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## Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board

### California Environmental Quality Act Notice of Exemption for Clean Water Act Section 401 Water Quality Certification

**To:** Office of Planning and Research  
1400 Tenth Street, Room 121  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**From:** California Regional Water Quality Control Board  
Central Valley Region, Redding Office  
364 Knollcrest Drive, Suite 205  
Redding, CA 96002

**Date:** 3 April 2025

**Project Title:**

Modoc National Wildlife Refuge South Bridge  
Replacement Project (Project)

**Project Location - Specific:**

Latitude: 41.4249° and Longitude: -120.5378°

**Project Location - County:**

Modoc County

**Description of Nature, Purpose, and Beneficiaries of Project:**

The proposed Project will demolish and remove the existing South Bridge and WCS and replace them with a new, updated bridge and WCS, adjacent and parallel to the existing location. The Project will also realign the existing gravel road to connect to the replacement structure and provide safe turning radii for the NWR's equipment. The replacement structure must safely accommodate farm equipment, wildland fire trucks, and support vehicles that are critical to NWR operation.

The replacement bridge and WCS will include the installation of the following: concrete weir walls and wingwalls, concrete abutments and piers, concrete bridge foundations and footings, riprap scour protection upstream and downstream of the replacement structure, and various fill materials behind the structure and within the realigned roadway approaches. The existing structure will be removed after the replacement structure is installed. Typical construction equipment will be used to complete the Project, including, but not limited to, the following: backhoe, front end loader, concrete pump truck, pavers, dump trucks, jackhammer, excavator, dozer, grader, possibly impact or vibratory pile drivers, other construction vehicles, and power tools. The structure installation and removal will include excavation, grading, and filling below the ordinary high water mark of the river and within adjacent wetlands. The permanent wetland fill at this site is expected to total 3,226 square feet (0.07 acre).

Vegetation in temporarily impacted wetlands and riparian areas will be returned to existing conditions via hydroseeding with a mix of Great Basin wild rye and intermediate wheat grass, consistent with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) practice at the Modoc NWR. Mitigation will be provided for permanent impacts to wetlands and the river through the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation's Sacramento District California In-Lieu Fee Program.

**Name of Public Agencies Approving Project:**

*Federal Agencies:* The project requires authorization under U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Clean Water Act Section 404, SPK-2023-00522.

*State Agency approval for Clean Water Act Section 401 Water Quality Certification:* California Regional Water Quality Control Board, Central Valley Region, Redding Office. WDID No. 5A25CR00066.

**Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project:**

Stacy Freitas  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
5364 County Road 115  
Alturas, CA 96101

**Exempt Status:**

The Central Valley Water Board has determined that the Project is exempt from review under CEQA pursuant to California Code of Regulations, title 14, section 15061. Specifically, the issuance of this Order and the activities described herein meet the exemption criteria under California Code of Regulations, Title 14, section 15302 (Replacement or Reconstruction). Class 2 consists of replacement or reconstruction of existing structures and facilities where the new structure will be located on the same site as the structure replaced and will have substantially the same purpose and capacity as the structure replaced. Additionally, the Central Valley Water Board concludes that no California Code of Regulations, title 14, section exceptions to the CEQA exemption apply to the activities approved by this Order or former use.

**Reasons why Project is Exempt:**

This project is categorically exempt under CEQA section 15302 because the project involves replacement or reconstruction of existing structures and facilities where the new structure will be located on the same site as the structure replaced and will have substantially the same purpose and capacity as the structure replaced.

**Federal Lead Agency Contact Person:**

Tucker Feyder  
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Durango, CO  
[Tucker.J.Feyder@usace.army.mil](mailto:Tucker.J.Feyder@usace.army.mil)

**State Lead Agency Contact Person:**

Lynn Coster, Senior Environmental Scientist  
Chief Storm Water and Water Quality Certification Unit  
Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board  
Redding Branch Office  
(530) 224-2437

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For Lynn Coster  
Senior Environmental Scientist  
Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board, Redding

cc via  
email: Tucker Feyder, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Durango, CO  
Amy Summe, Shannon & Wilson, Seattle, WA