

# 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: Modoc

108 E. Modoc Street

Alturas, CA 96101

From: (Public Agency): County of Modoc Planning  
204 South Court Street  
Alturas, CA 96101

(Address)

Project Title: Shaw Pit Bridge Stream Gage - Pit River

Project Applicant: Modoc County Planning

Project Location - Specific:

1294 County Road 85-A (Latitude 41.343628, Longitude -121.135483)

Project Location - City: Lookout

Project Location - County: Modoc

Description of Nature, Purpose and Beneficiaries of Project:

The County of Modoc will install one stream gage on the Pit River located at the Shaw Pit Bridge to collect stream flow data to understand the hydrological system entering into the Big Valley Groundwater basin from the watershed. Data will be collected on a monthly basis to ensure accurate flow. Equipment will consist of a Turnkey Surface Bubbler Type gaging station with GOES Telemetry and Turnkey Surface Water Radar Type Gaging Station with GOES Telemetry

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: Modoc County Board of Supervisors

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: Modoc County Office of Administration

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: Class 6 §Section 15306 - Information Collection
- Statutory Exemptions. State code number: \_\_\_\_\_

Reasons why project is exempt:

The County of Modoc will install a stream gage strictly for information gathering purposes. The data gathered will be used in the Big Valley Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP). No concrete will be used nor will the banks be modified. Equipment will be installed on the bridge or telephone pole located adjacent to the Pit River. Term of installation will be ten (10) years unless extended by a written agreement.

Lead Agency

Contact Person: Tiffany Martinez Area Code/Telephone/Extension: (530) 233-6201

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:  Date: 6 Aug 2021 Title: Modoc County Planning 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: \_\_\_\_\_

**Subject: CEQA Notice of Exemption: Stream Gauge Installation on the Pit River near Lookout**

**Project Location:** Modoc County, approximately 2.41 miles up-stream on the Pit River from the Big Valley Groundwater Basin boundary



**Purpose:** The proposed project, a bubbler stream gage, will be used to measure water surface elevation on the Pit River at Shaw Pit. Data collected from this gauge will be used for research purposes and to help refine the water budget for the Big Valley Groundwater Sustainability Plan.

**Project Description:** DWR is proposing to install a bubbler gage connected to a National Electrical Manufacturers Association (NEMA) box on the bank of the Pit River at Shaw Pit. The NEMA box will be attached to two 2" diameter galvanized pipes that will be driven into the ground along the side of the private road. Another 2" diameter galvanized pipe will attach to the NEMA box on ground level and will end of the pipe will be laterally submerged in the Pit River. This project requires no heavy equipment to complete, and all work will be done using hand tools over the course of no more than 2 days.

**Biological Resources:** The project area is located the bank of the Pit River, close to a private gravel road and bridge. Due to the placement of this existing infrastructure and nearby farmland practices, the project site and its surrounding area have previously been disturbed. The siting of the bubbler gage will be managed to avoid the removal of trees and other vegetation. The limits of the project site were

surveyed on July 7, 2021 to identify any potential biological resources within and adjacent to the project area.

**Special Status Species:**

A list of special status species with the potential to occur within the project area was compiled in reference to data from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife’s (CDFW) California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDDB) and California Native Plant Society’s (CNPS) website. CNDDDB showed no previously documented special-status plant or wildlife occurrences within the immediate project area. CNDDDB was also used to create a map to depict special status plant and wildlife species documented within ten miles of the project site.

**Flora:** A list of potential rare plants was generated from a nine-quad search of the California Natural Diversity Database using the California Department of Fish and Wildlife’s Biological Information and Observation System and the California Native Plant Society’s Inventory of Rare and Endangered Plants. The project area is located at 4,299 feet of elevation in a riparian zone within a narrow band of agricultural land and near an active quarry. The ecosystem beyond the cultivated and otherwise disturbed areas is sagebrush steppe/juniper woodland that is used primarily as rangeland, as well as for scattered rural developments. The project area hosts riparian species including willows, (*Salix spp.*) and grasses, (*Poaceae spp.*). Adjacent to the project area, dominant species include Ponderosa Pine (*Pinus ponderosa*), western juniper (*Juniperus occidentalis*); shrubs like sagebrush (*Artemisia tridentata*) and rabbitbrush (*Ericameria nauseosa*), and perennial bunchgrasses, such as Idaho fescue (*Festuca idahoensis*).

A rare plant survey occurred on July 7, 2021. Survey timing was expected to capture an identifiable phase of most of the potential rare plants. The survey focused on the area where vegetation removal is expected to occur, as well as areas approximately 100 feet upstream and downstream of this location. No rare plants were observed. A total of 12 plant taxa, listed in the table below, were identified within the immediate project area. The project site area is dominated by perennial and annual grasses, with some larger shrubs. Most of the plants identified are native to California.

| Scientific Name                | Common Name               |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------|
| <i>Eleocharis microstachya</i> | Spikerush                 |
| <i>Equisetum hyem</i>          | Horsetail                 |
| <i>Leymus cinereus</i>         | Great Basin Wildrye       |
| <i>Salix exigua</i>            | Narrowleaf/sandbar Willow |
| <i>Melica californica</i>      | California Melic          |
| <i>Elymus repens</i>           | Quack Grass               |
| <i>Salix lucida</i>            | Pacific willow            |
| <i>Medicago sp.</i>            | Alfalfa                   |
| <i>Erodium cicutarium</i>      | Heron’s bill              |
| <i>Artemisia douglasiana</i>   | Mugwort                   |
| <i>Hordeum brachyantherum</i>  | Meadow Barley             |
| <i>Alopecurus sp.</i>          | Foxtail                   |

**Wildlife:** Based on a literature review and CNDDDB, twelve special status wildlife species were determined to have the potential to occur within the project area. The likelihood of occurrence within the project area was estimated for each of the twelve species based on information on the wildlife's distribution and preferred habitat. Three species were considered to have a moderate potential to occur within the project area, while the remaining nine were considered to have a low potential to occur. The three species with moderate potential to occur are the Modoc Sucker (*Catostomus microps*), Swainson's hawk (*Buteo Swainsonii*) and American Badger (*Taxidae taxus*).

- **Modoc Sucker (*Catostomus microps*):** The Modoc Sucker is a State endangered species, which has been documented further upstream in the Willow Creek. Found primarily at the bottom of small streams that consist of mud and rock. Sucker larvae stay in shallow, vegetated margins of streams while large juveniles and adults remain mostly on or close to the bottom of pools.
- **Swainson's Hawk (*Buteo swainsoni*):** The Swainson's hawk is a State threatened Species. Typically, these raptors nest in large oaks and cottonwoods in or near riparian habitats and forage in grasslands, irrigated pastures and grain fields.
- **American Badger (*Taxidae taxus*):** The American badger is a state species of special concern, which are typically found in places like prairies, plains, farmland and edges of woodland. They require habitats with deep top soils, which allow them to burrow and make dens.

No special status species were detected during a site visit on July 7 2021. This project area receives heavy human disturbance due to the adjacent land use, which includes pastures and road traffic on the gravel road and bridge. Proposed activities will only last for two days and will not generate more than minimal ground and noise disturbances. Therefore, the proposed project is not anticipated to affect any special status wildlife species.

**Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA):** Pursuant to the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (16 U.S.C. 703 et seq.); Title 50 Code of Federal Regulations part 10 and DFC Code Sections 3503, 3513, and 3800, migratory birds, their occupied nests, and their eggs are protected. The project timeframe overlaps with the typical nesting window for migratory and special status bird species, such as raptors, which generally lasts from February 15 through August 31. Vegetation within and adjacent to the project site may be suitable nesting habitat for species covered by the act. Proposed activities are anticipated to be no more than two days in will have minimal noise impacts. No bird nests were detected within any vegetation or trees within or adjacent to the proposed project area. Therefore, it is expected that the proposed project will not affect nesting migratory birds, their occupied nests, or their eggs.

**Wetlands and/or other Special Aquatic Habitats:** It is not anticipated that proposed project activities will impact any riparian, wetland, or other special aquatic habitats.

**Invasive Plant Species:** Proposed activities for this project are not anticipated to be responsible for the introduction or spread of existing noxious weeds and invasive species. However, construction activities should implement applicable best management practices for preventing the spread of non-native weeds. These include removing invasive plant seeds and reproductive vegetative parts from tools and equipment, minimizing soil disturbance and erosion, and retaining as much native plant cover as possible.

**Biological Resources Summary:** Proposed activities associated with the project are not anticipated to result in impacts to wildlife, sensitive habitats, or special status plants or wildlife species.

**Cultural Resources:** No excavation is proposed as part of the scope of the project and ground disturbance will be minimal. The proposed project and associated activities are not anticipated to affect cultural resources. If cultural resources are uncovered while engaging in construction activities, all work will temporarily cease until the findings can be assessed by a qualified archaeologist and an appropriate course of action can be determined. In the event that human remains are uncovered, all work must immediately cease and the County coroner will be contacted pursuant to California Health and Safety Code 7050.5.

**Greenhouse Gas Emissions:** DWR has developed the Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction Plan (GGERP) in an effort to reduce its impact on the environment. The GGERP provides an analysis of the GHG emissions from most DWR activities. Given the exempt status of this project under CEQA, and that it will be completed by DWR staff, this project will not require an emission analysis under the GGERP.

**Hazardous Waste:** The Cortese List is a compilation of contaminated sites identified by the California State Water Resource Control Board; active, closed and inactive landfills identified by the Integrated Waste Management Board; and hazardous waste sites identified by the Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC). This list was reviewed as part of the initial screening for the project, and the proposed project is not within or impacting any site on the Cortese List.

**Permits:** No US Army Corps of Engineers, Regional Water Quality Control Board or California Department of Fish and Wildlife regulatory permits will be required for this project. Planned actions will not: result in the dredge or fill of any Water of the United States, alter the watercourse streambank or streambed, affect water quality, or significantly impact riparian or wetland vegetation.

**Conservation Measures/ Best Management Practices:**

1. No trees are anticipated to be removed as part of the proposed project. If any trees will need to be removed, a qualified biologist will conduct a pre-construction survey to confirm the proposed activities will not affect any nesting bird species.
2. To minimize ground disturbance and potential environmental impacts, all work will take place with hand crews, while no heavy equipment will be utilized as part of the proposed project.
3. To minimize the risk of introduction and potential spread of non-native invasive weed species, soil disturbance and erosion will be minimized to the greatest extent feasible, while native plant cover will be retained as much as possible.
4. If cultural resources are uncovered while engaging in construction activities, all work will temporarily cease until the findings can be assessed by a qualified archaeologist and an appropriate course of action can be determined. Should any human remains be uncovered, the county Coroner must be contacted pursuant to California Health and Human Safety Code 7050.5(b).
5. Hazardous materials associated with construction activities must be stored and used in accordance with practices that prevent them from polluting receiving waters.
6. Equipment must be kept in good working condition and any petroleum or lubricant spills must be cleaned up immediately and reported to Northern Region Office, Environmental Services Section.
7. All trash and debris must be removed at the end of the project.

**Summary:** The proposed project is not anticipated to impact any environmental resources, including scenic resources, cultural resources, hazardous waste sites, sensitive habitats, and special status plants or wildlife species. Overall, proposed activities here are not anticipated to result in any significant impact to the environment.

**Name of Public Agency Approving Project:** California Department of Water Resources

**Name of Person or Agency Implementing Project:** California Department of Water Resources.

**Reasons Why Project is Exempt:**

- *Categorical Exemption 15306. Information Collection (Class 6):* Exempts basic data collection, research, experimental management, and resource evaluation activities that do not result in major disturbances to an environmental resource.

**Lead Agency Contact Person and Phone:** Tiffany Martinez (530) 233-6201



**Selected Elements by Common Name**  
**California Department of Fish and Wildlife**  
**California Natural Diversity Database**



Query Criteria: Imported file selection

Pit River (Lookout) Stream Gage - 10-Mile Buffer

| Species  | Element Code | Federal Status | State Status | Global Rank | State Rank | Rare Plant Rank/CDFW SSC or FP |
|--|--------------|----------------|--------------|-------------|------------|--------------------------------|
| <b>Aleppo avens</b><br><i>Geum aleppicum</i>   | PDROS0S010   | None           | None         | G5          | S2         | 2B.2                           |
| <b>Baker's globe mallow</b><br><i>Iliamna bakeri</i>                                 | PDMAL0K010   | None           | None         | G4          | S3         | 4.2                            |
| <b>bald eagle</b><br><i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i>                                 | ABNKC10010   | Delisted       | Endangered   | G5          | S3         | FP                             |
| <b>Boggs Lake hedge-hyssop</b><br><i>Gratiola heterosepala</i>                       | PDSCR0R060   | None           | Endangered   | G2          | S2         | 1B.2                           |
| <b>cream-flowered bladderwort</b><br><i>Utricularia ochroleuca</i>                   | PDLNT020E0   | None           | None         | G4G5        | S1         | 2B.2                           |
| <b>eel-grass pondweed</b><br><i>Potamogeton zosteriformis</i>                        | PMPOT03160   | None           | None         | G5          | S3         | 2B.2                           |
| <b>Egg Lake monkeyflower</b><br><i>Diplacus pygmaeus</i>                             | PDSCR1B2C0   | None           | None         | G4          | S3         | 4.2                            |
| <b>ephemeral monkeyflower</b><br><i>Erythranthe inflatula</i>                        | PDSCR1B370   | None           | None         | G3          | S2         | 1B.2                           |
| <b>flat-leaved bladderwort</b><br><i>Utricularia intermedia</i>                      | PDLNT020A0   | None           | None         | G5          | S3         | 2B.2                           |
| <b>great blue heron</b><br><i>Ardea herodias</i>                                     | ABNGA04010   | None           | None         | G5          | S4         |                                |
| <b>greater sage-grouse</b><br><i>Centrocercus urophasianus</i>                       | ABNLC12010   | None           | None         | G3G4        | S2S3       | SSC                            |
| <b>greater sandhill crane</b><br><i>Antigone canadensis tabida</i>                   | ABNMK01014   | None           | Threatened   | G5T5        | S2         | FP                             |
| <b>Greene's tuctoria</b><br><i>Tuctoria greenei</i>                                  | PMPOA6N010   | Endangered     | Rare         | G1          | S1         | 1B.1                           |
| <b>hairy marsh hedge-nettle</b><br><i>Stachys pilosa</i>                             | PDLAM1X1A0   | None           | None         | G5          | S3         | 2B.3                           |
| <b>hardhead</b><br><i>Mylopharodon conocephalus</i>                                  | AFCJB25010   | None           | None         | G3          | S3         | SSC                            |
| <b>hillside arnica</b><br><i>Arnica fulgens</i>                                      | PDAST0Q090   | None           | None         | G5          | S3         | 2B.2                           |
| <b>large-flowered triteleia</b><br><i>Triteleia grandiflora</i>                      | PMLIL21060   | None           | None         | G4G5        | S1         | 2B.1                           |
| <b>long bluebells</b><br><i>Mertensia longiflora</i>                                 | PDBOR0N0D0   | None           | None         | G4?         | S2         | 2B.2                           |
| <b>long-eared myotis</b><br><i>Myotis evotis</i>                                     | AMACC01070   | None           | None         | G5          | S3         |                                |
| <b>long-haired star-tulip</b><br><i>Calochortus longebarbatus var. longebarbatus</i> | PMLIL0D0R1   | None           | None         | G4T3        | S3         | 1B.2                           |



