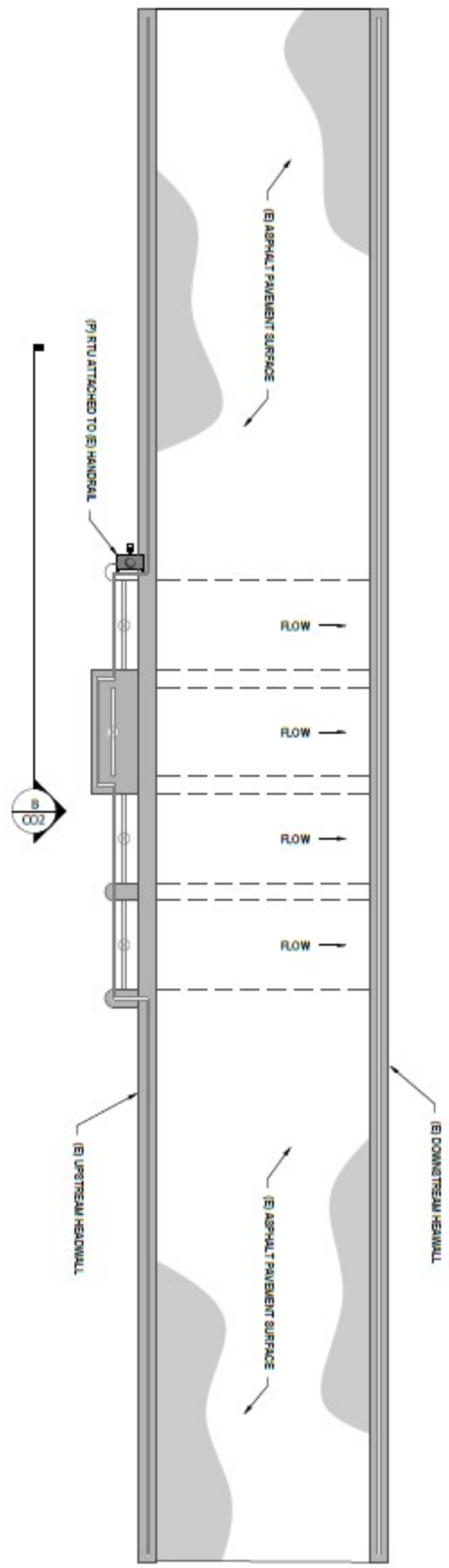
It is anticipated that staging areas are not required as the size of equipment required to complete the installation, and the materials that comprise the stream gage are minimal. The largest equipment anticipated to be used for installation will be handheld.

Schedule

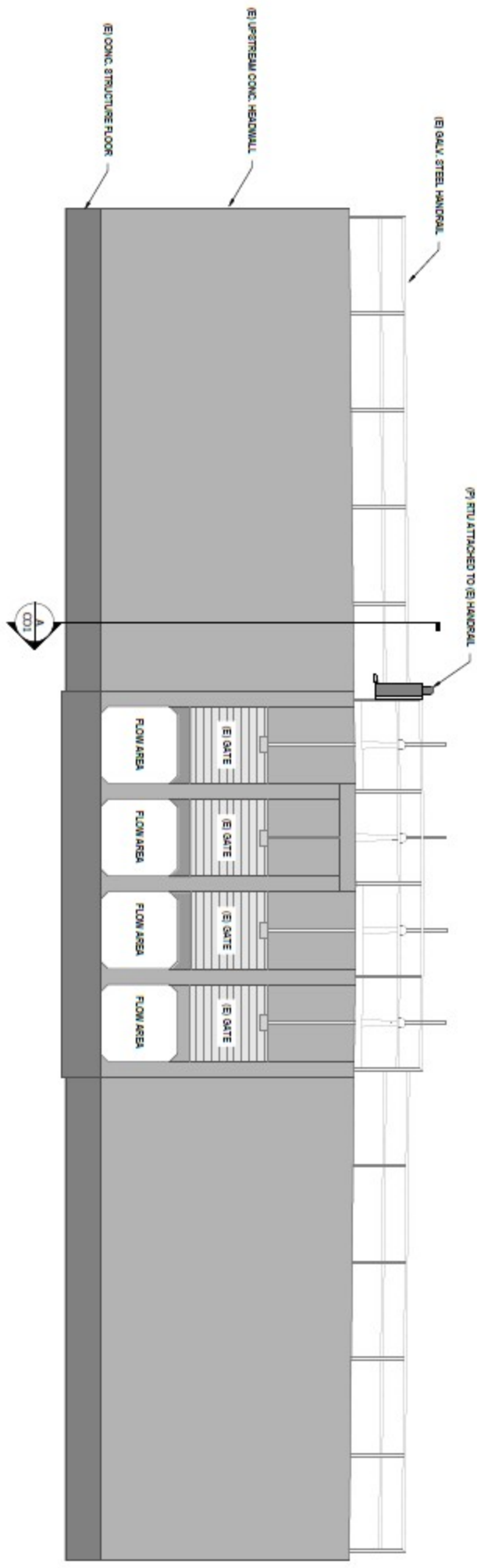
Installation is planned from summer of 2026.

