



WATER DEPARTMENT

212 Locust Street, Suite C, Santa Cruz, CA 95060 ♦ 831-420-5200

**City of Santa Cruz Water Department
NOTICE OF INTENT TO ADOPT A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION**

PROJECT TITLE: Anadromous Salmonid Habitat Conservation Plan

The City of Santa Cruz (City) as the Lead Agency has prepared an Initial Study and Proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) for the Anadromous Salmonid Habitat Conservation Plan (ASHCP or Proposed Project) pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act.

PROJECT LOCATION: The Proposed Project location includes watershed and water service/urban areas that total approximately 176 square miles in Santa Cruz County across three geographically distinct areas: (1) the 18-square-mile North Coast watersheds (Liddell, Laguna, and Majors Creek watersheds); (2) portions of the 138-square-mile San Lorenzo River watershed; and (3) the City Urban Center, which encompasses approximately 12 square miles centered around the mouth of the San Lorenzo River, as well as the approximately 8 square miles of water service areas outside of the City limits.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: The Proposed Project is implementation of the ASHCP that provides a strategy for avoiding, minimizing, and mitigating potential impacts from City operation and maintenance activities on state- and federally endangered Central California Coast coho salmon (*Oncorhynchus kisutch*) (coho) and federally threatened Central California Coast steelhead (*O. mykiss*) (steelhead) (Covered Species). The ASHCP was developed in support of applications for federal and state incidental take permits (ITPs) for coho and steelhead. The state ITP would be granted by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) pursuant to Section 2081 of the California Fish and Game Code (CFGC) (the California Endangered Species Act [CESA] of 1984). The federal ITP would be granted by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) pursuant to Section 10(a)(1)(B) of the Endangered Species Act (ESA) of 1973. The ASHCP is a 30-year plan that would provide coverage for Covered Activities related to operation, maintenance, and rehabilitation of the City's water supply and water system facilities, operation and maintenance of the City's municipal facilities, and management of City lands. The Conservation Strategy includes biological goals and objectives, avoidance and minimization measures, a non-flow conservation fund, and a monitoring program.

ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS: The Initial Study found that implementation of the Proposed Project may result in potentially significant environmental impacts to biological resources, cultural resources, geology and soils, hazards and hazardous materials, noise, and tribal cultural resources, which would be reduced to less than significant with mitigation measures identified in the MND.

PUBLIC INFORMATION MEETINGS: Two public information meetings regarding the Proposed Project and Proposed MND will be held, and the content provided at both meetings will be the same.

- **Tuesday, September 12, 2023, from 1:00 - 2:00 PM.**

- **Thursday, September 14, 2023, from 6:00 - 7:00 PM.**

Meeting log-in information can be found at the project website: <https://www.cityofsantacruz.com/government/city-departments/water/habitat-conservation-plan>

There will be an opportunity to ask questions about the CEQA review process at the end of each meeting, however oral comments will not be accepted at the public information meetings. Written comments on the Proposed MND can be submitted per the instructions below.

REVIEW AND COMMENT: The 30-day public review period for the Proposed MND is **August 25, 2023 through September 25, 2023**. Comments on the Proposed MND must be received in writing by email or mail to the contact listed below by 5:00 PM on September 25, 2023. Please include a return address and contact name.

Zeke Bean, Water Resources Planner, Watershed Section
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During the public review period, the Proposed MND will be available for review online at: <https://www.cityofsantacruz.com/government/city-departments/water/online-reports/environmental-documents> and at the Santa Cruz Public Library at: <https://catalog.santacruzpl.org/polaris/>. A printed copy of the Proposed MND may be reviewed during regular public counter hours at the City of Santa Cruz Water Department Engineering Counter (212 Locust Street, Suite C in Santa Cruz) by appointment. Please email waterengineering@cityofsantacruz.com or call (831) 420-5210 to schedule an appointment.