

Notice of Exemption

To: Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation
PO Box 3044
1400 Tenth Street, Rm 2
Sacramento, CA 95812-3044

From: Department of Fish and Wildlife
Marine Region
1700 9th Street
Sacramento, CA 95811

Project Title: 2026 San Francisco Bay USACE Dredge Monitoring Study

Project Location: San Francisco Bay Locations: Richmond Outer Harbor, Southampton Shoal Channel, Pinole Shoal Channel, Pinole Shoal Reach

Project Description: The Department of Fish and Wildlife is issuing a permit to Novo Aquatic Sciences, Inc. pursuant to Fish and Game Code Section 2081(a) for educational purposes. The Section 2081(a) permit authorizes the applicant to take longfin smelt (*Spirinchus thaleichthys*), delta smelt (*Hypomesus transpacificus*), coho salmon (*Oncorhynchus kisutch*), Chinook salmon (*Oncorhynchus tshawytscha*), and white sturgeon (*Acipenser transmontanus*) during the course of sampling, subject to terms and conditions set forth in the permit. The purpose of this sampling is for Novo Aquatic Sciences, Inc. to subsample the dredge material produced from the routine United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) dredging of San Francisco Bay to assess species caught during the dredging activities. The Section 2081(a) permit authorizes the applicant to potentially possess longfin smelt, delta smelt, coho salmon, Chinook salmon, and white sturgeon during surveys. The applicant will conduct sampling of dredge materials from June – November 2026 using hand collection, dip nets, and dredging basket from the crab basket and hopper of the dredging vessel.

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

Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: Steven Novotny, Novo Aquatic Sciences, Inc.

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 sampling of dredged materials from San Francisco Bay at Richmond Outer Harbor, Southampton Shoal Channel, Pinole Shoal Channel, and Pinole Shoal Reach which will not result in a serious or major disturbance to longfin smelt, delta smelt, coho salmon, Chinook salmon, or white sturgeon which are all listed under the California Endangered Species Act.

Lead Agency Contact Person: Dylan Inskeep

Telephone: (707) 317-3924

Signature: 

Date: 5/26/2026

Claire Waggoner, Habitat Conservation Program Manager, Marine Region

Signed by Lead Agency

Date Received for filing at OPR: _____