

**To:** Office of Planning and Research  
P.O. Box 3044, Room 113  
1400 Tenth Street  
Sacramento, CA 95812-3044  
  
County Clerk  
County of Fresno  
2221 Kern Street  
Fresno, CA 93721

**From (Public Agency):**  
State Water Resources Control Board  
Division of Water Rights  
Attention: Garrett Long  
P.O. Box 2000  
Sacramento, CA 95812

**Project Title:** Big Creek Dam No. 4 Low-Level Outlet Repair and Dam Resurfacing Project (Project)

**Project Applicant:** Southern California Edison (SCE)

**Project Location – Specific:** Big Creek Dam No. 4 is located at the tailrace of Big Creek Powerhouse No. 1 on Big Creek. Big Creek Dam No. 4 is located approximately 70 miles southwest of the city of Bishop in Fresno County, California.

**Project Location – City:** Bishop

**Project Location – County:** Fresno

**Description of Nature, Purpose, and Beneficiaries of Project:** SCE owns and operates the Big Creek Nos. 1 & 2 Hydroelectric Project, which generates 150.15 megawatts of energy from two powerhouses on Big Creek. Big Creek Dam No. 4 is located on the tailrace of Powerhouse No. 1 and forms the forebay for Powerhouse No. 2. The Project involves two main activities: (1) repair of Big Creek No. 4 Dam's existing low-level outlet (LLO) system to comply with California Department of Water Resources Division of Safety of Dams regulations and future flow requirements associated with the new FERC license that is anticipated for the Big Creek Nos. 1 and 2 Hydroelectric Project; and (2) resurface the downstream face of the dam to repair aging concrete. On November 18, 2022, SCE applied for water quality certification from the State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) for the proposed work. SCE then provided a Notice of Intent to enroll the Project in the State Water Board General Order (General Order WQ-2021-0048-DWQ) on January 17, 2023. This Notice of Exemption is for the State Water Board's Notice of Applicability and water quality certification action for the Project as the lead agency.

**Name of Public Agency Approving Project:** State Water Resources Control Board

**Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project:** SCE

**Exempt Status: (check one):**

- Ministerial (Sec. 21080(b)(1); 15268);  
 Declared Emergency (Sec. 21080(b)(3); 15269(a));  
 Emergency Project (Sec. 21080(b)(4); 15269(b)(c));  
 Categorical Exemption. State type and section number: Class 1, Existing Facilities, §15301  
 Statutory Exemptions. State code number: \_\_\_\_\_

**Reasons why project is exempt:** The Project is categorically exempt from the requirements to prepare environmental documents under California Code of Regulations, title 14, section 15301 (Class 1, Existing Facilities). Repairs and replacement of the low-level outlet valve and dam resurfacing will not have a significant adverse effect on Big Creek. The Project will not result in an expansion of use or the dam's footprint. None of the exceptions to the categorical exemptions apply.

**Lead Agency:** State Water Resources Control Board

**Contact Person:** Garrett Long

**Area Code/Telephone/Extension:** (916) 327-8555

**If filed by applicant:**

1. Attach certified document of exemption finding.
2. Has a Notice of Exemption been filed by the public agency approving the project?  Yes  No

Signature: Parker Thaler Title: Water Quality Certification Program Manager Date: 2/9/2023

Signed by Lead Agency

Signed by Applicant

Authority cited: Sections 21083 and 21110, Public Resources Code.

Date Received for filing at OPR: \_\_\_\_\_

Reference: Sections 21108, 21152, and 21152.1, Public Resources Code.