



State of California – Natural Resources Agency
DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE
Northern Region
619 Second Street
Eureka, California 95501
(707) 441-2075
www.wildlife.ca.gov

GAVIN NEWSOM, Governor
MEGHAN HERTEL, Director



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

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

Project Title: Little Mill Creek Groundwater Recharge Incised Channel Repair Project (Project) (Notification of Lake or Streambed Alteration, No. EPIMS-MEN-64381-R1C)

Project Location (Mendocino County): The Project to be completed is located within the Navarro River watershed, approximately 9 miles northeast of the town of Philo, County of Mendocino, State of California. The Project is located in Section 23, T15 N, R15 W, Mt. Diablo Base and Meridian; in the Bailey Ridge U.S. Geological Survey 7.5-minute quadrangle; Assessor's Parcel Number 026-235-22-00; latitude 39.14392 N and longitude 123.48704 W.

Project Description: The California Department of Fish and Wildlife has executed Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreement EPIMS Notification No. EPIMS-MEN-64381-R1C, pursuant to Section 1602 of the Fish and Game Code to Nicole Schmidt representing The Nature Conservancy.

The Project is part of the Navarro River – Mill Creek Habitat Enhancement Project and is limited to one (1) encroachment to conduct restoration work within approximately 600-linear feet of an unnamed tributary to Little Mill creek to increase groundwater recharge and augment dry season stream flow in the Mill Creek watershed. Work for this encroachment will include excavation, placement of fill, log sill and rock grade structures into the channel, removal of an existing culvert and replacement with a seasonal rock ford crossing, removal, relocation, and replacement of an existing culvert, revegetation plantings, backfilling and compaction of fill, and rock armoring as necessary to minimize erosion.

Rock Grade Control and Log Sill Structures. The project will install rock grade control and log sill structures and place soil into the incised channel to develop a series of low-gradient reaches and pools. Soil will be placed in the stream to raise the channel bed to the same elevation as the floodplain benches. The rock structures will be installed in the steeper stream reaches and will include a clay barrier on the upstream side to minimize water leakage through the structure and maximize upstream water retention. Two felled redwood trees (30-inch and 40-inch diameter at breast height [dbh]) will be cut into lengths to create the log sill structures, which will also incorporate the trees' root wads.

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Culvert Removal and Installation of Rock Ford Crossing. An existing 36-inch diameter corrugated metal pipe (CMP) culvert on the downstream end of the project site will be removed and replaced with a rocked stream crossing. The rocked crossing will accommodate a 12-foot road width and will include the placement of one-ton rock on the downstream side to create an energy dissipation pool to reduce erosion. Vehicles shall not be operated on the ford crossing when surface water is present.

Culvert Relocation. An existing 18-inch diameter CMP culvert that conveys flow to the stream from the access road will be removed, replaced, and relocated to discharge upstream of a log sill structure. The outfall will be rocked to reduce erosion in the channel.

Revegetation and Erosion Control. Revegetation includes ten (10) one-gallon redwood plantings, 92 native shrub plantings, 1,712 sedges and rushes plantings, 306 forbs and ferns, and 400 grass plugs.. Erosion control treatments include installation of 17,640 square feet of coir blanket and native plant seed mix.

Public Agency Approving Project: CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE

Person or Public Agency Carrying Out Project:

Permittee: Nicole Schmidt representing The Nature Conservancy

Contact: Jennifer Garrison - CDFW Senior Environmental Scientist (Specialist)

619 Second Street

Eureka, CA 95501

707-445-6493

Jennifer.Garrison@wildlife.ca.gov

Exempt Status:

☒ Categorical Exemption. Type – Class 33; California Code of Regulations, title 14, section 15333

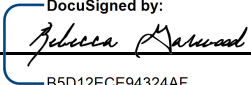
Reasons why project is exempt: The Project meets the criteria for categorical exemption type Class 33, California Code of Regulations, title 14, section 15333 because the project involves provides stream restoration to increase dry season stream flow, improve groundwater recharge, and restore habitat for salmonid species. Implementation of the proposed project would not to exceed five acres in size, there are no hazardous materials at or around the project site that may be disturbed or removed, and the project will have no significant adverse impacts on endangered, rare or threatened species or their habitat.

CDFW Contact Person: Jennifer Garrison, Senior Environmental Scientist (Specialist), Jennifer.Garrison@wildlife.ca.gov, 707-445-6493.

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Signature:  DocuSigned by:
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Date: 7/16/2026

Rebecca Garwood, Environmental Program Manager

Date received for filing at LCI: