

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: Moss Landing Marine Labs EMPA Monitoring and Assessment Program

Project Location: Nearshore waters of Del Norte, Mendocino, Marin, Sonoma, Santa Cruz, Monterey, San Luis Obispo, Los Angeles, Ventura, Santa Barbara, Orange, San Diego, San Mateo, and Humboldt counties

Project Description: The Department of Fish and Wildlife is issuing a permit to the Moss Landing Marine Laboratories 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*), and steelhead trout (*Oncorhynchus mykiss irideus*) during the course of sampling, subject to terms and conditions set forth in the permit. The purpose of this sampling is for the Moss Landing Marine Laboratories' research studies of estuarine MPAs. The Section 2081(a) permit authorizes the applicant to potentially capture Longfin Smelt, Coho Salmon, Chinook Salmon, and steelhead trout during surveys. The applicant will conduct year-round research of nearshore and estuarine fishes, invertebrates, algae, and phytoplankton at estuarine MPAs through the use of beach seines and bottom trawls through December 31, 2026.

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

Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: Ross Clark, Moss Landing Marine Laboratories

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 sampling within nearshore waters within the counties of Del Norte, Mendocino, Marin, Sonoma, Santa Cruz, Monterey, San Luis Obispo, Los Angeles, Ventura, Santa Barbara, Orange, San Diego, San Mateo, and Humboldt which will not result in a serious or major disturbance to Longfin Smelt, Coho Salmon, Chinook Salmon, or steelhead trout which are all listed under the California Endangered Species Act.

Lead Agency Contact Person: Dylan Inskeep

Telephone: (707) 576-2878

Signature:  _____ **Date:** 10.24.23
Dr. Craig Shuman, Regional Manager, Marine Region

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