State of California - Department of Fish and Wildlife

2025 ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENT FILING FEE CASH RECEIPT

DFW 753.5a (Rev. 01/01/25) Previously DFG 753.5a

RECEIPT NUMBER:
37-04/22/2025-0279

STATE CLEARING HOUSE NUMBER (*if applicable*)

SEE INSTRUCTIONS ON REVERSE. TYPE OR PRINT CLEARLY.

LEAD AGENCY	LEAD AGENCY EMAIL	DATE
SAN DIEGO UNIFIED PORT DISTRICT		04/22/2025

COUNTY/STATE AGENCY OF FILING	DOCUMENT NUMBER
SAN DIEGO	37-2025-0279

PROJECT TITLE
SHELLFISH BASKET STUDY AT FORMER A-8 ANCHORAGE

PROJECT APPLICANT NAME	PROJECT APPLICANT EMAIL	PHONE NUMBER
SAN DIEGO UNIFIED PORT DISTRICT		619-686-6200

PROJECT APPLICANT ADDRESS	CITY	STATE	ZIP CODE
3165 PACIFIC HIGHWAY	SAN DIEGO	CA	92101

PROJECT APPLICANT (*Check appropriate box*)
☐ Local Public Agency ☐ School District ☒ Other Special District ☐ State Agency ☐ Private Entity

CHECK APPLICABLE FEES:

☐ Environmental Impact Report (EIR)	$4,123.50	$	0.00
☐ Mitigated/Negative Declaration (MND)/(ND)	$2,968.75	$	0.00
☐ Certified Regulatory Program (CRP) document - payment due directly to CDFW	$1,401.75	$	0.00

☒ Exempt from fee
- ☒ Notice of Exemption (attach)
- ☐ CDFW No Effect Determination (attach)

☐ Fee previously paid (attach previously issued cash receipt copy)

☐ Water Right Application or Petition Fee (State Water Resources Control Board only)	$850.00	$	0.00
☒ County documentary handling fee		$	50.00
☐ Other		$	0.00

PAYMENT METHOD:

☐ Cash ☒ Credit ☐ Check ☐ Other **TOTAL RECEIVED** $ 50.00

SIGNATURE	AGENCY OF FILING PRINTED NAME AND TITLE
X ERS	San Diego County Clerk, ELVA STOPKE, Deputy

Payment Reference #: VITALCHEK: 200467620/066993

ORIGINAL - PROJECT APPLICANT | COPY - CDFW/ASB | COPY - LEAD AGENCY | COPY - COUNTY CLERK | DFW 753.5A (Rev. 01012025)

FILED
Apr 22, 2025 09:44 AM
JORDAN Z. MARKS
SAN DIEGO COUNTY CLERK
File # 2025-000311
State Receipt # 37042220250279

SAN DIEGO COUNTY CLERK
CEQA FILING COVER SHEET

THIS SPACE FOR CLERK'S USE ONLY

Complete and attach this form to each CEQA Notice filed with the County Clerk

TYPE OR PRINT CLEARLY

Project Title

SHELLFISH BASKET STUDY AT FORMER A-8 ANCHORAGE

Check Document being Filed:

- ○ Environmental Impact Report (EIR)
- ○ Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) or Negative Declaration (ND)
- ◉ Notice of Exemption (NOE)
- ○ Other (Please fill in type):

FILED IN THE OFFICE OF THE SAN DIEGO
COUNTY CLERK ON April 22, 2025
Posted April 22, 2025 **Removed** _____
Returned to agency on _____
DEPUTY _____

Filing fees are due at the time a Notice of Determination/Exemption is filed with our office.For more information on filing fees and No Effect Determinations, please refer to California Code of Regulations, Title 14, section 753.5.

Notice of Exemption *CEQA Guidelines Appendix E*

To: ■ Office of Planning and Research
1400 Tenth Street, Room 121
Sacramento, CA 95814

■ *San Diego County Recorder/County Clerk*
1600 Pacific Highway, Suite 260
San Diego, CA 92101-2480

From: (Public Agency)
San Diego Unified Port District
Development Services Department
3165 Pacific Highway
San Diego, CA 92101

Project Title: Shellfish Basket Study at Former A-8 Anchorage
Project Location – Specific: Former A-8 Anchorage (32.6497, -117.1275)
Project location – City: Coronado
Project Location – County: San Diego

Description of Nature, Purpose, and Beneficiaries of Project: The San Diego Unified Port District (Applicant or Port) proposes to perform baseline testing of the health and quality of adult oysters, mussels, and seaweed at one location in the former A-8 anchorage. This will involve co-locating and deploying shellfish baskets adjacent to the already deployed HyperKelp Sensor/Buoy to serve the dual purpose of providing ground truthing data and conducting concurrent water quality monitoring (the shellfish and seaweed health testing and water quality testing are collectively referred to as the "Project"). The Project is anticipated to occur over the course of two months in the summer of 2025 and would include:

(1) species harvesting and depuration;

(2) the installation of a buoy system (see Figure 1), which would include eight shellfish baskets containing shellfish and seaweed species; and

(3) sampling of the shellfish and seaweed, and water quality monitoring.

Due to its nature and limited scope, construction of the Project would generate a minor amount of vehicle trips and would require limited use of equipment. Therefore, impacts related to air quality, greenhouse gas emissions, and transportation and traffic are not anticipated to occur. Furthermore, the Applicant would be responsible for compliance with all laws and regulations associated with the activities on or in connection with the above-described premises, and in all uses thereof, including those regulating stormwater and hazardous materials.

The purpose of the Project is to assess the potential for deployed shellfish to be used to promote denitrification and water quality filtration through shellfish and seaweed co-culture experiments. These experiments will combine ambient water quality monitoring courtesy of the HyperKelp Sensors at the proposed study location with denitrification capacity assessments. The results of the Project would provide data on the denitrification capacity of shellfish and seaweed while providing HyperKelp valuable ground truthing data. Findings could be used in conjunction with previous shellfish basket study and water quality monitoring findings to inform the potential for future shellfish and seaweed aquaculture siting, as well as the use of shellfish and/or seaweed for potential restoration activities and bioremediation projects. The Project would study two species of shellfish and one species of seaweed: adult Pacific oysters (*Crassostrea gigas*) and adult Bay mussels (*Mytilus galloprovincialis*/*M. trossulus*) and green seaweed (*Ulva lactuca*). As described below, all shellfish and seaweed used in the Project would be harvested from existing shellfish and seaweed populations in San Diego Bay (Bay).

Shellfish and seaweed would be harvested by hand from existing structures within the Bay. Then the harvested organisms would undergo depuration at the Coastal and Marine Institute Laboratory at San Diego State University to eliminate the sampling bias associated with the existing Bay water quality conditions. This depuration would occur seven days before deployment. After harvesting and depuration, the shellfish and seaweed species would be placed into eight (8) shellfish baskets for deployment.

Following depuration, the buoy system would be installed at the Project location. No eelgrass resources are known to occur within the project footprint. Please see Figure 1 for the configuration of the proposed buoy system. This would include:

- One 600-pound 2 foot by 2 foot by 2-foot concrete block and up to three additional concrete weights in five-gallon buckets that are up to 100 pounds each and would be placed on the seafloor
- One 5/8" nylon line approximately 20 feet in length, which would connect the concrete block to a surface buoy
- One 5/8" nylon line approximately 15 feet in length (tether line), which would be connected to an additional surface buoy and connected to the longer nylon line with a 3/8" shackle
- Eight shellfish baskets, approximately 25 inches by 10 inches by 6 inches in size, which would be secured to the tether nylon line via secure clips on the baskets, and
- At least one additional submerged standard rubber marine-grade buoy, to ensure the baskets remain at a depth compatible with sampling, if necessary.

In total, the buoy system would have an approximate total radius of up to 30 feet and a bottom radius of three to four feet distributed between the concrete block and additional weights.

A maximum of two people would be required to deploy, and later remove, the buoy system at the proposed location, which would be sited approximately 2,230 feet west of the docks at the National City Marine Terminal and approximately 2,540 feet northwest of the opening of Sweetwater Channel. Following completion of the study, Port staff would remove all baskets from the water. Port divers would approach the site again, evaluate conditions at the surface and at bottom depth, bring the buoy onboard and retrieve the weights by chain/cable onto the vessel. Port staff will provide notification to Coastal staff when the baskets are deployed and removed.

The eight baskets would be filled with the shellfish and/or seaweed species as follows:

- One basket would contain between 80-150 adult Pacific oysters at a high stocking density
- One basket would contain between 80-150 adult Bay mussels at a high stocking density
- One basket would contain between 40-80 adult Pacific oysters at a low stocking density
- One basket would contain between 40-80 adult Bay mussels at a low stocking density
- One basket would contain between 40-80 adult Pacific oysters at a low stocking density and 3 pounds of green seaweed
- One basket would contain between 40-80 adult Bay mussels a low stocking density and 3 pounds of green seaweed
- One basket would contain between 80-150 adult Pacific oysters at a high stocking density and 3 pounds of green seaweed
- One basket would contain between 80-150 adult Bay mussels a high stocking density and 3 pounds of green seaweed

The buoy system would be deployed over a total estimated time of 60 days, or two-month period. It is anticipated that the shellfish baskets would be installed about a week after the buoy system is deployed, and that the shellfish baskets would be removed about a week prior to removal of the buoy system. Shellfish tissue, seaweed samples, and water samples would be collected frequently, anticipated to be on a weekly basis, during the deployment of the shellfish baskets. The deployment period of the shellfish baskets would allow adequate time for the shellfish to filter water and accumulate present in the surrounding waters. Taking multiple samples would be necessary because it would allow the Applicant to assess how water quality, shellfish tissues, and seaweed samples change over time with the presence of shellfish and seaweed during the deployment period, and additional sampling may

be needed during the deployment period. The Applicant would send the collected samples to an off-Tidelands location (University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and Weck Laboratories) for analysis.

On the final day of deployment, all equipment, including any remaining shellfish and seaweed, would be removed from the water. Removal of the buoy system from the proposed location would require approximately one day to complete. The Project location would be accessed by small boat for basket installation, sampling, and removal.

The Applicant would be responsible for compliance with all laws and regulations associated with the activities on or in connection with the above-described premises, and in all uses thereof, including those regulating stormwater and hazardous materials, as well as acquiring necessary permits from relevant resource agencies, such as the California Coastal Commission, Army Corps of Engineers, and Regional Water Quality Control Board, including the necessary real estate or access agreements, or coastal development permitting for the proposed project sites that are not within the District's permitting or coastal jurisdiction.

Marine Debris Reduction and Management. Port staff and/or consultants shall carry out operation consistent with the following marine debris reduction and management practices:

A. **Storm Damage and Debris.** As soon as safely and reasonably possible following storm or severe wind or weather events, Port staff and/or consultants shall patrol each study location for escaped or damaged equipment. All equipment that cannot be repaired and placed back into service shall be properly recycled or disposed of at an appropriate onshore facility. In addition, Port staff and/or consultants shall retrieve or repair any escaped or damaged equipment that it encounters while conducting routine sampling and/or maintenance activities associated with the pilot project. If the escaped gear cannot be repaired and replaced, it shall be properly recycled or disposed of on land.

B. **Gear Marking and Replacement.** Port staff and/or consultants shall mark all shellfish baskets and floats in an easily identifiable manner with identification information. Markings shall be securely attached and robust enough to remain attached and legible after an extended period in the marine environment (e.g. heat transfer, hot stamp, etching, etc.). Existing floats currently in use shall be marked or replaced with marked versions when replanted and all unmarked gear shall be replaced in this way. In the event that gear, or equipment becomes displaced or dislodged from the experiment, it shall be the Port's responsibility to retrieve the material from the shoreline, open water, eelgrass beds, mudflat, or submerged bottom with minimal damage to the resources affected. Once located, such material shall be removed as soon as feasible and properly disposed of, recycled, or returned to use.

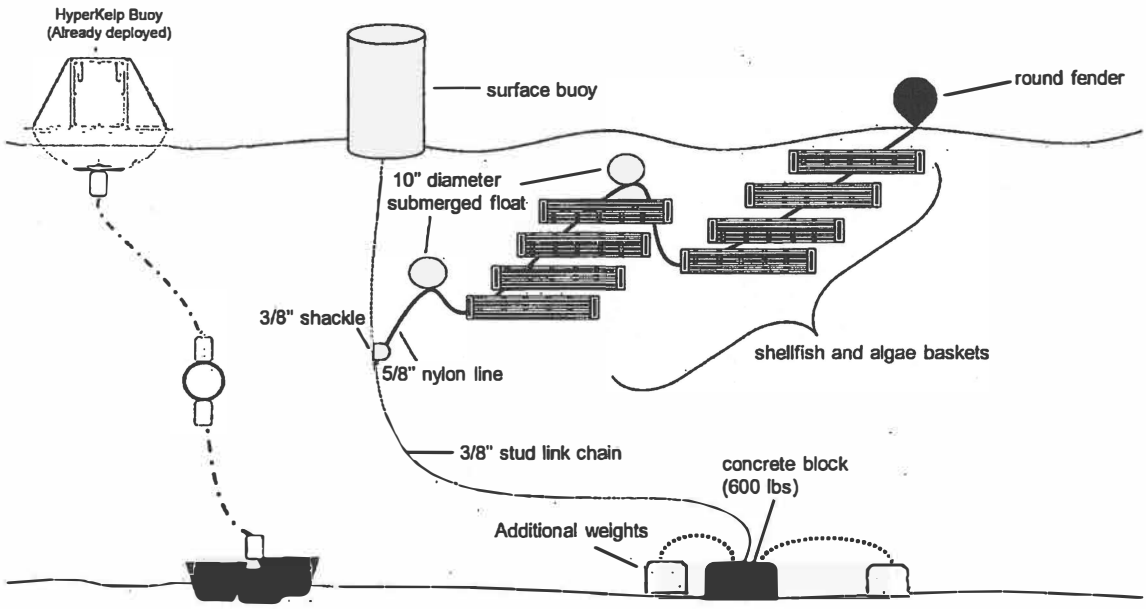
C. **Ongoing Operations.** Port staff and/or consultants shall not leave or temporarily store tools, loose gear, or construction materials on its leased tidelands or surrounding areas. All study equipment installed on and in use at the study sites shall be kept neat and secure and maintained in functional condition. Port staff and/or consultants shall carry out regular bed inspections and maintenance activities to help ensure that broken, collapsed, fallen, or buried gear is fixed or removed in a timely manner.

