

**CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION**

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# W13b

**Prepared November 13, 2023 for November 15, 2023 Hearing**

**To:** Commissioners and Interested Persons  
**From:** Stephanie REXING, North Central Coast District Manager  
Isobel Cooper, North Central Coast Coastal Planner  
**Subject:** **STAFF REPORT ADDENDUM for W13b, CDP Application Number 2-22-0664 (Johnson Pier Expansion and Dock Replacement)**

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In the time since the staff report for this item was published on October 27, 2023, staff has been contacted by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) concerning the protection of Chinook salmon in Pillar Point Harbor during project construction activities. The purpose of this addendum is to respond to these comments and incorporate CDFW's recommendations into the staff report. Please note that this addendum does not modify the base staff recommendation, which continues to be approval of the CDP amendment with conditions.

Specifically, CDFW has provided information on the Chinook Salmon Coastal Release Project (Project) and has provided recommendations to avoid and minimize impacts to Chinook salmon associated with that Project. The Project, which began in 2022, aims to enhance local recreational and commercial salmon fisheries by releasing hatchery-origin Chinook salmon (*Oncorhynchus tshawytscha*) smolts at various locations along the California coast, including Pillar Point Harbor, where the actual release is operated by the Coastside Fishing Club (CFC). The Project provides for the release of 750,000 hatchery-origin Central Valley fall-run Chinook salmon smolts to Pillar Point Harbor each spring through 2024. Smolts are transported in small batch increments, approximately 250,000 fish per trip, and over a five-day period, smolts are offloaded into a net pen tied to the end of Johnson Pier and subsequently towed to an outer harbor mooring for acclimation and release. This is repeated until all 750,000 smolts are released. Spring release dates for 2024 are yet to be determined and are reliant on factors such as fish size, growth rates, and environmental conditions at Pillar Point Harbor. The Project is likely to continue beyond 2024 after further CEQA analysis.

To avoid potential impacts to Chinook salmon smolts, CDFW recommends that in-water work be suspended during the five-day increments when smolts are held in Pillar Point Harbor. CDFW has also recommended additional BMPs, such as the use of wood cushion blocks during impact pile driving and the implementation of silt screens during hydraulic jetting to further reduce potential noise and water quality impacts to fish in the

harbor. Staff concurs on these recommendations and believes that they only further refine the staff recommendation's resource protection BMPs. Thus, in order to incorporate CDFW's recommendations, the following changes are made to the staff report dated produced October 27, 2023 (text in underline format denotes text that would be added, and text shown in ~~strikeout~~ format denotes text that would be deleted compared to the original text):

**1. Modify Special Condition 2(e)(2) on staff report page 7 as follows:**

***Pile Installation.*** ~~Piles shall be installed using driven or hammered methods to the maximum degree feasible. A wood cushion block shall also be required during impact pile driving to reduce potential noise impacts. If hydraulic jetting is required for pile installation, then a silt curtain shall be applied to reduce potential turbidity impacts.~~

**2. Renumber Special Condition 3(c) "Sea Turtle Protection" to 3(e) on page 11 of the staff report (to correct condition numbering errors) and subsequently renumber the rest of the condition accordingly; correct two typos; and add new Special Condition 3(h) "Salmon Smolt Protection." to page 12 of the staff report as follows:**

~~**e. Sea Turtle Protection.** Establishment of a 50-foot underwater "exclusion zone" for all sea turtles during pile driving activities to avoid interaction between pile driving equipment and sea turtles. Visual monitoring of the monitoring zone shall commence at least 30 minutes prior to the beginning of pile driving activities each day and after each break of more than 30 minutes. If a sea turtle is observed within the monitoring zone, all in-water project activities shall cease. Project activities shall not commence or continue until the ~~or~~ sea turtle has either been observed having left the monitoring zone, or at least 15 minutes have passed since the last sighting whereby it is assumed the sea turtle has voluntarily left the monitoring zone. Pile installation activities shall not occur if any part of the exclusion zones are obscured by weather or sea conditions. Project-related vessels should observe the no wake zone limit within the limits of the project.~~

~~**f. Black Abalone Protection.** A pre-construction survey to determine the presence of black abalone will be conducted no sooner than 120 days prior to the start of in-water work on the project. The survey is intended to focus on pilings, docks, and other subsurface infrastructure to be removed during the project. Methodology for this survey will follow NMFS Protection Resource Division (PRD) guidelines or will be otherwise approved by NMFS. If black abalone are observed during the survey, NMFS will be contacted to coordinate avoidance and minimization measures before beginning any in-water work that would impact abalone. These measures will likely include relocation of black abalone and/or operation of equipment to avoid contact with such abalone. ...~~

~~**h. Salmon Smolt Protection.** In-water work shall be avoided during the five-day periods when salmon smolts are held in Pillar Point Harbor as part of the Chinook~~

Salmon Coastal Release project implemented by the Coastside Fishing Club, under direction of the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (where exact dates and times of release will be scheduled as the time draws near and are dependent on fish size, growth rates, and environmental conditions at Pillar Point Harbor).