

Notice of Exemption

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To:

Office of Planning and Research
For U.S. Mail:
P.O. Box 3044
Sacramento, CA 95812-3044

From:

Department of Fish and Wildlife
Inland Deserts Region
787 N. Main Street, Ste. 220
Bishop, CA 93514

**Street Address:**

1400 Tenth Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

Project Title: Reestablish Amargosa Voles in Shoshone and Augment Vole Populations near Tecopa, Inyo County

Project Location (include county): The Project is located at Shoshone Village, (35°58.19'N 116°16.35'W) and at marsh sites located (35°53.00'N 116°14.01'W and 35°52.85'N 116°13.90'W) near Tecopa in Inyo County, California. The project area is adjacent to Old Highway 178 about 10 miles west of the town of Baker in San Bernardino County, California.

Project Description:

The project would release pairs of wild-caught Amargosa Voles into restored habitat on private land near Shoshone. The project will minimize impact to the donor populations by moving individuals for transfer at the time of maximum seasonal abundance. Proven handling techniques will minimize the chance of injury or loss to translocated individuals. The receiving property owner, and the source property owner US Bureau of Land Management are full partners in the project. Amargosa voles currently occupy approximately 75 acres of suitable habitat within a 1.5-mile radius of Tecopa but have been absent from Shoshone for over 100 years. The project will secure an independent, second population of Amargosa Voles, to better secure the subspecies from extinction. Additionally, the project will translocate wild-caught voles and release captive-bred voles into marshes with few to no voles in the southern part of the range (Tecopa) in order to augment small or locally extinct populations in specific marshes. Both activities will occur from 2022-2025 following protocols established in federal and state permits and in accordance with a yearly release plan approved by the United Fish and Wildlife Service. The survival of translocated and released individuals will be monitored to determine conservation outcomes.

Public Agency Approving Project: CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE

Person or Public Agency Carrying Out Project: California Department of Fish and Wildlife

Exempt Status:

- Statutory Exemption.
- Categorical Exemption. Type – Class (7); California Code of Regulations, title 14, section (15307);

Reasons why Project is exempt: *Class 7, §15307, Actions by Regulatory Agencies for Protection of Natural Resources*-The proposed project is an activity that falls within the Class 7 exemption because it is a wildlife preservation activity of CDFW that is limited in scope and no serious or major disturbances to environmental resources are expected. The project will reestablish Amargosa voles in former habitat to support Recovery Plan objectives and to decrease the probability of subspecies extinction.

Lead Agency Contact Person: Heidi Calvert 760-614-5098

Signature:

Date: 3/9/2022

Heidi Calvert, Environmental Program Manager

Date received for filing at OPR: _____