

## 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:** Dept. of Water Resources  
San Luis Field Division  
31770 Gonzaga Road  
Gustine, CA 95322

**Lead Agency:** California Department of Water Resources

**Project Title:** California Aqueduct MP 117.47L to MP 119.60L Russian Thistle Removal

**Project Location City & County:** Fresno County

**Project Location – Specific:** Work will occur on the left side (L) of Reach 5 of the California Aqueduct (Aqueduct) in the Department of Water Resources (DWR) right-of-way (ROW) from milepost (MP) 117.47 to MP 119.60. The northernmost part of the work site, MP 117.47L, is at the intersection of the Aqueduct and Manning Avenue; the southernmost part of the work site, MP 119.60L, is approximately 1.10 miles southeast of the intersection of the Aqueduct and West Dinuba Avenue.

**Description of Nature, Purpose, and Beneficiaries of Project:** DWRs' San Luis Field Division (SLFD) will remove Russian thistle (*Salsola* sp.) that obscure visual inspection of the Aqueduct embankment. The cutting blade of a motor grader will be used to remove Russian thistle that is up to 60 feet from the shoulder of the toe roads to the top of the Aqueduct embankment. The cutting blade will remain 2 inches above the ground. Any Russian thistle that cannot be reached by the motor grader will be removed by a backhoe with a clamshell bucket attachment. Removed vegetation will be stockpiled onsite and will be burned in compliance with the Fresno County burn permit. This work is required so that SLFD can visually inspect the Aqueduct for damage. The State Water Project will benefit.

### 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) and 15304 (Minor Alterations to Land)
- Statutory Exemptions:

**Reasons Why Project Is Exempt:** Work consists of removing vegetation from the DWR ROW. No healthy, mature, scenic trees will be removed and there will be no expansion of existing or former use of the Aqueduct embankment and toe roads. Categorical Exemptions 15301 (Existing Facilities) and 15304 (Minor Alterations to Land) apply.

**Name of Public Agency Approving Project:** California Department of Water Resources

**Contact Person:** Mark McDaniel

**Telephone:** (209) 827-5465

**Signature:** Mark McDaniel **Date:** 12/13/2024 **Title:** Planner/Scheduler/UC Supv.

Signed by Lead Agency

Signed by Applicant