

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

TO: County Clerk
County of Lake
Lakeport, CA 95453

Office of Planning & Research
1400 Tenth Street
Sacramento, CA 95814-3044

FROM: Lake County Community Development Dept.
255 North Forbes Street
Lakeport, CA 95453

PROJECT TITLE: Lake County Drought Emergency - Boat Ramp Extensions

PROJECT LOCATION: 20 Third Street, Lakeport, CA 95453 – Third Street Ramp
15 Fifth Street, Lakeport, CA 95453 – Fifth Street Ramp
1985 Park Dr., Kelseyville, CA 95451 – Lakeside County Park Ramp
14655 Ball Park Ave., Clearlake, CA 95422 – Redbud Park Ramp
12639 Island Dr., Clearlake Oaks, CA 95423 - Clearlake Oaks Ramp

APN(s): Third St. Ramp – 025-383-24
Fifth Street Ramp – 025-382-25
Lakeside Ramp – 008-011-02
Redbud Ramp – 040-240-10
Clearlake Oaks Ramp – 035-240-04

COUNTY: Lake

PURPOSE AND NEED OF THE PROJECT:

On April 12, 2021, May 10, 2021, July 8, 2021 and October 19, 2021, the Governor of California, Gavin Newsom, proclaimed states of emergency to exist throughout California due to severe drought conditions. The proclamation stated “the increasing frequency of multiyear droughts presents a significant risk to California’s ability to ensure adequate water supplies for communities”. The proclamation goes on to state that it is “necessary to expeditiously mitigate the effects of the drought conditions to ensure the protection of health, safety and the environment”.

The severe drought conditions throughout California have led to extremely low water levels in Clear Lake. There are numerous private and public water systems (<25 water companies) throughout Lake County that utilize water from Clear Lake to provide drinking water to their communities and neighborhoods. Approximately seventy percent (70%) of the population of this rural county get their drinking water from the lake. Each water system has an intake pipe located in Clear Lake. The current drought conditions have led to extremely low water levels, which have impacted the intake systems. Many of these water companies are making efforts to extend their intake pipes into deeper waters and further into the lake. In order to successfully protect the community drinking water supplies, the water companies and private citizens need sufficient access to those intake systems, by boat. Access to Clear Lake is critical to the implementation of these water system projects.

Current drought conditions have dropped water levels so low that there is insufficient water depth to float boats off of their trailers, limiting access to Clear Lake and thereby limiting the ability to access the water intake systems that provide critical drinking water to the community. The lack of access to Clear Lake also impedes the ability of the Sheriff's Office and Search and Rescue teams to respond to emergencies on the lake.

In addition to the low water levels, many of the public boat ramps have significant ledges or "drop-offs" at the end of the ramps as a result of currents created by boat propellers as the boats are loaded onto their trailers. The ledges have become so severe that vehicles are either unable to pull the trailer tires back up the ledge, or trailer axles become stuck on the ledge where they will sometimes break. The current created by boat propellers has displaced gravel in the boat launch channel, creating a ledge at the end of the boat ramp and a build-up of gravel in the channel, changing the natural slope of the lakebed to create mounds of gravel. Under normal circumstances, the water is deep enough that these accumulations of gravel do not create an obstacle. However, due to the extreme drought conditions and low water levels, these accumulations of gravel are now creating a hazard to boats. The "drop-offs" and mounds of gravel at the public boat launching ramps have created a public safety hazard.

DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT:

In order to address the public health and safety concerns that have arisen from the low water levels and the lack of access to Clear Lake for emergency services and projects, the County of Lake Public Works Department proposes to install pre-cast concrete mats at the end of the existing ramps to extend the useable surface of the ramps for continued access to Clear Lake, as the drought is expected to continue and water levels continue to drop. The ledges and "drop-offs" will be filled in using the accumulated gravel present on site. The accumulated gravel at the end of the ramps will be spread out to level the boat ramp approach so as to create a slightly deeper channel for boats to launch from. The channel will not exceed 3 feet in depth and no material will be removed from the lake. A barge-supported excavator will spread the material from the end of the existing ramps in the lake. Only the material that is contributing to a public safety hazard in the channels will be managed.

Implementation of these ramp maintenance projects will allow the public and private water companies, Sheriff's Department and Search and Rescue teams to continue to access Clear Lake so they can continue to provide the community with drinking water and respond to safety concerns and emergencies.

NAME OF PUBLIC AGENCY APPROVING PROJECT: Lake County Community Development

NAME OF PERSON OR AGENCY CARRYING OUT PROJECT: County of Lake Public Services Department

EXEMPT STATUS:

Emergency Exemption - 14CCR 15269 (a) - Projects to maintain, repair, restore, demolish, or replace property or facilities damaged or destroyed as a result of a disaster in a disaster stricken area in which a state of emergency has been proclaimed by the Governor pursuant to the California Emergency Services Act, commencing with Section 8550 of the Government Code.

Emergency Exemption - 14CCR 15269 (b) - Emergency repairs to publicly or privately owned service facilities necessary to maintain service essential to the public health, safety or welfare. Emergency repairs include those that require a reasonable amount of planning to address an anticipated emergency.

Emergency Exemption - 14CCR 15269 (c) - Specific actions necessary to prevent or mitigate an emergency.

REASONS WHY PROJECT IS EXEMPT:

On April 12, 2021, May 10, 2021, July 8, 2021 and October 19, 2021, the Governor of California, Gavin Newsome, proclaimed states of emergency to exist throughout California due to severe drought conditions. The proclamation stated “the increasing frequency of multiyear droughts presents a significant risk to California’s ability to ensure adequate water supplies for communities”. The proclamation goes on to state that it is “necessary to expeditiously mitigate the effects of the drought conditions to ensure the protection of health, safety and the environment”. Four operative orders of the proclamation apply to this project. Operative paragraphs 2, 6, 7 and 12 would be appropriately applied to this project.

Paragraph 2 states, “the orders and provisions contained in the April 21, May 10 and July 8 Proclamations remain in full force and effect. State agencies shall continue to implement all direction from those Proclamations and accelerate implementation where feasible.”

Paragraph 6 states, “As necessary to assist local governments and for the protection of public health and the environment, state agencies shall enter into contracts to arrange for the procurement of materials, goods, and services necessary to quickly assist with the response to and recovery from the impacts of the drought.”

Paragraph 7 states, “To proactively prevent situations where a community runs out of drinking water, the Water Board, the Department of Water Resources, the Office of Emergency Services, and the Office of Planning and Research shall assist local agencies with identifying acute drinking water shortages in domestic water supplies, and shall work with local agencies in implementing solutions to those water shortages.”

Paragraph 12 states, “For purposes of carrying out or approving any actions contemplated by the directives in operative paragraphs 5, 6 and 9, the environmental review by state agencies required by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) in Public Resources Code, Division 13 (commencing with Section 21000) and regulations adopted pursuant to that Division are hereby suspended to the extent necessary to address the impacts of the drought.”

The County of Lake Community Development Department finds that this project complies with the intent and overall direction of the State Proclamations of Emergency and is thereby exempt from the provisions of CEQA.

CONTACT PERSON: Tracy Cline

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Signature: Tracy Cline
Title: Associate Resource Planner

Date: 12-17-21