

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
R4LSA@wildlife.ca.gov



State Clearinghouse Number: N/A

Project Title: Chowchilla Subbasin Groundwater Recharge Project 1 (Streambed Alteration Agreement No. EPIMS-MAD-40478-R4).

Project Location: The Project will occur at three locations within the Eastside Bypass to the San Joaquin River, southwest of the intersection of Lincoln Road and Avenue 21, 13 miles southwest of the City of Chowchilla, Madera County, State of California. Latitude/longitude coordinates and Assessor’s Parcel Numbers (APNs) for each location are listed below:

- Clayton POD: Coordinates 37.054309, -120.500734; APN 020-150-011
- Vlot-Flood POD: Coordinates 37.040063, -120.486516; APN 020-150-012
- Haynes POD: Coordinates 37.040002, -120.482915; APNs 020-180-007 and 020-150-012

Project Description: The California Department of Fish and Wildlife has executed Streambed Alteration Agreement number EPIMS-MAD-40478-R4 pursuant to Section 1602 of the Fish and Game Code to the applicant, Madera County.

Project activities will include the construction of three water diversion facilities at points of diversion on the Eastside Bypass in support of future diversion of flood flows to groundwater recharge. Each facility will consist of a fish screen, a concrete control box that will capture water, and a buried reinforced concrete pipeline. The pipeline will transport water under the Eastside Bypass levee into a reinforced concrete pump box that, when operational, will pump water into one of two basins or to adjacent farmland for recharge.

Public Agency Approving Project: CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE

Person or Public Agency Carrying Out Project: Madera County

Exempt Status:

- Statutory Exemption.
 - Categorical Exemption.
- CEQA is suspended (see below)

Reasons why project is exempt: CDFW’s issuance of an Agreement is generally subject to CEQA (Pub. Resources Code, § 21000 et seq.) and its implementing regulations; however, CEQA is suspended per Executive Order N-7-22 (EO) for purposes of CDFW’s issuance of this Agreement. Paragraph 13 of the EO states that CEQA and its implementing regulations are suspended for the following, to the extent necessary to address the impacts of drought: (1) specified actions taken by state agencies and specified actions taken by a local agency where the Department of Water Resources concurs that local action is required; and (2) any permits necessary to carry out actions under (1). Actions under (1) are recharge projects under either Flood-Managed Aquifer Recharge or the Department of Water Resources Sustainable Groundwater Management Grant Program occurring on open and working lands to replenish and store water in groundwater basins that will help mitigate groundwater conditions impacted by drought. Because the Project to which this Agreement applies involves construction of facilities for subsequent diversions of flood flows for application to open and working lands to replenish and store water in groundwater basins to help mitigate groundwater conditions impacted by drought, no environmental review for this Agreement pursuant to CEQA is required at this point in time. Consequently, CDFW has not reviewed a certified environmental impact report or adopted mitigated negative declaration evaluating this project, nor has CDFW adopted related findings pursuant to CEQA. Similarly, in applying for this permit, Permittee relied on the CEQA suspension provided by Paragraph 13 of the EO.

CDFW Contact Person: Benessa Galvan (Senior Environmental Scientist Specialist); (559) 580-3197

Signature:  **Date:** 10/28/2024
Julie A. Vance, Regional Manager

Date received for filing at OPR: _____