

RECLAMATION

Managing Water in the West

Categorical Exclusion Checklist

Ortega Dam Reservoir Drain Modification

CEC-16-013

Prepared by:



Date: 06/06/2016

Rain L. Emerson

Supervisory Natural Resources Specialist

South-Central California Area Office

ITA Designee concurred with Item 11. Their determination has been placed within the project file.

Concurred by:

See Attachment A

Date: See Attachment A

Mark Carper

Archaeologist

Mid-Pacific Regional Office

Regional Archeologist concurred with Item 8. Their determination has been placed within the project file.

Concurred by:



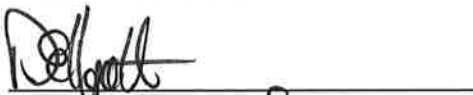
Date: 06/06/2016

Lisa Carlson

Wildlife Biologist

South-Central California Area Office

Approved by:



Date: 6/6/2016

Michael P. Jackson *for*

Area Manager

South-Central California Area Office



Background

Ortega Dam, constructed in 1956, is owned by the Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) and operated and maintained by the Cachuma Operations and Maintenance Board (COMB). The reservoir, located in Santa Barbara County approximately 1 mile northeast of Summerland, provides potable water storage for Montecito Water District and Carpinteria Valley Water District (see Figure 1 for project location).

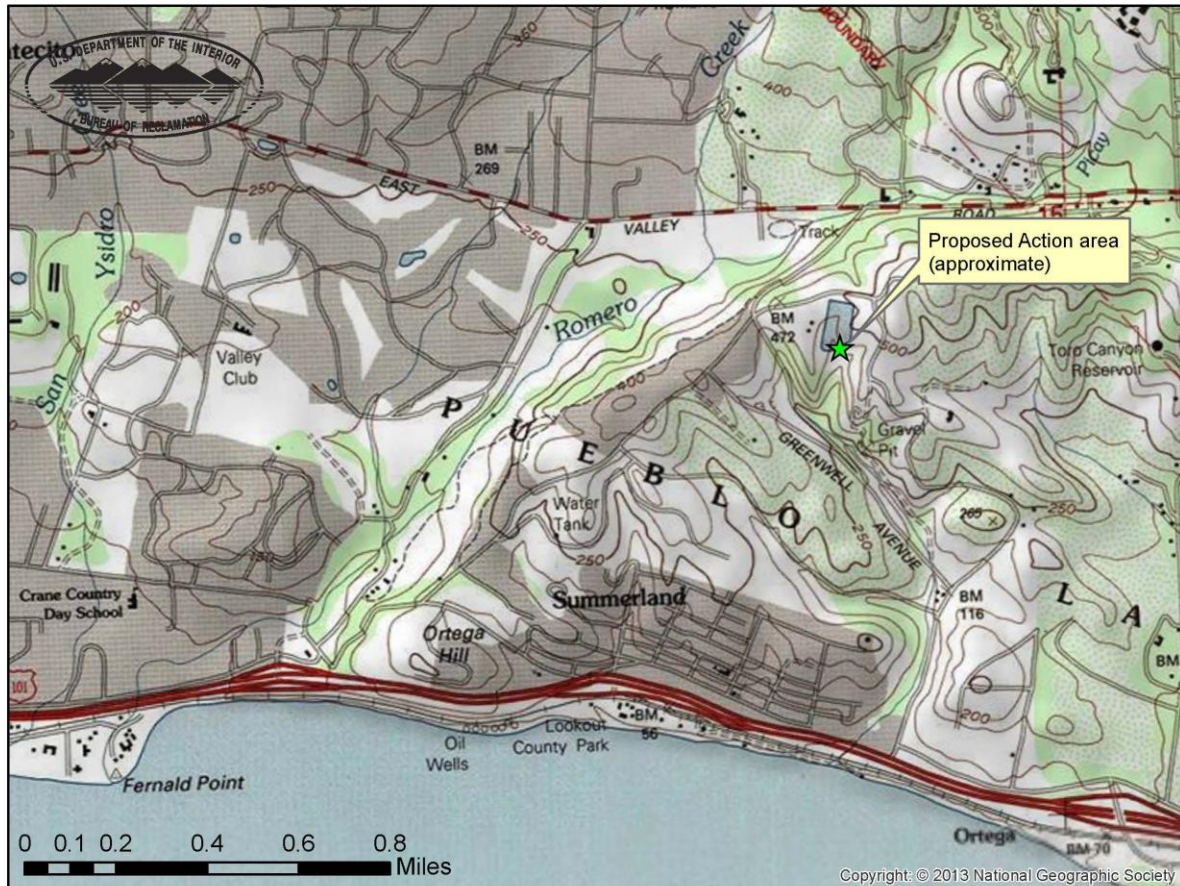


Figure 1 Proposed Action Area

On April 25, 2016, COMB discovered a new seep on the downstream slope of Ortega Dam during their routine monthly inspection. The new seepage was observed at about halfway up from the bottom of the dam near the left abutment (see Figure 2). Project engineers believe the water coming from the new seepage location is from the left reservoir underdrain system outfall pipe, based on the location of the new seepage, by comparing measurements of flow coming from the seepage with various reservoir water levels, and rising embankment and foundation piezometers. In order to reduce the potential for the malfunctioning reservoir underdrain system to create a situation that causes the embankment and abutment soils to become saturated or begin eroding, the blocked discharge pipe needs to be repaired.

