

Notice of Exemption

Appendix E

To: Office of Planning and Research
P.O. Box 3044, Room 113
Sacramento, CA 95812-3044

County Clerk

County of: _____

From: (Public Agency): _____
State Water Resources Control Board
1001 I Street, Sacramento CA 95814

(Address)

Project Title: Werner Lake Restoration and Water Quality Improvement Planning Project

Project Applicant: Elkhorn Slough Foundation

Project Location - Specific:

Werner Lake, North Monterey County, Garin Road, Royal Oaks, CA. APN: 119-011-00

Project Location - City: Royal Oaks, CA Project Location - County: Monterey

Description of Nature, Purpose and Beneficiaries of Project:

The applicant will develop a Werner Lake Restoration Plan, a proposal to reduce nonpoint source pollutant loads from runoff to Werner Lake/Watsonville Creek and to remove accumulated agricultural sediments to restore open water. The Recipient will complete planning tasks to restore Werner Lake by 1) assessing sediment accretion characteristics in the wetland, 2) working with consultants and stakeholders to identify agricultural inputs and strategies to decrease those inputs, and 3) working with consultants to develop project designs.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: State Water Resources Control Board

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: Elkhorn Slough Foundation

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: Minor Alterations to Land (Section 15304); Information Collection (Section 15306)
- ☐ Statutory Exemptions. State code number: _____

Reasons why project is exempt:

This is a feasibility study and planning project, and most of the actions will have no physical effects. Small-scale sediment sampling (a few, minor sediment cores) from the lake is categorically exempt as a minor alteration in the condition of land, water, and/or vegetation which does not involve the removal of healthy, mature, scenic trees (Class 4). Sampling will not include grading or blasting, and the sampling will be done to support planning designed to result in improvement of habitat for fish and wildlife resources.

The sediment sampling is also categorically exempt under Class 6 – it is data collection and resource evaluation which does not result in a serious major disturbance to an environmental resource. This exemption allows for test borings, and soil, water, and vegetation sampling.

Lead Agency
Contact Person: Jessica Leonard Area Code/Telephone/Extension: 916-341-5980

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

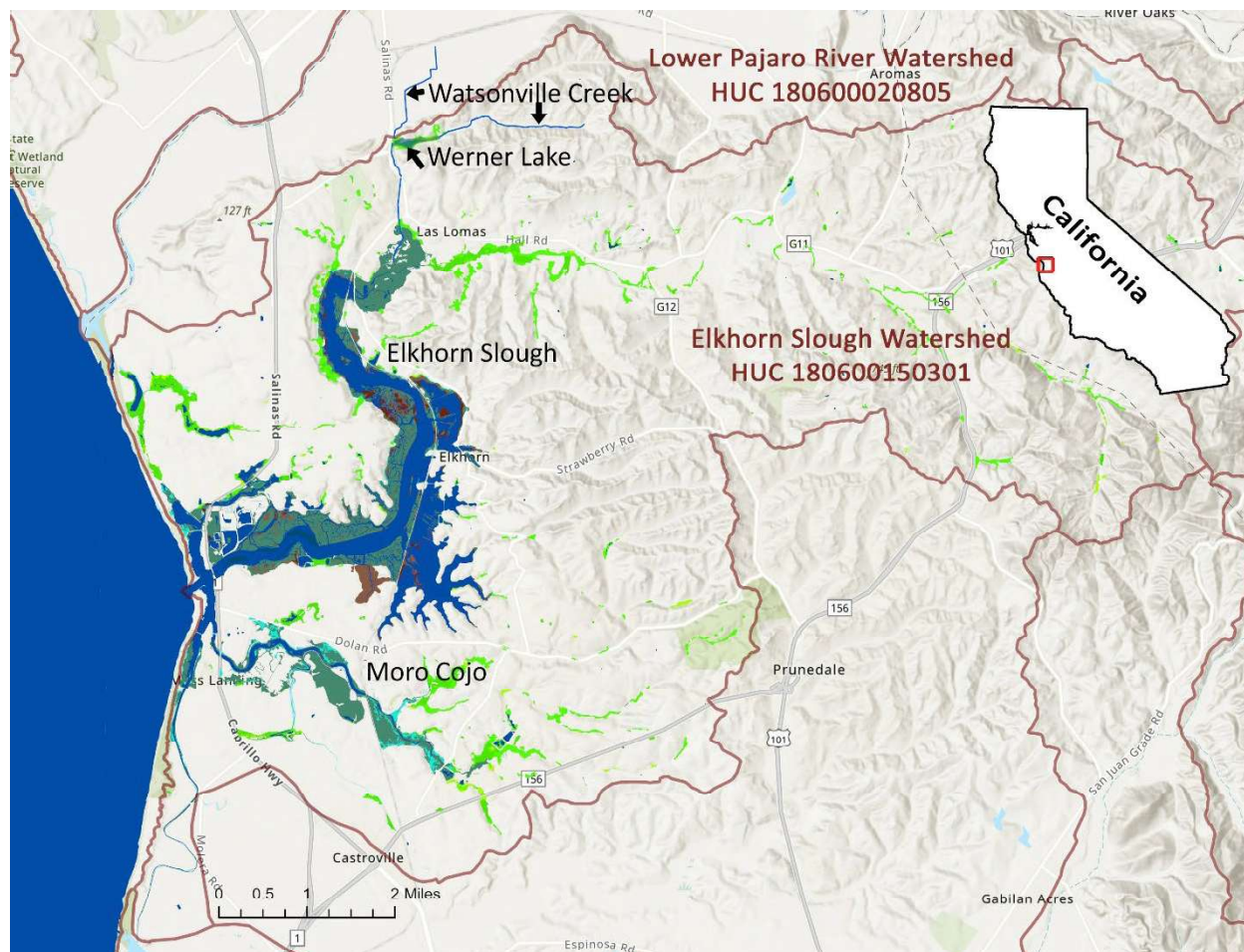
Signature: Phillip Crader Digitally signed by Phillip Crader
Date: 2026.08.17 16:58:55 -07'00' Date: 8/17/2026 Title: Deputy Director

Signed by Lead Agency Signed by Applicant

Authority cited: Sections 21083 and 21110, Public Resources Code.
Reference: Sections 21108, 21152, and 21152.1, Public Resources Code.

Date Received for filing at OPR: _____

Werner Lake Restoration and Water Quality Improvement Planning



Project location map, showing the watershed locations within the state (inset), the watershed boundaries (red lines), polygon showing Werner Lake, and other waterbodies in the region (Watsonville Creek, Elkhorn Slough and Moro Cojo).