D. **Bed Cleaning at Harvest.** Port staff and/or consultants shall carry out a thorough inspection to locate and remove loose, abandoned or out of use equipment, tools, and accumulations of oysters from the surrounding substrate. Oyster shell shall not be intentionally placed or deposited within the lease outside of cultivation gear, and oysters or oyster shell accidentally spilled during the experiment shall be immediately collected and removed.

E. **Excessive Gear Loss or Maintenance Failures.** If the Port is found to be responsible for consistently extensive loss of equipment into the marine environment or is consistently failing to maintain its equipment in an intact and serviceable condition, Port staff and/or consultants shall

modify its equipment and/or operations to minimize equipment loss and mitigate impacts to affected habitat

Figure 1. Configuration of buoy system to be deployed.



The following categorical determinations are based on the project submittal and all project information known to the District as of the date of this determination.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: *San Diego Unified Port District (SDUPD)*
Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: *San Diego Unified Port District (SDUPD), 3165 Pacific Highway, San Diego, CA 92101 (619) 686-6200*

Exempt Status: (Check one):

- ☐ Ministerial (Sec. 21080(b)(1); 15268);
- ☐ Declared Emergency (Sec. 21080(b)(3); 15269(a));
- ☐ Emergency Project (Sec. 21080(b)(4); 15269(b)(c));
- ■ **Categorical Exemptions:** ***New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures (SG § 15303) (Class 3), Minor Alternations to Land (SG § 15304) (Class 4),*** **and** ***Information Collection (SG § 15306) (Class 6)***

Reason Why Project is Exempt: The proposed project is determined to be Categorically Exempt pursuant to *California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines Sections* 15303 (New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures), and 15304 (Minor Alterations to Land), 15306 (Information Collection) *of the District's Guidelines for Compliance with CEQA* because it would result in no permanent effects on the environment, and would not involve the removal of mature, scenic trees and is for the purpose of basic data collection/research/experimental management/resource evaluation activities which would not result in a serious or major disturbance to an environmental resource. The District has determined none of the six exceptions to the use of a categorical

exemption apply to this project (CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2). *Section 3.b, 3.d, and 3.f of the District's CEQA Guidelines is as follows:*

3.c New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures (SG § 15303) (Class 3): Includes construction of limited numbers of new, small facilities or structures; installation of small new equipment and facilities in small structures; and conversion of existing small structures from one use to another with minor modifications to the exterior of the structure.

AND/OR

3.d. Minor Alterations to Land (SG § 15304) (Class 4): Includes minor alterations in the condition of land, water and/or vegetation not involving removal of mature, scenic trees, including, but not limited to:
(6) Minor temporary use of land having negligible or no permanent effects on the environment.

AND/OR

3.f. Information Collection (SG § 15306) (Class 6): Includes basic data collection, research, experimental management, and resource evaluation activities which do not result in a serious or major disturbance to an environmental resource. These may be for information gathering purposes, or as part of a study leading to an action which has not yet been approved, adopted, or funded.

Lead Agency Contact Person and Telephone Number: Lillian Mattes, (619) 686-8200

Signature: L Mattes **Date:** 4/18/2025 **Title:** Associate Planner

- ■ Signed by Lead Agency
- □ Signed by Applicant

Date received for filing at OPR/Clerk:

San Diego County

Transaction #: 8322395
Receipt #: 2025147862

JORDAN Z. MARKS
Assessor/Recorder/County Clerk
1600 Pacific Highway Suite 260
P. O. Box 121750, San Diego, CA 92112-1750
Tel. (619) 237-0502 Fax (619) 557-4155
www.sdarcc.gov

Cashier Date: 04/22/2025
Cashier Location: SD

Print Date: 04/22/2025 9:45 am

Payment Summary

Total Fees:	$50.00
Total Payments:	$50.00
Balance:	$0.00

Payment

VITALCHEK PAYMENT	$50.00
Total Payments	$50.00

Filing

CEQA - NOE FILE #: 2025-000311 Date: 04/22/2025 9:44AM Pages: 6

State Receipt # 37-04/22/2025-0279

Fees:	Fish & Wildlife County Administrative Fee	$50.00
Total Fees Due:		$50.00

Grand Total - All Documents: $50.00