**Selected Elements by Common Name**  
**California Department of Fish and Wildlife**  
**California Natural Diversity Database**



| Species  | Element Code | Federal Status | State Status | Global Rank | State Rank | Rare Plant Rank/CDFW SSC or FP |
|--|--------------|----------------|--------------|-------------|------------|--------------------------------|
| <b>Modoc County knotweed</b><br><i>Polygonum polygaloides ssp. esotericum</i>                  | PDPGN0L1Y2   | None           | None         | G4G5T3      | S3         | 1B.3                           |
| <b>Modoc green-gentian</b><br><i>Frasera albicaulis var. modocensis</i>                        | PDGEN05018   | None           | None         | G5T3T4      | S2S3       | 2B.3                           |
| <b>Modoc sucker</b><br><i>Catostomus microps</i>   | AFCJC02140   | Delisted       | Endangered   | G2          | S2         | FP                             |
| <b>North American porcupine</b><br><i>Erethizon dorsatum</i>                                   | AMAFJ01010   | None           | None         | G5          | S3         |                                |
| <b>northern goshawk</b><br><i>Accipiter gentilis</i>   | ABNKC12060   | None           | None         | G5          | S3         | SSC                            |
| <b>osprey</b><br><i>Pandion haliaetus</i>  | ABNKC01010   | None           | None         | G5          | S4         | WL                             |
| <b>Pit River Drainage Modoc Sucker Stream</b><br><i>Pit River Drainage Modoc Sucker Stream</i> | CARA2333CA   | None           | None         | GNR         | SNR        |                                |
| <b>prairie falcon</b><br><i>Falco mexicanus</i>  | ABNKD06090   | None           | None         | G5          | S4         | WL                             |
| <b>profuse-flowered pogogyne</b><br><i>Pogogyne floribunda</i>                                 | PDLAM1K070   | None           | None         | G3G4        | S3?        | 4.2                            |
| <b>prostrate buckwheat</b><br><i>Eriogonum prociduum</i>                                       | PDPGN084W0   | None           | None         | G3          | S3         | 1B.2                           |
| <b>Santa Lucia dwarf rush</b><br><i>Juncus luciensis</i>                                       | PMJUN013J0   | None           | None         | G3          | S3         | 1B.2                           |
| <b>Sheldon's sedge</b><br><i>Carex sheldonii</i>   | PMCYP03CE0   | None           | None         | G4          | S2         | 2B.2                           |
| <b>slender Orcutt grass</b><br><i>Orcuttia tenuis</i>  | PMPOA4G050   | Threatened     | Endangered   | G2          | S2         | 1B.1                           |
| <b>stoloniferous pussy-toes</b><br><i>Antennaria flagellaris</i>                               | PDAST0H0W0   | None           | None         | G4          | S3         | 4.2                            |
| <b>Swainson's hawk</b><br><i>Buteo swainsoni</i>   | ABNKC19070   | None           | Threatened   | G5          | S3         |                                |

