

STATE OF CALIFORNIA
DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE



GAVIN NEWSOM, Governor
MEGHAN HERTEL, Director

Central Region
1234 East Shaw Avenue
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: Washington Road Over Eastside Bypass Bridge Emergency Retrofit Project
(Notification of Lake or Streambed Alteration, No. EPIMS-MER-64928-R4)

Project Location (Merced County): The Project is located at the Washington Avenue bridge crossing over the Eastside Bypass, approximately 4 miles west of the intersection of California State Route 59 and 4.5 miles southwest of the community of El Nido, Merced County, California; Assessor's Parcel Number 074-130-012; GPS coordinates 37.11338, -120.56337.

Project Description: The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) has executed Streambed Alteration Agreement Notification No. EPIMS-MER-64928-R4, pursuant to Section 1602 of the Fish and Game Code, to Merced County – Public Works.

The Project includes activities related to the rehabilitation and repair of the existing Washington Avenue bridge crossing over Eastside Bypass. The Project will include reinforcement of existing Pier 9 through 17 using cast-in-place post-tensioned superbents supported on cast-in-place concrete columns founded on larger cast-in-drilled-hole (CIDH) concrete piles. The existing bridge pier columns within the interior of the bridge footprint will be demolished. Before the Project site is accessed, vegetation will be mowed to access the staging area and Eastside Bypass. Project activities will be done in dry conditions.

Public Agency Approving Project: CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE

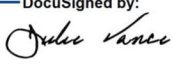
Person or Public Agency Carrying Out Project:

Alvaro Buenrostro
Merced County – Public Works
(209) 385-7601, Ext. 4632
abuenrostro@countyofmerced.com
345 West 7th Street
Merced, California 95340

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Exempt Status: On January 8, 2026, the County of Merced, the Lead Agency, determined that the Project is categorically exempt pursuant to California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Section 15301. The Lead Agency determined that the Project meets certain qualifying criteria for the exemption. Pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21080.1(a), the Lead Agency is responsible for determining whether the Project is exempt from CEQA and that determination shall be final and conclusive on all persons, including Responsible Agencies. As a result, CDFW, acting as a Responsible Agency, is bound by the Lead Agency's determination that the Project is exempt from CEQA.

CDFW Contact Person: Clint Stevens (Environmental Scientist), (559) 578-0837,
Clint.Stevens@wildlife.ca.gov.

Signature: _____ DocuSigned by:  Date: 9/10/2026
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Julie A. Vance, Regional Manager

Date received for filing at LCI: