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Humboldt Bay
Harbor, Recreation and Conservation District
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CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT - NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

To: County of Humboldt
County Clerk
825 5th Street
Eureka, CA 95501

From: Humboldt Bay Harbor, Recreation,
and Conservation District
601 Startare Drive
Eureka, CA 95501
districtplanner@humboltdbay.org

Project Title: Long Pond Tidal Wetland Enhancement Project

Project Applicant: US Fish and Wildlife Service, Humboldt Bay National Wildlife Refuge,
1020 Ranch Road, Loleta, CA 95551.

Project Location: Salmon Creek Unit of Humboldt Bay National Wildlife Refuge at the mouth
of Long Pond where it connects to Hookton Slough on the south end of Humboldt Bay within
APN 308-191-008.

Project Summary: The project involves the replacement of a failing tide gate structure (Phase 1) and wetland habitat restoration activities involving the creation of ponds and tidal channeling, hydrology reconnection, and placement of large woody debris in wetland habitat (Phase 2). Phase 1 of the Project focuses on replacing a failing tide gate structure that is a critical water control mechanism for the refuge to prevent seawater from flowing upstream during high tide, which could inundate infrastructure. The existing structure is approximately 1,500 square feet in size and will be replaced with a dimensionally equivalent structure. Phase 2 (Habitat Restoration) will restore approx. 2.8 acres of upland habitat adjacent to Long Pond by converting it into functional brackish and salt marsh wetlands. Restoration activities will include the excavation of tidal channels and ponds to improve hydrologic connectivity, expand floodplain function, and increase habitat diversity.

Pertinent California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Exemption: The District has determined that the project is exempt from CEQA pursuant to Class 33, §15333 Small Habitat Restoration Projects and Class 2, §15302 Replacement or Reconstruction. The Class 33 exemption applies to small habitat restoration projects that are undertaken for the purpose of maintaining, restoring, enhancing, or protecting the natural environment. The Project meets all of the following conditions: (1) the Project includes restoration, enhancement, and protection of habitat for fish, plants, or wildlife, (2) the Project does not exceed five acres in size and will not result in significant adverse impacts, (3) the Project will not result in significant adverse effect on endangered, rare, or threatened species or their habitat pursuant to Section 15065 of the CEQA Guidelines, (4) the Project site is not

located on a site that is included on any list compiled pursuant to Section 65962.5 of the Government Code, and (5) the Project will not result in cumulative impacts that are significant when viewed in connection with the effects of past, current, or probable future project. The Class 2 exemption applies to the tide gate replacement and consists of replacement or reconstruction of existing structures and facilities where the new structure will be located on the same site as the structure replaced and will have substantially the same purpose and capacity as the structure replaced.

Rationale for Exemption: The project involves replacement of an existing tide gate with a dimensionally equivalent structure, and tidal wetland restoration of approximately 2.8 acres. The District has further determined that the use of the categorical exemption is not barred by any of the exceptions set forth in CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2. The material supporting these findings is on file with the District and available for review upon request at the address listed below. Specifically:

1. The cumulative impact of successive projects would not result in a significant impact.
2. There are not unusual circumstances that create a reasonable possibility that the project will have a significant effect on the environment.
3. The project would not impact scenic resources.
4. The project is not located on a site which is included on any list compiled pursuant to Section 65962.5 of the Government Code.
5. The project would not cause a substantial adverse change to the significance of a historic structure.

Lead Agency Contact: Rob Holmlund, Development Director
Humboldt Bay Harbor, Recreation and Conservation District
601 Startare Drive, Eureka, CA 95501

Signature: Van Blodgett
Vanessa Blodgett, District Planner

Date: 6/16/25