STATE OF CALIFORNIA STATE WATER RESOURCES CONTROL BOARD

In the Matter of Water Quality Certification for

STOCKTON EAST WATER DISTRICT AND FOWLER BROTHERS FARMING, INC. CADY RANCH WATER DISTRIBUTION PROJECT

SOURCE: Calaveras River

COUNTY: San Joaquin

WATER QUALITY CERTIFICATION FOR FEDERAL PERMIT OR LICENSE

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

Applicants	Stockton East Water District and Fowler Brothers Farming Inc.
BMPs	best management practices
CDFW	California Department of Fish and Wildlife
Central Valley Regional Water Board	Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board
Construction General Permit	National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) General Permit for Stormwater Discharges Associated with Construction and Land Disturbance Activities
CEQA	California Environmental Quality Act
certification	water quality certification
Deputy Director	Deputy Director of the Division of Water Rights
Dredge or Fill Procedures	State Wetland Definition and Procedures for Discharges of Dredged or Fill Materials to Waters of the State
ELAP	California's Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Program
ESA	Endangered Species Act
Executive Officer	Executive Officer of Central Valley Regional Water Board
IS/MND	Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration
NPDES	National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System
NTU	Nephelometric Turbidity Unit
Project	Cady Ranch Water Distribution Project
PVC	polyvinyl chloride
Regional Water Boards	Regional Water Quality Control Boards
SEWD	Stockton East Water District
SR/SJR Basin Plan	Water Quality Control Plan for the Sacramento River Basin and the San Joaquin River Basin
State Water Board	State Water Resources Control Board
TMDLs	total maximum daily loads
USEPA	United States Environmental Protection Agency
USFWS	United States Fish and Wildlife Service

1.0 **Project Description**

Stockton East Water District (SEWD) and Fowler Brothers Farming, Inc. (collectively the Applicants) propose the Cady Ranch Water Distribution Project (Project), which involves installation of a new surface water diversion along the Calaveras River in San Joaquin County (Figure 1) for irrigation on the Cady Ranch property. The Project consists of installing two pumps along the Calaveras River (Figure 2), a new agricultural holding pond, and approximately 4,900 feet of 27-inch diameter polyvinyl chloride (PVC) pipe for conveyance of the surface water. Installation of the PVC pipe will permanently impact roughly 10 linear feet of stream bank along the Calaveras River. In addition, the Project would have approximately 2.36 acres of permanent impacts to grassland habitat for the excavation and construction of a new agricultural holding pond or reservoir (Figure 3).

The two pumps will be installed in a 4-foot by 4-foot concrete box. The concrete box will be excavated to a depth of approximately 20 feet. The 27-inch-diameter PVC pipe will run from the bottom of the concrete box approximately 125 feet to the Calaveras River. The PVC pipe conduit will be capped with a fish screen to ensure aquatic organisms are not entrained in the conduit. The Applicants propose construction of a cofferdam to separate the work area from the Calaveras River. After the pumps and PVC conduit are installed, all trenching will be backfilled, and the riverbank will be restored to its previously undisturbed condition using native soil and hydroseeding.

Water Rights

The Applicants intend to use a United States-contracted water right for the New Hogan Project. In August of 1970, the United States entered into a contract with Stockton and East San Joaquin Water Conservation District (now SEWD), which SEWD asserts provide it with the ability to irrigate crops on an almond ranch from the New Hogan Project.

2.0 Regulatory Authority

Water Quality Certification and Related Authorities

The federal Clean Water Act (33 U.S.C. §§ 1251-1388) was enacted "to restore and maintain the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of the Nation's waters." (33 U.S.C. § 1251(a).) The Clean Water Act relies significantly on state participation and support in light of "the primary responsibilities and rights of States to prevent, reduce, and eliminate pollution" and "plan the development and use" of water resources. (33 U.S.C. § 1251(b).) Section 101 of the Clean Water Act (33 U.S.C. § 1251(g)) requires federal agencies to "co-operate with State and local agencies to develop comprehensive solutions to prevent, reduce and eliminate pollution in concert with programs for managing water resources."

Section 401 of the Clean Water Act (33 U.S.C. § 1341) requires any applicant for a federal license or permit that may result in a discharge into navigable waters to provide the licensing or permitting federal agency with certification that the project will comply

with specified provisions of the Clean Water Act, including water quality standards promulgated pursuant to section 303 of the Clean Water Act (33 U.S.C. § 1313). Clean Water Act section 401 directs the agency responsible for certification to set effluent limitations and other conditions necessary to ensure compliance with the Clean Water Act and with "any other appropriate requirement of State law." (33 U.S.C. § 1341(d).) Section 401 further provides that water quality certification (certification) conditions shall become conditions of any federal license or permit for the project.

The State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) is the state agency responsible for Clean Water Act section 401 certification in California. (Wat. Code, § 13160.) The State Water Board has delegated authority to act on applications for certification to the Executive Director of the State Water Board. (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 23, § 3838, subd. (a).)

Water Code section 13383 authorizes the State Water Board to "establish monitoring, inspection, entry, reporting, and recordkeeping requirements" and obtain "other information as may be reasonably required" for activities subject to certification under section 401 of the Clean Water Act. For activities that involve the diversion of water for beneficial use, the State Water Board delegated this authority to the Deputy Director of the Division of Water Rights (Deputy Director), as provided for in State Water Board Resolution No 2012-0029 (State Water Board 2012). In the *Redelegation of Authorities* memo issued by the Deputy Director on November 18, 2020, this authority is redelegated to the Assistant Deputy Directors of the Division of Water Rights (State Water Board 2020).

On December 6, 2021, SEWD filed a certification application for the Project with the State Water Board under section 401 of the Clean Water Act. On December 10, 2021, State Water Board staff provided public notice of the application, pursuant to California Code of Regulations, title 23, section 3858, by posting information describing the Project on the State Water Board's website. On February 23, 2022, State Water Board staff requested comments from the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (Central Valley Regional Water Board) on the certification. (See Cal. Code Regs., tit. 23, § 3855, subd. (b)(2)(B).) No comments were received.

Water Quality Control Plans and Related Authorities

The California Regional Water Quality Control Boards (Regional Water Boards) have primary responsibility for the formulation and adoption of water quality control plans for their respective regions, subject to State Water Board and United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) approval, as appropriate. (Wat. Code, § 13240 et seq.) The State Water Board may also adopt water quality control plans, which will supersede regional water quality control plans for the same waters to the extent of any conflict. (Wat. Code, § 13170.) For a specified area, water quality control plans designate the beneficial uses of water to be protected, water quality objectives established for the reasonable protection of those beneficial uses or the prevention of nuisance, and a program of implementation to achieve the water quality objectives. (Wat. Code, §§ 13241, 13050, subds. (h), (j).) The beneficial uses, together with the water quality objectives that are contained in the water quality control plans and state and federal

antidegradation requirements, constitute California's water quality standards for purposes of the Clean Water Act.

The Central Valley Regional Water Board adopted, and the State Water Board and USEPA approved the *Water Quality Control Plan for the Sacramento River Basin and the San Joaquin River Basin* (SR/SJR Basin Plan) (Central Valley Regional Water Board 2018). The SR/SJR Basin Plan designates the beneficial uses of water to be protected along with the water quality objectives necessary to protect those uses. The SR/SJR Basin Plan identifies existing beneficial uses for surface waters in the Calaveras River, from the New Hogan Reservoir to the Delta, as: municipal and domestic supply; irrigation; stock watering; contact recreation; canoeing and rafting; noncontact water recreation; warm freshwater habitat; cold freshwater habitat; warm migration of aquatic organisms; cold migration of aquatic organisms; warm spawning, reproduction, and/or early development; cold spawning, reproduction and/or early development; and wildlife habitat. The SR/SJR Basin Plan identifies potential beneficial uses for surface waters in the Calaveras River, from the New Hogan Reservoir to the Delta, as: municipal and domestic supply; and industrial service supply.

The State Water Board's Antidegradation Policy, "Statement of Policy with Respect to Maintaining High Quality Waters in California," Resolution No. 68-16, requires that the quality of existing high-quality water be maintained unless any change will be consistent with the maximum benefit to the people of the state, will not unreasonably impact present or anticipated future beneficial uses of such water, and will not result in water quality less than that prescribed in water quality control plans or policies. The Antidegradation Policy further requires best practicable treatment or control of the discharge necessary to assure that pollution or nuisance will not occur and the highest water quality consistent with maximum benefit to the people of the state will be maintained. The state Antidegradation Policy incorporates the federal Antidegradation Policy (40 C.F.R. section 131.12 (a)(1)), which requires "[e]xisting instream water uses and the level of water quality necessary to protect the existing uses shall be maintained and protected."

Clean Water Act Section 303(d) Listing

USEPA approved the 2018 303(d) list on June 9, 2021. Section 303(d) of the Clean Water Act requires total maximum daily loads (TMDLs) to be developed for impaired waterbodies. TMDLs are control programs that define the maximum amount of a pollutant that a waterbody can receive without exceeding water quality standards and establish waste load allocations and load allocations for point and nonpoint sources of pollution. The portion of the Calaveras River where the proposed Project is located does not identify any impairments on the 303(d) list.

Construction General Permit

The Applicants shall obtain coverage under the State Water Board's National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) General Permit for Stormwater Discharges Associated with Construction and Land Disturbance Activities (Construction General

Permit)¹ (State Water Board 2009) for activities that disturb one or more acres of soil, or that disturb less than one acre but are part of a larger common plan of development that in total disturbs one or more acres. Construction activities subject to the Construction General Permit include clearing, grading, and disturbances to the ground, such as stockpiling or excavation, but do not include regular maintenance activities performed to restore the original line, grade, or capacity of the facility. Coverage is required pursuant to Clean Water Action sections 301 and 402, which prohibit certain discharges of stormwater containing pollutants except in compliance with a NPDES permit. (33 U.S.C. §§ 1311, 1342(p); 40 C.F.R. pts. 122, 123, and 124.)

State Wetland Definition and Procedures for Discharges of Dredged or Fill Material to Waters of the State

On April 2, 2019, the State Water Board adopted the *State Wetland Definition and Procedures for Discharges of Dredged or Fill Material to Waters of the State* (Dredge or Fill Procedures),² which became effective on May 28, 2020. The Dredge or Fill Procedures provide California's definition of wetland, wetland delineation procedures, and procedures for submitting applications for activities that could result in discharges of dredged or fill material to waters of the state. The Dredge or Fill Procedures ensure that State Water Board regulatory activities will result in no net loss of wetland quantity, quality, or permanence, compliant with the *California Wetlands Conservation Policy*, Executive Order W-59-93. The Applicants must comply with the Dredge or Fill Procedures when conducting dredge or fill activities that may impact waters of the state, including wetlands.

California Environmental Quality Act

SEWD is the lead agency for the Project for the purpose of compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (Pub. Resources Code, § 21000 et seq.) and CEQA Guidelines (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 15000 et seq.). The State Water Board is a responsible agency under CEQA.

CEQA applies to discretionary projects that may cause a direct or indirect physical change in the environment. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21000 et seq.) When proposing to undertake or approve a discretionary project, state agencies must comply with the procedural and substantive requirements of CEQA. SEWD released a draft Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) for public review from May 13, 2021 to June 13, 2021. SEWD did not receive comments. SEWD approved the final IS/MND

¹ Water Quality Order No. 2009-0009-DWQ and NPDES No. CAS000002, as amended by Order No. 2010-0014-DWQ, Order No. 2012-0006-DWQ, and any amendments thereto. Available at: https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/stormwater/construction.html Accessed on February 24, 2022.

² The Dredge or Fill Procedures are available online at: https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/cwa401/docs/wrapp/rs2021_ 0012.pdf. Accessed on February 24, 2022.

for the Project on June 22, 2021 (SEWD 2021b) and filed a Notice of Determination with the State Clearinghouse on June 23, 2021. In accordance with California Code of Regulations, title 23, section 3859, subdivision (a), the State Water Board has required, as conditions of certifying the Project, compliance with the mitigation measures in Table B, as identified in SEWD's final IS/MND. SEWD is responsible for implementing each mitigation measure and providing verification of implementation.

Table B. Resource Area and Mitigation Measure, Impact, and Corresponding
Certification Condition

IS/MND Resource Area: Mitigation Measure	IS/MND Potential Impacts	Applicable Certification Condition				
Biological Resources: Worker Training (BIO-1)	Temporary impacts to special status wildlife	Condition 8				
Biological Resources: Environmentally Sensitive Areas (BIO-2)	Temporary impacts to riparian habitat	Condition 9				
Biological Resources: Best Management Practices (BIO-3)	Adverse impacts to special status wildlife and riparian habitat	Condition 3 Condition 4				
Biological Resources: Vegetation Management (BIO-4)	Adverse impacts to riparian habitat	Condition 7				
Biological Resources: Restoration (BIO-5)	Adverse impacts to special status wildlife and riparian habitat	Condition 7				
Biological Resources California Tiger Salamander Surveys (BIO-7)	Adverse impacts to special status wildlife	Condition 9				
Biological Resources Fugitive Dust (BIO-16)	Adverse impacts to special status wildlife and riparian habitat	Condition 3				
Biological Resources Western Pond Turtle Surveys (BIO-17)	Adverse impacts to special status wildlife	Condition 9				
Biological Resources Western Pond Turtle Relocation (BIO-18)	Adverse impacts to special status wildlife	Condition 9				

Per the final IS/MND, species listed as threatened or endangered under the federal or California Endangered Species Act or species identified by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife as a species of special concern that have the potential to occur in the Project area include:

- 1. California tiger salamander (Ambystoma californiense);
- 2. Western pond turtle (Actinemys marmorata);
- 3. Central Valley Steelhead (Oncorhynchus mykiss irideus); and

4. Valley elderberry longhorn beetle (Desmocerus californicus dimorphus).

This certification has been informed by the environmental information and analysis contained in the final IS/MND and other information in the record. These documents and other materials that constitute the public record are located at the State Water Board, Division of Water Rights, 1001 I Street, Sacramento, California. The State Water Board will file a Notice of Determination with the State Clearinghouse within five days of issuing this Project certification.

3.0 Overview Rationale for Water Quality Certification Conditions

Certification conditions were developed to ensure compliance with water quality standards and water quality requirements established under the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act, the federal Clean Water Act, including requirements in the SR/SJR Basin Plan, and other appropriate requirements of state law. The conditions are necessary to protect the beneficial uses of water identified in the SR/SJR Basin Plan, prevent degradation of water quality, and ensure compliance with state and federal water quality requirements.³

When preparing this certification, State Water Board staff reviewed and considered the following information:

- SEWD's application for certification (SEWD 2021a), and supplemental information provided subsequent to the application and prior to certification issuance;
- SEWD's final IS/MND (SEWD 2021b);
- Existing and potential beneficial uses, associated water quality objectives, and implementation measures and programs described in the SR/SJR Basin Plan;
- Project-related controllable water quality factors; and
- Other information in the record.

Rationale for Condition 1: Water Quality Monitoring

The Project involves installing a new surface water diversion along the Calaveras River, which has the potential to violate the SR/SJR Basin Plan's water quality objectives. Condition 1 requires the Applicants to comply with applicable water quality objectives of the SR/SJR Basin Plan and implement water quality monitoring to ensure compliance with water quality objectives and help prevent or limit impacts to beneficial uses. Water quality monitoring included in this certification further ensures that the Project will not substantially impact water quality.

Turbidity. Excavation, installation, and removal of a cofferdam, and other inwater or water-adjacent work may increase turbidity above levels protective of beneficial uses. Beneficial uses in the Calaveras River that could be most

³ Designated beneficial uses for surface waters in the Project area are described in Section 2.2 of this certification and in Chapter 2 of the SR/SJR Basin Plan.

impacted by increased turbidity levels include: warm freshwater habitat; cold freshwater habitat; warm migration of aquatic organisms; cold migration of aquatic organisms; warm spawning, reproduction, and/or early development; cold spawning, reproduction and/or early development; and wildlife habitat. Turbidity affects fish by impairing vision and altering feeding behavior, predator avoidance, and behavioral interaction with other fish. The SR/SJR Basin Plan prescribes numeric turbidity limits based on natural turbidity levels. The SR/SJR Basin Plan allows appropriate averaging periods to be applied when determining compliance with the turbidity limits, provided that beneficial uses will be protected. Condition 1 requires compliance with the SR/SJR Basin Plan's turbidity limits averaged over 24 hours for all in-water and water-adjacent work.

Dissolved Oxygen. Increased turbidity can decrease dissolved oxygen, which could adversely impact beneficial uses. Beneficial uses in the Calaveras River that could be most impacted by decreased dissolved oxygen levels include: warm freshwater habitat; cold freshwater habitat; warm migration of aquatic organisms; cold migration of aquatic organisms; warm spawning, reproduction, and/or early development; cold spawning, reproduction, and/or early development; and wildlife habitat. Condition 1 requires the Applicants to comply with the SR/SJR Basin Plan water quality objective of 7.0 milligrams per liter for the cold freshwater habitat beneficial use (Central Valley Regional Water Board 2018) and monitor dissolved oxygen during in-water and water-adjacent work to ensure that Project activities do not decrease dissolved oxygen below the water quality objective.

pH. Construction materials, such as cement, can alter pH levels outside of levels protective of beneficial uses. Beneficial uses in the Calaveras River that would be most impacted by altered pH levels include: warm freshwater habitat; cold freshwater habitat; warm spawning, reproduction, and/or early development; cold spawning, reproduction, and/or early development; and wildlife habitat. Condition 1 requires the Applicants to comply with the SR/SJR Basin Plan pH water quality objective of 6.5 to 8.5 (Central Valley Regional Water Board 2018) and monitor pH during in-water and water-adjacent work to ensure that Project activities do not violate the water quality objective.

Rationale for Condition 2: Project Activities

Condition 2 requires the Applicants to implement the Project as described in its certification application and as modified by this certification. This condition will help ensure that the Project is implemented in a manner that protects water quality objectives and avoids unreasonable impacts to beneficial uses. Any changes to the Project description after certification issuance could impact the findings, conclusions, and conditions of the certification, as well as trigger additional environmental review.

Protection of the instream beneficial uses identified in the SR/SJR Basin Plan requires effluent limitations and other limitations on discharges of pollutants from point and nonpoint sources to the Calaveras River. Erosion from Project construction activities has the potential to result in discharges that violate water quality standards. Compliance with the Construction General Permit will help ensure protection of water quality and beneficial uses.

Rationale for Condition 3: Erosion and Sediment Control

Erosion and sedimentation can contribute to significant degradation of the waters of the state; therefore, it is necessary to implement actions to limit or eliminate such discharges in order to protect water quality and associated beneficial uses. Project activities, including but not limited to the use of unpaved roads, vegetation removal, and construction work along the Calaveras River, have the potential to result in increased erosion that discharges sediment and other materials into waters of the state in the Project area and downstream of the Project area. Increases in erosion and sedimentation can violate water quality objectives and impact existing beneficial uses including: warm freshwater habitat; cold freshwater habitat; warm migration of aquatic organisms; cold migration of aquatic organisms; warm spawning, reproduction, and/or early development; cold spawning, reproduction, and/or early development; and wildlife habitat. This condition requires the Applicants to implement erosion and unreasonable impacts to beneficial uses.