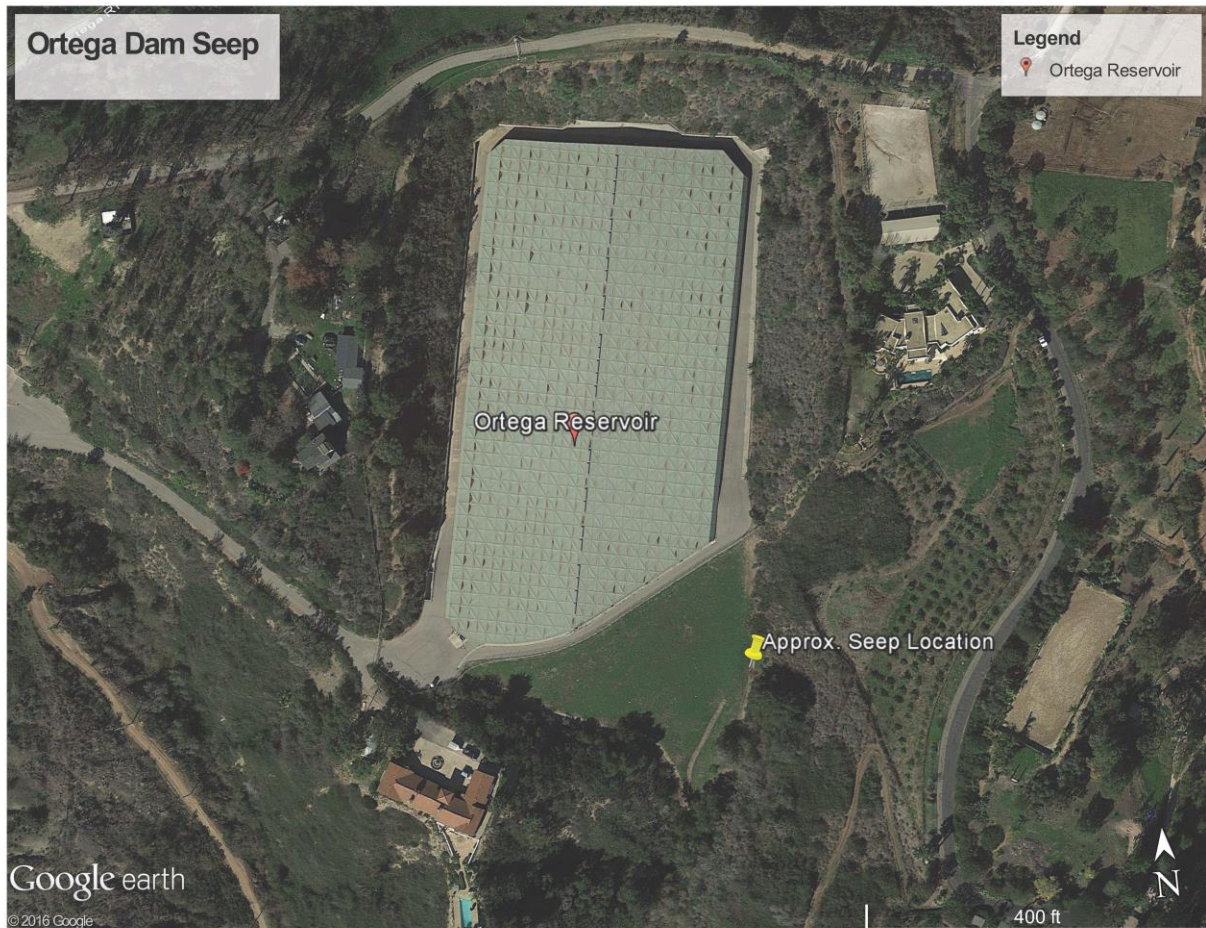


Figure 2 Approximate Seep Location

Nature of the Action

COMB, as Reclamation's non-federal operating entity, proposes to inspect and repair the left reservoir underdrain system as described below.

A contractor procured by COMB will perform the work to modify the reservoir drain system. Repair of the drain system will be done in two parts. First, access to the drain system's left outfall pipe will be improved by splicing a wye into the existing 8 inch concrete pipe with an additional pipe that day-lights at the surface. The day-lighted pipe will improve access to the drain system for routine maintenance and inspection by COMB. Once completed, a closed circuit television (CCTV) inspection will be conducted in an attempt to find the blockage or damaged pipe section that could be causing the new seepage. Once the blockage has been located, the portion of the pipe that is blocked or damaged will be removed and replaced. The wye and portions of the pipe that will be replaced will be 8 inch diameter non-perforated double-walled corrugated high density polyethylene pipe. New pipe segments will be joined to existing pipe segments via couplers.

The excavation to access the drain system pipe will be about 6 feet deep and up to 30 feet long and about 4 feet wide at the base. Side slopes for the excavation will be about 1-1/2:1 or 2:1. The excavation will be within the area previously disturbed during the dam's construction and within Reclamation's right-of-way.

As shown in Figure 3, construction equipment and building materials will be staged on the Dam's crest near the left abutment. Access to the excavation site will be from the dam's crest near the left abutment and down the dam's groin.

Equipment anticipated for the site repair will consist of the following:

- Portable electrical Generator
- Small excavator similar to a Caterpillar 300 or 305 series
- Pneumatic hand compactor (jumping jack)
- Trench stabilization box
- Water Truck

Environmental Commitments

COMB and/or its designee shall implement the environmental protection measures included in Table 1. Environmental consequences for resource areas assume the measures specified would be fully implemented.

Table 1 Environmental Protection Measures and Commitments

Resource	Protection Measure
Biological Resources	Immediately before any excavation associated with the project, the person in charge of work at the site shall slowly walk the area that will be excavated, and adjacent land within 25 feet of such areas, visually canvassing it for frogs. If any litter, debris, vegetation, or rocks could obscure a frog, the area shall be inspected. If any frog is observed, its length from snout to vent shall be estimated, general coloration and any distinguishing characteristics (i.e. pattern and distribution of spotting, coloration, particularly at base of hind legs, stripes or mask through eye, etc.) shall be noted and recorded. If possible, photographs shall be taken. If photographs are taken, an identifiable object near the frog and wholly with the frame of the photograph shall be measured with a ruler. Documentation for an observation shall be transmitted to Reclamation environmental staff and no work shall commence until that information is reviewed and notification of permission to proceed is provided by a Reclamation biologist. If it is determined that the frog is a California red-legged frog, no action may commence until consultation with the Service is completed.
Biological Resources	To prevent inadvertent entrapment of listed species and other wildlife during construction, all excavated steep-walled holes or trenches more than 1 foot deep shall be covered at the close of each working day by plywood or similar materials. If the trenches cannot be closed, one or more escape ramps (with slopes less than or equal to 1:1) constructed of earthen-fill or wooden planks shall be installed. Before such trenches or holes are filled, they must be thoroughly inspected for trapped animals. If federally protected species are found in any of the holes or trenches, work shall stop and Reclamation shall be contacted immediately for further guidance.

Resource	Protection Measure
Biological Resources	<p>A qualified biologist shall conduct nesting bird surveys in the tree(s) immediately adjacent to the Action Area. If a nesting migratory bird is found, no construction on the project shall occur within 35 feet of the nest until the young have fledged or until a qualified biologist determines that the nest is no longer active. If active nests are observed and the recommended nest avoidance buffer is not feasible, a qualified biologist may propose a non-disturbance buffer based on, but not limited to, species-specific information, sight lines from the nest to the work-site, and observations of the nesting bird's reaction to project activities. If the biologist determines that a smaller avoidance buffer is warranted, the biologist shall provide Reclamation with a written explanation as to why. Based on the submitted explanation, Reclamation will determine whether to allow the smaller buffer. All survey documentation shall be submitted to Reclamation prior to the start of construction.</p>

Exclusion Category

516 DM 14.5 D (17). *Minor safety of dams construction activities where the work is confined to the dam, abutment areas, or appurtenant features, and where no major change in reservoir or downstream operation is anticipated as a result of the construction activities.*



Figure 3 Project Details

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"/> |

NEPA Action: Categorical Exclusion

The Proposed Action is covered by the exclusion category and no extraordinary circumstances exist. The Action is excluded from further documentation in an EA or EIS.

Attachment A: Cultural Resources Determination

CULTURAL RESOURCE COMPLIANCE
Mid-Pacific Region
Division of Environmental Affairs
Cultural Resources Branch

MP-153 Tracking Number: 16-SCAO-129

Project Name: Ortega Reservoir Dam Seep Project

NEPA Document: CEC-16-013

MP 153 Cultural Resources Reviewer: Mark Carper

NEPA Contact: Rain Emerson

Determination: No Historic Properties Affected

Date: May 27, 2016

This proposed undertaking by Reclamation is to excavate potholes and trenches on the toe-slope of the Ortega Reservoir Dam to identify the source of a recently identified seep below the reservoir. Reclamation determined that initiation of the proposed project is an undertaking as defined in 36 CFR § 800.16(y) and a type of activity that has the potential to cause effects on historic properties under 36 CFR § 800.3(a).

In late April 2016 operations personnel of COMB discovered a seep at Ortega Dam during their routine monthly inspection. The seep is located approximately mid-slope of the embankment near the left abutment. Due to the seriousness of the situation COMB installed a small weir within an asphalt gutter to allow for collection, observation, and measurement of seepage flows. Following a weekend of monitoring, a conference call was held on May 3, 2016 to discuss the situation, monitoring data collected, and plan for future dam safety activities.

The general consensus is the tree roots have clogged either the left toe-drain, left underdrain outfall, or both. The plan is to video inspect pipes, however modern robust cameras are not able to travel up the pipes from current access points. There is significant uncertainty regarding the precise alignment of the underdrain and toe drain piping. Therefore, the pothole and trench excavations will be required to find the existing pipes, construct cleanouts at the located pipe sections, and insert the video camera. The cleanouts would be left in place to allow future access.

CULTURAL RESOURCE COMPLIANCE
Mid-Pacific Region
Division of Environmental Affairs
Cultural Resources Branch

Reclamation and COMB propose to excavate between 6 and 8 potholes to locate the toe-drain and underdrain piping. The drain is believed to be between 5 and 15 feet deep. Once identified a 4x4 foot square will be excavated down to it. Depending upon the depth of the drain the excavation unit will need to be sloped back resulting in a trench as long as 20 feet. All project excavations will be conducted within fill soils of the dam's toe-slope. No native soils will be impacted.

The Ortega Reservoir was constructed in 1953 and is a component of the South Coast Conduit. The South Coast Conduit, a pipeline and balancing reservoir system conveying water to the City of Santa Barbara and the Goleta Municipal Water District, Montecito Water District, Summerland Water District, and Carpinteria Water District. In 2010 Reclamation evaluated for National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) all of Reclamation owned properties associated with the Cachuma and Ventura River projects. This included the South Coast Conduit. The South Coast Conduit was determined ineligible for inclusion and received concurrence with this determination from SHPO on September 21, 2010.

All proposed activities will be conducted entirely within the constraints of the dam's built environment; therefore, there is little potential to encounter sites of religious and cultural significance pursuant to the regulations at 36 CFR § 800.3(f)(2) and 36 CFR § 800.4(a)(4). Reclamation did not consult with federally recognized Indian tribes for this undertaking.

