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: Newport Bay Microplastic Sampling

Project Location: Orange County (Newport Harbor, Upper Newport Harbor SMCA)

Project Description: The Department of Fish and Wildlife is issuing a permit to the University of California Riverside pursuant to Fish and Game Code Section 2081(a) for scientific purposes. The Section 2081(a) permit authorizes the applicant to take 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 University of California Riverside's microplastic research study within Newport Harbor and Upper Newport Harbor SMCA. The Section 2081(a) permit authorizes the applicant to potentially capture steelhead trout during surveys. The applicant will conduct year-round research sampling of the fate of microplastics in Newport Harbor through the use of midwater trawls through December 31, 2025.

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

Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: Clare Murphy-Hagan, University of California Riverside

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 Newport Harbor and Upper Newport Harbor SMCA which will not result in a serious or major disturbance to steelhead trout which are listed under the California Endangered Species Act.

Lead Agency Contact Person: Dylan Inskeep **Telephone:** (707) 317-3924

Signature: _____ **Date:** 12/6/23
Craig Shuman, Regional Manager, Marine Region

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