

Notice of Exemption

Appendix E

To: Office of Planning and Research
P.O. Box 3044, Room 113
Sacramento, CA 95812-3044
County Clerk
County of: Humboldt
825 5th Street #5
Eureka, CA 95501

From: (Public Agency): Humboldt County Resource Conservation District
5630 S. Broadway St., Eureka CA 95503
(Address) doreen@hcrd.org

Project Title: Wadulh Lagoon Tidal Wetland Enhancement Project

Project Applicant: Humboldt County Resource Conservation District

Project Location - Specific:

APN: 506-291-014; coordinates: 40.891815, -124.139325

Project Location - City: 1.25 mi. west of Arcata Project Location - County: Humboldt

Description of Nature, Purpose and Beneficiaries of Project:

See additional information attachment.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: Humboldt County Resource Conservation District

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: Humboldt County Resource Conservation District

Exempt Status: (check one):

- Ministerial (Sec. 21080(b)(1); 15268);
Declared Emergency (Sec. 21080(b)(3); 15269(a));
Emergency Project (Sec. 21080(b)(4); 15269(b)(c));
Categorical Exemption. State type and section number:
Statutory Exemptions. State code number: 21080.56 - Statutory Exemption for Restoration Projects

Reasons why project is exempt:

See additional information attachment.

Lead Agency Contact Person: Jill Demers Area Code/Telephone/Extension: 707-296-3992

If filed by applicant:

- 1. Attach certified document of exemption finding.
2. Has a Notice of Exemption been filed by the public agency approving the project? Yes No

Signature: [Signature] Date: 12/19/2024 Title: Executive Director

Signed by Lead Agency Signed by Applicant

Authority cited: Sections 21083 and 21110, Public Resources Code. Date Received for filing at OPR:
Reference: Sections 21108, 21152, and 21152.1, Public Resources Code.

Description of Nature, Purpose and Beneficiaries of the Project:

Since the completion of the SERP concurrence on January 17, 2024, updated details of the Project include: (1) breaching and lowering approximately 1,650 feet of Mad River Slough levee; (2) (and 3) excavation and grading of approximately 9.35 acres to create a tidal lagoon channel network that will support eelgrass. The Project includes the placement of gravel and the replacement of up to three culverts along Refuge Access Road to increase access for recreation, reduce the potential of erosion and improve hydrologic connectivity into the restored tidal lagoon wetland complex. The replacement of one culvert at the southern cross levee and the installation of one culvert near the northern property boundary will improve hydrologic connectivity into the restored tidal lagoon wetland complex. In total, the Project's limits of disturbance include 28.9 acres and will result in the protection and restoration of 52 acres of tidal lagoons, intertidal salt and brackish marsh, and freshwater emergent wetlands to restore the natural shoreline with a transition from slough to salt marsh to freshwater forested wetlands g intertidal habitat.

The following Project components have not been updated since the SERP concurrence on January 7, 2024: (4) placement of approximately 27,000 cubic yards of native fill to raise low-lying areas to elevations that will support salt marsh; (5) construction of two cross levees; and (6) removal of invasive plant species.

Reasons why project is exempt:

The Project remains exempt under the Statutory Exemption for Restoration Projects (CA Public Resources Code 21080.56) because the updated Project details do not change the purpose of the Project, which is solely to conserve, restore, protect, or enhance, and assist in the recovery of California native fish and wildlife, and the habitat upon which they depend; or restore or provide habitat for California native fish and wildlife. The placement of gravel and replacement of culverts along Refuge Access Road serve as an incidental public benefit because these Project components would improve public access for recreation and post-project performance monitoring and maintenance, in addition to improving hydrologic connectivity into the restored tidal lagoon wetland complex. The other two culverts would benefit fish and wildlife because they would improve hydrologic connectivity into the restored tidal lagoon wetland complex.