

Notice of Exemption

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

From:
Department of Fish and Wildlife
Central Region
1234 East Shaw Avenue
Fresno, California 93710



Project Title: El Puente Floodplain Reconnection Project (Project) (Streambed Alteration Agreement No. EPIMS-STA-53226-R4)

Project Location: The Project is located along the Tuolumne River, within the City of Modesto, County of Stanislaus, California; centered at latitude 37.60149 and longitude -121.13410; Section 00 and 07, Township 4 South, Range 8 East; U.S. Geological Survey Map Westley; Assessor's Parcel Number 017-027-034-000.

Project Description: The California Department of Fish and Wildlife has executed Streambed Alteration Agreement Number EPIMS-STA-53226-R4 pursuant to Fish and Game Code section 1602 to River Partners. The Project is designed to restore 13.6 acres of Tuolumne River streambank by converting a farmed almond orchard to native riparian vegetation. The Project includes Restoration Activities (ground preparation and revegetation) and Restoration Management Activities (invasive species treatments and supplemental watering). The Project does not include modifications to existing earthen berms or existing irrigation infrastructure.

Public Agency Approving Project: CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE

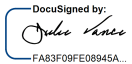
Person or Public Agency Carrying Out Project: River Partners

Exempt Status:

- Statutory Exemption: Public Resources Code section 21080.56 (Statutory Exemption for Restoration Projects, "SERP")
- Categorical Exemption.

Reasons why project is exempt: CDFW approved the Streambed Alteration Agreement relying on the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Statutory Exemption for Restoration Projects (SERP) (Cal. Pub. Res. Code, § 21080.56). Evidence in support of that determination is set forth in the Reclamation District 2092 August 15, 2024 CEQA SERP Lead Agency Determinations for the Project and the CDFW's CEQA SERP Concurrence Number 21080.56-2024-059-R4. The Project falls within the SERP 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.

CDFW Contact Person: Megan Rooney, Environmental Scientist, (559) 203-2792 or megan.rooney@wildlife.ca.gov

Signature:  _____ **Date:** 2/5/2025
Julie A. Vance, Regional Manager

Date received for filing at OPR: _____