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Summary Form for Electronic Document Submittal

Form F

Lead agencies may include 15 hardcopies of this document when submitting electronic copies of Environmental Impact Reports, Negative Declarations, Mitigated Negative Declarations, or Notices of Preparation to the State Clearinghouse (SCH). The SCH also accepts other summaries, such as EIR Executive Summaries prepared pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15123. Please include one copy of the Notice of Completion Form (NOC) with your submission and attach the summary to each electronic copy of the document.

SCH #: 2018062020

Project Title: Ocean Ranch Restoration Project

Lead Agency: California Department of Fish and Wildlife

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Project Location: Loleta (*City*) Humboldt (*County*)

Project Description (Proposed actions, location, and/or consequences).

The Project would occur on 850-acres within the Ocean Ranch Unit of the Eel River Wildlife Area, which is located northwest of the community of Loleta in Humboldt County, California. The Project would restore 571-acres of salt marsh and 279-acres of coastal dunes along the north spit of the Eel River. Restoration activities within the existing salt marsh are proposed to improve tidal exchange, control invasive plant species, and restore native tidal marsh habitat. Salt marsh restoration activities would include breaching, lowering, and removing portions of internal and external levees; excavating tidal channels; creating transitional high marsh habitat and habitat ridges; installing ditch plugs and large wood habitat structures; and controlling dense-flowered cordgrass (spartina densiflora) using a combination of mowing, grinding, excavation, prescribed fire, and/or herbicide application methods. Restoration activities within the coastal dunes would be focused on the eradication of European beachgrass (Ammophila arenaria) using manual, mechanical, prescribed fire and/or herbicide application methods. The Project also proposes to enhance public access to and within the Project Area by improving the access road and existing parking area; constructing a new parking area; installing a non-motorized boat put-in, establishing a formal trail system; and installing interpretive signage. Please reference the Draft EIR, Chapter 2 (Project Description), for a detailed project description.

Identify the project's significant or potentially significant effects and briefly describe any proposed mitigation measures that would reduce or avoid that effect.

The Project could result in significant impacts, and mitigation measures have been proposed to reduce the significance of impacts to a less than significant level for the following areas: air quality, biological resources, cultural resources, geology and soils, hydrology and water quality, hazards and hazardous materials, and tribal cultural resources. The proposed Project could also result in significant and unavoidable impacts due to increases in tidal scour and velocities in McNulty Slough, which have the potential to adversely impacts levees on adjacent private lands. Several mitigation measures were considered to reduce these significant and unavoidable impacts but were determined to be legally infeasible or ineffective. Project alternatives were also analyzed to avoid or reduce these potential significant and unavoidable impacts. One of the analyzed alternatives was identified as the environmentally superior alternative in the Draft EIR because it would reduce the identified potential significant and unavoidable impacts.

If applicable, describe any of the project's areas of controversy known to the Lead Agency, including issues raised by agencies and the public.

The following provides a brief summary of the comments and issues identified during the scoping process for the EIR.
— Potential impacts on special-status species, including potential impacts during construction and changes in habitat resulting from implementation of the Project;
— Potential impacts associated with short-term and long-term invasive plant management, with particular attention given to the potential effects of herbicide application;
— Inland dune migration resulting from removal of European beachgrass, including long-term management considerations;
— Evaluation of noise and vibration impacts on species;
— Identification of potential cultural resources in the Project Area, and consideration of potential impacts to underground or submerged resources that may not be identified in a records search or cultural resources investigation;
— Analysis of sea level rise on the Project;
— Analysis of greenhouse gases through the identification of thresholds of significance;
— Information and analysis of the hydrology of the area, past and present;
— Potential conversion of habitat types resulting from the Project, such as the loss of freshwater wetlands if tidal hydrology is restored to the Project Area;
— Potential impacts to agricultural resources in the Project Area;
— Potential impacts to levees and dikes outside of the Project Area but within the Project's sphere of influence;
— Potential impacts of continued recreational use of All Terrain Vehicles (ATVs) within the Project Area; and
— Potential impacts on recreation, including waterfowl hunting, fishing and access along the Sand Road.
All of the substantive environmental issues raised during the scoping process have been addressed in this Draft EIR.

Provide a list of the responsible or trustee agencies for the project.

California Coastal Commission
California Department of Fish and Wildlife
California State Historic Preservation Office
North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board
State Lands Commission
National Marine Fisheries Service
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers