

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: California Department of Water Resources
SLFD 31770 Gonzaga Rd
Gustine, CA 95322

Lead Agency: California Department of Water Resources

Project Title: California Aqueduct Reach 4 Verizon Fiber Optic Lines Repair

Project Location City & County: Fresno County

Project Location – Specific: Repairs will be made on existing Verizon fiber optic communication lines in the California Aqueduct (Aqueduct) right of way in Reach 4. Work will occur between Aqueduct Check 14 at milepost (MP) 95.06 and Check 15 at MP 108.50. Work is scheduled to begin on the right (R) side of the Aqueduct at MP 98.48R, MP 99.81R, and MP 100.23R; however, repairs may occur at other locations between Aqueduct Check 14 and Check 15.

Check 14 is located about 1.41 miles southeast of the intersection of the Aqueduct and West Nees Avenue, and Check 15 is located about 0.25 miles northwest of the intersection of the Aqueduct and South Fairfax Avenue.

Description of Nature, Purpose, and Beneficiaries of Project: Existing Verizon fiber optic communication lines are used to remotely operate existing California State Water Project (SWP) infrastructure. A portion of this line between Check 14 and Check 15 is damaged. Failure to immediately repair the existing line could cause loss of the ability to remotely monitor and control SWP infrastructure.

Currently scheduled repairs will occur at Aqueduct MP 98.48R, MP 99.81R, and MP 100.23R, but repairs may be made anywhere between Aqueduct Checks 14 and 15. At each repair site, an approximately 8-foot-long, by 6-foot-wide, by 6-foot-deep excavation will be made. Once the excavation is made, the line will be located and assessed for damage. The damaged line will be repaired by splicing new fiber optic material into them in an on-site Verizon splice-lab trailer. The repaired line will be reinstalled in the excavation, and each excavation will be backfilled and compacted to original contours. The SWP and Verizon will benefit from this work.

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: 15301 — Existing Facilities
- Statutory Exemptions:

Reasons Why Project Is Exempt: Verizon will repair its existing fiber optic lines located in the DWR right of way. The fiber optic lines enable remote monitoring and control of existing SWP infrastructure; there will be no expansion of existing or former use of the fiber optic lines or of the SWP infrastructure. Categorical Exemption 15301 (Existing Facilities) applies.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: DWR

Contact Person: Cody Nelson

Telephone: 209-827-5190

Signature: Cody Nelson **Date:** 1/25/2024 **Title:** Planner Scheduler/UC Supv.

Signed by Lead Agency

Signed by Applicant