

RECLAMATION

Managing Water in the West

Categorical Exclusion Checklist

Contra Costa Water District's Safety Improvements to Pumping Plants

CEC-16-042

Prepared by:

Kate Connor
Kate Connor
Natural Resources Specialist
South-Central California Area Office

Date: March 30, 2017

Concurred by:

See Attachment A
Archaeologist/Architectural Historian
Mid-Pacific Regional Office
Regional Archeologist concurred with Item 8. Their determination has been placed within the project file.

Date: See Attachment A

Concurred by:

Ned M. Gruenhagen
Ned M. Gruenhagen
Wildlife Biologist
South-Central California Area Office

Date: 04/03/2017

Concurred by:

Rain L. Emerson
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.

Date: 04/05/2017

Approved by:

Michael R. Jackson
Michael R. Jackson
Area Manager
South-Central California Area Office

Date: 04/11/2017



Background

The Contra Costa Canal (Canal) was constructed by the Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) between 1937 and 1948. The Canal originates at Rock Slough, 4 miles southeast of Oakley, California, where it intercepts natural flow from the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta. Contra Costa Water District (Contra Costa) pursuant to an operating agreement (Contract No. 14-06-200-6072A) operates and maintains (O&Ms) the Canal on behalf of Reclamation.

Contra Costa is seeking to improve worker safety at the following three sites on the Canal: Pumping Plant (PP) 2, PP 3, and PP 4 (see Figure 1). Maintenance staff manually clean the bar racks at the three pumping plants to keep debris from entering the pumps. Debris is stored on the grated, concrete work area at the top of the screens until it dries and enough accumulates for staff to remove. This work area is several feet above the water surface and approximately 15 linear feet below the finished grade around the pumping plants. Removal of the debris requires maintenance staff to manually load the debris into bags that are tethered to the bucket of a backhoe located above the screen areas. The areas where the backhoe is parked during debris removal is not designed to support a backhoe and the District is concerned about the stability of the ground and safety of the workers operating the backhoe.

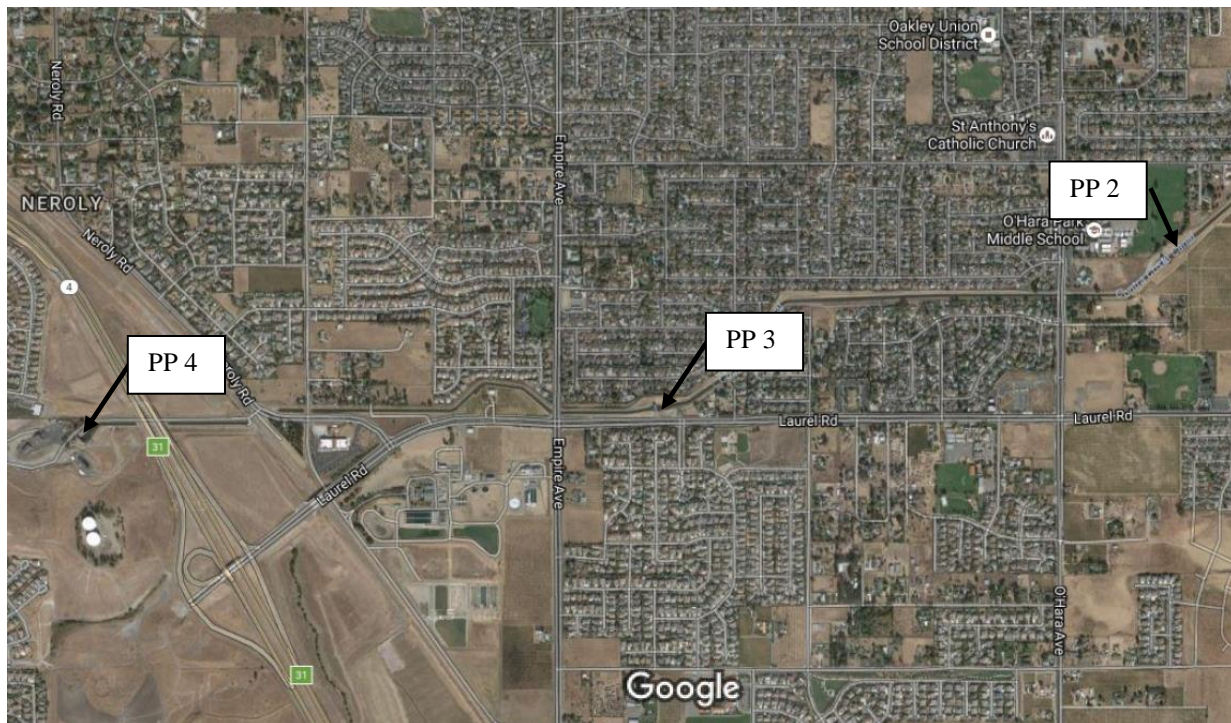


Figure 1 Project Location

The proposed project will improve the safe operations and maintenance at these locations through installation of concrete work platforms, concrete walkways, guardrails, and handrails, as shown in Figure 2. The construction activities will occur at PP 2, PP 3, and PP 4 at the top of the canal embankment and directly abutting the pumping plant structures.

Nature of the Action

Reclamation proposes to issue an MP-620 permit (Mid-Pacific Region specific permit for the modification of federal facilities) to Contra Costa for their proposed project at PP 2, PP 3, and PP 4. A general outline of construction activities proposed at each site is shown in Figure 2.

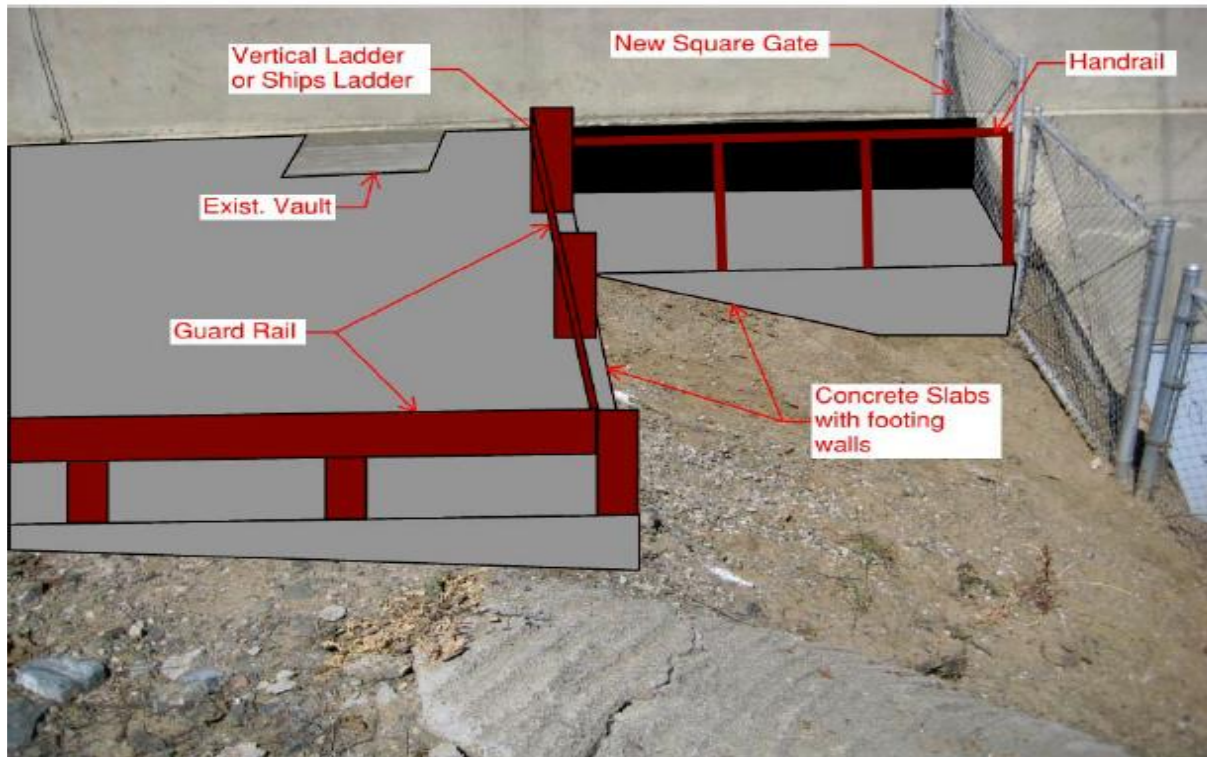


Figure 2 Proposed Improvements

Prior to any construction work, soil borings will be taken to determine the soil strength and composition within (or under) the proposed retaining wall locations. Bores will be 4 inches in diameter and up to 25 linear feet deep. A single bore will occur at each site. Each bore will remove approximately 2 cubic feet of soil. Soil samples will be tested at a laboratory to determine soil performance properties (density, bearing capacity, etc.). Bore holes will be backfilled with slurry cement. Unused soils will be spread onsite.

Once soil strength is determined, Contra Costa will install a concrete slab at PP 2, PP 3, and PP 4 with a cast-in-place concrete retaining wall that will allow a backhoe or boom truck to safely park on the pad for lifting and loading of screened debris. Additional improvements to site safety will include installation of guardrails/handrails as needed along the exposed sides of the concrete pad and walkway and a vertical ladder to access the walkway below the main concrete pad. Each pad will be approximately 18 linear feet by 25 linear feet. A 6 linear foot wide walkway will span the remaining distance (approximately 5 linear feet) to the wing wall. Final retaining wall depths will be designed based on the geotechnical boring laboratory results. Retaining wall heights above existing ground are estimated to be 4 linear feet at PP 2, and PP 3 and 8 linear feet at PP 4.

Construction equipment necessary to perform the work will consist of: concrete mixers, dump trucks, excavators, backhoes, pickup trucks, and hand tools for welding, drilling, bolting, and painting. The project will occur within the previously disturbed areas of the Canal, directly abutting the pumping plants.

Environmental Commitments

Contra Costa shall implement the following environmental protection measures to avoid and/or reduce environmental consequences associated with the Proposed Action:

- If the construction would occur during February 1 through August 31, which includes the avian breeding season, a qualified biologist or ornithologist will conduct pre-construction surveys for nesting migratory birds in the Project area and immediate vicinity. Surveys shall be conducted using commonly accepted methods. If take would occur from project activities, then if possible, recommendations for avoiding take shall be implemented (e.g., establishing an appropriate avoidance buffer until the young have fledged or until a qualified biologist determines that nesting is no longer active and take would not occur). If take cannot be avoided, project activities shall be deferred to such time that take would not occur.
- If construction will commence during the non-breeding season of September 1 through January 31, a qualified biologist or ornithologist will conduct pre-construction surveys for burrowing owls that may be using the project area or immediate vicinity.
 - a.) If no burrowing owls are located during the pre-construction surveys, then construction may be initiated.
 - b.) If burrowing owls are using burrows in the vicinity of the Project and would be affected by the project activities, procedures to avoid take shall be implemented. This may include demarcating buffer areas to avoid. Additionally, excluding owls from burrows that would be affected can be accomplished (CDFW 1995). For example, owls may be passively relocated from burrows by placing one-way doors in the burrows and leaving them in place for a minimum of three days. Once the biologist/ornithologist has determined that all burrowing owls have vacated the site and no take would occur, then construction may proceed.

Exclusion Category

516 DM 14.5 C (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.*

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

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: 17-SCAO-016

Project Name: Contra Costa Water District Automated Screen at Milepost 25.02 Improvement Project

NEPA Document: 16-041 and 16-042

MP 153 Cultural Resources Reviewer: Lex Palmer

Date: February 17, 2017

This proposed undertaking by the Contra Costa Water District (CCWD) is for the CCWD's proposed modification of federal facilities permitting CCWD to modify their facility by installing permanent power, equipment for communications with the District SCADA system, a concrete work pad, retaining wall, safety railing, and modify the existing material handling system adjacent to the Canal between MP 25.02 and MP 25.7, within the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation right-of-way. Reclamation determined that the authorization of this work is an undertaking as defined in 36 CFR § 800.16(y) and involves the type of activity that has the potential to cause effects on historic properties under 36 CFR § 800.3(a).

Based on historic properties identification efforts conducted by Reclamation, Reclamation consulted with, and received concurrence from, the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) on a finding of no adverse effect to historic properties, pursuant to 36 CFR § 800.5(b). Consultation correspondence between Reclamation and the SHPO has been provided with this cultural resources compliance document for inclusion in the administrative record for this action.

This document serves as notification that Section 106 compliance has been completed for this undertaking. Please note that if project activities subsequently change, additional NHPA Section 106 review, including further consultation with the SHPO, may be required. Thank you for providing the opportunity to comment.

Attachment:

Letter: SHPO to Reclamation dated February 16, 2017

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

1725 23rd Street, Suite 100
SACRAMENTO, CA 95816-7100
(916) 445-7000 Fax: (916) 445-7053
calshpo@parks.ca.gov
www.ohp.parks.ca.gov



February 16, 2017

In reply refer to: BUR_2017_0126_001

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

Subject: Section 106 Consultation for the Contra Costa Water District's (CCWD) Pumping Plants Safety Improvements Project (Project # 17-SCAO-014)-and Automated Canal Debris Removal Screen at Milepost 25.02 Improvement Project (Project #17-SCAO-015), Contra Costa County, California.

Dear Ms. Leigh:

The Office of Historic Preservation (OHP) received on January 26, 2017 your letter initiating consultation on the above referenced undertaking under Section 106 of the NHPA, and its implementing regulations found at 36 CFR Part 800 for two CCWD proposed worker safety projects at four locations along the Reclamation-owned Contra Costa Canal (CCC), located in Contra Costa County, California. Project 17-SCAO-014 will improve three canal pumping plants (PP2, PP3, and PP4) where manual cleaning of debris bar racks now occurs. Upgrades will include retaining walls, concrete pads, guardrails/handrails as needed and a walkway and vertical ladder for lower canal access. Project 17-SCAO-015 will augment an existing automated canal debris removal screen at Milepost (MP) 25.02 which now uses a portable generator to function. CCWD will install permanent power through a half- mile of buried conduit; add a communications equipment system (SCADA); concrete work pads and guardrails; and a debris material handling system. Reclamation proposes a finding of no adverse effect for this two-component undertaking. The following documents were included:

- *Enclosure 1: Project 17-SCAO-015: Figure 1-Location Map; Figure 1a-APE Map; Figure 1b-Work area; 2014 Reclamation/SHPO Correspondence*
- *Enclosure 2: Project 17-SCAO-014: Figure 2-Location Map; Figure 2a-PP2 APE Map; Figure 2b-PP3 APE Map; Figure 2c-PP4 APE Map; Figure 2d-Proposed changes to PP3-PP4 for project.*

The area of potential effects (APE) includes the entirety of the construction-related activities. The automated canal debris screen is 3,800 ft. long by 22 in. wide by 38 in. deep for the conduit trench; 2 ft. in diameter by 6 ft. deep for the three SCADA poles; and 100 square feet by 24 in. deep for the concrete pad. The APE for each of the three pumping plants is 4 inch diameter by 25 ft. deep for each of the three soil bores at each location (total of nine), and 100 square feet for the concrete pads. The entire APE is about 0.16 acres in total. Access and equipment and materials staging will take place on existing graveled and paved roads.

Reclamation's efforts to identify historic properties included reviewing its cultural resource files and records. These efforts resulted in reconfirming the National Register eligibility, under Criterion A, of the 47 mile long Contra Costa Canal (CCC), built in 1948 as the first operational component of the greater California Central Valley Project and which is additionally designed to aid in stemming salinity intrusion into Suisun Bay. Reclamation previously consulted with

OHP on September 23, 2014 for the canal debris screen installation (Project 17-SCAO-015). Reclamation made a finding of no adverse effect to the CCC and received concurrence from the SHPO in a letter dated October 29, 2014 (copy included in documentation). As all the associated work will take place within the canal prism and canal berm, which is composed of original canal construction excavation spoils, no additional inventory or survey was conducted.

The Wilton Rancheria is identified as an Indian tribe who might attach religious and cultural significance to historic properties in the area and their participation in the Section 106 process was sought by letter. On December 29, 2016, the Wilton Rancheria responded by letter, requesting additional information and Reclamation responded that the only identified cultural resource in the APE is the CCC. The Amah Mutsun Tribal Band, Indian Canyon Mutsun Band of Costanoan, the Muwekma Ohlone Indian Tribe, North Valley Yokuts Tribe, and Ohlone Indian Tribe were also contacted. Should any concerns be subsequently raised, Reclamation will work to address them and make notifications as required.

Reclamation has determined that the proposed safety measures will result in no significant alterations to the historic characteristics that make the canal segments and the CCC eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. The use of in-kind materials (concrete, steel) and spare industrial design of the new features is in keeping with the original canal construction materials, design and function. The 2015 automated canal debris screen modifications are consistent with that structure and also will not affect the eligibility of the CCC. The length of the canal (47 miles) helps lessen the degree of any potential effects from the proposed safety improvements. The CCC will still retain its integrity of feeling and association of a water conveyance system that is part of the California Central Valley project.

After OHP staff review of the documentation, the following comments are offered:

- Pursuant to 36 CFR 800.4(a)(1), there are no objections to the APE as defined;
- Pursuant to 36 CFR 800.4(b), Reclamation has documented a reasonable and good faith effort to identify historic properties within the area of potential effects.
- Reclamation has determined that the proposed undertaking will result in no adverse effects to the historic properties affected. Pursuant to 36 CFR 800.5(b), **I concur.**

Please be advised that under certain circumstances, such as unanticipated discovery or a change in project description, Reclamation may have additional future responsibilities for this undertaking under 36 CFR Part 800 (as amended). Should you require further information, please contact Jeanette Schulz at Jeanette.Schulz@parks.ca.gov or (916) 445-7031.

Sincerely,



Julianne Polanco
State Historic Preservation Officer