
Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board

California Environmental Quality Act Notice of Exemption for Clean Water Act Section 401 Water Quality Certification

To: Office of Planning and Research
1400 Tenth Street, Room 121
Sacramento, CA 95814

From: California Regional Water Quality Control Board
Central Valley Region, Redding Office
364 Knollcrest Drive, Suite 205
Redding, CA 96002

Date: 23 August 2024

Project Title:

Big Chico Creek Iron Canyon Fish Passage Project
(Project)

Project Location - Specific:

Address: Park Road, Upper Bidwell Park, Chico.
Latitude: 39.77204° and Longitude: -121.77897°

Project Location - County:

Butte County

Description of Nature, Purpose, and Beneficiaries of Project:

The proposed project is part of a larger restoration effort that aims to modify a fish passage barrier. The purpose of this project is to improve Park Road to accommodate large equipment access and material delivery. Improvements to Park Road will involve vertical and horizontal curve modifications and removal or limbing of trees. Direct impacts are the result of fill due to the grading, widening, and smoothing of the road.

Name of Public Agencies Approving Project:

Federal Agencies: The project requires authorization under U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Clean Water Act Section 404, Nationwide Permit 14, Linear Transportation Projects.

State Agency approval for Clean Water Act Section 401 Water Quality Certification: California Regional Water Quality Control Board, Central Valley Region, Redding Office. WDID No. 5A04CR00365.

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project:

Damon Goodman
California Trout
435 Pacific Ave, Suite 200
San Francisco, CA 94133

Exempt Status:

The Central Valley Water Board has determined that the Project is exempt from review under CEQA pursuant to California Code of Regulations, title 14, section 15061.

Specifically, the Project was determined to qualify as a statutorily exempt restoration project under CEQA pursuant to California Public Resources Code, section 21080.56 (Statutory Exemption for Restoration Projects). The lead agency, City of Chico, received concurrence of the statutory exemption from California Department of Fish and Wildlife on 5 January 2024 and filed a Notice of Exemption (NOE) at the State Clearinghouse (SCH) on 17 May 2024 (SCH No. 2024050797).

Reasons why Project is Exempt:

This project is statutorily exempt under CEQA section 21080.56 because the Project meets all of the following conditions: (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.

Federal Lead Agency Contact Person:

Lillian Jepson
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Sacramento
(916) 557-7759

State Lead Agency Contact Person:

Lynn Coster, Senior Environmental Scientist
Chief Storm Water and Water Quality Certification Unit
Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board
Redding Branch Office
(530) 224-2437

Office of Planning and Research -2-
Big Chico Creek Iron Canyon Fish Passage Project

23 August 2024

cc: Damon Goodman, California Trout, San Francisco
Lilian Jepson, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Sacramento
Anthony McLaughlin, Gallaway Enterprises, Chico