

**Notice of Exemption****- 1 -****To:**

Office of Planning and Research  
 For U.S. Mail:  
 P.O. Box 3044  
 Sacramento, CA 95812-3044

**From:**

Department of Fish and Wildlife  
 Region 1 – Northern  
 619 Second Street  
 Eureka, CA 95501

**Street Address:**

1400 Tenth Street  
 Sacramento, CA 95814

**Project Title:** Cannibal Island Restoration Project (Project)

**Project Location:** The Project is located 3 miles west of the town of Loleta, Humboldt County California within the Eel River estuary (coordinates 40.653, -124.289). The Project is in the Cannibal Island U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) 7.5-minute quadrangle, bounded by Cannibal Island Road to the south (owned by the County of Humboldt), the North Bay of the Eel River estuary and Mosley Slough to the west, and Sevenmile Slough to the north and northeast.

**Project Description:** On February 7, 2024, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) Lands and Wildlife Program, in coordination with Project partners, submitted a Statutory Exemption for Restoration Project (SERP) Concurrence Request to implement the Project on CDFW's Eel River Wildlife Area. The Project will enhance and reconnect full tidal exchange to approximately 500 acres of former tidal marsh habitat through the removal of degraded water control structures, excavation of historic slough channels, and enhancement of natural marsh topography. Increased tidal exchange and connectivity will promote recovery and maintenance of tidal marsh habitats that support a variety of native fish, wildlife, and plant species, including Sensitive Natural Communities (SNC), rare plants, and State and Federal Endangered Species Act-listed fish, such as Coho salmon (*Oncorhynchus kisutch*) and others. Improvement of tidal channel networks will accommodate natural sediment transport and marsh plain accretion processes, thereby increasing the resilience of this landscape to sea level rise.

**Public Agency Approving Project:** CDFW


**Person or Public Agency Carrying Out Project:** CDFW in partnership with California Trout

**Exempt Status:**

- Statutory Exemption. Public Resources Code section 21080.56 (Statutory Exemption for Restoration Projects)
- Categorical Exemption.

**Reasons why project is exempt:** CDFW has determined the Project meets the qualifying criteria set forth in Section 21080.56, subdivisions (a) through (d), inclusive. This determination is supported by (1) CDFW's February 7, 2024, initial determination as the lead agency (see attached), that the Project meets the qualifying criteria set forth in Section 21080.56, subdivisions (a) through (d), inclusive; and (2) pursuant to Section 21080.56, subdivision (e), the CDFW Director's April 29, 2024, concurrence with that lead agency determination, which is available at [wildlife.ca.gov/Conservation/Cutting-Green-Tape/SERP/Concurrences](http://wildlife.ca.gov/Conservation/Cutting-Green-Tape/SERP/Concurrences).

**CDFW Contact Person:** Shawn Fresz (Senior Environmental Scientist Supervisor), (707) 601-6281, [Shawn.Fresz@wildlife.ca.gov](mailto:Shawn.Fresz@wildlife.ca.gov)

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Date: 4/30/2024  
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Tina Bartlett, Regional Manager

Date received for filing at OPR: \_\_\_\_\_