Figure 1. Project Location Map





PLAN VIEW
SCALE: 1"=4'



UPSTREAM ELEVATION VIEW
SCALE: 1"=4'

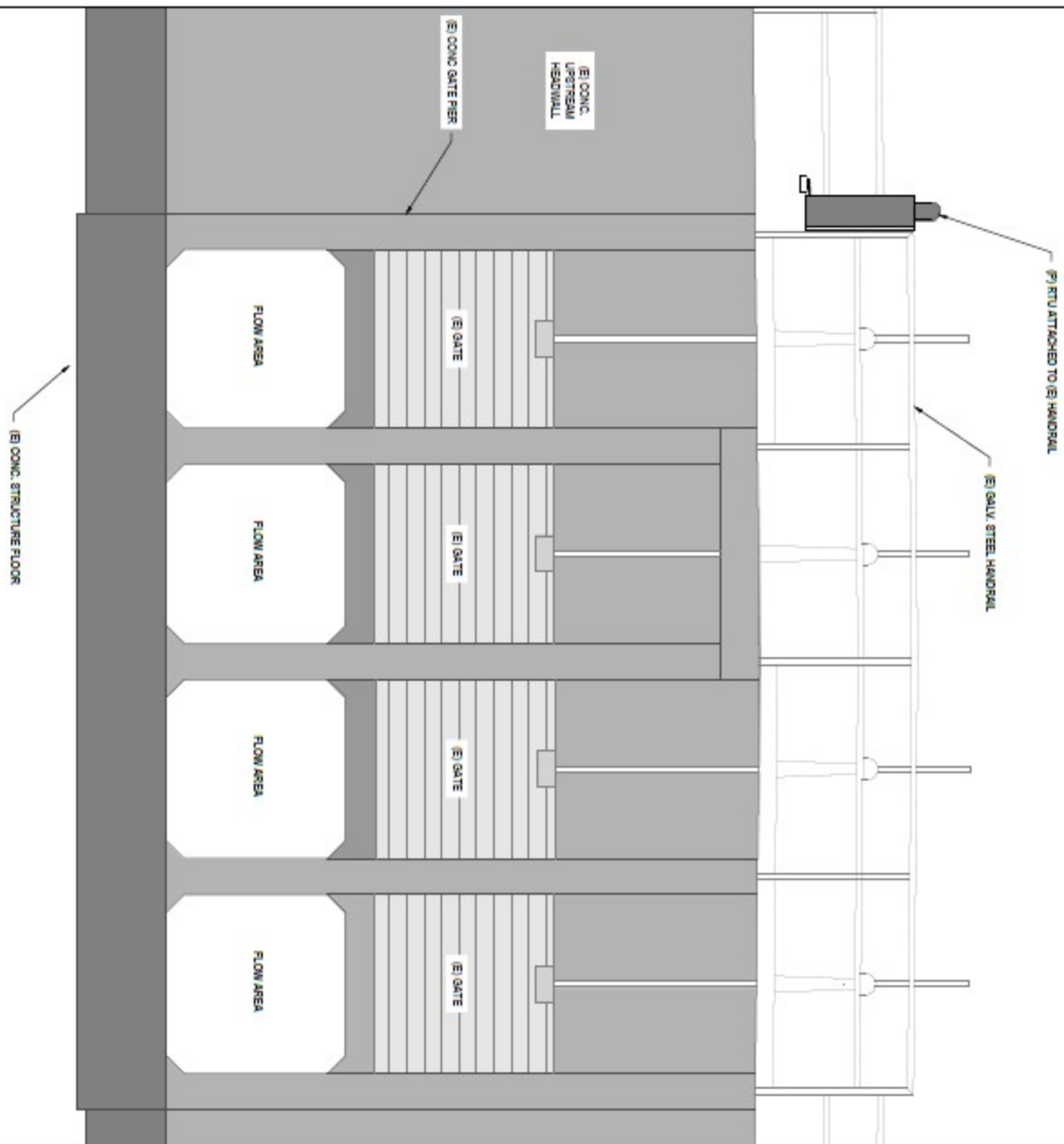
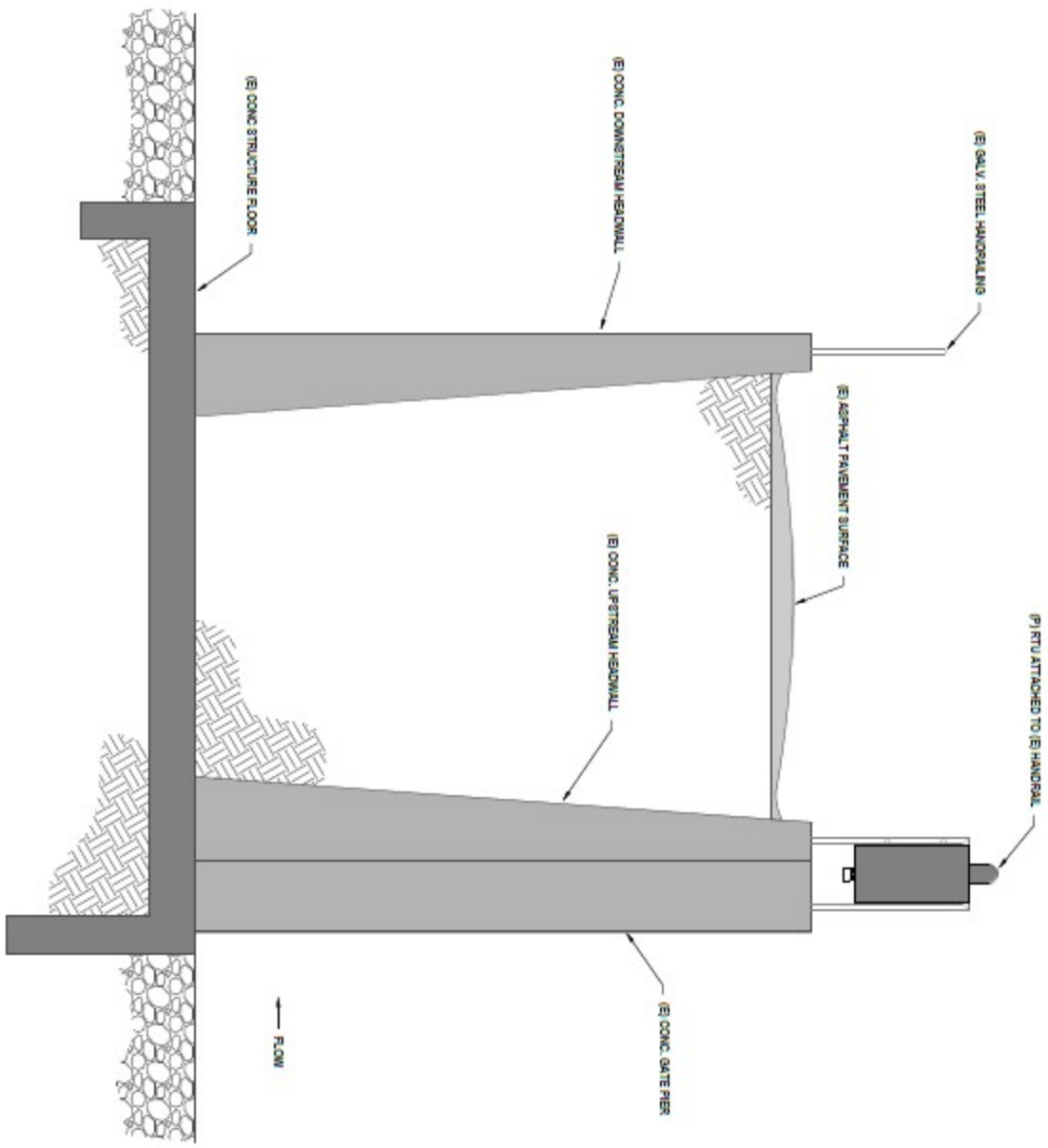


REV.	BY:	DATE:	DESCRIPTION:

RTU INSTALLATION PLAN
BIG CHICO CREEK HEADGATES STREAM GAGE
DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES
CHICO
BUTTE COUNTY CALIFORNIA

DATE: 4/10/2028
SCALE: AS NOTED
JOB NUMBER: 1230171
DESIGNED: DRH
DRAWN: DRH
CHECKED: DRH

C01
SHEET 1 OF 2



A CROSS SECTION

B UPSTREAM ELEVATION

SCALE: 1" = 2'

SCALE: 1" = 2'



Water Infrastructure Technology

REV.	BY:	DATE:	DESCRIPTION

RTU INSTALLATION PLAN

BIG CHICO CREEK HEADGATES STREAM GAGE
DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES
CHICO CALIFORNIA
BUTTE COUNTY

DATE:	4/14/2025
SCALE:	AS NOTED
JOB NUMBER:	1234.01
DESIGNED:	DRH
DRAWN:	DRH
CHECKED:	DRH

C02
SHEET 1 OF 2