

## 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:

**From:** (Public Agency): California Fish and Game Commission  
P.O. Box 944209  
Sacramento, CA 94244-2090

Project Title: Amend Sections 27.20, 27.40, 27.45, 27.50, 27.65, 28.27, 28.28, 28.29, 28.65, Title 14, CCR, Regarding Recreational Fishing Regulations for Federal Groundfish for 2025 and 2026, and Fillet Requirements at Sea

Project Applicant: N/A

Project Location - Specific: California State Waters

Project Location - City: NA

Project Location - County: NA

Description of Nature, Purpose and Beneficiaries of Project:

The proposed regulation amendments will align state regulations with federal regulations for jointly managed species of groundfish, ensuring that currently depleted groundfish populations are conserved. See attachment for full description.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: California Fish and Game Commission

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: California Department of Fish and Wildlife

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. California Code of Regulations, Title 14, sections 15307 and 15308
- Statutory Exemptions. State code number:

Reasons why project is exempt:

These exemptions are related to agency actions to protect natural resources and the environment. This regulatory proposal will protect and conserve depleted fish stocks. The Commission's adoption of regulations is an activity that is the proper subject of CEQA's classes 7 and 8 categorical exemptions. See attachment.

Lead Agency

Contact Person: Melissa Miller-Henson

Area Code/Telephone/Extension: (916) 653-4899

**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:  Date: 10/15/2024

Title: Executive Director

Signed by Lead Agency  Signed by Applicant.

Date Received for filing at OPR:

## **Attachment to Notice of Exemption**

### **Adoption of Amendments to Sections 27.20, 27.40, 27.45, 27.50, 27.65, 28.27, 28.28, 28.29, 28.54, and 28.65, Title 14, California Code of Regulations Regarding Recreational Fishing Regulations for Federal Groundfish for 2025 and 2026, and Fillet Requirements at Sea**

At its October 9-10, 2024 meeting, the California Fish and Game Commission (Commission) took final action under the California Fish and Game Code and the California Administrative Procedure Act with respect to the above-named project. In taking its final action for the purposes of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA, Public Resources Code, Section 21000 *et seq.*), the Commission adopted amendments to sections 27.20, 27.40, 27.45, 27.50, 27.65, 28.27, 28.28, 28.29, 28.54 and 28.65, Title 14, California Code of Regulations (CCR) (“Project”), relying on the categorical exemptions for “Actions by Regulatory Agencies for Protection of Natural Resources and the Environment” contained in CEQA Guidelines sections 15307 and 15308 (class 7 and 8 categorical exemptions, CCR, Title 14, sections 15307 and 15308). Class 7 and 8 categorical exemptions apply to agency actions to protect natural resources and the environment.

The regulatory changes are related to recreational fishing for federal groundfish in 2025 and 2026. The changes are consistent with and complementary to those taking effect in federal ocean waters on or around January 1, 2025. The Pacific Fishery Management Council (PFMC) approved management measures for the 2025-2026 recreational groundfish fishery that include fewer changes than typical for a biennial rulemaking; this is because significant changes to season dates, depth restrictions, and bag limits were implemented for the 2024 season and current action by PFMC is carrying those management measures over to the 2025-2026 fishing seasons with no modification. However, changes to size limits and fillet regulations were approved by PFMC, and other clarifications and non-substantive changes to Title 14 are necessary for the 2025 and 2026 fisheries.

Therefore, because the Project would maintain, restore, and enhance fishery resources and the environment, these regulatory changes are the proper subjects of CEQA’s Class 7 and Class 8 categorical exemptions.