



Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board

1 August 2024

Mohamed Khairan
California Department of Transportation
1976 East Martin Luther King Blvd.
Stockton, CA 95205
mohamed.khairan@dot.ca.gov

ORDER AMENDING CLEAN WATER ACT SECTION 401 TECHNICALLY CONDITIONED WATER QUALITY CERTIFICATION; CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION, 10-0G830 MERCED SEISMIC RESTORATION PROJECT (WDID#5B24CR00095A1), MERCED COUNTY

This Order responds to the 27 June 2024 request for an amendment of the 10-0G830 Merced Seismic Restoration Project (Project) Section 401 Water Quality Certification (WDID#5B24CR00095). The original Water Quality Certification (Certification) was issued on 1 February 2022. The requested amendment is hereby approved. The original Certification is therefore amended as described below. Please attach this document to the original Certification.

AMENDMENT:

Caltrans is requesting a modification to the in-water work plans at Los Banos Creek and the San Joaquin River outlined in the original Certification's Project description. The modified in-water work plans result in reduced temporary dredge/fill impacts.

Sections IV and VII and Attachments A and B of the Certification are amended as described and shown below.

Amendment A1.1

Section IV is replaced in its entirety with the following:

IV. Project Description

The Project will seismically retrofit five bridges on State Routes 59, 140, and 152 in Merced County to increase their structural integrity. The construction activities include retrofitting hinges with pipe seat extenders and cable restrainers, adding steel column casings, and upgrading non-standard bridge railings.

In-channel work is not anticipated for the Eastside Bypass Channel Bridge and will not require a federal license or permit. Therefore, the work on this bridge is not covered under this Order.

In-channel work is expected for the Bear Creek Bridge, Los Banos Creek Bridge, and the San Joaquin River Bridge. Details of the in-channel work at these three bridges are as follows:

- The diversion at the Bear Creek Bridge will consist of gravel bag berm with an impervious membrane. Approximately 0.54 acre of channel will be dewatered on the north side and south side of the bridge. Flow will be allowed to continue through the center of the channel.
- At the Los Banos Creek Bridge, rock slope protection (RSP) will be placed in the channel on one side of the bridge to build a work pad up and out into the channel from the bank along with placing K-rail or rock-filled super-sacks to support the end of the work pad. The end of the work pad will stop short of the opposing bank by approximately 10 to 20 feet to allow for fish passage. Once work is complete on one side of the bridge, the RSP work pad will be removed and redeployed in the same fashion on the other side of the bridge.

Coffer dams (constructed from rock-filled super sacks or k-rail) will be constructed around every new set of pier piles where pile driving will occur in water. These coffer dams will isolate elevated turbidity from flowing water in the open channel and will not be dewatered. When heavy equipment is in use within the Ordinary High-Water Mark (OHWM) of Los Banos Creek, an absorbent boom will be placed downstream.

Approximately 0.35 acres of channel will be temporarily impacted from RSP installation, foot traffic, heavy equipment use, and any vegetation clearing. After the bridge pile work is complete, all coffer dams and RSP work pads will be removed and riverbed restoration will begin.

- At the San Joaquin River Bridge, a two-stage sheet pile coffer dam system will be installed around the bridge columns to be retrofitted. Water within the sheet pile coffer dams will be pumped to upland areas or other column excavations. RSP will be placed in the channel on both sides of the bridge to build a work pad up and out into the channel from the bank along with placing K-rail to support the end of the work pad. The end of the work pad will stop short of the opposing bank by approximately 30 to 50 feet to allow for fish passage. Once the first stage of the column retrofitting work is complete, the stage 1 coffer dam and RSP work pads will be removed and redeployed in the same fashion from the opposing bank so the stage 2 column retrofitting work can be done.

Approximately 0.37 acres of channel will be temporarily impacted as a result of RSP placement, foot traffic, heavy equipment use, and vegetation clearing. After stage 2 work is complete, the coffer dam and RSP work pads will be removed

and riverbed restoration will begin. When heavy equipment is in use within the Ordinary High-Water Mark (OHWM) of the San Joaquin River, an absorbent boom will be placed downstream.

Amendment A1.2

The first paragraph of Section VII is replaced in its entirety with the following:

The Project will directly impact a total of 1.27 acres of stream channel. The temporary impacts are a result of rock slope protection (RSP), cofferdam installation, foot traffic, heavy equipment use, and vegetation clearing. The permanent impacts will be from the placement of RSP for the Los Banos Creek Bridge and the encasing of piles on the Bear Creek Bridge.

Amendment A1.3

Table 1 in Section VII is replaced in its entirety with the table below.

Table 1: Total Project Fill/Excavation Quantity for Temporary Impacts

Aquatic Resources Type	Acres	Cubic Yards	Linear Feet
Stream Channel	1.26		

Amendment A1.4

Table 4 in Section XIV.J is replaced in its entirety with the table below.

Table 4: Required Project Mitigation Quantity for Temporary Impacts by Method

Aquatic Resource Type	Mitigation Type	Units	Est.	Re-est.	Reh.	Enh.	Pres.	Unknown
Stream Channel	Permittee Responsible	Acres			1.26			

Amendment A1.5

Figures 8-11 on pages 4-7 of this amendment are incorporated in Attachment A of the Certification.

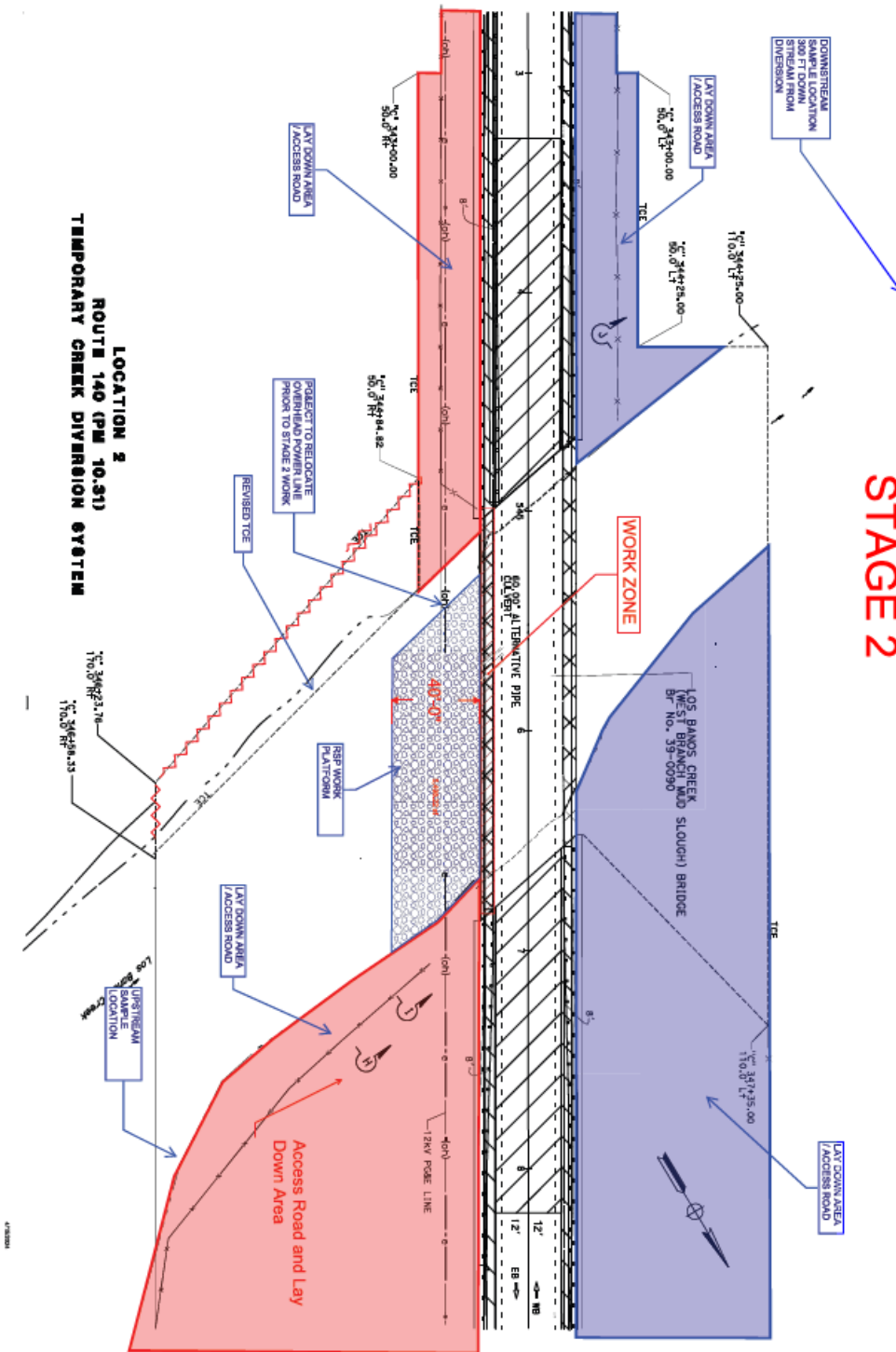


Figure 9: Water Diversion Plan Stage 2, Los Banos Creek

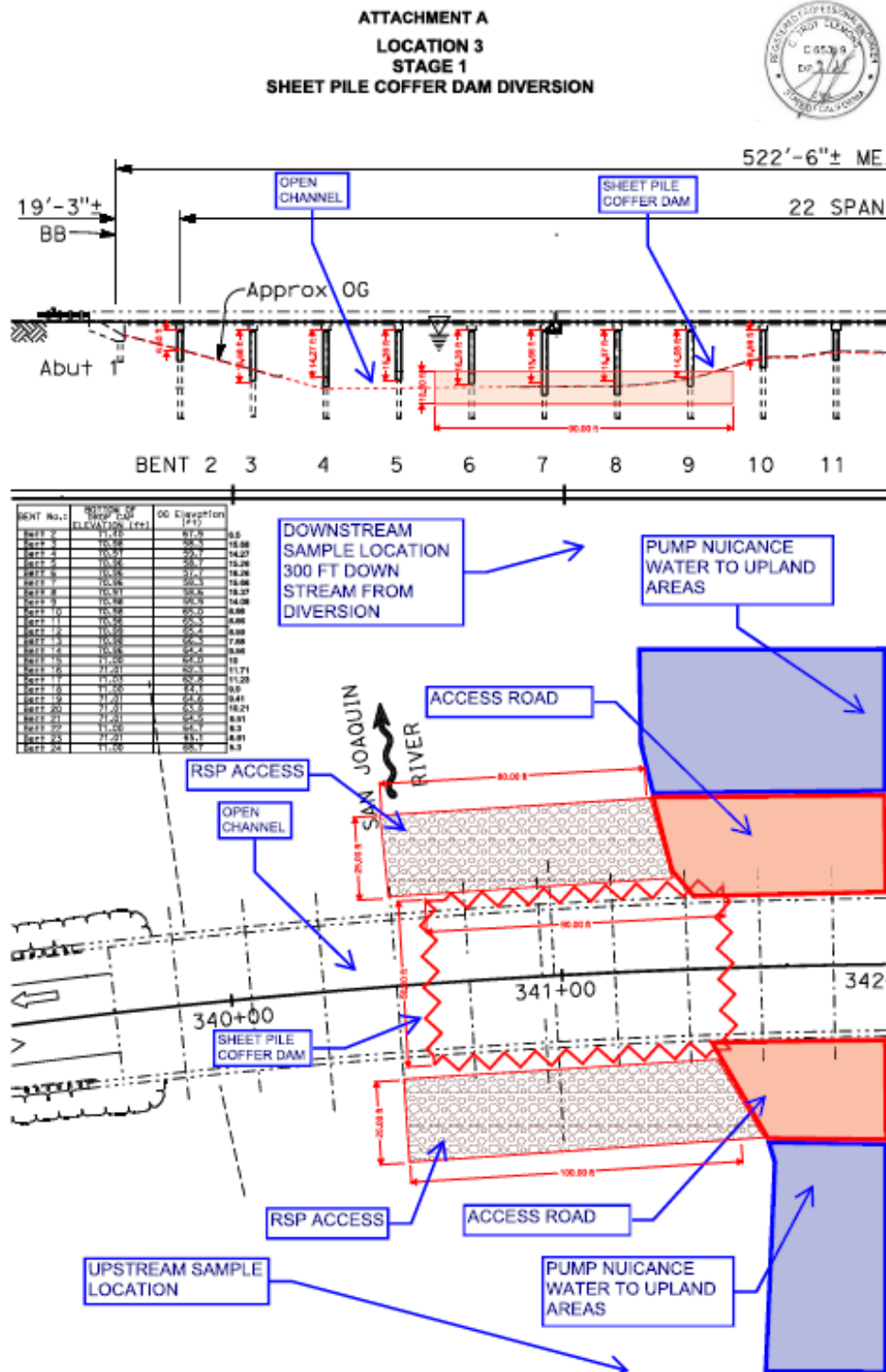
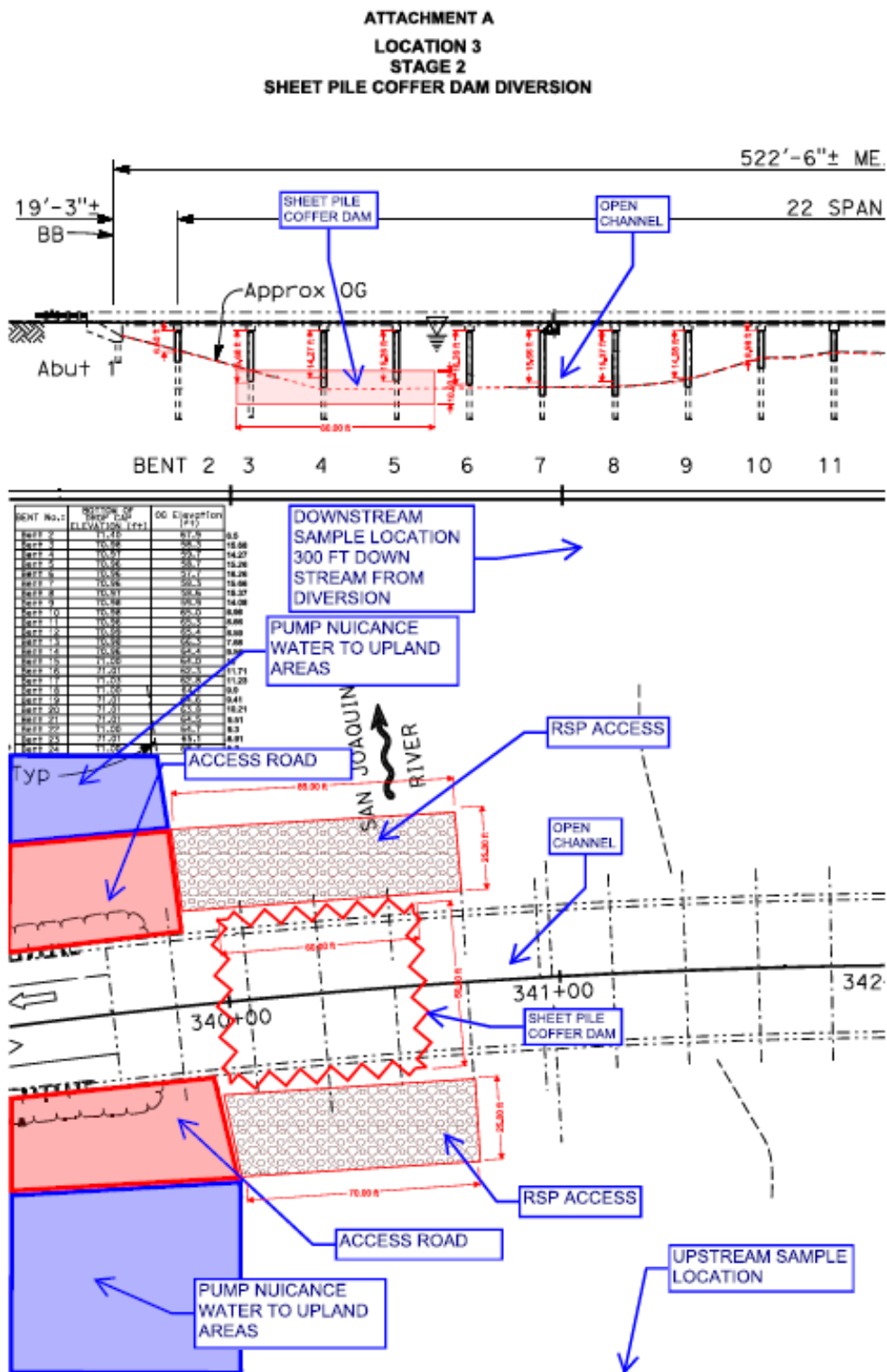


Figure 10: Water Diversion Plan Stage 1, San Joaquin River



Amendment A1.6

Table 2 in Attachment B is replaced in its entirety with the table below.

Table 2: Individual Temporary Fill/Excavation Impact Information

Impact Site ID	Latitude	Longitude	Indirect Impact Requiring Mitigation?	Acres	Cubic Yards	Linear Feet
Bear Creek Bridge	37.30759	-120.50330	No	0.54	2613	240
Los Banos Creek Bridge	37.29136	-120.94420	No	0.35		
San Joaquin River Bridge	37.30984	-120.93048	No	0.37		

APPLICATION FEE RECEIVED:

No fee was required for this amendment. Total fees of \$39,958.00 for the original Certification were received on 14 December 2021. The fee amount was determined as required by California Code of Regulations, title 23, sections 3383(b)(3) and 2200(a)(3), as was calculated as category A - Fill & Excavation Discharges (fee code 84).

CENTRAL VALLEY REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARD CONTACT:

Olivia Ilsley, Environmental Scientist
11020 Sun Center Drive, Suite 200
Rancho Cordova, CA 95670
olivia.ilsley@waterboards.ca.gov; (916) 464-4673

PUBLIC NOTICE:

The Central Valley Water Board provided public notice of the amendment request pursuant to California Code of Regulations, title 23, section 3858 from 28 June 2024 to 19 July 2024. The Central Valley Water Board did not receive any comments during the comment period.

WATER QUALITY CERTIFICATION:

I hereby issue an Order amending the existing Clean Water Act, Section 401 Technically Conditioned Water Quality Certification for the 10-0G830 Merced Seismic Restoration Project (WDID#5B24CR00095A1). All other conditions and provisions of the original Water Quality Certification and any previously approved amendments remain in full force and effect, except as modified based on the conditions of this Order. Failure to comply with the terms and conditions of the original Water Quality Certification, previously approved amendments, or of this Order may result in suspension or revocation of the Water Quality Certification.

Original Digitally Signed by Alexander S. Mushegan
For Patrick Pulupa
Executive Officer

cc: see next page

cc: United States Environmental Protection Agency
Region 9
R9cwa401@epa.gov

United States Army Corps of Engineers
Sacramento District Headquarters
SPKRegulatoryMailbox@usace.army.mil

Jenn Schofield
United States Fish & Wildlife Service
jenn_schofield@fws.gov

Grant Piepkorn
California Department of Fish and Wildlife, Region 4
Grant.Piepkorn@wildlife.ca.gov

CWA Section 401 WQC Program
Division of Water Quality
State Water Resources Control Board
Stateboard401@waterboards.ca.gov

Maninder Walia
Caltrans
Maninder.walia@dot.ca.gov

Christy Lafayette
Caltrans
christy.lafayette@dot.ca.gov