
Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board

19 April 2023

Kim Sorini
Sierra National Forest
29688 Auberry Rd,
Prather, CA 93651

NOTICE OF APPLICABILITY FOR COVERAGE UNDER ORDER NO. WQ 2022-0048-DWQ, ORDER FOR CLEAN WATER ACT SECTION 401 GENERAL WATER QUALITY CERTIFICATION AND WASTE DISCHARGE REQUIREMENTS FOR RESTORATION PROJECTS STATEWIDE, EXCHEQUER MEADOW RESTORATION PROJECT (WDID# 5C10CR00083), FRESNO COUNTY

On 9 February 2023, the Sierra National Forest (Permittee) submitted a Notice of Intent (NOI) to enroll under and comply with State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) Order No. WQ 2022-0048-DWQ, Order for Clean Water Act Section 401 Water Quality Certification and Waste Discharge Requirements for Restoration Projects Statewide (General Certification Order), which was adopted on 16 August 2022.

The Central Valley Water Quality Control Board (Central Valley Water Board) has reviewed your enrollment materials and finds the Exchequer Meadow Restoration Project (Project) meets the requirements of, and is hereby enrolled under, Order No. WQ 2022-0048-DWQ. You may proceed with your Project in accordance with the Order. This Notice of Applicability is being issued under the General Certification Order pursuant to Section 3838 of the California Code of Regulations.

A copy of [Order WQ 2022-0048-DWQ](https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/board_decisions/adopted_orders/water_quality/2022/wqo2022-0048-dwq.pdf) (https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/board_decisions/adopted_orders/water_quality/2022/wqo2022-0048-dwq.pdf) can be found on the State Water Resources Control Board's General Orders webpage.

The Project is described in the NOI requesting coverage under the General Certification Order and supplementary information (Application Package). Coverage under the General Certification Order is no longer valid if the Project (as described) is modified. Failure to comply with Order No. WQ 2022-0048-DWQ constitutes a violation of the California Water Code and may result in enforcement action or termination of enrollment under the Order.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

The 39.7-acre Project consists of restoring approximately 1,000 feet of gullied stream channel and about 1,800 feet of incising small channels within a portion of about 20

acres of meadow habitat within about a 33-acre project area along Exchequer Creek. The project impacts will restore meadow hydrology to a functional level. Project elements that affect aquatic resources include but are not limited to:

- Raise the base level of stream flow in the existing large gully at the bottom of the meadow using a series of constructed riffles using native soil, wood and, rock from on-site or nearby roadside borrows areas.
- Terminate the gully fill with a large rock structure to transition the flow down from the constructed riffle elevation to the existing channel elevation below the meadow.
- Install rock riffles on the channel immediately above the main gully headcut.
- Install debris jams in channels farther up the meadow. Jams would include on-site material as well as biodegradable jute fabric and coir logs.
- Strategically scatter woody debris throughout the meadow to slow and disperse overland flood-flow velocity and discourage straight-line cattle trailing. Open an easy-access livestock trail around the meadow to discourage travel up and down the meadow.
- Remove hazardous rebar and dilapidated fencing material along the stream channel and in the meadow.
- Replace native vegetation (stockpiled prior to ground disturbance) on newly bare areas to hasten recovery of meadow sod and to maintain the native species composition in the meadow.
- Install a gravity-fed watering trough for livestock to reduce cattle trampling on sensitive riparian habitat.

The Project will permanently impact 0.01 acre of wetland and 0.96 acre of stream channel.

PROJECT LOCATION:

The Project is located at Exchequer Meadow within the Sierra National Forest in Fresno County. The approximate center of the Project area is located at latitude 37.07211 degrees North and longitude -119.11723 degrees West.

PROJECT SCHEDULE:

The project is expected to begin construction in July of 2023 and cease construction activities before November 2023, weather permitting.

APPLICATION FEE RECEIVED:

Federal dischargers involved in Dredge and Fill Operations only are not subject to permit fees as required by Section 3833(b)(3) and Section 2200(a)(4) of the California Code of Regulations.

REPORTING AND NOTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

The Permittee shall follow notification and reporting requirements described in this Notice of Applicability (NOA), and those found in Attachment D of the Order WQ 2022-0048-DWQ, unless specified as an optional requirement and excluded from this NOA.

ADDITIONAL CONDITIONS:

1. Annual Reporting

The Permittee shall submit an Annual Report each year within one month of the anniversary of the effective date of this Notice of Applicability. Annual reporting shall continue until the active discharge period is complete and the project enters the post-construction monitoring phase where upon the Permittee shall annually submit a Post-Construction Monitoring Report (Report Type 2). The Post-Construction Monitoring Report shall be submitted on the anniversary of the date that the project restoration activities were completed.

The Annual Report and Post-Construction Monitoring Report shall include the information specified in Attachment D, Part A of Order No. WQ 2022-0048-DWQ. The Permittee shall submit the reports in accordance with the report submittal instructions in Attachment D of Order No. WQ 2022-0048-DWQ and email it to centralvalleyfresno@waterboards.ca.gov with a cc to Brandon Salazar at brandon.salazar@waterboards.ca.gov. The WDID No. for this Project is 5C10CR00083.

2. Notification for In-Water Work and Diversions

The project proponent shall notify the Water Board at least forty-eight (48) hours prior to initiating work in flowing or standing water or stream diversions. Notification may be via e-mail, delivered written notice, or other verifiable means.

NOTICE OF COMPLETION:

Upon completion of the Project, the Permittee shall submit a Request for Notice of Project Complete (NOC) Letter no later than 30 days after Project completion. The NOC request shall demonstrate the Project was carried out in accordance with the Project description, include a map of the Project location with final boundaries of the restoration area, and include post-project photographs. More information on the NOC request is listed in section B (Report Type 4) of the Order.

If you have any questions regarding this Notice of Applicability, please contact Brandon Salazar at (559) 445-6287 or at brandon.salazar@waterboards.ca.gov.

Original Signed by Scott J. Hatton for:
Patrick Pulupa
Executive Officer

cc: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (Electronic Copy Only)
Region 9
R9cwa401@epa.gov

United States Army Corps of Engineers (Electronic Copy Only)
Sacramento District Headquarters
SPKRegulatoryMailbox@usace.army.mil

Patricia Cole (Electronic Copy Only)
United States Fish & Wildlife Service
patricia_cole@fws.gov

Department of Fish and Wildlife (Electronic Copy Only)
Region 4
R4LSA@wildlife.ca.gov

CWA Section 401 WQC Program (Electronic Copy Only)
Division of Water Quality
State Water Resources Control Board
Stateboard401@waterboards.ca.gov

Jessica Strickland (Electronic Copy Only)
Trout Unlimited
Jessica.Strickland@tu.org

Leslie Mink (Electronic Copy Only)
Plumas Corp
leslie@plumascorp.org

Figure 1. Project Vicinity Map

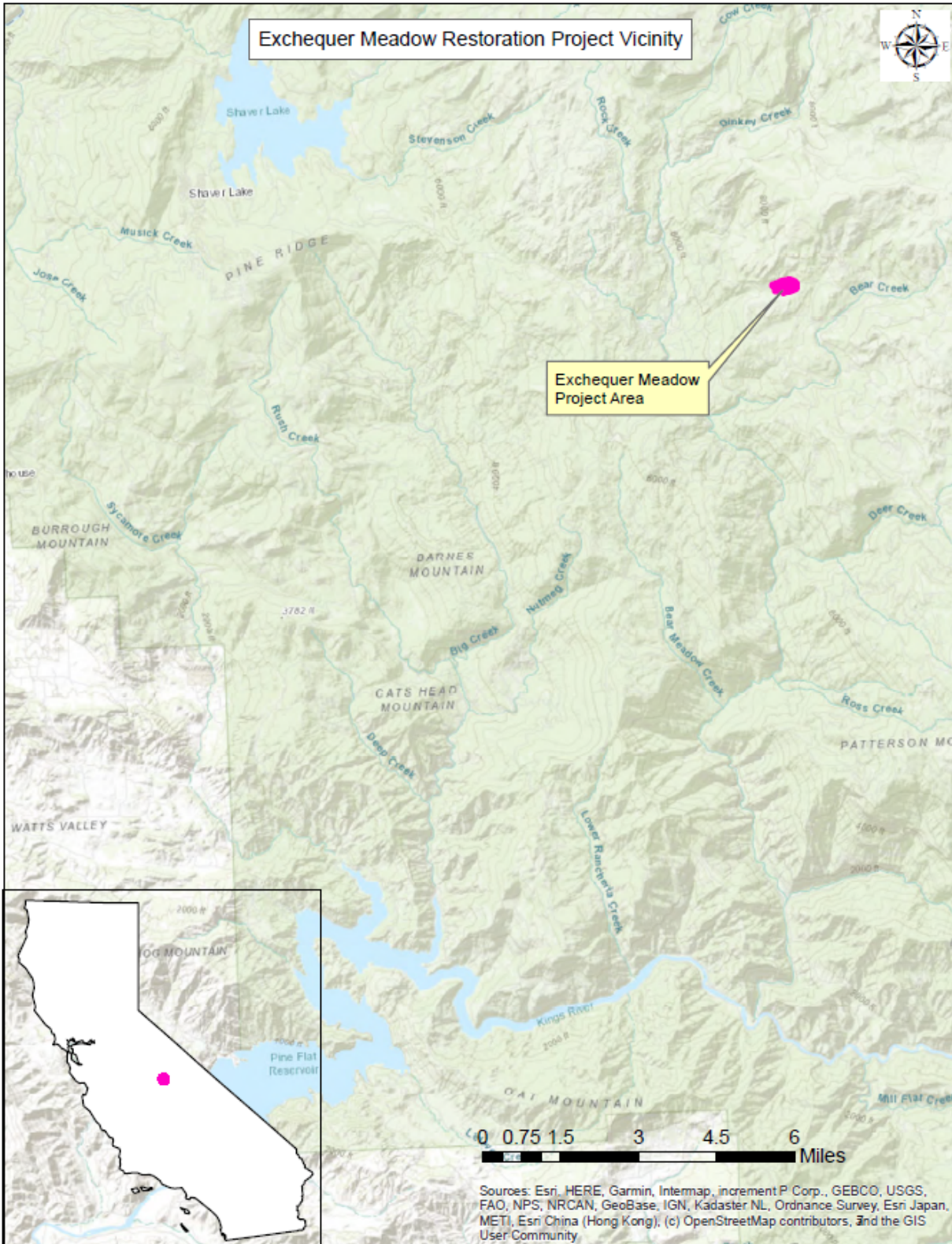


Figure 2. Project Impact Map

