



State of California – Natural Resources Agency
DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE
South Coast Region
3030 Old Ranch Parkway, Suite 400
Seal Beach, CA 90740
www.wildlife.ca.gov

GAVIN NEWSOM, Governor
CHARLTON H. BONHAM, Director



To:
Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation
[CEQA Submit](#)

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

Project Title: Big Canyon Coastal Habitat Restoration and Resiliency Project: Phase 3 (Streambed Alteration Agreement, No. EPIMS-ORA-36265-R5)

Project Location (Orange): The project is located at Big Canyon Creek and the confluence to Upper Newport Bay, in the City of Newport Beach, Orange County, CA.

Project Description: The California Department of Fish and Wildlife has executed Streambed Alteration Agreement, No. EPIMS-ORA-36265-R5, pursuant to Section 1602 of the Fish and Game Code to the Newport Bay Conservancy, as represented by Heather Cieslak.

The project is the final phase of this multi-phase habitat restoration project in the Big Canyon Nature Park. Project activities include the use of a bulldozer, backhoe, steel-tracked excavator mounted with a hydraulic concrete breaker and thumb attachments, front end loader, grader, and amphibious equipment for dredging.

Public Agency Approving Project: CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE

Person or Public Agency Carrying Out Project: NEWPORT BAY CONSERVANCY

Exempt Status:

Statutory Exemption. Public Resources Code section 21080.56 (Statutory Exemption for Restoration Projects)

Categorical Exemption.

Reasons why project is exempt: CDFW has determined that the Project meets the qualifying criteria set forth in Section 21080.56, subdivisions (a) through (d), inclusive. CDFW’s determination is supported by (1) The City of Newport Beach’s March 24, 2022, initial determination as lead agency that the Project meets the qualifying criteria set forth in Section 21080.56, subdivisions (a) through (d), inclusive; and (2) pursuant to Section 21080.56, subdivision (e), the CDFW Director’s May 4, 2022, concurrence with that The

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July 30, 2025

City of Newport Beach's determination, which is available
at <https://wildlife.ca.gov/Conservation/Cutting-Green-Tape/SERP/Concurrences>.

CDFW Contact Person: Christian Romberger, Senior Environmental Scientist
(Specialist), (562) 292-6365, Christian.Romberger@wildlife.ca.gov

DocuSigned by:

Signature: _____ *Date:* 7/30/2025
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Victoria Tang, Environmental Program Manager

Date received for filing at LCI: