

MINUTE ITEM

This Calendar Item No. C57 was approved as
Minute Item No. 57 by the California State Lands
Commission by a vote of 3 to 0 at its
6-14-99 meeting.

**CALENDAR ITEM
C57**

A 6,7,9,11,12,13,14,16,18,19,20,21,

06/14/99

S 2,3,8,9,10,11

W 25556

L. Kiley

**CALIFORNIA STATE LANDS COMMISSION
SAN FRANCISCO CENTRAL BAY ROCK REMOVAL**

BACKGROUND:

There are six underwater rock formations in the central portion of San Francisco Bay adjacent to, or close by, U. S. Coast Guard (USCG) designated shipping lanes. At low tide, their highest portions are 33 to 45 feet below the water surface. The Harbor Safety Committee of the San Francisco Bay Region, which is composed of business, navigation, environmental, recreation, government and labor representatives, believes these rocks pose a threat to the navigational safety of vessels going in and out of San Francisco Bay. The threat is far greater to modern oil tankers that have a draft of 55 feet.

The USCG considers the rock formations to be hazards to navigation and recommends their removal. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) concludes that there is a Federal interest because of the benefits to navigation and the reduction in the risk to the environment, i.e., the possible threat of a Valdez-like oil spill in San Francisco Bay, that would result from the removal of these rock formations. The Corps performed a Reconnaissance Study in September 1998. This study concludes that there is a possible solution to the existing navigation problems, that the solution is feasible from an engineering perspective, and that there is a Federal interest in removing these rock formations.

The San Francisco Harbor Main Ship Channel is a channel 2,000 feet wide, 55 feet deep, and 20,400 feet in length through San Francisco Bay. All deep draft vessels entering San Francisco Bay enter through this channel and pass through the area of underwater rocks. Rock removal was first authorized by the Federal River and Harbor Act of July 3, 1930. Improvements at that time included the removal of Blossom Rock and Alcatraz shoal to a depth of 40 feet below the water surface, and, the removal of Arch Rock, Shag Rock, and Harding Rock to a depth of 35 feet below the water surface.

The Corps requires that there be a non-Federal sponsor to continue this project. The California State Lands Commission has been suggested as the non-Federal sponsor because of its land title/management and oil spill prevention responsibilities in San

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Francisco Bay. The non-Federal sponsor is required to contribute fifty percent of the cost of the Feasibility Study and, if removal is pursued, twenty-five percent of the cost of removal. The Corps estimates the cost of the Feasibility Study to be \$3,708,400 with the 50% State share being \$1,854,200. Senator John Burton is seeking to place the required State funding in the Commission's 1999 Budget.

OTHER PERTINENT INFORMATION:

1. The Feasibility Study is the second phase of the Corps of Engineers' planning process. The purpose of the Feasibility Study is to fully evaluate all reasonable solutions to the problem identified during the Reconnaissance Phase. The Feasibility Study involves implementation of five study phases. Those study phases are 1) development of without-project condition, 2) selection of a plan, 3) detailed evaluation of the selected plan, 4) preparation of a draft report, and 5) final report preparation. The Corps will conduct a public workshop at the beginning of the Feasibility Study and hold a public hearing after the completion and distribution of the draft Feasibility Report.
2. Pursuant to the Commission's delegation of authority and the State CEQA Guidelines (Title 14, California Code of Regulations, section 15061), the staff has determined that this activity is exempt from the requirements of the CEQA because the activity is not a "project" as defined by the CEQA and the State CEQA Guidelines.

Authority: Public Resources Code section 21065 and Title 14, California Code of Regulations, section 15378.

PERMIT STREAMLINING ACT DEADLINE:

N/A

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT THE COMMISSION:

CEQA FINDINGS:

FIND THAT THE ACTIVITY IS EXEMPT FROM THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE CEQA PURSUANT TO TITLE 14, CALIFORNIA CODE OF REGULATIONS, SECTION 15061 BECAUSE THE ACTIVITY IS NOT A PROJECT AS DEFINED BY PUBLIC RESOURCES CODE SECTION 21065 AND TITLE 14, CALIFORNIA CODE OF REGULATIONS, SECTION 15378.

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AUTHORIZATION:

UPON THE APPROPRIATION OF THE FUNDS NECESSARY FOR THE STATE'S COST SHARE OF THE FEASIBILITY STUDY, AUTHORIZE THE EXECUTIVE OFFICER TO PREPARE, SIGN, AND SEND, ON BEHALF OF THE COMMISSION, A "LETTER OF INTENT" TO THE U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS DESIGNATING THE COMMISSION AS THE NON-FEDERAL SPONSOR FOR THE SAN FRANCISCO CENTRAL BAY ROCK REMOVAL PROJECT.

AUTHORIZE THE EXECUTIVE OFFICER TO ACT ON BEHALF OF THE COMMISSION IN THE DRAFTING OF THE "FEASIBILITY STUDY-PROJECT STUDY PLAN" AND TO TAKE WHATEVER ACTIONS ARE NECESSARY TO SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETE THE FEASIBILITY STUDY.