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Notice of Exemption

To:
Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation

CEQA Submit

From:
Department of Fish and Wildlife

Watershed Restoration Grants Branch
Street Address:
1010 Riverside Pkwy
West Sacramento, CA 95605

For U.S. Mail:
P.O. Box 944209
Sacramento, CA 94244-2090

Project Title: California Beaver Coexistence Training and Support Program (Project)

Project Location: The Project includes design and implementation of low-impact beaver coexistence (i.e., damage-deterrent) activities on privately–owned and/or publicly–owned land located throughout California with priority in Butte, Colusa, Merced, Placer, Sacramento, and San Joaquin Counties.

Project Description: On September 18, 2024, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) executed a $2,000,000 grant with Nature Based Solutions: Wetlands and Mountain Meadows funding to the Occidental Arts and Ecology Center (Grantee) to launch a program facilitating widespread beaver coexistence strategies. Initial grant activities related to planning have recently been completed. These activities included setting up a Help Desk website, training professionals in nonlethal deterrence strategies, setting up data collection and analysis strategies, and conducting outreach. The Grantee will assist landowners with implementation of beaver damage-deterrent installations that result in the alleviation of beaver depredation and reduction in beaver take by providing non-lethal deterrence strategies and support for beaver coexistence installations. Now CDFW is authorizing the next phase of the grant agreement: implementation of the following physical activities on a programmatic basis as "low-impact" activities to be funded under the grant (Project):

- Non-invasive activities to prevent and minimize flooding caused by beaver damming, such as pond levelers, fenced notches, and beaver deceiver flow pipes;
- Strategies to prevent blocked culverts and water conveyance structures, using methods such as culvert protection (exclusion) fencing, beaver back savers (a retrofit to an existing weir allowing water to flow through the structure using a perforated pipe capped with a metal grate), or diversion fencing installations (fencing upstream of a culvert which diverts beavers damming efforts away from the culvert);
- Tree protection strategies, including use of regular or electric fencing around individual or groups of trees, and painting trees with sand paint; and
- Replacement and maintenance activities related to all installed devices.

Public Agency Approving Project: CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE

Person or Public Agency Carrying Out Project: Occidental Arts and Ecology Center

Exempt Status: ☒ California Environmental Quality Act Class 4 Categorial Exemption (Minor Alterations to Land)

Reasons Why Project is Exempt: CDFW has determined that the Project meets the qualifying criteria set forth in Cal. Code Regs. Tit. 14, § 15304 subdivision (d). CDFW's determination that the Project qualifies as a "minor alteration[s] in land, water, and vegetation on existing officially designated wildlife management areas or fish production facilities which result in improvement of habitat for fish and wildlife resources or greater fish production" is supported by the Project will use low-impact preventative methods to prevent beaver-related damage, reducing the need for lethal control, and minimizing property damage.

CDFW Contact Person: Elizabeth Buttler, Policy and Outreach Manager, (916) 594-3879, Elizabeth.Buttler@Wildlife.ca.gov

DocuSigned by:
Signature: Matt Wells 613C2E6C801C4E8... *Date:* 6/19/2026

Matt Wells, Branch Chief

Date received for filing at LCI: _____