



STATE OF CALIFORNIA
DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE

GAVIN NEWSOM, Governor
MEGHAN HERTEL, Director

Central Region
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Fresno, California 93710
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wildlife.ca.gov

To:
Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation
[CEQA Submit](#)

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

Project Title: Ruddle Ditch Rock Diversion Dam For 2026 (Notification of Lake or Streambed Alteration, No. EPIMS-MER-64953-R4)

Project Location (Merced): The Project will occur in the Merced River, at river mile 47.85, in the community of Snelling, Merced County, California; northeast ¼ of Section 9, Township 5 South, Range 14 East, USGS 7.5 Minute Quad Map Snelling, MDBM; Latitude 37.517601, Longitude - 120.43719.

Project Description: The California Department of Fish and Wildlife has executed Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreement Notification No. EPIMS- MER-64953-R4, pursuant to Section 1602 of the Fish and Game Code, to Ralph Fagundes.

The Project involves activities related to the one-time construction of two rock diversion dams in the Merced River at the head of the Ruddle Ditch. One dam will be constructed in the main channel and one dam will be constructed in a side channel. Dam installation will result in backing up water and guiding flow into the diversion ditch.

Public Agency Approving Project: CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE

Person or Public Agency Carrying Out Project:
Fagundes Dairy, represented by Ralph Fagundes

Exempt Status:

Statutory Exemption.


Categorical Exemption. Type – Class 1; California Code of Regulations, title 14, section 15301

Reasons why project is exempt: The Project includes activities involved in the operation of an existing diversion ditch. The Project is not intended to expand an existing facility use. The Project will

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not have significant environmental impacts if it is completed under the protective features of Streambed Alteration Agreement No. EPIMS-MER-64953-R4.

CDFW Contact Person: Jackson Powell (Environmental Scientist); (559) 899-9758

Signature:  *Date:* 5/8/2026
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For: Julie A. Vance, Regional Manager

Date received for filing at LCI: