

OFFICIAL FILE COPY

Categorical Exclusion Log Number: CEC-11-037

North West Kern Resource Conservation District Mobile Irrigation Laboratory

South-Central California Area Office

Date: June 13, 2011

To:	Wildlife Biologist	SCC 424	<i>SM</i>	S McDonald	<i>6/13/11</i>
	Supervisory Nat. Res. Specialist	SCC 411	<i>Sier</i>	C Siek	<i>6/24/11</i>
	Secretary	SCC 101	<i>pe</i>	P Escobar	<i>6/24/11</i>
	Chief, Resource Division	SCC 400	<i>WE</i>	R English	<i>6/23/11</i>
	Deputy Area Manager	SCC 102	<i>SM</i>	L Myers	<i>6/20/11</i>
	Natural Resource Specialist	SCC 413	<i>Sier</i>	D Oliveira	<i>6/30/11</i>

Cost Authority Number: A10-1971-1000-000-00-0-0

Key Code: 511

From: Danielle Oliveira

Subject: Review and signing of Categorical Exclusion Checklist

Please review the attached CEC and route it according to the order on the list. When your review is finished, please date, initial and sign on the last page. However, if you have comments or questions please contact the Environmental Team or the proponent of the action. When everyone has signed the CEC, please return it to Danielle Oliveira.

Thank you.

Ready for Central Files

6/30/11

Copies to: MP-3730 (1 Copy)

Project Lead (1 Copy): Dave Woolley - SCC-418

North Kern RCD
Kern-Tulare WAD

01 2011
SM

CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION CHECKLIST
North West Kern Resource Conservation District
Mobile Irrigation Laboratory: Irrigation System Evaluations
July 1, 2011- June 30, 2012

South-Central California Area Office

June 1, 2011

Background: The North West Kern Resource Conservation District (NWKRCDD) provides technical assistance on irrigation practices. The Kern-Tulare Water District (KTWD) delivers water to the northeastern portion of Kern County and the southeastern portion of Tulare County, and is comprised of 19,000 acres (Figure 1).

The KTWD is sponsoring the Mobile Irrigation Laboratory, operated by the NWKRCDD to provide evaluations to landowners in order to promote irrigation efficiency.

Purpose and Need for Action: Many growers in the area have access to private consultants that provide irrigation scheduling, but most of these consultants do not perform any type of system evaluation before scheduling the irrigations. The purpose of the Mobile Irrigation Laboratory is to provide evaluations on irrigation system performance to enable the water users to be more proficient at scheduling their irrigation.

Proposed Action: Reclamation proposes to award a 2011 Water Conservation Field Service Grant for \$50,000 for the Mobile Irrigation Laboratory. An additional \$86,000 would be provided by local water districts and other local sources. As the applicant, the grant would be awarded to KTWD for use by NWKRCDD. Local water districts would assist in determining which landowners would benefit most from the evaluations provided by the Mobile Irrigation Laboratory.

The evaluations involve monitoring components of both surface (gravity flow) and pressurized irrigation systems. No surface disturbing activities would take place during this project.

Exclusion Category: 516 DM 14.5 D (12). Conduct of programs of demonstration, educational, and technical assistance to water user organizations for improvement of project and on-farm irrigation water use and management.



Evaluation of Criteria for Categorical Exclusion

- | | | | |
|---|-------------|----------------|-----|
| 1. This Action will have a significant effect on the quality of human environment | No <u>X</u> | Uncertain ____ | Yes |
| 2. This action would have highly controversial environmental effects or involve unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources | No <u>X</u> | Uncertain ____ | Yes |

Evaluation of Exemptions to Actions within Categorical Exclusion

- | | | | |
|---|-------------|----------------|-----|
| 1. This action would have significant impacts on public health or safety | No <u>X</u> | Uncertain ____ | Yes |
| 2. 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 (E.O. 11990); floodplains (E.O. 11988); national monuments; migratory birds; and other ecologically significant or critical areas | No <u>X</u> | Uncertain ____ | Yes |
| 3. This action will have highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risks | No <u>X</u> | Uncertain ____ | Yes |
| 4. This action would establish a precedent for future action or represent a decision in principle about future actions with potentially significant environmental effects | No <u>X</u> | Uncertain ____ | Yes |

- | | | | |
|--|-----------------|-------------------------|-----|
| 5. This action would have a direct relationship to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant environmental effects | No <u> X </u> | Uncertain <u> </u> | Yes |
| | | | |
| 6. This action would have significant impacts on properties listed, or eligible for listing, on the National Register or Historic Places (National Register) as determined by the bureau (in coordination with a Reclamation cultural resources professional, LND 02-01 D(1)(a)) | No <u> X </u> | Uncertain <u> </u> | Yes |
| | | | |
| 7. 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 | No <u> X </u> | Uncertain <u> </u> | Yes |
| | | | |
| 8. This action would violate a Federal, State, local, or tribal law or requirement imposed for protection of the environment | No <u> X </u> | Uncertain <u> </u> | Yes |
| | | | |
| 9. This action would affect ITAs (To be completed by Reclamation official responsible for ITAs) | No <u> X </u> | Uncertain <u> </u> | Yes |
| | | | |
| 10. This action would have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on low income or minority populations | No <u> X </u> | Uncertain <u> </u> | Yes |
| | | | |
| 11. 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 | No <u> X </u> | Uncertain <u> </u> | Yes |

12. 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 Weeds Control Act)

No X Uncertain ____ Yes

NEPA Action: Categorical Exclusion X

Environmental commitments, explanation, and/or remarks:

☐ Yes ☒ No Environmental commitments are required and attached.

- ☐ San Joaquin Kit Fox Avoidance and Minimization Measures
- ☐ Giant Garter Snake Avoidance and Minimization Measures
- ☐ California Tiger Salamander Avoidance and Minimization Measures
- ☐ California Red-Legged Frog Avoidance and Minimization Measures
- ☐ Other:

Prepared by:

Danielle OliveiraDate: June 13, 2011

South-Central California Area Office

Regional Archeologist concurrence with Item 7:
See attachment.ITA Designee concurrence with Item 10:
See attachment.

Concur:

Shanna McDonald

Date:

6/13/11

Wildlife Biologist, South-Central California Area Office

Concur:

C. J. Ford

Date:

6/24/11

Supervisory Natural Resources Specialist, South-Central California Area Office

Concur:

Randy J. English

Date:

6/27/11

Chief, Resources Management Division, South-Central California Area Office

Approved:

Laura Myers

Date:

6/30/2011

Deputy Area Manager, South-Central California Area Office

Oliveira, Danielle M

From: Overly, Stephen A
Sent: Thursday, June 02, 2011 1:10 PM
To: Oliveira, Danielle M; Perry, Laureen (Laurie) M
Cc: Barnes, Amy J; Bruce, Brandee E; Dunay, Amy L; Fogerty, John A; Goodsell, Joanne E; Nickels, Adam M; Soule, William E; Williams, Scott A
Subject: CR Review Complete for CEC-11-037 (11-SCAO-177)

Project #11-SCAO-177

Hi Danielle,

The proposed action to provide a Water Conservation Field Services Grant to the Northwest Kern Resources Conservation District has no potential to cause effects to historic properties pursuant to the regulations at 36 CFR Part 800.3 (a)(1).

I concur with Item 6 of Categorical Exclusion Checklist 11-037 for the 2011 Water Conservation Services Field Grant, Northwest Kern Resources Conservation District Mobile Lab, dated 06/01/11.

Proposed Action: The Bureau of Reclamation proposes to approve a Water Conservation Field Services Grant to the District for their Mobile Irrigation Laboratory Project (Mobile Lab). The project involves providing recommendations and assistance to agricultural landowners in the southern San Joaquin Valley. The assistance consists of on-farm irrigation system evaluations and would be available to farms of all sizes. The Mobile Lab would provide much needed information about irrigation system performance that would enable the water user to be more proficient at scheduling irrigations. No surface disturbing activities would take place during this project. The evaluation process involves monitoring various components of a working irrigation system. Components would vary depending on the system type, of which there are basically two: surface (or gravity flow) systems and pressurized systems. Once evaluations are completed, observations and recommendations would be made to the landowner/farmer.

NEPA Exclusion Category: 516 DM 14.5D (12). Conduct of programs of demonstration, educational, and technical assistance to water user organizations for improvement of project and on-farm irrigation water use and management.

This concludes the National Historic Preservation Act, Section 106 process for the proposed undertaking. Please retain a copy of this concurrence with the CEC file. Thank you for providing the opportunity to comment.

Tony

Stephen (Tony) Overly, M.A. Archaeologist
U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, Mid-Pacific Region
2800 Cottage Way, MP-153
Sacramento, CA 95825
916-978-5552

From: Oliveira, Danielle M
Sent: Thursday, June 02, 2011 10:56 AM
To: Perry, Laureen (Laurie) M
Cc: Barnes, Amy J; Bruce, Brandee E; Dunay, Amy L; Fogerty, John A; Goodsell, Joanne E; Nickels, Adam M; Overly, Stephen A; Soule, William E; Williams, Scott A
Subject: CR Request for CEC-11-037

Oliveira, Danielle M

From: Rivera, Patricia L
Sent: Friday, June 03, 2011 9:16 AM
To: Oliveira, Danielle M
Subject: RE: ITA Request for CEC-11-037

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Danielle,

I reviewed the proposed action to approve a 2011 Water Conservation Field Service Grant to North Kern Resource Conservation District for their Mobile Irrigation Laboratory Project. The project would involve providing recommendations and assistance to agricultural landowners in the southern San Joaquin Valley. This assistance would consist of on-farm irrigation system evaluations and would be available to farms of all sizes. Participants that would benefit most would be referred from local water districts. The mobile lab provides much needed information about irrigation system performance that would enable the water users to be more proficient at scheduling their irrigations.

No surface disturbing activities would take place during this project. The evaluation or assessment process involved in observing a working irrigation system includes monitoring various components of the system. Those components will vary depending on the system type, of which there are only two. The two system types are surface, or gravity flow, systems and pressurized systems. Surface systems are made up primarily of two different types, including furrow and flood, which work on the same principle of advance and recession, taking into account flow rates and soil types. Pressurized systems include the various types of sprinkler based systems and are driven by pressure and flow rate. Observations in these systems are more extensive due to the nature of the system. Therefore, there would be a breakdown between an impact type sprinkler system and a micro system with even more to be observed in the latter. Once evaluations are complete, observations and recommendation will be made to the landowner/farmer on how to better manage their water through the use of a more efficient irrigation system.

The proposed action does not have a potential to affect Indian Trust Assets. The nearest ITA is Tule River Reservation approximately 42 miles NE of the project location.

Patricia



United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF RECLAMATION
1243 "N" Street
Fresno, CA 93727



IN REPLY REFER TO:

Friant Division
ENV 7.00
SCC-424

June 13, 2011

MEMORANDUM

To: Danielle M. Oliveira

From: Shauna McDonald *Shauna McDonald*
Wildlife Biologist

Subject: No-Effect Determination for North West Kern Resource Conservation District
Mobile Irrigation Laboratory (CEC-037)

Reclamation proposes to approve a 2011 Water Conservation Field Service Grant to NKRCD for their Mobile Irrigation Laboratory Project. The project would involve providing recommendations and assistance to agricultural landowners in the southern San Joaquin Valley. This assistance would consist of on-farm irrigation system evaluations and would be available to farms of all sizes. Participants that would benefit most would be referred from local water districts. The mobile lab provides much needed information about irrigation system performance that would enable the water users to be more proficient at scheduling their irrigations.

No surface disturbing activities would take place during this project. The evaluation or assessment process involved in observing a working irrigation system includes monitoring various components of the system.

Once evaluations are complete, observations and recommendation will be made to the landowner/farmer on how to better manage their water through the use of a more efficient irrigation system.

Based upon the nature of this action Reclamation has determined there would be No Effect to listed or proposed species or any critical habitat under the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (16 U.S.C. §1531 et. seq.).