Reclamation initiated consultation with California the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) on May 13, 2016 with a notification of a determination of no historic properties affected for the proposed project. SHPO concurred with the determination in a letter dated May 24, 2016.

I concur with Item 8 on CEC-16-013. The proposed action would have no 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.

**OFFICE OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION**

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SACRAMENTO, CA 95816-7100
(916) 445-7000 Fax: (916) 445-7053
calshpo@parks.ca.gov
www.ohp.parks.ca.gov



May 24, 2016

In reply refer to: BUR_2016_0513_001

Ms. Anastasia T. Leigh
Regional Environmental Officer
U.S. Bureau of Reclamation
Mid-Pacific Regional Office
2800 Cottage Way
Sacramento, CA 95825-1898

RE: Section 106 Consultation for the Ortega Reservoir Dam Seep Project, Santa Barbara County, California (Project #16-SCAO-129)

Dear Ms. Leigh:

The Office of Historic Preservation received on May 13, 2016 your letter initiating consultation on the above referenced project to comply with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (as amended) and its implementing regulations at 36 CFR Part 800. The Bureau of Reclamation (BUR) is seeking my comments on their finding of effect for the Ortega Reservoir Dam Seep Project located in Santa Barbara County, California. The BUR requested an expedited review of their submitted documents due to the urgent nature of the project.

The Ortega Reservoir Dam is owned by BUR and operated and managed by Cachuma Operations and Maintenance Board (COMB). In late April COMB discovered a seep at Ortega Reservoir Dam during a routine inspection located approximately mid-slope of the embankment near the left abutment of the dam. The proposed undertaking would involve the excavation of 6 to 8 potholes to locate the toe-drain and underdrain piping in order to locate the existing pipes, construct cleanouts at the located pipe sections, and insert a video camera for inspection of the pipes. Following location of the drain, a 4x4 foot square excavation will be made down to the drain (at a depth of 5-15 feet). In addition, a trench up to 20 feet long will be made sloping back from the excavation unit. The cleanouts would be left in place to allow for future access.

The BUR has defined the Area of Potential Effects (APE) as 0.26-acre of the toe-slope of Ortega Reservoir Dam, as shown in Figure 2 of your submittal. The vertical APE is dependent upon the depth of the toe-drain, but is not expected to go beyond 15 feet deep. All excavations required for this undertaking will be conducted within fill soils of the dam's toe-slope and will not impact native soils.

The Ortega Reservoir is a component of the South Coast Conduit. In 2010 the BUR evaluated all of its owned properties associated with the Cachuma and Ventura River Projects, including the South Coast Conduit. The BUR evaluated the South Coast Conduit as ineligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), and my office concurred with this determination in a letter dated September 21, 2010. Efforts to identify historic properties that may be affected by the current undertaking did not include a records search, pedestrian survey, or Native American consultation.

As a result of the efforts described above, the BUR has determined that there are no historic properties listed on or eligible for listing on the NRHP within their APE. Therefore, they are requesting comments on the delineation of the APE, on the adequacy of their historic property identification efforts and their finding of "*no historic properties affected*" for this undertaking. After reviewing the submitted materials, I have the following comments:

- I have no objection to the APE for this undertaking, as it appears appropriate pursuant to 36 CFR 800.16(d).
- The location of the planned undertaking is within the footprint of a built resource previously determined ineligible for the NRHP in 2010. The BUR did not conduct additional historic property identification efforts. I find the present identification efforts adequate due to the narrowly defined APE and the low archaeological sensitivity of the project with excavation limited to non-native fill soils contained entirely within the toe-slope of the dam.
- Pursuant to 36 CFR 800.4(d)(2), it appears that there are no historic properties located within the project area for this undertaking and, therefore, **I do not object** to a finding of *no historic properties affected* for this undertaking.

Be advised that under certain circumstances, such as unanticipated discovery or a change in project description, the BUR may have additional future responsibilities for this undertaking under 36 CFR Part 800. If you require further information, please contact Koren Tippet of my staff at (916) 445-7017 or Koren.Tippett@parks.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Julianne', followed by a long horizontal line.

Julianne Polanco
State Historic Preservation Officer