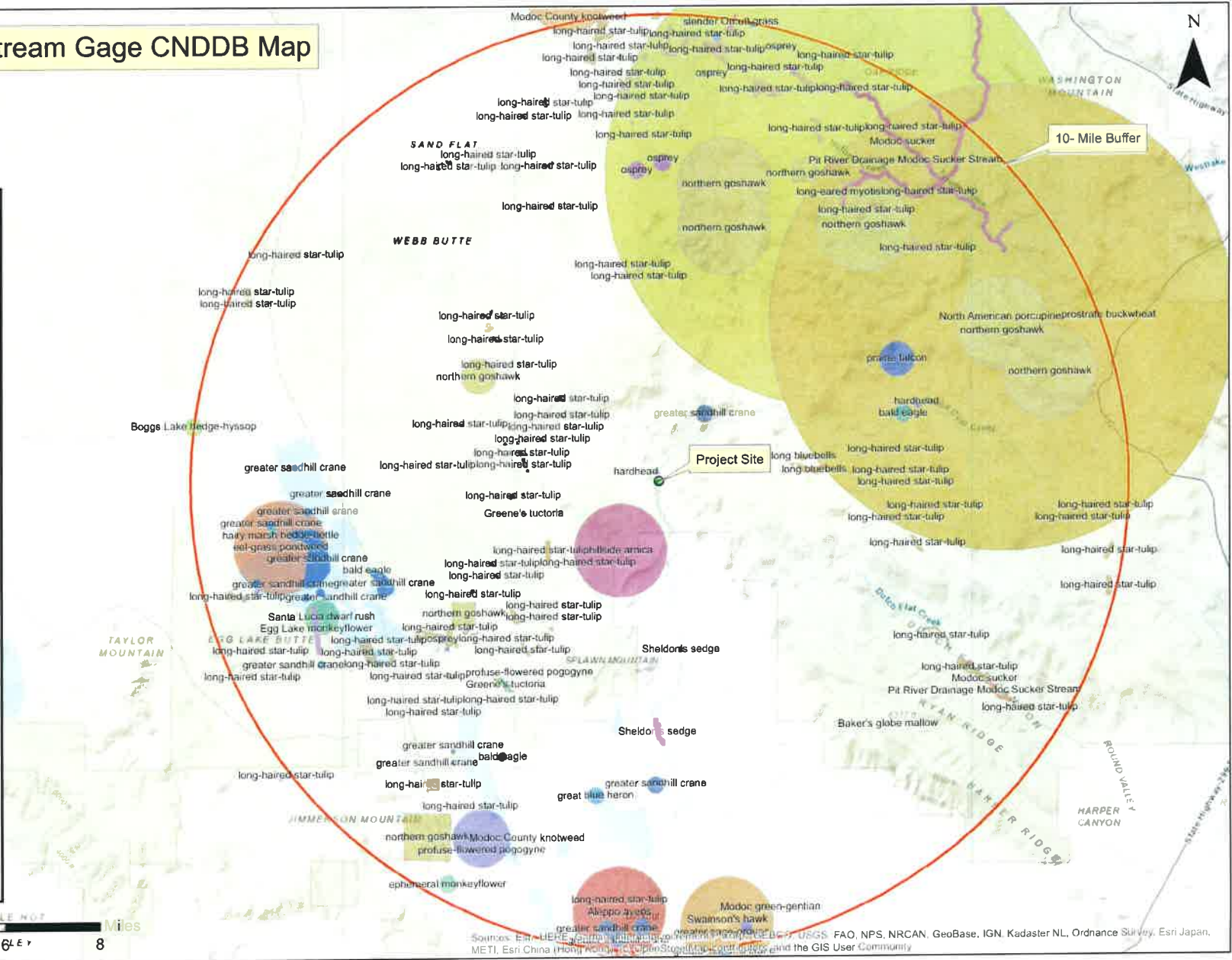
**Record Count: 35**



# Pit River (Lookout) Stream Gage CNDDDB Map

## Legend

- CNAME
- Aleppo avens
  - Baker's globe mallow
  - Boggs Lake hedge-hyssop
  - Egg Lake monkeyflower
  - Greene's tuctoria
  - Modoc County knotweed
  - Modoc green-gentian
  - Modoc sucker
  - North American porcupine
  - Pit River Drainage Modoc Sucker Stream
  - Santa Lucia dwarf rush
  - Sheldon's sedge
  - Swainson's hawk
  - bald eagle
  - cream-flowered bladderwort
  - eel-grass pondweed
  - ephemeral monkeyflower
  - flat-leaved bladderwort
  - great blue heron
  - greater sage-grouse
  - greater sandhill crane
  - hairy marsh hedge-nettle
  - hardhead
  - hillside arnica
  - large-flowered triteleia
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  - long-eared myotis
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  - northern goshawk
  - osprey
  - prairie falcon
  - profuse-flowered pogogyne
  - prostrate buckwheat
  - slender Orcutt grass
  - stoloniferous pussy-toes



Source: Esri, HERE, DeLorme, Intermap, Inc., Swisstopo, United States Geological Survey, USGS, FAO, NPS, NRCAN, GeoBase, IGN, Kadaster NL, Ordnance Survey, Esri Japan, METI, Esri China (Hong Kong), Swisstopo, Swisstopo, IGN France, Esri (India), Swisstopo, and the GIS User Community