Rationale for Condition 4: Hazardous Materials Management

The Project involves construction using equipment that may require equipment refueling and/or servicing. Site management requires implementation of best practices to prevent, minimize, and/or clean up construction spills, including from construction equipment. For instance, fuels and lubricants associated with the use of mechanized equipment have the potential to result in toxic discharges to waters of the state in violation of water quality standards, including the toxicity and floating material water quality objectives. This condition is also required pursuant to Water Code section 13264, which prohibits any discharge that is not specifically authorized in this certification.

The SR/SJR Basin Plan includes narrative water quality objectives for oil, grease, and other hazardous materials. Waters must be free of hazardous materials in concentrations that cause nuisance or "detrimental physiological responses in human, plant, animal, or aquatic life" (Central Valley Regional Water Board 2018). Beneficial uses in the Calaveras River that could be most impacted by hazardous materials include: warm freshwater habitat; cold freshwater habitat; warm migration of aquatic organisms; cold migration of aquatic organisms; warm spawning, reproduction, and/or early development; cold spawning, reproduction, and/or early development; and wildlife habitat. Condition 4 requires implementation of hazardous materials management measures to prevent hazardous material spills into waterways, including containment criteria pursuant to California Code of Regulations, title 27, section 20320.

Rationale for Condition 5: Diversion and Dewatering

The Project includes in-water and water-adjacent work, which will require the dewatering of a small portion of the Calaveras River and diversion of water around the dewatered area. Installation and removal of temporary dams or other artificial obstructions could violate turbidity water quality objectives and impact beneficial uses (e.g., dewater habitat and strand fish). Beneficial uses in the Calaveras River that could be most impacted by increased turbidity levels include: warm freshwater habitat; cold freshwater habitat; warm migration of aquatic organisms; cold migration of aquatic organisms; warm spawning, reproduction, and/or early development; cold spawning, reproduction, and/or early development; and wildlife habitat. Turbidity affects fish by impairing vision and altering feeding behavior, predator avoidance, and behavioral interaction with other fish. Condition 5 requires the Applicants to develop a Dewatering and Diversion Plan that will ensure the protection of Calaveras River water quality and associated beneficial uses during Project activities. The Dewatering and Diversion Plan includes water guality monitoring, measures to avoid water guality impacts, reporting, and adaptive management, as needed. Additionally, Condition 5 does not allow for new permanent water diversion, as the Applicants' certification application is for construction of diversion-related works. This certification does not grant water rights.

Rationale for Condition 6: Project Completion Report

Condition 6 requires the Applicants to notify the Central Valley Regional Water Board and State Water Board staff prior to implementing Project activities and to submit a Project Completion Report (Completion Report) following construction to document Project compliance with certification requirements. The Completion Report will inform the Deputy Director of potential water quality objective violations and/or impacts to beneficial uses. This will allow implementation of measures to limit or prevent any violations and/or impacts.

Rationale for Condition 7: Site Stabilization

Implementation of the Project is expected to result in the permanent impacts to 2.36 acres of grassland habitat and up to 10 feet of stream channel. Condition 7 requires the Applicants to develop and implement a Site Stabilization Plan prior to implementing Project activities. Implementation of the Site Stabilization Plan will ensure that native plants are used to prevent the spread of invasive species. The Site Stabilization Plan will also include criteria and monitoring to ensure the hydroseeding is successful. Hydroseeding can help prevent soil erosion in the Project area by reducing runoff to nearby waterbodies.

Rationale for Condition 8: Environmental Awareness Training

Condition 8 requires the Applicants to conduct a worker environmental awareness training program for all personnel who will work on-site. Special status species such as the California Tiger Salamander have the potential to occur in the Project area. The training program will ensure that all personnel are able to identify special status species and how to implement avoidance and minimization measures in order to reduce

potential impacts to special status species and their habitat as a result of Project implementation.

Rationale for Condition 9: Biological Protections

The Project includes ground disturbing activities with the potential to impact special status wildlife. Condition 9 requires the Applicants to conduct pre-construction surveys for special status species with the potential to occur in the Project area, and to safely relocate to a suitable area outside of the Project area if found during pre-construction surveys or Project implementation. Condition 9 is necessary to ensure there are no Project-related impacts to special status species. Condition 9 also requires the Applicants to mark environmentally sensitive areas to avoid impacting those areas.

Rationale for Condition 10: Details of Water Diversion

Condition 10 requires the Applicants to provide details of the amount and timing of their anticipated Project diversions. This will help ensure that diversions are implemented consistent with existing water rights.

Rationale for Conditions 11-30

This certification imposes additional conditions regarding Project approvals, monitoring, enforcement, and potential future revisions. Conditions 11 - 30 contain important clarifications concerning the scope and legal effect of this certification, and other legal requirements that may apply to the Project. In addition, Condition 11 is necessary to comply with Water Code section 13167 and Conditions 12 - 14 are required by California Code of Regulations, title 23, section 3860, which requires imposition of these conditions for all certifications. Conditions 15 - 30 are necessary to ensure that the Project is implemented to meet water quality standards and other appropriate requirements of state law, or that adjustments are made to ensure continued compliance with water quality requirements in light of new information, changes to the Project, or changes to standards themselves.

4.0 Conclusion

The State Water Board finds that, with the conditions and limitations imposed by this certification, the Project will be protective of the state water quality standards and other appropriate requirements of state law.

5.0 Water Quality Certification Conditions

ACCORDINGLY, BASED ON ITS INDEPENDENT REVIEW OF THE RECORD, THE STATE WATER RESOURCES CONTROL BOARD CERTIFIES THAT IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CADY RANCH WATER DISTRIBUTION PROJECT

(Project) will comply with sections 301, 302, 303, 306, and 307 of the Clean Water Act, and with applicable provisions of state law, under the following terms and conditions.

CONDITION 1. Water Quality Monitoring

Stockton East Water District (SEWD) and Fowler Brothers Farming, Inc. (collectively the Applicants) shall monitor water quality associated with Project activities as outlined in this condition. Turbidity, dissolved oxygen, and pH shall be maintained in accordance with the *Water Quality Control Plan for the Sacramento River Basin and the San Joaquin River Basin* (SR/SJR Basin Plan) water quality objectives (Central Valley Regional Board 2018) and any amendments thereto. The water quality objectives for turbidity, dissolved oxygen, and pH are summarized below.

<u>Turbidity</u>. The turbidity limits for in-water and water-adjacent work shall be:

- Where natural turbidity is less than one Nephelometric Turbidity Unit (NTU), controllable factors shall not cause downstream turbidity to exceed two NTUs.
- Where natural turbidity is between one and five NTUs, increases shall not exceed one NTU.
- Where natural turbidity is between five and 50 NTUs, increases shall not exceed 20 percent.
- Where natural turbidity is between 50 and 100 NTUs, increases shall not exceed 10 NTUs.
- Where natural turbidity is greater than 100 NTUs, increases shall not exceed 10 percent.

Turbidity shall be measured using a 24-hour averaging period unless otherwise approved by the Deputy Director for the Division of Water Rights (Deputy Director).

Dissolved Oxygen. The Applicants shall not decrease dissolved oxygen below 7 milligrams per liter.

<u>*pH*</u>. The Applicants shall maintain pH between 6.5 and 8.5.

The Applicants shall conduct water quality monitoring during all in-water and wateradjacent work. At a minimum, water quality monitoring shall be performed for the installation, dewatering, and removal of the cofferdam needed to implement the Project activities, and for other Project activities with the potential to impact water quality. Unless otherwise approved by the Deputy Director, at a minimum, two monitoring locations in the Calaveras River shall be located: (1) approximately 50 feet upstream of the work area; and (2) no more than 400 feet downstream of the work area. The Applicants shall take a global positioning system point and a photograph for each proposed monitoring location and provide them to Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (Central Valley Regional Water Board) and State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) staff at least one week prior to starting construction. These locations shall be used for monitoring unless the Deputy Director directs the Applicants to use other locations or to work with staff to find alternate locations.

Unless otherwise approved by the Deputy Director, the Applicants shall:

- Monitor turbidity, dissolved oxygen, and pH at 15-minute intervals using an automatedsensor system; and
- Conduct visual inspections for turbidity plumes, oily sheens, and signs of construction-related pollutants⁴ continuously throughout the construction period.

The Applicants shall submit the first monitoring report to State Water Board staff within 30 days of initiating monitoring and every two weeks thereafter for the remainder of any in-water and water-adjacent Project work. The monitoring reports shall include: (a) the turbidity, dissolved oxygen, and pH monitoring results, visual monitoring results, and any supplemental water quality monitoring data collected; (b) a description of the equipment, frequency, methods, and quality assurance process for water quality monitoring; and (c) any requests for consultation regarding the need for development of additional site-specific construction measures to protect water quality.

The Deputy Director and the Central Valley Regional Water Board Executive Officer (Executive Officer) shall be notified promptly, and in no case more than 24 hours, following an exceedance of a narrative or numeric water quality objective (for turbidity this may be with consideration of the averaging period), or identification of construction related pollutants. Project activities associated with the exceedance or pollutant shall immediately cease and the Applicants shall immediately implement measures to contain or clean up any pollutant or discharge. Construction shall not resume Project activities associated with the exceedance or pollutant without approval from the Deputy Director.

The Applicants may request modifications to the water quality monitoring described in Condition 1. The Applicants shall submit the request to the Deputy Director for review and consideration of approval at least 30 days prior to starting in-water or water-adjacent work or 30 days prior to when the Applicants would like to modify their water quality monitoring. The request shall include the proposed modifications and supporting rationale for the modifications.

⁴ Visible construction-related pollutants may include oil, grease, foam, fuel, petroleum products, uncured concrete, and construction-related excavated, organic, or earthen material.

CONDITION 2. Project Activities

Unless otherwise modified by conditions of this water quality certification (certification), the Applicants shall implement the Project as described in their December 6, 2021 certification application (SEWD 2021) and any supplemental materials received prior to issuance of the certification or otherwise approved by the Deputy Director. This includes implementation of all avoidance and minimization measures listed in Section 4 of the Biological Resources Technical Report for the Cady Ranch Water Distribution Project (Dokken Engineering 2021).

The Applicants shall obtain coverage under and comply with the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) General Permit for Storm Water Discharges Associated with Construction and Land Disturbance Activities⁵ (Construction General Permit) (State Water Board 2009) and any amendments thereto.

CONDITION 3. Erosion and Sediment Control

The Applicants shall implement erosion, sedimentation, and turbidity control measures as described in: (a) Section Eight of their certification application, (b) Section 4 of the *Biological Resources Technical Report for the Cady Ranch Water Distribution Project*; and (c) this condition below.

- Control measures for erosion, excessive sedimentation, and sources of turbidity shall be implemented and in place prior to the commencement of, during, and after any ground disturbing activities, or any other Project activities that could result in erosion or sediment discharges to surface water.
- Exposed soils and material stockpiles shall be stabilized, through watering or other measures, to prevent the movement of dust at the Project site caused by wind and construction activities such as traffic and grading activities.
- All construction roadway areas shall be properly protected to prevent excess erosion and sedimentation.
- To prevent fugitive dust from drifting into adjacent habitat, all clearing, grubbing, scraping, excavation, land leveling, grading, cut and fill, demolition activities, or other dust generating activities shall be effectively controlled by watering or other measures.

⁵ Water Quality Order No. 2009-0009-DWQ and NPDES No. CAS000002, as amended by Order No. 2010-0014-DWQ, Order No. 2012-0006-DWQ, and any amendments thereto. Available at:

https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/stormwater/construction.html Accessed on February 25, 2022.

- Stockpiles shall be located outside of riparian habitat and protected in accordance with appropriate best management practices (BMPs). During the construction season, if more than 0.25 inch of rain is forecast, all stockpiles shall be covered with plastic and surrounded with sediment control technologies or berms to prevent sediment run-off for the duration of the rainfall event.
- If erosion or sedimentation causes increased turbidity above the limits described in Condition 1, the Applicants shall contain the turbid water using a cofferdam. All cofferdams shall be installed and maintained pursuant to Condition 5. The contained water may be released downstream once the water is below turbidity limits, disposed of off-site, or used for dust abatement, in a manner that does not impair water quality.

CONDITION 4. Hazardous Materials Management

The Applicants shall implement hazardous materials⁶ control measures as described in: (a) Section Eight of their certification application; (b) Section 4 of the *Biological Resources Technical Report for the Cady Ranch Water Distribution Project*; and (c) this condition below.

- (a) Caution shall be used when handling and/or storing hazardous materials near waterways. Appropriate materials shall be on site to prevent and manage spills to prevent impacts to surface waters. When not in use, hazardous materials shall be stored at least 300 feet from any waterway.
- (b) When not in use, equipment shall be stored in upland areas outside the ordinary high-water mark of the Calaveras River.
- (c) All construction equipment shall be inspected for leaks before entering the Project area. All equipment shall be well maintained and inspected daily while on site to prevent leaks of fuels, lubricants, or other fluids into waters of the United States or water of the state. Stationary equipment (e.g., generators) within 100 feet of waterways shall be parked over secondary containment.
- (d) Service and refueling procedures shall be conducted in a designated area, at least 300 feet from any waterway, where no potential exists for fuel spills to seep or wash into waterways. Service and refueling areas shall include secondary containment including drip pans and/or placement of absorbent material.
- (e) Containment areas shall include secondary containment. All containment structures shall comply with California Code of Regulations, title 27, section 20320.
- (f) Any water contaminated by hazardous materials shall be stored according to items (a) and (e) in this condition and disposed of properly off-site in a manner that does not impair water quality.

