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: Effects of seasonal fish assemblages on the trophic cascade in eelgrass beds within the San Francisco Estuary

Project Location: San Francisco Bay Estuary (counties of Marin, Sonoma, Contra Costa, Alameda, Santa Clara, San Mateo, and San Francisco)

Project Description: The Department of Fish and Wildlife is issuing a permit to the San Francisco State University pursuant to Fish and Game Code Section 2081(a) for scientific purposes. The Section 2081(a) permit authorizes the applicant to take longfin smelt (*Spirinchus thaleichthys*), coho salmon (*Oncorhynchus kisutch*), Chinook salmon (*Oncorhynchus tshawytscha*), white sturgeon (*Acipenser transmontanus*), and Delta smelt (*Hypomesus transpacificus*) during the course of sampling, subject to terms and conditions set forth in the permit. The purpose of this sampling is for the San Francisco State University's research study on the effects of seasonal fish assemblages on the trophic cascade in eelgrass beds within the San Francisco Estuary. The Section 2081(a) permit authorizes the applicant to potentially capture longfin smelt, coho salmon, Chinook salmon, white surgeon, and Delta smelt during surveys. The applicant will conduct year-round research sampling of estuarine species through the use of beach seines and cast nets through December 31, 2027.

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

Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: Angelo La Commare-Soto, San Francisco State University

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 waters of the San Francisco Estuary which will not result in a serious or major disturbance to longfin smelt, coho salmon, Chinook salmon, white sturgeon, or Delta smelt which are all listed under the California Endangered Species Act.

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

Signature: _____ **Date:** ___**4/22/2025**_____
Craig Shuman, Regional Manager, Marine Region

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