

**Notice of Exemption**

**To:**  
Office of Planning and Research  
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Sacramento, CA 95812-3044

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Sacramento, CA 95814

**From:**  
Department of Fish and Wildlife  
Inlands Deserts Region  
3602 Inland Empire Blvd., Suite C-220  
Ontario, CA 91764



**Project Title:** Colorado River Aqueduct Exposed Barrel Repairs (Lake or Streambed Alteration Agreement No. EPIMS-RIV-17092-R6)

**Project Location:** The Project is located at three locations along the underground Colorado River Aqueduct where it intersects the San Gorgonio River, an unnamed tributary to the San Gorgonia River and an unnamed tributary to Mission Creek, in the County of Riverside, State of California. Station: 9434+50, Latitude: 33.980907, Longitude: -116.584911; Station: 9977+00, Latitude: 33.927718, Longitude: -116.729769; Station: 10101+65, Latitude: 33.905693, Longitude: -116.757923.

**Project Description:** The California Department of Fish and Wildlife has executed Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreement number EPIMS-RIV-17092-R6, pursuant to Section 1602 of the Fish and Game Code to the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California.

The Project is limited to repairing erosion and restoring soil cover over the underground Colorado River Aqueduct (CRA) at three locations where the CRA has become exposed as a result of high stream flows during heavy precipitation events in 2019 and 2020. This segment of the CRA is constructed of buried cast-in-place concrete conduit that requires earthen groundcover for structural stability. The repairs will include the placement of earthen material to restore soil cover over the CRA and placement of 18-inch riprap (500 lb class) to dissipate energy and reduce further erosion. Temporary impact areas have been defined beyond the permanent impact area and will be used for vehicle and equipment storage and access. Equipment to be used includes: 289 skid steer, 2,500-gallon water truck, 10-yard dump trucks, D4 dozer, 320 or 330 excavator and one 930 loader.

**Public Agency Approving Project:** CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE

**Person or Public Agency Carrying Out Project:** The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California

**Exempt Status:**

- Statutory Exemption. California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Section (15269(b)–Emergency Projects)
- Categorical Exemption.

**Reasons why project is exempt:** This Project is limited to the repair of a privately owned service facility (Colorado River Aqueduct) necessary to maintain service essential to the public health, safety or welfare. The section of the Colorado River Aqueduct (CRA) that needs repair consists of a buried cast-in-place concrete conduit that relies on earthen groundcover for structural stability. Without such stability the exposed CRA poses a substantial risk of failure due to: (1) structural damage resulting from boulder strikes during storm events and (2) erosion-induced collapse if the downstream side of the conduit becomes further exposed and lacks sufficient groundcover to support its weight. These failures would necessitate a long-term shutdown of the entire CRA, interrupting the delivery of water to nearly 19 million southern California residents.

**CDFW Contact Person:** Alyssa Marquez, Environmental Scientist, (760) 567-0332

DocuSigned by:  
*Alisa Ellsworth* for Date: 7/9/2021  
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Alisa Ellsworth, Environmental Program Manager

Date received for filing at OPR: \_\_\_\_\_