Notice of Exemption

To: Office of Planning and Research
PO Box 3044
1400 Tenth Street, Rm 2
Sacramento, CA 95812-3044

From: Department of Fish and Wildlife
Marine Region
1933 Cliff Drive, Suite 9
Santa Barbara, CA 93109

Project Title: Monterey Bay Aquarium's 2021 Entity Permit

Project Location: Nearshore and offshore location's Statewide

Project Description: The Department of Fish and Wildlife is issuing a permit to the Monterey Bay Aquarium pursuant to Fish and Game Code Section 2081(a) for educational purposes. The Section 2081(a) permit authorizes the applicant to take Longfin Smelt (*Spirinchus thaleichthys*), Coho Salmon (*Oncorhynchus kisutch*), Chinook Salmon (*Oncorhynchus tshawytscha*), steelhead trout (*Oncorhynchus mykiss),* Leatherback Sea Turtle (*Dermochelys coriacea*) during the course of sampling, subject to terms and conditions set forth in the permit. The purpose of this sampling is for the Monterey Bay Aquarium's research studies and permanent collections. The Section 2081(a) permit authorizes the applicant to potentially capture Longfin Smelt, Coho Salmon, Chinook Salm, steelhead trout, and leatherback sea turtle during surveys. The applicant will conduct year-round research and permanent collection sampling of nearshore and estuarine fishes, invertebrates, and phytoplankton through the use of hook & line – surface, hand tools (rocky substrate), hand (SCUBA), hand net, hoop net, ROV, hand tools (soft substrate), purse seine, beach seine, fish trap, trawl soft bottom fish, midwater trawl, hook & line – longline bottom set, bottom trawl, hook & line – longline pelagic, invertebrate trap, hook & line – swimbait, hook & line – squid jig, plankton net, trawl soft bottom invertebrate, and hand tools through June 30, 2024.

California Public Agency Approving Project: California Department of Fish and Wildlife

Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: John B. O'Sullivan, Monterey Bay Aquarium

Exempt Status:

☐ Ministerial;

☐ Declared Emergency;

☐ Emergency Project;

☒ Categorical Exemption. Type and section number: Calif. Code Regs., § 15306, Information Collection, Class 6

Reasons why project is exempt: The Project involves research and permanent collection sampling within nearshore and offshore waters Statewide which will not result in a serious or major disturbance to Longfin Smelt, Coho Salmon, Chinook Salmon, steelhead trout, or leatherback sea turtles which are all listed under the California Endangered Species Act.

Lead Agency Contact Person: Dylan Inskeep **Telephone:** (707) 576-2878

Signature: _____ **Date:** _**2.1.2023**_____
Craig Shuman, Regional Manager, Marine Region

☐ Signed by Lead Agency Date Received for filing at OPR: _____