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San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board

NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY, NOTICE OF OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC COMMENT, AND NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING ON A DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT /ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT FOR USACE NAVIGATIONAL DREDGING

Lead Agencies

United States Army Corps of Engineers, San Francisco District (USACE) and Regional Water Quality Control Board, San Francisco Bay Region

Project

San Francisco Bay Federal Channels Operation and Maintenance Dredging and Sediment Placement Activities, Dredging Years 2025-2034 (SCH # 2024020498)

The USACE and the San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Water Board) have prepared a Draft Environmental Assessment (EA)/ Environmental Impact Report (EIR) to address the potential environmental effects of the maintenance dredging of federal aquatic navigation channels in San Francisco Bay and the associated placement of dredged materials from dredging years 2025 to 2034. The USACE proposes to continue maintenance dredging of the federal navigation channels in San Francisco Bay to maintain the navigability of the channels. The Regional Water Board will consider USACE's application for a Clean Water Act Section 401 water quality certification and waste discharge requirements for USACE's continued maintenance dredging operations.

The Draft EA/EIR evaluates the potential environmental impacts of the proposed project and its alternatives. The analysis will support decision making by USACE, the Regional Water Board, and other agencies regarding implementation of the proposed project, and will satisfy compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Additionally, the EA/EIR is intended to serve as the Clean Water Act Section 404(b)(1) analysis for maintenance dredging.

Under NEPA, USACE determined that the proposed project would not significantly affect the quality of the physical, biological, and human environment under any of the alternatives.

Under CEQA, the Regional Water Board determined that the No Project Alternative would have significant project and cumulative impacts to longfin smelt from entrainment, which could be reduced to less than significant levels. The Regional Water Board determined that the proposed project, which comprises the No Project Alternative and two other alternatives, could potentially have other significant impacts to cultural and archeological resources, which could be mitigated to less than significant levels.

The lead agencies are unaware of any sites enumerated under Government Code section 65962.5 that are present as part of this project.

DOCUMENT AVAILABILITY: The Draft EA/EIR is available electronically on the Water Board's website at https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/sanfranciscobay/public_notices/#section401. Printed copies

ALEXIS STRAUSS HACKER, CHAIR | EILEEN M. WHITE, EXECUTIVE OFFICER

and references are also available at the San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board office at 1515 Clay Street, Suite 1400, Oakland, CA 94612 during normal business hours.

COMMENTS: A comment period is established for this document, from October 31, 2024, to December 16, 2024. The Water Board will accept written comments on the Draft EA/EIR. Written comments must be received no later than **5:00 p.m. on December 16, 2024**, to be considered. Please send all comments to:

Jazzy.Graham-Davis@waterboards.ca.gov and SF-Bay-Dredging@usace.army.mil or 1515 Clay Street, Suite 1400, Oakland, CA 94612, Attn.: Jazzy Graham-Davis.

PUBLIC MEETING: A public meeting will be held to explain the proposed project and answer clarifying questions on the Draft EA/EIR. This meeting will be held online on **November 19, 2024, from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m.** Please register for this meeting at <https://stantec.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJ0sdOivpzoqG9B7k6nrmy6YTAyBo2VlchZr>. The Regional Water Board anticipates a public hearing on the Final EIR in summer/fall 2025.