

Notice of Exemption

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: Knightsen Wetland Restoration Project (Project)

Project Location Contra Costa County: The Project is located in unincorporated Contra Costa County, partially in the community of Knightsen. The Project will occur on a 645-acre site, which consists of two parcels: the North Parcel (APN 020-171-001), located north of Delta Road; and the South Parcel (APN 020-172-004), located south of Delta Road. The South Parcel is divided into two areas referred to as the Central and East Sub-Parcels. The approximate coordinates of the Project are 37.961865, -121.629017.

Project Description: On April 30, 2025, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) executed a \$10,308,518 grant from the Proposition 1 Delta Water Quality and Ecosystem Restoration Grant Program to East Contra Costa County Habitat Conservancy for the Project. The Project is designed to benefit giant garter snake (*Thamnophis gigas*), western pond turtle (*Emys marmorata*), tricolored blackbird (*Agelaius tricolor*), fairy shrimp (*Branchinecta lynchi*), white-tailed kite (*Elanus leucurus*), Swainson’s hawk (*Buteo swainsoni*), golden eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*), western burrowing owl (*Athene cucularia*), California black rail (*Laterallus jamaicensis coturniculus*), green sturgeon (*Acipenser medirostris*), delta smelt (*Hypomesus transpacificus*), steelhead (*Oncorhynchus mykiss irideus*), longfin smelt (*Spirinchus thaleichthys*), hoary bat (*Lasiurus cinereus*), northern California legless lizard (*Amniella pulchra*), northern harrier (*Circus cyaneus*), and migratory birds. The Project includes creating seasonal wetlands, alkali meadow, grassland, and oak savanna on the Central Sub-Parcel, and emergent wetlands with adjacent alkali meadow and grassland habitat on the East Sub-Parcel. On the North Parcel the design will enhance and restore seasonal wetland and remnant interior dune habitat.


Public Agency Approving Project: CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE

Person or Public Agency Carrying Out Project: East Contra Costa County Habitat Conservancy

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) East Contra Costa County Habitat Conservancy’s February 14, 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 March 30, 2023 concurrence with that East Contra Costa County Habitat Conservancy determination, which is available at wildlife.ca.gov/Conservation/Cutting-Green-Tape/SERP/Concurrences.

CDFW Contact Person: Hildie Spautz, Senior Environmental Scientist, Specialist, (916) 594-5364, Hildegard.Spautz@wildlife.ca.gov.

Signature:  **Date:** 5/1/2025
Matt Wells, Branch Chief

Date received for filing at OPR: _____