

# RECLAMATION

*Managing Water in the West*

## Categorical Exclusion Checklist

### Friant Dam Erosion Repair

CEC 13-009

Prepared by:



Chuck Siek  
Supervisory Natural Resources Specialist  
South-Central California Area Office

Date: 2/14/13

Concurred by:



Shauna McDonald  
Wildlife Biologist  
South-Central California Area Office

Date: 2/19/13

Approved by:



Michael Jackson  
Area Manager  
South-Central California Area Office

Date: 2/19/13



U.S. Department of the Interior  
Bureau of Reclamation  
South-Central California Area Office

13-009

## Background

On February 6, 2013 a lined drainage canal overflowed at the Friant Dam facility in Fresno County. This resulted in erosion of three scarps near the lower, left groin of the dam and sloughing along the access road above the office building (Figure 1). The erosion of these areas resulted from mudslides of unconsolidated, saturated surface material. It is estimated that 200 cubic yards of material eroded from this area, much of which has settled at the toe of the slope.

## Purpose and Need for Action

There is a need to repair the erosion damage as soon as practical since heavy rainfall could exacerbate the damage. The purpose of the proposed action is to reduce subsequent damage from runoff and to allow safe use of the damaged maintenance road.

## Proposed Action

Regional geologic and engineering staff have evaluated the site and have recommended that the eroded material be replaced, compacted, revegetated and stabilized on the two scarps closest to the dam. The third scarp that is located furthest from the face of the dam (directly adjacent to the old restroom building) will be left as-is, with the exception of removing large loose rock and stabilizing upper slope soils to prevent future failure or collapse. The reason for this is that the slope is extremely steep and would be difficult to restore with soil material, and it has eroded down to bedrock and therefore deemed stable.

The sloughing that is evident along the edge of the road near the generator and transformer at the end of the access road above the office building would require removal of a section of the edge of the pavement along the downstream edge (approximately 2' x 50'), and removal of the sloughed material (approximately 20 cubic yards). The recommendation for repair is to remove and replace the same material in compacted lifts to restore the slope and roadbed. The removed edge of pavement would be repaved with new AC pavement, and the slope would be stabilized and revegetated. Most of the work can be done from the existing pavement and dirt parking area that is adjacent to the area to be repaired.

Material would be brought from either on-site stockpiles or Vulcan Materials, a local off-site provider of such materials. Facilitation of this work would require a trackhoe to enter the area above and below the scarped areas, primarily utilizing existing pavement and dirt parking area to replace material. All disturbances caused by equipment would be restored and stabilized.

## Environmental Commitments

| Resource           | Protection Measure                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|--------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Cultural Resources | In the event that cultural resources or human remains are identified during the implementation of this project there may be additional considerations pursuant to Section 106 of the NHPA. If inadvertent discoveries of cultural resources or human remains occur during project implementation, work shall temporarily stop and Reclamation cultural resources staff shall be contacted immediately. |

Environmental consequences for resource areas assume the measures specified would be fully implemented.

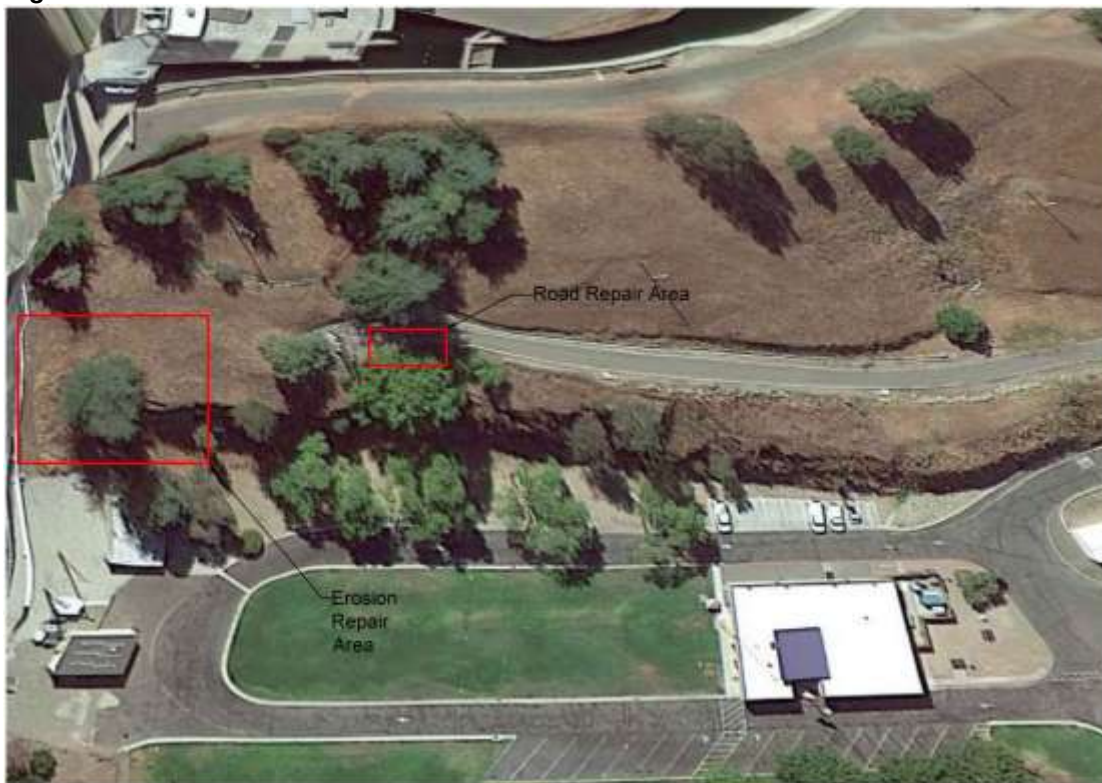
## Exclusion Category

516 DM 14.5 Categorical Exclusions.

D. Operation and Maintenance Activities: (1) Maintenance, rehabilitation, and replacement of existing facilities which may involve a minor change in size, location, and/or operation.

C. Project Implementation Activities: (3) Minor construction activities associated with authorized projects which correct unsatisfactory environmental conditions or which merely augment or supplement, or are enclosed within existing facilities.

**Figure 1 Friant Dam Erosion Areas**



## Evaluation of Criteria for Categorical Exclusion:

- |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |    |                                     |           |                          |     |                          |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|-------------------------------------|-----------|--------------------------|-----|--------------------------|
| 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"/> |
| 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"/> |

Regional Archeologist concurred with Item 8. Their determination has been attached.

ITA Designee concurred with Item 11. Their determination has been attached.

SCCAO Biologist concurred with Item 9. Their determination is in the project folder.

## Environmental Commitment Program

This form must accompany all Federal discretionary action approvals that require compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act and other applicable environmental laws.

### Environmental Document<sup>1</sup>: 13-009 Friant Dam Erosion Repair

On January 14, 2011 the President's Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) issued guidance for Federal agencies to implement, monitor and evaluate environmental commitments identified in Environmental Assessments and Environmental Impact Statements completed for compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). This guidance also pertains to Categorical Exclusions when environmental commitments have been identified in order to meet the requirements for exclusion.

The Bureau of Reclamation's NEPA Handbook provides guidance on the establishment of an Environmental Commitment Program (ECP) to meet the CEQ guidance. The ECP is a system designed to implement, monitor and evaluate the environmental commitments identified in the NEPA document. These commitments fall under one or more of the following categories:

#### 1. Commitments where no construction or ground disturbance is involved

These commitments are typically associated with water transfers, exchanges, Warren Act contracts and similar actions.

Required ☐ Not Required ☒

#### 2. Commitments where construction or ground disturbance is involved

These commitments are typically associated with short-term construction impacts resulting from modifications to Federal facilities or modifications to non-Federal facilities where there is a Federal nexus such as Federal funds or approvals.

Required ☒ Not Required ☐

#### 3. Long-term commitments

These commitments are typically associated with larger construction or ground disturbing activities where impacts to resources such as wetlands, special status species habitat or water quality may occur that require long-term mitigation and monitoring.

Required ☐ Not Required ☒

**Note:** If the "Not Required" boxes are checked on all three commitment categories, no further action is required. If any of the required boxes are checked please refer to the following Environmental Commitment table for a summary of the commitments required for environmental compliance. Reclamation would continue to require compliance with all commitments imposed by existing environmental documents, such as Biological Opinions and Programmatic Agreements. Please direct any questions or comments regarding the Environmental Commitment Program to:

Chuck Siek, Supervisory Natural Resources Specialist  
Department of Interior, Bureau of Reclamation  
1243 "N" Street, Fresno, CA 93721  
(559) 487-5138 email at [csiek@usbr.gov](mailto:csiek@usbr.gov)

<sup>1</sup> Environmental Document types include: Categorical Exclusion, Environmental Assessment/Finding of No Significant Impact and Environmental Impact Statement/Record of Decision

## Environmental Commitment Table

| Environmental Document: Categorical Exclusion 13-009<br>Project Title: Friant Dam Erosion Repair<br>Anticipated Project Start Date: 2/25/13<br>Approximate Project Duration: 2/30/13 |                                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                                           |                                                         |      | [Proponent] Point of Contact <sup>2</sup><br><br>Nick Zaninovich 559-487-5520 |                       |                         |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| To be completed by Reclamation:<br>Chuck Siek, Natural Resources Specialist 559 487-5138<br>Shauna McDonald, Wildlife Biologist 559 487-5202<br>Mark Carper 916 978-5552             |                                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                                           |                                                         |      |                                                                               |                       |                         |
| Resource                                                                                                                                                                             | Commitment Category <sup>3</sup> | Summary of Environmental Commitments <sup>4</sup>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Timeframe for Implementation <sup>5</sup> | Reclamation POC Verification of Compliance <sup>6</sup> |      | Verification of Compliance Dates                                              |                       |                         |
|                                                                                                                                                                                      |                                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                                           | Initials                                                | Date | Implementation Date                                                           | Verification Interval | Final Verification Date |
| Cultural Resources                                                                                                                                                                   | 2                                | In the event that cultural resources or human remains are identified during the implementation of this project there may be additional considerations pursuant to Section 106 of the NHPA. If inadvertent discoveries of cultural resources or human remains occur during project implementation, work shall temporarily stop and Reclamation cultural resources staff shall be contacted immediately. | Construction Phase                        |                                                         |      |                                                                               |                       |                         |

**Funding:** The project proponent is responsible for all direct costs to implement, monitor and evaluate the environmental commitments described in the table. The project proponent is also responsible for the costs incurred by Reclamation staff to monitor and evaluate the environmental commitments.

<sup>2</sup> Proponent point of contact may be the individual responsible for a specific commitment or the Authorizing Official responsible for overall environmental compliance

<sup>3</sup> List category numbers checked on first page

<sup>4</sup> Summarize environmental commitments from environmental document completed for action

<sup>5</sup> List when environmental commitments must start/end

<sup>6</sup> Verification by Reclamation that all environmental commitments have been implemented and a summary report has been completed as required





## United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF RECLAMATION  
Mid-Pacific Regional Office  
2800 Cottage Way  
Sacramento, California 95825-1898

IN REPLY  
REFER TO:  
MP-153  
ENV-3.00

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL ONLY

February 15, 2013  
MEMORANDUM

To: Chuck Siek  
Supervisory Natural Resources Specialist  
South-Central California Area Office

From: Mark. A. Carper  
Archaeologist – Division of Environmental Affairs

Subject: 13-SCAO-097: Friant Dam Erosion Repair Project (CEC-13-009)

This proposed undertaking by Reclamation is to repair erosional damage at three areas near the lower, left groin of Friant Dam. This is the type of undertaking that does not have the potential to cause effects to historic properties, should such properties be present, pursuant to the NHPA Section 106 regulations codified at 36 CFR § 800.3(a)(1). Reclamation has no further obligations under NHPA Section 106, pursuant to 36 CFR § 800.3(a)(1).

Due to overflow of a line drainage canal at the Friant Dam facility on February 6, 2013, which is Reclamation (i.e., Federal) property, Reclamation is proposing to repair the damage by replacing the eroded material, then compacting, revegetating, and stabilizing the two scarps closest to the dam. All ground disturbing activities will be limited to soils heavily disturbed by the construction of Friant Dam and not to the dam itself. Thus, this undertaking has no potential to cause effects to historic properties. Friant Dam is located in Fresno County, California at Millerton Lake.

After reviewing CEC-13-009, dated February 14, 2013, I concur with item 8 which states that this action would not have significant impacts on properties listed, or eligible for listing, on the National Register of Historic Places.

This memorandum is intended to convey the completion of the NHPA Section 106 process for this undertaking. Please retain a copy in the administrative record for this action. Should changes be made to this project, additional NHPA Section 106 review, possibly including consultation with the State Historic Preservation Officer, may be necessary. Thank you for providing the opportunity to comment.

Mark

Mark A. Carper, M.A., Archaeologist  
U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, Mid-Pacific Region, MP-153

2800 Cottage Way, Sacramento, CA 95825  
Phone: 916-978-5552 Email: mcarper@usbr.gov

CC: Cultural Resources Branch (MP-153), Anastasia Leigh – Regional Environmental Officer (MP-150)

Friant Division  
ENV 7.00  
SCC-424

February 15, 2013

MEMORANDUM

To: Chuck Siek  
Supervisory Natural Resource Specialist

From: Shauna McDonald  
Wildlife Biologist

Subject: No-Effect Determination for Friant Dam Erosion Repair Project (13-009)

Regional geologic and engineering staff have evaluated the site and have recommended that the eroded material be replaced, compacted, revegetated and stabilized on the two scarps closest to the dam. The third scarp that is located furthest from the face of the dam (directly adjacent to the old restroom building) will be left as-is, with the exception of removing large loose rock and stabilizing upper slope soils to prevent future failure or collapse. The reason for this is that the slope is extremely steep and would be difficult to restore with soil material, and it has eroded down to bedrock and therefore deemed stable.

The sloughing that is evident along the edge of the road near the generator and transformer at the end of the access road above the office building will require removal of a section of the edge of the pavement along the downstream edge (approximately 2' x 50'), and removal of the sloughed material (approximately 20 cubic yards). The recommendation for repair is to remove and replace the same material in compacted lifts to restore the slope and roadbed. The removed edge of pavement will be repaved with new AC pavement, and the slope will be stabilized and revegetated. This work shall require use of either a trackhoe or backhoe for excavation and replacement of material. Most of the work can be done from the existing pavement and dirt parking area that is adjacent to the area to be repaired.

Material would be brought from either on-site stockpiles or Vulcan Materials, a local off-site provider. Facilitation of this work will require a trackhoe to enter the area above and below the scarped areas to replace material. All disturbances caused by equipment would be restored and stabilized.

Reclamation biologists conducted a site visit on February 13, 2013. A species list and map are attached. There is no critical habitat in the action area, the closest is for the succulent owl's clover, on the other side of the San Joaquin River. The site visit revealed that there are many crevices in the action area, due to the uncovering of rocks because of the erosion. However, as this area is not enroute to any breeding habitat for the California tiger salamander, and because of the dry conditions that have prevailed since the erosion occurred, no salamanders are expected to have taken refuge in any of the crevices. Habitat for other special status species is entirely lacking.

With the above limitations and based upon the nature of this action Reclamation has determined there would be No Effect to proposed or listed species or critical habitat under the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (16 U.S.C. §1531 et seq.), and no take of birds protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (16 U.S.C. §703 et seq.).

## Friant Dam Erosion Repair Project

**RIVERA, PATRICIA**

February 19, 2013  
8:06 AM (56 minutes ago)

Chuck,

I reviewed the proposed action. The Regional geologic and engineering staff have evaluated the site and have recommended that the eroded material be replaced, compacted, revegetated and stabilized on the two scarps closest to the dam. The third scarp that is located furthest from the face of the dam (directly adjacent to the old restroom building) will be left as-is, with the exception of removing large loose rock and stabilizing upper slope soils to prevent future failure or collapse. The reasons for this is that the slope is extremely steep and would be difficult to restore and that the slope has eroded down to bedrock and is therefore deemed stable.

The sloughing that is evident along the edge of the road near the generator and transformer at the end of the access road above the office building would require removal of a section of the edge of the pavement along the downstream edge (approximately 2' x 50'), and removal of the sloughed material (approximately 20 cubic yards). The recommendation for repair is to remove and replace the same material in compacted lifts to restore the slope and roadbed. The removed edge of pavement would be repaved with new AC pavement, and the slope would be stabilized and revegetated. This work shall require use of either a trackhoe or backhoe for excavation and replacement of material. Most of the work can be done from the existing pavement and dirt parking area that is adjacent to the area to be repaired.

Material would be brought from either on-site stockpiles or Vulcan Materials, a local off-site provider. Facilitation of this work will require a trackhoe to enter the area above and below the scarped areas to replace material. All disturbances caused by equipment would be restored and stabilized. The proposed action does not have a potential to affect Indian Trust Assets. The nearest ITA is Table Mountain Reservation approximately 3 miles East by Southeast of the project location.