

To: Office of Planning and Research
P.O. Box 3044, Room 113
Sacramento, CA 95812-3044
County Clerk
County of: N/A

From: California Fish and Game Commission
P.O. Box 944209
Sacramento, CA 95814

Project Title: Amend Section 180.15 of Title 14, CCR – Commercial Coonstripe Shrimp Fishery

Project Applicant: N/A

Project Location: Ocean Waters, Statewide

Project Location – City: N/A

Project Location – County: N/A

Description of Nature, Purpose, and Beneficiaries of Project:

Coonstripe shrimp (*Pandalus danae*) supports a commercial trap fishery centered in northern California, from Monterey Bay to the California/Oregon border. Coonstripe fishery gear has been implicated in three whale entanglements: one in 2017 near Crescent City, and two in 2024 near San Francisco. With declining opportunities in other fisheries (i.e., salmon, groundfish), there is a growing concern with the potential for more fishermen to turn to coonstripe fishing, increasing gear usage in the fishery and further increasing the risk of marine life entanglement. The fishery operates in areas and at times of the year when there are relatively high densities of whales, including species listed under the federal Endangered Species Act. The potential growth of the fishery has the potential to increase entanglement risk. Therefore, the California Fish and Game Commission (Commission) has amended Section 180.15, Title 14, California Code of Regulations to address marine life entanglement risk in the coonstripe shrimp fishery.

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. CEQA guidelines classes 7 and 8; California Code of Regulations, Title 14, sections 15307 and 15308
- Statutory Exemptions. State code number:

Reasons why project is exempt:

The Class 7 and Class 8 categorical exemptions apply to agency actions to assure the maintenance, restoration, and enhancement of natural resources and the environment, respectively. The Commission approved the emergency regulation by relying on the categorical exemptions described in CEQA Guidelines Sections 15307 (Action by Regulatory Agencies for Protection of Natural Resources), the Class 7 exemption, and 15308 (Action by Regulatory Agencies for Protection of the Environment), the Class 8 exemption.

The Commission took this emergency action pursuant to its duty and authority to protect marine resources in state waters. Current regulations for the coonstripe shrimp fishery do not restrict the

number of participants or gear deployed, which could lead to significant risk of marine life entanglement. The emergency rulemaking adds regulations to limit growth in the fishery by establishing a north/south dividing line at the Sonoma/Mendocino county border, limiting the number of vertical lines that may be deployed per vessel, limiting the number of traps per string, establishing a maximum depth limit of 30 fathoms for the northern fishery only, and setting a new control date. This regulatory action is intended to limit the growth of the fishery to reduce marine entanglement risk. Therefore, the project is designed to reduce the risk of marine life entanglements caused by coonstripe shrimp trap gear and are exempt under CEQA as the project will ensure the maintenance and enhancement of marine resources and the marine environment.

Lead Agency

Contact Person: Melissa Miller-Henson

Phone: (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: March 18, 2025 Title: Executive Director

Signed by Lead Agency Signed by Applicant. Date Received for filing at OPR: