

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: California Department of Water Resources
San Luis Field Division, 31770 Gonzaga Road
Gustine, CA 95322

Lead Agency: California Department of Water Resources

Project Title: California Aqueduct Reach 7 Erosion Repair and Drain Installation

Project Location City & County: Fresno and Kings Counties

Project Location – Specific: Work will occur in Reach 7 of the California Aqueduct (Aqueduct) in the Department of Water Resources (DWR) right of way (ROW) on the left (L) side of the Aqueduct in the following areas: Aqueduct mileposts (MP) 164.33L to MP 164.40L and MP 167.25L to MP 167.45L. The northernmost work area, MP 164.33L, is about 0.07 miles northwest of the intersection of the Aqueduct and Avenal Cutoff Road. The southernmost work area, MP 167.45L, is about 0.09 miles southeast of the intersection of the Aqueduct and Plymouth Avenue.

Description of Nature, Purpose, and Beneficiaries of Project: San Luis Field Division (SLFD) will work in two areas to repair multiple erosions in the Aqueduct embankments and will install drains to prevent further erosion. One work area is from MP 164.33L to MP 164.40L; in this area, erosions will be repaired, and one drain will be installed. The other work area is from MP 167.25L to MP 167.45L; in this area, erosions will be repaired, and two drains will be installed -- one at MP 167.40L and the other at MP 167.35L.

The erosions in each area are up to 4 feet wide and are close enough to each other to be repaired as if they were one erosion. To repair the erosions, approximately 10 tons of base rock will be hauled to the MP 164.33L to MP 164.40L work area; 20 tons of base rock will be hauled to the MP 167.25L to MP 167.45L work area. The base rock will be transported from the SLFD's Coalinga Operations and Maintenance yard (Coalinga Yard). A backhoe will compact the base rock into the erosions. Once the erosions are repaired, a grader will be used to restore existing berms and will grade the embankment slope of the Aqueduct road to direct water runoff towards the drains that will be installed. When the grading is finished, the drains will be installed in each work area on top of the base rock. The drains will be made using 12-inch by 12-inch open-top metal flumes. Each drain will be positioned on the surface of the Aqueduct embankment, on the base rock, and will be installed by securing the flume to metal rods extending from the crest of the Aqueduct road to the bottom of the embankment. Each drain will be approximately 20 feet long. About 5 cubic yards of cobble, hauled from SLFD's Coalinga Yard, will be used at the end of each drain to form an approximately 4-foot wide, 4-foot long, by 12-inch deep base at the bottom of the embankments.

The work is necessary to maintain the integrity of the Aqueduct embankments. 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 involves repairing erosions in existing Aqueduct embankments and installing drains to prevent future erosion. There will be no expansion of existing or former use of the Aqueduct or its embankments and no healthy, mature, scenic, trees will be removed. Categorical Exemption 15301 (Existing Facilities) and 15304 (Minor Alterations to Land) apply.

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Signed by Lead Agency

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Signature: *Mark McDaniel*

Date: 3/24/2025