



State of California – Natural Resources Agency
DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE
Inland Desert Region
3602 Inland Empire Blvd., Suite C-220
Ontario, CA 91764
www.wildlife.ca.gov

GAVIN NEWSOM, Governor
CHARLTON H. BONHAM, Director



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

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

Project Title: Pickel Meadow Restoration Project (Notification of Lake or Streambed Alteration, No. EPIMS-MOO-52058-R6)

Project Location (Mono County): The project is located at West Walker River, in the County of Mono, State of California; Latitude 38.350194, Longitude -119.531644, Assessor's Parcel Number 006-050-011-000.

Project Description: The California Department of Fish and Wildlife has executed Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreement EPIMS Notification No. EPIMS-MOO-52058-R6, pursuant to Section 1602 of the Fish and Game Code to American Rivers.

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife has executed the Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreement (LSAA) EPIMS Notification No. EPIMS-MOO-52058-R6, pursuant to Section 1602 of the Fish and Game Code to American Rivers.

The project is designed to restore alluvial fan and meadow function, promote aquatic habitat conditions, and decrease erosion in the meadow improving the functional integrity of 251 acres of meadow and aquatic habitat for native fish and wildlife. The project will 1) remove approximately 35,000 yd³ of artificial fill to reconnect the historic alluvial fan to the upper meadow to allow high flows to distribute across the meadow surface. 2) regrade three historic alluvial fan channels to reestablish geomorphic and biological processes at a range of flows. 3) build three apex log jams and install 35 boulder clusters and eight habitat log structures to create complexity within the West Walker River channel throughout Pickel Meadow 4) install wildlife-friendly fencing to exclude livestock from a small spring 5) improve recreational access by relocating the existing parking lot and creating an access trail 6) upgrade the existing diversion located on the side channel of the West Walker River to ensure reliability and allow irrigation of a portion of the upper meadow.

Public Agency Approving Project: CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE

Person or Public Agency Carrying Out Project:
Matthew Freitas
American Rivers

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4/23/2025

Director, California Headwaters Conservation
(530) 478-8376
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Pickel Meadow Restoration Project
1101 14th St. NW, Suite 140
Washington, D.C 20005

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 LSAA 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 Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board's December 11, 2024, CEQA SERP Lead Agency Determinations for the Project and the CDFW's CEQA SERP Concurrence Number 21080.56-2024-062-R6. 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: Dana Scott, Environmental Scientist, (760) 644-8056,
Dana.Scott@Wildlife.ca.gov.

DocuSigned by:
Alisa Ellsworth 4/23/2025
Signature: _____ Date: _____
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Alisa Ellsworth, (Environmental Program Manager)

Date received for filing at OPR: _____