



Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board

26 February 2026

Daniel Okoli
University of California Merced
5200 Lake Road
Merced, CA 95343

NOTICE OF APPLICABILITY FOR COVERAGE UNDER ORDER SB12006GN, AMENDED ORDER FOR CLEAN WATER ACT SECTION 401 GENERAL WATER QUALITY CERTIFICATION FOR SMALL HABITAT RESTORATION PROJECTS, UC MERCED BARN POND HYDROLOGIC RESTORATION PROJECT (WDID# 5B24CR00128), MERCED COUNTY

On 28 January 2026, the University of California Merced (UC Merced) submitted a Notice of Intent (NOI) to enroll under and comply with State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) Order No. SB12006GN, Amended Order for Clean Water Act Section 401 General Water Quality Certification for Small Habitat Restoration Projects.

The Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (Central Valley Water Board) has reviewed your enrollment materials and finds the UC Merced Barn Pond Hydrologic Restoration Project (Project) meets the requirements of, and is hereby enrolled under, Order No. SB12006GN. You may proceed with your Project in accordance with the Order.

A copy of [Order SB12006GN](https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/cwa401/docs/generalorders/srhcpcert032713.pdf) (https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/cwa401/docs/generalorders/srhcpcert032713.pdf) can be found on the State Water Resources Control Board's General Orders webpage and is enclosed.

Please familiarize yourself with the requirements of Order No. SB12006GN. You are responsible for complying with all applicable Order requirements. Failure to comply with Order No. SB12006GN constitutes a violation of the California Water Code and may result in enforcement action or termination of enrollment under the Order.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The 3.6-acre Project is a targeted habitat enhancement effort designed to restore ecological function within the Merced Vernal Pools and Grassland Reserve. The Project centers on installing a gate valve outlet within the Barn Pond levee embankment to enable adaptive water level management. This Project provides measurable ecological

NICHOLAS AVDIS, CHAIR | PATRICK PULUPA, EXECUTIVE OFFICER

benefits by restoring natural hydrologic function, improving breeding conditions for sensitive amphibians, and enhancing downstream vernal pool and swale habitats. The Project will convert the existing pond area, approximately 3.6 acres, into restored habitat that supports *Ambystoma californiense* (California tiger salamander) and associated vernal pool species.

Project elements that affect aquatic resources include installing a gate valve within Barn Pond's levee, which creates a small permanent footprint in aquatic habitat but enables adaptive water management critical for restoration. Temporary dewatering may occur to isolate the work area, with measures in place to protect aquatic life.

The Project will temporarily impact 0.04 acre and permanently impact 0.001 acre of pond (wetland) habitat. Temporarily impacted areas will be restored to pre-Project condition.

PROJECT LOCATION

The Project is located at the Merced Vernal Pools and Grassland Reserve, immediately north of the UC Merced Campus. The approximate center of the Project area is at latitude 37.37677 Degrees, and longitude -120.41018 Degrees.

PROJECT SCHEDULE

The Project is expected to begin construction in September 2026 and last until 31 October 2026.

APPLICATION FEE RECEIVED

\$1,123.00 was received on 27 January 2026. The fee amount was determined as required by California Code of Regulations, title 23, sections 3833(b)(3) and 2200(a)(3), and was calculated as category D - Ecological Restoration and Enhancement Projects (fee code 85) with the dredge and fill fee calculator.

MITIGATION AND MINIMIZATION MEASURES

UC Merced must implement the mitigation and minimization measures proposed in section 3.3 of the "Implementation Plan" document dated December 2025, which was submitted with the application package.

NOTICE OF COMPLETION

Upon completion of the Project, UC Merced shall submit a Notice of Completion (NOC) no later than 30 days after Project completion. The NOC shall demonstrate the Project was carried out in accordance with the Project description, include a map of the Project location with final boundaries of the restoration area, and include post-project photographs. More information on the NOC is listed in section B.6 of the Order.

If you have questions concerning this matter, please contact Brandon Salazar by phone at (559) 445-6278 or by email at Brandon.Salazar@waterboards.ca.gov.

Digitally signed by Alex S. Mushegan

for Patrick Pulupa
Executive Officer

Enclosure: Amended Order for Clean Water Act Section 401 General Water Quality Certification for Small Habitat Restoration Projects File # SB12006GN

cc: [Via email only]

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