



State of California – Natural Resources Agency
DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE
Northern Region
601 Locust Street
Redding, CA, 96001
www.wildlife.ca.gov

GAVIN NEWSOM, Governor
MEGHAN HERTEL, Director



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

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

Project Title: Vanauken Creek Habitat Enhancement Project (Restoration Management Permit No. RMP-2026-0030-R1)

Project Location (Humboldt): The 63.65-acre Project is located along Vanauken Creek within the Mattole watershed. The Project includes 1.19 acres of instream work and 62.5 acres of upland habitat enhancement. The Project is located in the County of Humboldt, state of California; Latitude 40.051573 and Longitude -123.956125; Assessor's Parcel Numbers: 215-162-018, 215-162-021, 215-162-022.

Project Description: On June 3, 2026, The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) issued this Restoration Management Permit (RMP) pursuant to section 1670 of the Fish and Game Code to Sanctuary Forest, Inc. This Project includes management or propagation activities intended to benefit native fish, wildlife, plants, or their habitat, or a combination thereof. The Project is expected to improve habitat for coho salmon (*Oncorhynchus kisutch*) and steelhead (*O. mykiss*) in Vanauken Creek, an important salmon bearing tributary in the Mattole River headwaters, by addressing limiting factors, including low summer stream flows, poor summer rearing habitat, and the lack of winter refuge habitat. The Project has three primary objectives: (1) Instream and floodplain habitat enhancement; (2) streamflow enhancement; (3) and forest thinning and riparian habitat enhancement. CDFW has determined that the Project is a Qualifying Restoration Project pursuant to section 1671(d)(1) of the Fish and Game Code, and the Project is expected to result in a substantial, cumulative benefit to native fish, wildlife, plants and their habitats. This notice is to advise that CDFW issued the above-described RMP on the date signed below.

Public Agency Approving Project: CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE

Person or Public Agency Carrying Out Project:

Walker Wise
Sanctuary Forest, Inc.
(707) 986-1087 ext. 6#
Walker@sanctuaryforest.org
PO Box 166

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

RMP-2026-0030-R1

June 3, 2026

Whitethorn, CA 95589

Exempt Status: The Project is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21080.56. Under Public Resources Code section 21080.1, subdivision (a), the lead agency is responsible for determining whether a project is exempt from CEQA, and that determination is final and conclusive on all persons, including responsible agencies. Notwithstanding Section 21080.1, subdivision (a), a lead agency’s determination that a project is exempt from CEQA pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21080.56 is only valid if the exemption determination is made after the Director of CDFW has concurred with the lead agency’s preliminary determination that the project meets certain qualifying criteria set forth in Public Resources Code section 21080.56, subdivisions (a) to (d), inclusive.

On May 23, 2024, the Humboldt County Planning and Building Department (HCPBD) made a preliminary determination that the Project meets certain qualifying criteria set forth in Public Resources Code section 21080.56, subdivisions (a) to (d), inclusive. On June 19, 2024, the Director of CDFW concurred with the HCPBD’s preliminary determination. On July 17, 2024, the HCPBD as CEQA lead agency made a final determination that the Project meets certain qualifying criteria set forth in Public Resources Code section 21080.56, subdivisions (a) to (d), inclusive, and determined that the Project is exempt from CEQA pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21080.56. CDFW, now acting as a CEQA responsible agency for the issuance of the RMP on June 3, 2026, is bound by the HCPBD’s determination on July 17, 2024, that the Project is exempt from CEQA pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21080.56.

CDFW Contact Person: Corrina Kamoroff, (707) 653-3578,
Corrina.Kamoroff@wildlife.ca.gov

Signature:  **Date:** June 3, 2026

Michael Harris, Acting Regional Manager

Date received for filing at LCI: