

**Notice of Exemption**

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**To:**  
Office of Planning and Research  
[CEQA Submit](#)

**From:**  
Department of Fish and Wildlife  
Watershed Restoration Grants Branch  
*Street Address:*  
1010 Riverside Pkwy  
West Sacramento, CA 95605



*For U.S. Mail:*  
P.O. Box 944209  
Sacramento, CA 94244-2090

**Project Title:** I-15 Mojave Wildlife Overcrossings (Project)

**Project Location San Bernardino County:** The Project is located on approximately 20.5 acres of publicly owned property at three locations along I-15, Cady Mountain (PM R116.70; 35.088, -116.322), Zzyzx Road (PM R129.75; 35.195, -116.142), and Clark Mountain (PM 168.05; 35.475, -115.572).

**Project Description:** On March 29, 2024, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) executed a \$20,000,000 grant from Nature Based Solutions: Wildlife Corridors to the California Department of Transportation for the Project. The Project is designed to benefit terrestrial animals including desert bighorn sheep, mountain lion, and desert tortoise. The Project includes remediation of a barrier to wildlife connectivity presented by the existing I-15 highway and planned Brightline West railway line to be constructed within the I-15 corridor. Construction of dedicated wildlife overcrossings can effectively maintain and restore the ability of terrestrial wildlife to move across the existing highway lanes and a future highspeed railway in the median. Each wildlife overcrossing will be 100-feet in width. The span length of the overcrossings varies depending on the topography at each site - approximately 198 feet long at Cady and Clark Mountains and 186 feet long at Zzyzx Road Mountain. Each side of the overcrossing will feature a concrete barrier, topped by wire fencing, with directional fencing parallel to the I-15 corridor extending from the overcrossing surface to guide animals to the overcrossings.

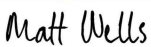
**Public Agency Approving Project:** CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE

**Person or Public Agency Carrying Out Project:** California Department of Transportation

**Exempt Status:**  Statutory Exemption: Public Resources Code section 21080.56 (Statutory Exemption for Restoration Projects)

**Reasons why project is exempt:** CDFW has determined that the Project meets the qualifying criteria set forth in Section 21080.56, subdivisions (a) through (d), inclusive. CDFW's determination is supported by (1) the California Department of Transportation's August 28, 2023, initial determination as lead agency that the Project meets the qualifying criteria set forth in Section 21080.56, subdivisions (a) through (d), inclusive; and (2) pursuant to Section 21080.56, subdivision (e), the CDFW Director's October 13, 2023 concurrence with that California Department of Transportation determination, which is available at [wildlife.ca.gov/Conservation/Cutting-Green-Tape/SERP/Concurrences](http://wildlife.ca.gov/Conservation/Cutting-Green-Tape/SERP/Concurrences).

**CDFW Contact Person:** Daniel Burmester, Senior Environmental Scientist, (916) 594-3734,  
[Daniel.Burmester@wildlife.ca.gov](mailto:Daniel.Burmester@wildlife.ca.gov).

**Signature:**  **Date:** 4/30/2024  
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Matt Wells, Branch Chief

Date received for filing at OPR: \_\_\_\_\_