

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: N/A

From: California Fish and Game Commission
P.O. Box 944209
Sacramento, CA 94244-2090

Project Title: Amend Section 28.30 of Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations (CCR), Regarding recreational take of barred sand bass

Project Applicant: N/A

Project Location: Ocean Waters, South of Point Conception

Project Location - City: N/A

Project Location - County: N/A

Description of Nature, Purpose, and Beneficiaries of Project: The approved project reduces the bag and possession limit for barred sand bass. The limit on the take and possession of barred sand bass is reduced to 4 barred sand bass year-round, with a sunset provision of June 1, 2028. The limit reduction would allow the species to recover, specifically during the spawning months when barred sand bass are most vulnerable to fishing, thereby benefiting the species and the overall marine ecosystem through maintenance of marine biodiversity.

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. Classes 7 and 8 (Title 14, CCR Sections 15307 and 15308)
- Statutory Exemptions. State code number:

Reasons why project is exempt: The rulemaking helps the California Department of Fish and Wildlife carry out its duty to protect marine resources in state waters. For decades, barred sand bass (*Paralabrax nebulifer*) ranked as one of the most commonly caught and retained marine sport fishes in southern California. Barred sand bass form large spawning aggregations in the summer months; commercial passenger fishing vessels (CPFVs) and private fishing boats target these aggregations, as this is when the fish are easily found and caught. CPFV landings declined in the late 2000s and have remained under 30,000 landed individuals annually since 2016. This lack of recovery could be due to several factors including continued fishing pressure during the summer months when barred sand bass form spawning aggregations and intermittent recruitment of young-of-the-year. The proposed regulation amendments are intended to allow the recovery of barred sand bass by reducing the overall number of barred sand bass fishers can take and by reducing fishing effort during their spawning season when they are most susceptible to fishing.

Therefore, Class 7 and 8 exemptions apply because reducing the take and possession of barred sand bass will allow the barred sand bass population to recover, maintain and enhance the marine environment generally by assuring marine biodiversity, and maintain an essential part of the marine ecosystem.

Lead Agency

Contact Person: Melissa Miller-Henson

Telephone: 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: May 15, 2025 Title: Executive Director

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