

RECLAMATION

Managing Water in the West

Categorical Exclusion Checklist

Adobe Ranch Temporary Additional Point of Delivery and Temporary Right-of-Way Access at Milepost 17.28 on the Madera Canal

CEC-13-037

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Background

The Smith Adobe Ranch Family Limited Partnership (Adobe Ranch) has a contract (contract number 14-06-200-6523) dated July 8, 1957 with the Bureau Reclamation (Reclamation) for up to 300 acre-feet per year (AFY) of a “Substitute Water Supply” for irrigation purposes to be delivered at Dike 3 (milepost [MP] 20.57) off of the Madera Equalization Reservoir (Reservoir). The source of the water from the Reservoir is Millerton Lake.

The area covered by the current contract goes from the Reservoir to approximately 2.5 miles south and includes approximately 700 acres of non-irrigated pasture owned by Adobe Ranch (see Figure 1-1). The water from the Reservoir is released at Dike 3 (MP 20.57) into a natural channel and travels approximately 1.5 miles south to a diked pond. The water delivered to Adobe Ranch is currently used for livestock watering.

Reclamation received a request from Adobe Ranch to approve a temporary additional point of delivery for delivery of up to 100 AF of their 300 AF substitute water supply for irrigation of livestock kept on lands to the west of the currently irrigated pastures (see Figure 1). This action was done in 1990, 1991, 1992 and 2009 during drought conditions. Adobe Ranch is also pursuing a separate long-term action which is not covered under this EA and would require additional environmental analysis.

Purpose and Need for Action

Adobe Ranch needs an additional point of delivery for their substitute water supply for watering livestock during this drought period.

Reclamation’s purpose is to fulfill its mission, which is to manage, develop and protect water and related resources in an environmentally and economically sound manner in the interest of the American people. In order to fulfill its mission, Reclamation facilitates water delivery that would benefit efficient and effective water use. Reclamation’s purpose under the Proposed Action would be to fulfill its role as Contracting Officer and approve Adobe Ranch’s temporary additional point of delivery of up to 100 AF of substitute water for livestock irrigation.

Proposed Action

Reclamation proposes to approve temporary ROW access and the temporary additional point of delivery at MP 17.28 on the Madera Canal to Adobe Ranch for delivery of up to 100 AF of substitute water supply for the purposes of livestock irrigation on lands located west of the Adobe Ranch pasturelands that receive water at Dike 3.

Water would be removed from the Madera Canal through the existing 6-inch aboveground plastic pipe siphoning system to the inlet drain that runs underneath the Madera Canal. No petroleum products or other equipment or structures would be needed to siphon the water. From the drain, water would flow via gravity to the south side of the Madera Canal into an existing natural channel to be delivered to two ponds [Pond 1 – 0.5 miles south; and Pond 2 – two miles

south of the inlet drain] (see Figure 1-1). Both ponds are connected to the existing channel and are used for watering livestock.

No ground disturbance would occur. Water siphoning would be done 24 hours per day at a rate of 450 gallons per minute until the ponds are near capacity or they have delivered all 100 AF. Meters and progress would be monitored every three days.

Exclusion Category

516 DM 14.5 paragraph D (4): *Approval, execution, and implementation of water service contracts for minor amounts of long-term water use or temporary or interim water use where the action does not lead to long-term changes and where the impacts are expected to be localized.*

516 DM 14.5 paragraph D (10): *Issuance of permits, licenses, easements, and crossing agreements which provide right-of-way over Bureau lands where the action does not allow for or lead to a major public or private action.*

Evaluation of Criteria for Categorical Exclusion:

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|---|---|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. This action would have a significant effect on the quality of the human environment (40 CFR 1502.3). | No
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Uncertain
<input type="checkbox"/> | Yes
<input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. This action would have highly controversial environmental effects or involve unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources (NEPA Section 102(2)(E) and 43 CFR 46.215(c)). | No
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Uncertain
<input type="checkbox"/> | Yes
<input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. This action would have significant impacts on public health or safety (43 CFR 46.215(a)). | No
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Uncertain
<input type="checkbox"/> | Yes
<input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. This action would have significant impacts on such natural resources and unique geographical characteristics as historic or cultural resources; parks, recreation, and refuge lands; wilderness areas; wild or scenic rivers; national natural landmarks; sole or principal drinking water aquifers; prime farmlands; wetlands (EO 11990); flood plains (EO 11988); national monuments; migratory birds; and other ecologically significant or critical areas (43 CFR 46.215 (b)). | No
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Uncertain
<input type="checkbox"/> | Yes
<input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. This action would have highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risks (43 CFR 46.215(d)). | No
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Uncertain
<input type="checkbox"/> | Yes
<input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6. This action would establish a precedent for future action or represent a decision in principle about future actions with potentially significant environmental effects (43 CFR 46.215 (e)). | No
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Uncertain
<input type="checkbox"/> | Yes
<input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7. This action would have a direct relationship to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant environmental effects (43 CFR 46.215 (f)). | No
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Uncertain
<input type="checkbox"/> | Yes
<input type="checkbox"/> |
| 8. This action would have significant impacts on properties listed, or eligible for listing, on the National Register of Historic Places as determined by Reclamation (LND 02-01) (43 CFR 46.215 (g)). | No
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Uncertain
<input type="checkbox"/> | Yes
<input type="checkbox"/> |

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|--|---|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 9. This action would have significant impacts on species listed, or proposed to be listed, on the List of Endangered or Threatened Species, or have significant impacts on designated critical habitat for these species (43 CFR 46.215 (h)). | No
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Uncertain
<input type="checkbox"/> | Yes
<input type="checkbox"/> |
| 10. This action would violate a Federal, tribal, State, or local law or requirement imposed for protection of the environment (43 CFR 46.215 (i)). | No
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Uncertain
<input type="checkbox"/> | Yes
<input type="checkbox"/> |
| 11. This action would affect ITAs (512 DM 2, Policy Memorandum dated December 15, 1993). | No
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Uncertain
<input type="checkbox"/> | Yes
<input type="checkbox"/> |
| 12. This action would have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on low income or minority populations (EO 12898) (43 CFR 46.215 (j)). | No
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Uncertain
<input type="checkbox"/> | Yes
<input type="checkbox"/> |
| 13. This action would limit access to, and ceremonial use of, Indian sacred sites on Federal lands by Indian religious practitioners or significantly adversely affect the physical integrity of such sacred sites (EO 13007, 43 CFR 46.215 (k), and 512 DM 3)). | No
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Uncertain
<input type="checkbox"/> | Yes
<input type="checkbox"/> |
| 14. This action would contribute to the introduction, continued existence, or spread of noxious weeds or non-native invasive species known to occur in the area or actions that may promote the introduction, growth, or expansion of the range of such species (Federal Noxious Weed Control Act, EO 13112, and 43 CFR 46.215 (l)). | No
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Uncertain
<input type="checkbox"/> | Yes
<input type="checkbox"/> |