

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
31770 Gonzaga Road
Gustine CA 95322

Lead Agency: California Department of Water Resources

Project Title: California Aqueduct Milepost 119.60 to Milepost 121.90 Vegetation Thinning and Removal

Project Location City & County: The project is approximately 13.50 miles southwest of the City of Mendota, in Fresno County.

Project Location – Specific: Work will be on the left side (L) of the California Aqueduct (Aqueduct) from mileposts (MP) 119.60L to MP 121.40L, and on the right side (R) of the Aqueduct from MP 119.60R to MP 121.90R. The work will be in the Department of Water Resources (DWR) right of way (ROW).

Description of Nature, Purpose, and Beneficiaries of Project: Work involves thinning and removing trees and other vegetation to allow access to the toe road of the Aqueduct. An excavator with a thumb attachment will be used to trim, or completely remove vegetation. Larger trees with limbs growing less than six feet high on the trunk will be thinned by having limbs selectively removed; to remove these limbs, the excavator will use the thumb attachment to grab each limb and pull them off the trunk. If limbs are growing more than six feet high on a trunk, those limbs will not be removed or trimmed. Vegetation and trees less than six feet tall will be completely removed.

All removed vegetation will be stockpiled onsite excavator and will be burned in compliance with the Fresno County burn permit.

This work is required to give DWR road access for inspection and maintenance of the Aqueduct and ROW. State Water Project Contractors will benefit from the project.

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 15304, Minor Alterations to Land
- Statutory Exemptions:

Reasons Why Project Is Exempt: Trees and other vegetation in degraded mesquite thickets will be thinned or removed from the DWR ROW. The trees are not designated as Fresno County landmark trees. Work consists of minor alterations in the condition of land and vegetation, and no healthy, scenic, mature trees will be impacted. Categorical Exemption 15304 Minor Alterations to Land apply.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: DWR

Contact Person: Jake Grace

Telephone: (209) 827-5190

Signature:  _____ **Date:** 10/18/2022 _____ **Title:** Planner/Scheduler _____

Signed by Lead Agency

Signed by Applicant