

**Attachment to Notice of Exemption  
Amend Sections 28.06 and 28.65, Title 14,  
California Code of Regulations,  
Regarding Recreational Gear Restrictions for White Shark**

*June 18, 2026*

On June 17, 2026, the California Fish and Game Commission (Commission) took final action under the California Fish and Game Code and the California Administrative Procedure Act (APA) with respect to the proposed project. In taking its final action for the purposes of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA, Public Resources Code, Section 21000 *et seq.*), the Commission adopted emergency amendments to sections 28.06 and 28.65, Title 14, California Code of Regulations (CCR), relying on the statutory exemption for specific actions necessary to prevent or mitigate an emergency contained in Public Resources Code Section 21080(b)(4) and the categorical exemption for “Actions by Regulatory Agencies for Protection of Natural Resources” contained in CEQA Guidelines Section 15307.

**Statutory Exemption for Specific Actions Necessary to Prevent or Mitigate an Emergency**

In compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA; Public Resources Code Section 21000 *et seq.*), the Commission adopted the regulation relying on a statutory exemption contained in Public Resources Code Section 21080(b)(4) (Actions Necessary to Prevent or Mitigate an Emergency). The exemption applies to agency actions to prevent or mitigate an emergency. The Commission considered four factors in determining whether an emergency exists: (1) the magnitude of potential harm, (2) the existence of a crisis situation, (3) the immediacy of the need, and (4) whether the anticipation of harm has a basis firmer than simple speculation.

The recreational take of white shark (*Carcharodon carcharias*) is prohibited. White sharks are slow-growing, long lived, and have low reproductive rates compared to other fish species. As a top-level predator, healthy populations are necessary to maintain a balanced ecosystem. Dr. Chris Lowe, shark researcher at California State University, Long Beach, has documented increased shark aggregations in southern California waters this year. Juvenile white sharks usually move into southern California waters in the summer months, as waters to the south become too warm. During warm water events, the sharks are present in greater numbers and are present farther north. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration is forecasting a strong El Niño event beginning this summer that will bring warmer than normal waters to the California coast. Warm water events have historically led to increased presence of white sharks in California, and a northward shift in the range of juvenile white sharks. In early April 2026, 20 juvenile white sharks were caught in a single day from the Hermosa Beach Pier. At least three white sharks have been documented to have died this year following being hooked and released with heavy fishing gear consisting of wire leaders and large hooks.

In addition to the harm to the species, a hooked white shark poses a serious risk of harm to ocean users. In 2014, an ocean swimmer was bitten by a shark that had been hooked off the Manhattan Beach Pier. The swimmer ran into the fishing line and was bitten by the shark fighting on the line. The individual was hospitalized with lacerations and puncture wounds on

the right side of his torso and his right hand. An additional risk is an ocean user becoming entangled in the fishing line or leader. Wire leader has the capability of severely injuring someone if entangled while a large shark is struggling on the end. A single incident involving a hooked white shark harming a bystander in the water is unacceptable. The increased number of sharks already being hooked from piers and beaches indicates that a crisis exists, which will likely increase through the summer without intervention.

### **Categorical Exemption to Protect Natural Resources**

In adopting amendments to sections 28.06 and 28.65 of Title 14, CCR, the Commission relied on the Class 7 categorical exemption under CEQA, which applies to agency actions taken to protect natural resources. The proposed amendments add a requirement to immediately release hooked white sharks and prohibit removing white sharks from the water. The action also prohibits the use of wire or metallic line or leaders, or hooks greater than one and one-half inches in maximum inside diameter, when fishing from the shoreline (including beaches, banks, piers, jetties, breakwaters, docks, and other man-made structures connected to the shore) or within 1,000 yards of the mean high tide line, when fishing in ocean waters south of Pigeon Point (San Mateo County, 37° 11' N. lat.).

White sharks are an important apex predator in the marine ecosystem and are protected under state and federal fishing regulations. White sharks are slow-growing, long-lived, and have low reproductive rates compared to other fish species. As a top-level predator, healthy populations are necessary to maintain a balanced ecosystem. There have been several recent incidents involving pier and beach anglers either intentionally targeting white sharks or accidentally hooking them with very heavy fishing gear. In early April 2026, 20 juvenile white sharks were caught in a single day from the Hermosa Beach Pier. These incidents have resulted in the death of at least three white sharks this year. Young white sharks are already being observed in significantly higher numbers in southern California. Because of this, there is an immediate need to curtail illegal targeted fishing for white sharks, help ensure accidentally hooked sharks are released alive.