⁶ Hazardous materials include, but are not limited to: petroleum products, pesticides, fuels, lubricants, oils, hydraulic fluids, raw cement, concrete or the washing thereof, asphalt, paint, coating material, drilling fluids, or other substances potentially hazardous to water quality and beneficial uses.

(g) Wet concrete or cement shall not be placed into stream channel habitat. Concrete or cement shall be completely cured before coming into contact with waters of the United States or waters of the state. Any surface water that contacts wet concrete or cement must be pumped out and disposed of in accordance with applicable laws and regulations.

The Deputy Director may require implementation of additional actions in response to the information provided as part of a report following a release or other information indicating a threat to water quality or beneficial uses.

CONDITION 5. Diversion and Dewatering

A minimum of 90 days prior Project implementation, the Applicants shall submit a Dewatering and Diversion Plan (Dewatering Plan) to the State Water Board's Deputy Director for review and consideration for approval. The Deputy Director may require modifications as part of any approval. The objective of the Dewatering Plan shall be to identify and implement actions to protect water quality associated with Project-related activities that require dewatering, water diversions, or in-water work. The Applicants shall develop the Dewatering Plan in consultation with California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), Central Valley Regional Water Board, and State Water Board staff. At a minimum, the Dewatering Plan shall include:

- An overview of all in-water and/or water-adjacent work, including work related to dewatering of any portion of the Calaveras River or diversion of water around the Project area;
- Schedule for conducting Project construction activities associated with in-water and/or water-adjacent work, including dewatering of any portion of the Calaveras River or diversion of water around the Project area;
- Description of cofferdams or other barriers that will be used to isolate the work area from surface waters;
- List of construction materials that will be used in or adjacent to the watercourse. Any imported riprap, rocks, and gravels shall be pre-washed. Further, any cofferdam or other artificial obstruction shall only be built from clean materials such as sandbags, gravel bags, water dams, or clean/washed gravel that will cause little or no siltation;
- Description of measures, if needed, that will be implemented to avoid potential water quality impacts and maintain compliance with Condition 1 or other provisions of this certification;
- A description of how any temporary cofferdam or other artificial obstruction being constructed, maintained, or placed in operation, will not impede flow in the Calaveras River. At all times the Applicants shall ensure sufficient water is allowed to pass downstream to maintain beneficial uses.
- Description of how, upon completion of construction activities, removal of the cofferdam and rewatering of the dewatered area will resume with the least disturbance to the substrate, water quality, and beneficial uses. No more than 14 days following completion of Project activities, the Applicants shall remove the entire cofferdam; and

• Documentation of consultation with CDFW, Central Valley Regional Water Board, and State Water Board staff, including comments and recommendations made in connection with the plan, and a description of how the plan incorporates or addresses the comments and recommendations.

Any modifications to the Dewatering Plan require approval by the Deputy Director prior to implementation. The Applicants shall not commence Project implementation without receipt of Deputy Director approval of the Dewatering Plan. The Applicants shall implement the Dewatering Plan, and any amendments thereto, upon receipt of Deputy Director and any other required approvals, in accordance with the schedule and requirements specified therein. In the event dewatering may result in discharges to surface water, the Applicants shall work with the Central Valley Regional Water Board to obtain coverage under a NPDES permit for the discharge.

CONDITION 6. Project Completion Report

The Applicants shall notify Central Valley Regional Water Board and the State Water Board staff a minimum of 30 days prior to Project implementation. Within 30 days of Project completion, the Applicants shall submit a Project Completion Report (Completion Report) to the Deputy Director. The Completion Report shall include:

- A summary of Project activities performed;
- Documentation of compliance with each condition of this certification and details of any failure to meet the certification requirements;
- Details of Project-related adverse impacts to beneficial uses, if applicable;
- Any Project implementation activities (e.g., construction, dewatering, or diversion) differing from those described in the certification application or required by this certification;

The Deputy Director may require the Applicants to implement corrective actions in response to the information provided in the Completion Report. The Applicants shall provide any additional information or clarification requested by the Deputy Director related to a Completion Report. Upon request from State Water Board staff, the Applicants shall meet with staff to discuss the Completion Report.

CONDITION 7. Site Stabilization

A minimum of 90 days prior Project implementation, the Applicants shall submit a Site Stabilization Plan to the Deputy Director for review and consideration for approval. The Deputy Director may require modifications as part of any approval. The objective of the Site Stabilization Plan shall be to detail specifics pertaining to reseeding and grading of disturbed areas to protect water quality associated with Project-related activities. The Applicants shall develop the Site Stabilization Plan in consultation with State Water Board staff. At a minimum, the Site Stabilization Plan shall include:

• Detailed maps of the locations where site stabilization measures will be implemented following construction, as well as the measures that will be implemented at the locations, such as hydroseeding and grading;

- Description of how vegetation removal will be avoided to the greatest extent practicable, and how trees and shrubs will be trimmed rather than removed, where feasible;
- A seed list for the hydroseeding effort that is tailored to the location and replacement of existing native vegetation disturbed by Project activities. The seed stock must consist exclusively of native plants, with a preference for plants that promote soil stabilization;
- Criteria that will be used to determine whether the hydroseeding effort is successful;
- A schedule for implementation of the plan, including identification of any maintenance (e.g., irrigation or additional spot hydroseeding or planning efforts) that will be implemented to ensure the hydroseeding effort is successful; and
- Monitoring and reporting, including identification and implementation of any adaptive management that may be needed, that will be conducted as part of plan implementation, including the proposed monitoring locations and duration of proposed monitoring and reporting.

The Deputy Director may require modifications as part of any approval. The Applicants shall implement the Site Stabilization Plan upon receipt of Deputy Director and any other required approvals, in accordance with the schedule and requirements specified therein. The Applicants shall not commence Project construction without receipt of Deputy Director approval of the Site Stabilization Plan. Any revisions to the Site Stabilization Plan must be approved by the Deputy Director prior to implementation.

CONDITION 8. Environmental Awareness Training

Environmental awareness training shall be provided by a qualified biologist to all personnel prior to going out to the Project site. The training shall, at a minimum, include:

- A review of special-status species⁷ with the potential to occur in the Project area, including pictures.
- A review of special-status habitat that occurs in the Project area including the primary elements of each habitat.
- A review of the avoidance and protection measures that must be implemented to minimize the potential for effects to these species and habitats.

⁷ Special-status species shall include any listed species or species identified as special status at the state or federal level, including any species that are newly identified or listed prior to Project completion. At a minimum special-status species related to this Project include: Central Valley Steelhead (*Oncorhynchus mykiss irideus*); California tiger salamander (*Ambystoma californiense*); Valley elderberry longhorn beetle (*Desmocerus californicus dimorphus*); and western pond turtle (*Actinemys marmorata*).

• A review of applicable elements of the Project certification that must be implemented to protect environmental resources to ensure personnel implement measures to protect water quality and beneficial uses.

The Applicants shall direct their staff and all contractors to: (a) avoid disturbance of special-status species and habitats; (b) to stop work and contact CDFW and the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) upon discovery of a special-status species in the Project area; and (c) to implement certification conditions and notify the Applicants immediately if water quality or beneficial uses may be impacted by activities associated with Project implementation.

CONDITION 9. Biological Protections

Prior to Project implementation, the Applicants shall mark Environmentally Sensitive Areas and conduct pre-construction surveys for special status species with the potential to occur in the Project area as noted in this condition. Qualified biologists shall conduct pre-construction surveys for California tiger salamander (*Ambystoma californiense*) and western pond turtle (*Actinemys marmorata*) as outlined below.

Environmentally Sensitive Areas:

Prior to the start of construction activities, the Project limits in proximity to the Calaveras River shall be marked with high visibility Environmentally Sensitive Area fencing or staking to ensure construction will not further encroach into water resources. If Environmentally Sensitive Area fencing is not feasible, the Project limits shall be discussed in the environmental awareness training (Condition 8) so that all Project personnel are aware of, and avoid, the sensitive natural habitats in the Project area.

California tiger salamander:

- The pre-construction survey shall take place no more than 14 days prior to the start of ground-disturbing activities;
- If burrows are discovered during the pre-construction survey or Project implementation, the burrows shall be flagged and avoided with a buffer of at least 50 feet;
- If burrows cannot be avoided, the Applicants shall stop work and consult with USFWS and CDFW staff; and
- Work may resume once consultation is complete and continuation of work is approved by the resource agencies.

Western pond turtle:

- The pre-construction survey shall take place no more than 14 days prior to the start of ground-disturbing activities;
- If any western pond turtles are found during the pre-construction survey or as part of Project implementation, they shall be relocated by a qualified biologist to a suitable location outside of the Project area.

Copies of the surveys and documentation of any associated actions (e.g., relocation of western pond turtles) implemented per this condition shall be provided to USFWS, CDFW, and State Water Board staff upon request. The Applicants shall document implementation of the Environmentally Sensitive Areas fencing/staking or why such fencing/staking was infeasible and provide it to State Water Board staff upon request.

CONDITION 10. Details of Water Diversion

Prior to Project implementation (i.e., prior to any ground-disturbing activities), the Applicants shall provide State Water Board staff with details regarding the quantity of water and the months in which the water is anticipated to be diverted by the Project.

CONDITIONS 11 – 30

CONDITION 11. Unless otherwise specified in this certification or at the request of the Deputy Director, data and/or reports shall be submitted electronically in a format accepted by the State Water Board to facilitate the incorporation of this information into public reports and the State Water Board's water quality database systems in compliance with California Water Code section 13167.

CONDITION 12. This certification is subject to modification or revocation upon administrative or judicial review, including but not limited to review and amendment pursuant to California Water Code, section 13330 and California Code of Regulations, title 23, division 3, chapter 28, article 6 (commencing with section 3867).

CONDITION 13. This certification is not intended and shall not be construed to apply to any activity involving a hydroelectric facility and requiring a Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) license or an amendment to a FERC license unless the pertinent application for certification was filed pursuant to California Code of Regulations, title 23, section 3855, subdivision (b) and that application for certification specifically identified that a FERC license or amendment to a FERC license for a hydroelectric facility was being sought.

CONDITION 14. This certification is conditioned upon total payment of any fee required under California Code of Regulations, title 23, division 3, chapter 28.

CONDITION 15. This certification does not authorize any act which results in the take of a threatened, endangered, or candidate species or any act which is now prohibited, or becomes prohibited in the future, under either the California Endangered Species Act (ESA) (Fish & G. Code, §§ 2050–2097) or the federal ESA (16 U.S.C. §§ 1531–1544). If a "take" will result from any act authorized under this certification or water rights held by the Applicants, the Applicants must obtain authorization for the take prior to any construction or operation of the portion of the Project that may result in a take. The Applicants are responsible for meeting all requirements of the applicable ESAs for the Project authorized under this certification.

CONDITION 16. This certification shall not be construed as replacement or substitution for any necessary federal, state, and local approvals. The Applicants are

responsible for compliance with all applicable federal, state, or local laws or ordinances and shall obtain authorization from applicable regulatory agencies prior to the commencement of Project activities.

CONDITION 17. Any requirement in this certification that refers to an agency whose authorities and responsibilities are transferred to or subsumed by another state or federal agency, will apply equally to the successor agency.

CONDITION 18. Notwithstanding any conditions in this certification, the Applicants' diversions and uses of water related to the Project are subject to the separate and independent conditions and legal requirements under the water rights. Nothing in this certification shall be construed as State Water Board approval of the validity of any water rights, including pre-1914 claims. The State Water Board has separate authority under the Water Code to investigate and take enforcement action, if necessary, to prevent any unauthorized or threatened unauthorized diversions of water.

CONDITION 19. Notwithstanding any more specific provision of this certification, any plan developed as a condition of this certification requires review and approval by the Deputy Director. The State Water Board's approval authority, including authority delegated to the Deputy Director or others, includes the authority to withhold approval or to require modification of a plan, proposal, or report prior to approval. The State Water Board may take enforcement action if the Applicants fail to provide or implement a required item in a timely manner. If a time extension is needed to submit an item for approval, the Applicants shall submit a written request for the extension, with justification, no later than 30 days prior to the deadline. The Applicants shall not implement any plan, proposal, or report until after receiving approval and any other necessary regulatory approvals.

CONDITION 20. The State Water Board reserves the authority to add to or modify the conditions of this certification: (1) to incorporate changes in technology, sampling, or methodologies; (2) if monitoring results indicate that Project activities could violate water quality objectives or impair beneficial uses; (3) to implement any new or revised water quality standards and implementation plans adopted or approved pursuant to the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act or section 303 of the Clean Water Act; and (4) to require additional monitoring and/or other measures, as needed, to ensure that Project activities meet water quality objectives and protect beneficial uses.

