

Summary Form for Electronic Document Submittal

Form F

Lead agencies may include 15 hardcopies of this document when submitting electronic copies of Environmental Impact Reports, Negative Declarations, Mitigated Negative Declarations, or Notices of Preparation to the State Clearinghouse (SCH). The SCH also accepts other summaries, such as EIR Executive Summaries prepared pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15123. Please include one copy of the Notice of Completion Form (NOC) with your submission and attach the summary to each electronic copy of the document.

SCH #: Pending

Project Title: Humboldt Bay Oyster Company Shellfish Farm

Lead Agency: Humboldt Bay Harbor, Recreation and Conservation District (HBHRCD)

Contact Name: Vanessa Blodgett

Email: districtplanner@humboldtby.org Phone Number: (707) 825-8260

Project Location: Eureka Humboldt
City *County*

Project Description (Proposed actions, location, and/or consequences).

Humboldt Bay Oyster Company (HBOC) currently farms Pacific oysters (*Crassostrea gigas*) and Kumamoto oysters (*Magallana sikimeia*) to maturity as well as Manila clams (*Venerupis philippinarum*) for seed in Humboldt Bay, California. The farm was established in 1978 and HBOC purchased it from Kuiper Mariculture in 2002. The proposed project seeks approval for (1) its existing FLUPSY, raft culture, and rack and bag culture methods within existing 17.8 acre farming area (2) farming within two proposed expansion areas near-by (3.1-acre Expansion Area 1 and 10.8-acre Expansion Area 2), and (3) the use of an additional intertidal culture method known as "Longline Culture". A FLUPSY is a raft consisting of a series of bins containing shellfish seed suspended into the water and an electric paddle wheel to move water through the bins to create "upwelling" that is beneficial to growth of shellfish seed. The species they currently farm are already abundantly cultured in Humboldt Bay. The proposed intertidal longline culture method involves using either SEAPA-type culture baskets or tipping bags. These systems may be deployed with or without floats that harness tidal energy to "tumble" the oysters. HBOC proposes the use of intertidal longlines within existing rack & bag culture areas and within the proposed expansion areas.

Identify the project's significant or potentially significant effects and briefly describe any proposed mitigation measures that would reduce or avoid that effect.

The project could result in potentially significant impacts to biological resources, particularly eelgrass habitat, through the placement of aquaculture structures, vessel traffic, anchoring, and propeller scour. To reduce or avoid these impacts, cultivation structures and equipment would be prohibited within 5 meters of eelgrass habitat, annual eelgrass surveys would be conducted prior to installing new gear in new areas, vessel routes would avoid eelgrass beds by using established channels or transiting at higher tides, and anchoring would be prohibited in areas containing eelgrass. Project activities also have the potential to affect cultural resources if ground disturbance results in the inadvertent discovery or disturbance of archaeological resources, cultural resources, or human remains. These potential effects would be reduced through compliance with the Harbor District Protocol developed in coordination with the Blue Lake Rancheria, Bear River Band of Rohnerville Rancheria, and Wiyot Tribe. Coordination with the Wiyot Tribe THPO would occur, and a qualified cultural resource monitor would be present if ground-disturbing activities occur within 100 feet of a recorded site or exceed currently proposed disturbance levels. The project could also result in water quality impacts associated with vessel maintenance and fueling, including accidental releases of fuel, lubricants, or other hazardous materials. Mitigation measures include maintaining all vessels to minimize leaks or spills, using marine-grade fuel containers refilled on land, and requiring project personnel to carry oil spill absorption materials to allow for immediate response in the event of a spill. Farming operations could contribute to marine debris if aquaculture equipment becomes loose or lost, creating potential environmental and navigation hazards. To minimize this effect, farming areas would be regularly surveyed for loose equipment or debris, all materials would be promptly secured or removed, and culture equipment would be clearly marked with the operator's name and contact information to facilitate tracking and recovery.

If applicable, describe any of the project's areas of controversy known to the Lead Agency, including issues raised by agencies and the public.

There are no known areas of substantial controversy associated with the project. The project consists primarily of the continued operation of an existing shellfish farm with limited expansion of area and culture methods within areas that have historically supported aquaculture uses.

Provide a list of the responsible or trustee agencies for the project.

California Coastal Commission
North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board
State Lands Commission
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers