

Notice of Exemption

Appendix E

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

County Clerk

County of: Merced
222 M St.

Merced, CA 95340

From: (Public Agency): CA Dept of Fish and Wildlife
1010 Riverside Pkwy
West Sacramento, CA 95605

(Address)

Project Title: West Hilmar Wildlife Area Pollinator and Habitat Improvement Project

Project Applicant: CA Dept. of Fish and Wildlife

Project Location - Specific:

Along the San Joaquin River in Merced County, 37°23'56.68" N; 120°57'22.14"W

Project Location - City: Hilmar, CA

Project Location - County: Merced

Description of Nature, Purpose and Beneficiaries of Project:

The Project will enhance habitat resources on CDFW's West Hilmar Wildlife Area to provide habitat for the monarch butterfly and other native pollinator species (Phase I), while developing a restoration plan for enhancing riparian resources for migratory songbirds and anadromous fish (Phase II) along the San Joaquin River. Phase I will entail establishing five non-contiguous acres of native forbs (non-woody plants) to provide ovipositing and nectaring sites for pollinators. Phase II will entail modelling, design, and planning for the establishment of beneficial native woody plants. If appropriate, project partners will work with local hydrological engineers to review flow and LIDAR data, model flow events, and evaluate potential terrain improvements and design revegetation plans for woody habitat elements. Phase II will also include obtaining any permits required for future project implementation. Phase III of the project, which currently remains unfunded and is not part of this project, will include implementation of riparian and floodplain habitat enhancements developed in Phase II planning.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: CA Dept of Fish and Wildlife

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: California Assoc. of Resource Conservation Districts through Valley Eco LLC

Exempt Status: **(check one):**

- Ministerial (Sec. 21080(b)(1); 15268);
- Declared Emergency (Sec. 21080(b)(3); 15269(a));
- Emergency Project (Sec. 21080(b)(4); 15269(b)(c));
- Categorical Exemption. State type and section number: Minor Alterations to Land; 14 CCR § 15304(d)
- Statutory Exemptions. State code number: _____

Reasons why project is exempt:

As described in 14 CCR § 15304(d), Phase I of this project consists of minor alterations to the vegetation on an officially designated wildlife management area. The expected result of Phase I will be improvement of habitat for wildlife resources, in particular Monarch butterflies and other pollinators. Phase II of this project consists of evaluating the site and where appropriate, planning for additional restoration in a future phase.

Lead Agency

Contact Person: Karen Converse

Area Code/Telephone/Extension: 916/425-4693

If filed by applicant:

1. Attach certified document of exemption finding.
2. Has a Notice of Exemption been filed by the public agency approving the project? Yes No

Signature: Karen Converse Date: 04/12/2023 Title: Wildlife Area Coordinator
Signer ID: HSB37XCD10...

Signed by Lead Agency Signed by Applicant

Authority cited: Sections 21083 and 21110, Public Resources Code.
Reference: Sections 21108, 21152, and 21152.1, Public Resources Code.

Date Received for filing at OPR: _____