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: Aquarium of the Bay's Collections

Project Location: Nearshore waters of Monterey, Los Angeles, Ventura, San Luis Obispo, Orange, Santa Barbara, Sonoma, and Santa Cruz Counties. San Francisco Bay west of Carquinez Bridge (Marin, Sonoma, Napa, Solano, Contra Costa, Alameda, Santa Clara, San Mateo, and San Francisco Counties)

Project Description: The Department of Fish and Wildlife is issuing a permit to the Aquarium of the Bay 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)* during the course of sampling, subject to terms and conditions set forth in the permit. The purpose of this sampling is for the Aquarium of the Bay's collections. 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 and permanent collection sampling of nearshore and estuarine fishes, invertebrates, and phytoplankton through the use of hook & line – baited dropper loop, hook & line – shrimp fly, beach seine, and squid jig through December 31, 2026.

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

Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: Mike McGill, Aquarium of the Bay

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 of Monterey, Los Angeles, Ventura, San Luis Obispo, Orange, Santa Barbara, Sonoma, and Santa Cruz Counties. San Francisco Bay west of Carquinez Bridge (Marin, Sonoma, Napa, Solano, Contra Costa, Alameda, Santa Clara, San Mateo, and San Francisco Counties) 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:** 11/1/23
Craig Shuman, Regional Manager, Marine Region

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