



State of California - Department of Fish and Wildlife
2026 ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENT FILING FEE
CASH RECEIPT
DFW 753 5a (Rev 01/01/26) Previously DFG 753 5a

RECEIPT NUMBER
37-10/14/2026-0880
STATE CLEARING HOUSE NUMBER (If applicable)

SEE INSTRUCTIONS ON REVERSE TYPE OR PRINT CLEARLY.

LEAD AGENCY SAN DIEGO UNIFIED PORT DISTRICT	LEAD AGENCY EMAIL	DATE 10/14/2026
COUNTY/STATE AGENCY OF FILING SAN DIEGO	DOCUMENT NUMBER 37-2026-0880	

PROJECT TITLE
OCEAN ECOSTRUCTURES LIFE BOOSTING UNITS PILOT PROJECT

PROJECT APPLICANT NAME DAVID RODES, OCEAN ECOSTRUCTURES SL	PROJECT APPLICANT EMAIL	PHONE NUMBER 346-292-268	
PROJECT APPLICANT ADDRESS WRC BARCELONA, MOLL DE BARCELONA S/N, EAST BUILDING, 1ST FLOOR	CITY BARCELONA	STATE SPAIN	ZIP CODE 08039
PROJECT APPLICANT (Check appropriate box) ☐ Local Public Agency ☐ School District ☐ Other Special District ☐ State Agency ☒ Private Entity			

CHECK APPLICABLE FEES:

☐ Environmental Impact Report (EIR)	\$4,227 50	\$	0 00
☐ Mitigated/Negative Declaration (MND)/(ND)	\$3,043 75	\$	0 00
☐ Certified Regulatory Program (CRP) document - payment due directly to CDFW	\$1,437 25	\$	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 X	AGENCY OF FILING PRINTED NAME AND TITLE San Diego County Clerk, SILVIA LUNA, Deputy
----------------	--

Payment Reference #: AUTH: 062966/ORDER: 228631843



SAN DIEGO COUNTY CLERK
CEQA FILING COVER SHEET

FILED
Oct 14, 2026 03:25 PM
JORDAN Z. MARKS
SAN DIEGO COUNTY CLERK
File # 2026-000949
State Receipt # 37101420260880

THIS SPACE FOR CLERK'S USE ONLY

TYPE OR PRINT CLEARLY

Project Title

OCEAN ECOSTRUCTURES LIFE BOOSTING UNITS PILOT PROJECT

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)

Posted 10/14/26

Filed by SILVIA LUNA
Deputy County Clerk

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 783.5.

Notice of Exemption**CEQA Guidelines Appendix E**

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

From: ■ San Diego Unified Port District
Development Services Department
3165 Pacific Highway
San Diego, CA 92101

Project Title Ocean Ecostructures Life Boosting Units Pilot Project

Project Applicant: David Rodés, Ocean Ecostructures SL, WTC Barcelona, Moll de Barcelona s/n, East Building, 1st Floor, 08039 Barcelona, Spain, +346292268

Project Location – Specific Shelter Island Fishing Pier, 1776 Shelter Island Dr, San Diego, CA 92106, Grape Street Pier, 1800 N Harbor Dr, San Diego, CA 92101, J Street Pier, 999 Bayside Parkway, Chula Vista, CA 91910

Project location – City San Diego and Chula Vista

Project Location – County San Diego

Description of Nature, Purpose, and Beneficiaries of Project The proposed project is a two-year pilot project through the San Diego Unified Port District's (District) Blue Economy Incubator (BEI) program that would involve the installation of up to 30 Life Boosting Units® (LBUs) to enhance the biodiversity of marine life at scale at various locations within San Diego Bay. Ocean Ecostructures (Applicant) has developed LBUs to replicate the way natural reefs work by stimulating the growth of fully functional and complex ecosystems and naturalize damaged environments. The aim of this two-year pilot project is to demonstrate Ocean Ecostructures' LBUs ability to enhance marine life in a port environment by accurately measuring and quantifying the environmental and socioeconomic impacts generated, while also analyzing the associated business benefits.

Work to specifically complete the proposed project would involve the installation of up to 30 LBUs across three (3) locations on District Tidelands, with ongoing monitoring and maintenance as-needed. The LBUs are a portable, steel-coated structure with a calcium carbonate layer of variable thickness (between 0.8 and 1.3 mm), which promotes the attachment and colonization of marine benthic species. The LBUs measure approximately 3.3 ft x 4.9 ft x 1.15 ft, weigh 60 kg, and are designed for attachment to pilings underwater. Construction of the proposed project is anticipated to occur in approximately Fall 2026 and would take approximately five (5) working days to complete with ongoing monitoring, maintenance, and removal as needed. Depending on the proposed location and contractor availability, installation could be scheduled over the course of a few weeks.

For piling installation, a non-invasive method using mechanical clamping and a stainless steel, riveting bracket system is used to install the LBUs. A diver would be required to install the system and attach the LBU using ratchet straps. No drilling is required, and structures could easily be relocated to a different pile if needed. The Applicant and its contractors would scrape existing marine growth at designated attachment areas prior to installation. All LBUs would extend slightly beyond the pilings, and marine life would not be prohibited from growing behind the LBUs once installed. Should repair or replacement of the existing pilings become necessary, the LBUs would be temporarily relocated to a nearby area during construction activities and then returned to their original location once construction is complete.

Equipment required for all installation and removal activities includes a surface-based air compressor, a pneumatic hammer drill, manual ratchets, a riveting tool, and specialized scrapers to prepare the surface. To assist the diver with installation, professional underwater lift bags are used to neutrally buoy the 100 lb units. All equipment is portable and can be managed from a small van for landside installations or a 15–20 ft boat for water-based installations. Individual units are sized to fit a 40x60-inch pallet, making the entire equipment setup compact and easy to deploy within active port environments.

Quarterly monitoring would occur for the duration of the two-year pilot. The units would be monitored using remotely operated vehicles (ROVs), and the imaging collected would be processed through the Applicant's artificial intelligence (AI) models. More specifically, the AI models would analyze a range of biological and physicochemical parameters, including biodiversity through the identification and taxonomic classification of all detected species, ecological function through the evaluation of functional groups, and the detection of any invasive, non-native species and their potential impacts on local biodiversity. The AI models would also estimate biomass by calculating the dry weight of benthic organisms on the LBUs, as well as the amount of fixed CO₂ derived from the generated biomass. In addition, the analysis would incorporate the ARMI Index for ecosystem characterization, a multivariable indicator used to evaluate the ecological and functional quality of the fish community, including ecosystem structure, mean trophic level, vulnerability, and economic importance. Physicochemical parameters such as temperature, turbidity, and chlorophyll levels would also be measured and analyzed.

The LBUs include suspended plates, which would be retrieved during monitoring events to inform the biomass analysis. All data from monitoring would be transcribed into the iOceans platform, the Applicant's App, Impact Reports and audiovisual material suitable for future educational opportunities and public dissemination. The Applicant shall work with the District on a communications plan for future public dissemination of data collected and lessons learned from the pilot project, which may include the installation of small-scale educational signage. All monitoring results and data collected would be reviewed and verified by the District, and the associated reports would be subject to a third-party external review. The Applicant and their contractors would be responsible for coordinating monitoring events with the District and any Tenants that may be affected by data collection activities. Land-based and water-based access through the use of a small vessel may be required to complete monitoring and data collection.

LBUs promote the development of complex ecosystems from the organisms naturally present in the surrounding waters. These may include both native and non-native species. Regular monitoring and species identification would support the early detection of invasive species, should they be present in the area. If any invasive species are detected on the LBUs, the Applicant would follow the established protocol for invasive species removal, notify California Coastal Commission staff, and coordinate accordingly with the appropriate regulatory agencies. This may include adhering to policies and guidance within the San Diego Bay Integrated Natural Resources Management Plan (INRMP) which was developed by the District and the United States Navy. This could include the Applicant and the District would utilize adaptive management principles to coordinate on a response by prioritizing eradication while avoiding harm to sensitive habits (e.g., eelgrass and/or native species detected on the LBUs), and conducting follow-up monitoring to evaluate success of removal. The District may request more frequent monitoring if invasive species are detected.

The District would evaluate the success of the LBUs in their ability to recruit native taxonomy to San Diego Bay and the viability of the LBUs as a method to create natural reefs in areas with hardened infrastructure. Removal would be conducted using tools and methods similar to what would be required for installation.

The proposed pilot project would involve a Tidelands Use and Occupancy Permit (TUOP) for the use of water area to pilot, install, maintain, monitor, and if required by the District, remove the Applicant's LBUs. It is anticipated that the TUOP would have a minimum term of two years. The TUOP may be terminated by the District or Tenant as a matter of right and without cause at any time upon providing thirty-day notice in writing to the other party of such termination. A "Blue Economy Agreement" by and between the District and the Applicant is also proposed, and other similar agreements may also be required.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project. San Diego Unified Port District (SDUPD)

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 Exemption(s): Existing Facilities (SG § 15301) (Class 1), New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures (SG § 15303) (Class 3), Minor Alterations in Land Use Limitations (SG § 15305) (Class 5), and Information Collection (SG § 15306) (Class 6)**
- Statutory Exemption State code number

Reason Why Project is Exempt: The proposed project is determined to be Categorically Exempt pursuant to California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines Sections 15301 (Existing Facilities), 15303 (New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures), 15306 (Information Collection), and 15311 (Accessory Structures) and Sections 3 a , 3 c , 3 f , and 3 i of the District's Guidelines for Compliance with CEQA because it would be a nature study that would involve no expansion of use beyond that previously existing, would not result in a significant cumulative impact due to the continuation of the existing use, would consist of the construction and location of small, new structures, would result in no permanent effects on the environment, 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 Sections 3 a , 3 c , 3 f , and 3 i of the District's CEQA Guidelines are as follows

3 a Existing Facilities (SG § 15301) (Class 1) Includes operation, repair, maintenance, or minor alteration of existing public or private structures, facilities, mechanical equipment, or topographical features, involving negligible or no expansion of use beyond that previously existing

AND/OR

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

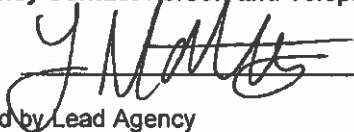
3 f Information Collection (SG § 15306) (Class 6) Includes basic data collection, research, experimental management, and resource evaluation activities which do not result in a serious or major disturbance to an environmental resource These may be for information gathering purposes, or as part of a study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

AND/OR

3 i Accessory Structures (SG § 15311) (Class 11) Includes construction, or placement of minor structures accessory to (appurtenant to) existing facilities

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).

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

Signature  **Date** 10/14/26 **Title** Senior Planner

- Signed by Lead Agency
- Signed by Applicant

Date received for filing at OPR/Clerk



San Diego County



Transaction #: 9325191
Receipt #: 2026398830

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: 10/14/2026
Cashier Location: SD

Print Date: 10/14/2026 3:26 pm

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 #: 2026-000949 Date: 10/14/2026 3:25PM Pages: 4

State Receipt # 37-10/14/2026-0880

Fees: Fish & Wildlife County Administrative Fee \$50.00

Total Fees Due: \$50.00

Grand Total - All Documents: \$50.00