

# Notice of Intent to Adopt Negative Declaration

## Lead Agency:

California Department of Fish and Wildlife

Contact: Ryon Kurth

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## Subject:

Notice of Intent to adopt negative declaration pursuant to California Environmental Quality Act, Article 6, Section 15074

## Project Title:

Chinook Salmon Coastal Release: Santa Cruz Wharf

## Project Location:

Santa Cruz County, Santa Cruz Wharf (36.958751°, -122.017397°)

## Project Description:

California Department of Fish and Wildlife's (CDFW) Mokelumne River Hatchery (MOK) would deliver 160,000 Central Valley fall-run Chinook Salmon (CV FRCS) smolts to the Project location for direct release (if possible) at the designated location on Santa Cruz Wharf in Monterey Bay in 2021 and again in 2022. MBSTP is implementing this Project. CDFW would deliver MOK CV FRCS smolts to Santa Cruz Wharf in mid-May of 2021 and 2022. Exact dates and times would be scheduled as the time draws near and are dependent on fish size, growth rates, and environmental conditions in Monterey Bay. All smolts would be transported in a single trip each year, using 2-4 fish transport trucks (dependent upon loading density/fish size). Water in transport trucks would be salted prior to on-loading fish to initiate smoltification and aid in acclimation to the marine environment. If conditions do not allow for discharge from transport trucks on Santa Cruz Wharf, smolts would be discharged into a net barge in Santa Cruz Harbor (36.963907°, -122.002198°) and be towed out and released to the ocean as soon as is safely possible, and no more than 24 hours from offload. The Project's objective is to enhance the commercial and recreational salmon ocean fishery.

Location and Custodian of the Negative Declaration Document:

California Department of Fish and Wildlife  
Fisheries Branch  
Attention: Ryon Kurth, [Ryon.Kurth@wildlife.ca.gov](mailto:Ryon.Kurth@wildlife.ca.gov)  
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<http://nrm.dfg.ca.gov/FileHandler.ashx?DocumentID=191695>

Determination:

CDFW finds that the Project would not have significant effect on the environment. The completed Initial Study, attached to this negative declaration, documents the bases for this finding, and CDFW's determination that no evidence of a significant effect on the environment would occur as a result of Project implementation, and there is no evidence, in light of the record before CDFW, that the Project may have a significant effect on the environment (see Initial Study and environmental checklist). Therefore, a Negative Declaration has been prepared pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act, Public Resource Code Section 21080, subd. (c)(1).

The Initial Study concluded that the Project would have less than significant impacts to biological resources, greenhouse gas emissions, and public services. The Project would have no impacts to aesthetics, agriculture and forestry, air quality, cultural resources, energy, geology/soils, hazards/hazardous materials, hydrology/water quality, land use/planning, mineral resources, noise, population/housing, recreation, transportation, tribal cultural resources, utilities/service systems, and wildfire.

Negative Declaration:

A copy of the Negative Declaration, Initial Study, and supporting documents can be found on the Department's web site at  
<http://nrm.dfg.ca.gov/FileHandler.ashx?DocumentID=191695>

Comments on the Negative Declaration will be received from March 29, 2021 through April 29, 2021.