CONDITION 21. The Applicants shall submit any change to the Project, including operations, facilities, technology changes or upgrades, or methodology, which could have a significant or material effect on the findings, conclusions, or conditions of this certification, to the State Water Board for prior review and written approval. The State Water Board shall determine significance and may require consultation with state and/or federal agencies. If the State Water Board is not notified of a change to the Project, it will be considered a violation of this certification.

CONDITION 22. This certification is contingent on compliance with all applicable requirements of the SR/SJR Basin Plan.

CONDITION 23. Notwithstanding any more specific conditions in this certification, the Project shall be operated in a manner consistent with all water quality standards and implementation plans adopted or approved pursuant to the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act or section 303 of the Clean Water Act. The Applicants shall take all reasonable measures to protect the beneficial uses of waters of the state.

CONDITION 24. In the event of any violation or threatened violation of the conditions of this certification, the violation or threatened violation is subject to any remedies, penalties, process, or sanctions as provided for under applicable state or federal law. For the purposes of section 401(d) of the Clean Water Act, the applicability of any state law authorizing remedies, penalties, process, or sanctions for the violation or threatened violation constitutes a limitation necessary to ensure compliance with the water quality standards and other pertinent requirements incorporated into this certification. In response to any violation of the conditions of this certification, the State Water Board may add to or modify the conditions of this certification as appropriate to ensure compliance.

CONDITION 25. In response to a suspected violation of any condition of this certification, the State Water Board or Central Valley Regional Water Board may require the holder of any federal permit or license subject to this certification to furnish, under penalty of perjury, any technical or monitoring reports the State Water Board deems appropriate, provided that the burden, including costs, of the reports shall bear a reasonable relationship to the need for the reports and the benefits to be obtained from the reports. (Wat. Code, §§ 1051, 13165, 13267, and 13383.)

CONDITION 26. Upon request, a construction schedule shall be provided to State Water Board and Central Valley Regional Water Board staff. The Applicants shall provide State Water Board and Central Valley Regional Water Board staff access to the Project site to document compliance with this certification.

CONDITION 27. A copy of this certification shall be provided to any contractor and all subcontractors conducting Project-related work, and copies shall remain in their possession at the Project site. The Applicants shall be responsible for work conducted by its contractor, subcontractors, or other persons conducting Project-related work.

CONDITION 28. The State Water Board shall provide notice and an opportunity to be heard in exercising its authority to add to or modify the conditions of this certification.

CONDITION 29. The Applicants shall ensure no net loss of wetland or riparian habitat functions and is responsible for compliance with the *State Wetland Definition and Procedures for Discharges of Dredged or Fill Material to Waters of the State* (State Water Board 2019) and the California Wetlands Conservation Policy (Governor's Executive Order W-59-93 (Aug. 23, 1993)), and any amendments thereto.

CONDITION 30. The Applicants shall use analytical methods approved by California's Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Program (ELAP), where such methods are available. Samples that require laboratory analysis shall be analyzed by ELAP-certified laboratories.

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Eileen Sobeck Executive Director

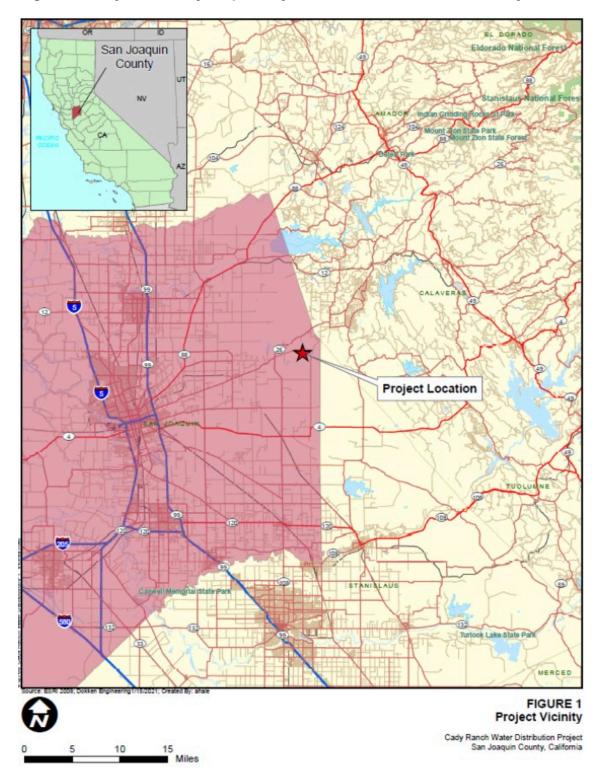
March 4, 2022

Date

6.0 References

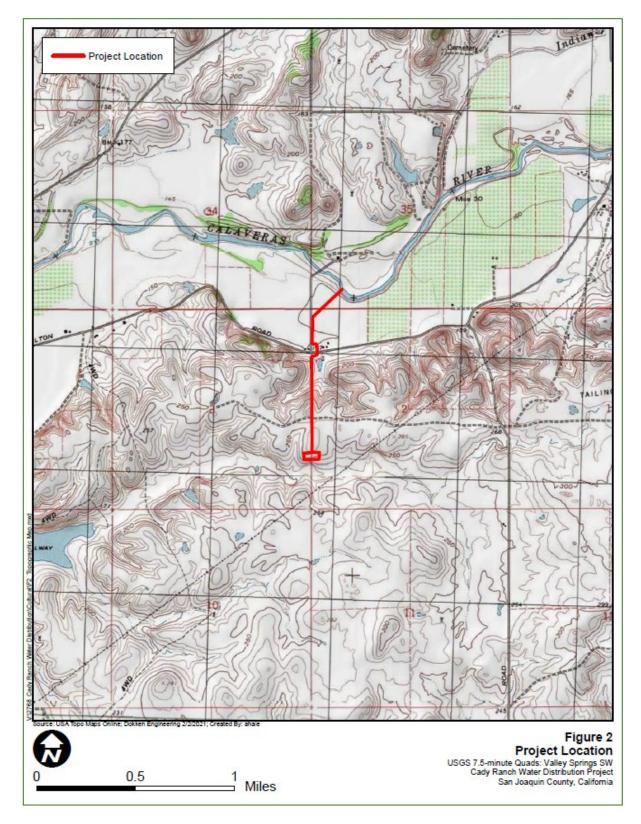
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Source: SEWD CWA 401 Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration





Source: SEWD CWA 401 Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration

Figure 3. Project Features: Cady Ranch Water Distribution Project



Source: SEWD CWA 401 Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration