

Notice of Exemption

Fee Exempt per Government Code Section 6103

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

From: CA Dept of Water Resources
31770 Gonzaga Road
Gustine, CA 95322

Lead Agency: California Department of Water Resources (DWR)

Project Title: California Aqueduct Mile Post 54.95 Left Emergency Leak Repair Project

Project Location City & County: Approximately 5.5 miles Northwest of Gustine in Stanislaus County

Project Location – Specific: All repair work is located in the DWR right-of-way (ROW) at milepost (MP) 54.95 left side (L) of the California Aqueduct, approximately 1 miles northwest of the intersection between Pete Miller Road and the Aqueduct. Three staging areas will be established in the ROW at MP 55.1 L (L), MP 54.9 on the Right (R), and MP 55.2 R. The initial leak included water released into an adjacent un-named drainage adjacent to the ROW.

Description of Nature, Purpose, and Beneficiaries of Project: On August 9, 2021, a leak in the concrete liner of the California Aqueduct was discovered at MP 54.9 L. Initial flow out of the leak was approximately 700 gallons per minute. A sandbag ring with a PVC pipe was established to direct the flow from the leak away from the ROW and into a concrete-lined ditch then into an un-named drainage adjacent to and east of the ROW. A short-term repair of the leak was conducted by divers injecting grout and a concrete/cement mix into the concrete liner.

To fully repair the leak, two rockfill cofferdams (~16,000 cubic yard (cy)) will be installed in the Aqueduct to dewater it. Material for the cofferdam will be borrowed from an existing stockpile located at the intersection of McCabe Avenue and the Aqueduct and Basalt Road at the toe of Sisk Dam. A layer of sand (~670cy) and visqueen will be placed on the rock slopes on the water side to reduce seepage. The Aqueduct will be fully dewatered between the cofferdams and the existing concrete liner panels will be pressure washed in the work area.

Geological exploration will be done by sawcutting or coring approximately twelve 3” diameter cores through the concrete liner panels between MP 54.8 and MP 55.0 on both the primary and secondary embankments. The core holes will be backfilled to match existing liner surface when complete. Additional cores will be added as necessary.

An estimated 30 Aqueduct liner panels will be removed and replaced or repaired as necessary. This effort includes removing the damaged panels, excavating unsuitable material from behind the panels, and backfilling the excavated area and voids with either imported material or concrete. It is estimated

that approximately 1,000cy of embankment will be excavated with additional excavation as required. Formwork will be placed over the finished grade and the removed panels will be replaced with new 4-inch cast-in-place concrete liner.

Panel repair will include cleaning cracks and applying joint sealant, filling voids behind panels with stable cementitious grout, and filling larger cracks or holes in the concrete with shotcrete, mortar, hydraulic cement, or conventional concrete. Once the new panels are in place and panel repair has been completed, a geosynthetic geomembrane liner (asphalt mat) will be placed on top of the concrete panels over an approximate total of 600' length of Aqueduct. Joint sealant will be applied in the finished joints and will be allowed to cure a minimum of 3 days.

Three staging areas will be established at MP 55.1 L, MP 54.9 R, and MP 55.2 R. Water trucks will be continuously traveling both sides of the Aqueduct for the entire length of Pool 10 to keep the existing exposed concrete panels wet and prevent damage. This will occur for the duration of the project; approximately 6 weeks. The site will be cleaned up, equipment demobilized, and Pool 10 will be carefully refilled.

Exempt/Suspend Status:

- Ministerial (§21080[b][1]; 15268)
- Declared Emergency (Proclamation of a State of Emergency Due to Drought)
- Emergency Project (Public Resources Code §21080[b][4]; California Code of Regulations §15269[c])
- Categorical Exemption: 15301(m)
- Statutory Exemptions:

Reasons Why Project Is Exempt: This work falls within Emergency Project 15269 - emergency repairs to publicly or privately owned service facilities necessary to maintain service essential to the public health, safety or welfare. It is also exempt under categorical exemption 15301 (m) - to repair existing Aqueduct liners and embankments to restore them to original condition. The repairs will not involve an expansion of existing or former use and will not have a significant effect on the environment; Categorical Exemption 15301 (Existing Facilities) applies.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: Department of Water Resources

Contact Person: Rob Dunlop

Telephone: 209-827-5106

Signature: Rob Dunlop **Date:** 8/27/2021 **Title:** Field Division Manager

- Signed by Lead Agency
- Signed by Applicant