

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: Dept. of Water Resources
San Luis Field Division
31770 Gonzaga Rd. Ca 95322

Lead Agency: California Department of Water Resources

Project Title: California Aqueduct Reach 5 Toe Road Vegetation Removal and Mulching

Project Location City & County: Fresno County

Project Location – Specific: Work will occur in western Fresno County along the left (L) and right (R) sides of Reach 5 of the California Aqueduct (Aqueduct) in the DWR right-of-way at the following mileposts (MP): MP 119.70L to MP 121.40L, MP 124.40L to MP 125.90L, MP 130.30L to MP 131.10L, MP 132.80L to MP 133.10L, MP 140.60L to MP 140.80L, MP 119.70R to MP 125.30R, MP 127.40R to MP 128.50R, MP 128.80R to MP 129.70R, and MP 133.30R to MP 133.60R. The northernmost MP is approximately 1.17 miles southeast of the intersection of Dinuba Avenue and the Aqueduct; the southernmost MP is approximately 2.3 miles northwest of the intersection of Fresno-Coalinga Road and the Aqueduct.

Description of Nature, Purpose, and Beneficiaries of Project: The Department of Water Resources' San Luis Field Division will use an excavator with a mulching attachment to remove and mulch bushes and trim portions of trees that obscure visual inspection of the Aqueduct embankments. All vegetation that is removed will be mulched and scattered in place on the soil. Vertical tree trunks and portions of limbs that do not obscure visual inspection of the Aqueduct embankments from the outer maintenance road will be left intact. A water truck will be used for dust suppression if necessary. This work is necessary to conduct visual inspections of the Aqueduct embankments. California State Water Project Contractors will benefit.

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: Categorical Exemption 15301 (h): Existing Facilities – Maintenance of existing landscaping, native growth, and water supply reservoirs.
- Statutory Exemptions:

Reasons Why Project Is Exempt: Work involves trimming and mulching vegetation in the Aqueduct right-of-way to improve visual inspection of the embankments. No pesticides will be used. This work does not expand the use or capacity of the Aqueduct or embankments. Categorical Exemption 15301 (h): Existing Facilities – Maintenance of existing landscaping, native growth, and water supply reservoirs applies.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: Department of Water Resources

Contact Person: Eleuterio Diaz, Planner/Scheduler and Utility Crasftworker Supervisor, WR

Telephone: (209) 827-5190

Signature: Eleuterio Diaz **Date:** 5/9/2022 **Title:** _____

Signed by Lead Agency

Signed by Applicant