

**Notice of Exemption**

**Form D**

**To:** Office of Planning and Research  
P.O. Box 3044, Room 212  
Sacramento, CA 95812-3044

**From:** North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board  
5550 Skylane Boulevard  
Santa Rosa CA, 95403  
Phone 707-576-2220  
Fax 707-523-0135  
Email: [NorthCoast@waterboards.ca.gov](mailto:NorthCoast@waterboards.ca.gov)

**Project Title:** Lower Klamath National Wildlife Refuge Unit 2/3 Reroute Project

**Project Location:** Lower Klamath National Wildlife Refuge, in Siskiyou County (42.00265, -121.82477)

**Description of Project:** The Project is designed to benefit wetland habitat for migratory bird species and involves enhancing the Lower Klamath National Wildlife Refuge’s (LKNWR) existing water conveyance system to allow for more efficient and reliable delivery of water from the Ady Canal to the Central Canal. Currently, water delivered to the LKNWR from the Ady Canal must completely fill Unit 2 and Unit 3 before it is available to be delivered to approximately 13,000 acres of emergent wetlands located in the southern portion of the LKNWR. Since Unit 2 and Unit 3 are collectively 7,000 acres, during years with limited water supply such as drought, there is not enough water to fill both units and deliver water to the emergent wetlands. To address these issues and provide a more efficient and reliable water source in the LKNWR for native fish and wildlife, the Project will include water conveyance measures to enhance approximately 20,200 acres of wetlands located within the LKNWR. This will require replacing the existing water conveyance systems in the Project area with a new 32,000-foot bypass canal and associated berms designed to convey flows up to 200 cubic feet per second to assist in providing habitat.

**Name of Public Agency Approving Project:** North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board

**Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project:** U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service and Ducks Unlimited, Inc.

**Exempt Status:** (check one)

- Ministerial (Sec. 21080(b)(1): (5268):
- Declared Emergency (Sec. 21080(b)(3); 15269(a)):
- Emergency Project (Sec. 21 080(b)(4); 15269(b)(c)):
- Categorical Exemption:
- Statutory Exemptions: Sec. 23. Section 21080.56 Statutory Exemption for Restoration Projects

**Reasons the project is exempt:** As lead agency, the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board has determined that Project meets the qualifying criteria set forth in Public Resources Code section 21080.56, subdivisions (a) to (d), which includes: (1) the Project is exclusively to conserve, restore, protect, or enhance, and assist in the recovery of California native fish and wildlife, and the habitat upon which they depend; or is exclusively to restore or provide habitat for California native fish and wildlife; (2) the Project may have public benefits incidental to the Project’s fundamental purpose; (3) the Project will result in long-term net benefits to climate resiliency, biodiversity, and sensitive species recovery; and includes procedures and ongoing management for the protection of the environment; and (4) Project construction activities are solely related to habitat restoration.

**Lead Agency Contact:** Jake Shannon

**Area Code/Telephone/Extension:** 707-576-2673

**Signature:** JAKE SHANNON **Title:** Jake Shannon, Restoration Specialist **Date:** April 12, 2024

Signed by Lead Agency  Signed by Applicant Date received for filing at OPR: \_\_\_\_\_