

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: NOAA Northwest Fisheries Science Center's Annual West Coast Groundfish Bottom Trawl Study

Project Location: Statewide

Project Description: The Department of Fish and Wildlife is issuing a permit to the NOAA Northwest Fisheries Science Center 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 irideus* pop.), and Pacific 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 NOAA's Northwest Fisheries Science Center's Annual West Coast Groundfish Bottom Trawl Study. The Section 2081(a) permit authorizes the applicant to potentially capture Longfin Smelt, Coho Salmon, Chinook Salm, steelhead trout, and Pacific Leatherback Sea Turtle during surveys. The applicant will conduct sampling from May to October each year to capture groundfish species along with various other marine species by way of Aberdeen-style bottom trawl through December 31, 2024.

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

Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: Dr. Aimee Keller, NOAA Northwest Fisheries Science Center

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 sampling groundfish and other marine species 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 Pacific Leatherback Sea Turtle which are all listed under the California Endangered Species Act.

Lead Agency Contact Person: Dylan Inskeep

Telephone: (707) 576-2878

Signature:



Craig Shuman, Regional Manager, Marine Region

Date: 5.17.2023

Signed by Lead Agency

Date Received for filing at OPR: _____