

**STAFF REPORT  
C85**

A 72  
S 34

08/23/18  
W 27023  
K. Connor

**GENERAL LEASE – RECREATIONAL USE**

**APPLICANT:**

Dorothy Virginia Johnson and Julie Anne Johnson, as Co-Trustees of the Theodore Richard Johnson Family Trust, Trust A

**PROPOSED LEASE:**

*AREA, LAND TYPE, AND LOCATION:*

Sovereign land in the Main Channel of Huntington Harbour, adjacent to 16672 Coral Cay Lane, Huntington Beach, Orange County

*AUTHORIZED USE:*

Use and maintenance of an existing boat dock, access ramp, and cantilevered deck not previously authorized by the Commission.

*LEASE TERM:*

10 years, beginning August 23, 2018.

*CONSIDERATION:*

Rent in the amount of \$3,334 per year, with an annual Consumer Price Index adjustment.

*SPECIFIC LEASE PROVISIONS:*

Liability insurance in an amount no less than \$1,000,000 per occurrence.

**STAFF ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATION:**

**Authority:**

Public Resources Code sections 6005, 6216, 6301, 6501.1, 6503, and 6503.5; California Code of Regulations, title 2, sections 2000 and 2003.

**Public Trust and State's Best Interests Analysis:**

The improvements occupying sovereign land adjacent to the subject parcel have not been previously authorized by the Commission. On October 18, 2010, ownership of the upland was deeded to Dorothy Virginia Johnson, as trustee of the Theodore Richard Johnson Family Trust. On December 11, 2017, the Trust was changed to add Julie Anne Johnson as co-trustee with Dorothy Virginia Johnson. The Applicant is now applying for a General Lease – Recreational Use for use and

STAFF REPORT NO. **C85** (CONT'D)

maintenance of an existing boat dock, access ramp, and cantilevered deck.

The subject facilities are privately owned and maintained and located within the Main Channel of Huntington Harbour. The boat dock and access ramp are used for recreational boating. Recreational boating is water-dependent and is generally consistent with the common law Public Trust Doctrine. The California Legislature has identified private recreational boating facilities as an authorized use of Public Trust lands (Pub. Resources Code, § 6503.5)

The Main Channel in Huntington Harbour was created in the early 1960s and the adjacent upland parcel is privately owned and developed with a residence. There is no public access at this upland property because the private upland property directly abuts the concrete bulkhead that defines the limits of the channel. The boat dock extends to the pierhead line, which is 60 feet into the 400-foot-wide channel, leaving the majority of the Main Channel available for navigation and public recreation.

The existing cantilevered deck is connected to the upland residence. Residential use is generally not consistent with the Public Trust Doctrine. However, the cantilevered deck extends no more than 5 feet over the Main Channel and does not substantially interfere with the public right of navigation or access. The terms of the proposed lease prohibit use of the cantilevered deck as living quarters. Proposed rent for the cantilevered deck is based on nearby upland land values to ensure the State receives appropriate compensation for use of sovereign land as an extension of the private backyard of the upland.

The proposed lease does not alienate the State's fee simple interest or permanently impair public rights. The lease is limited to a 10-year term, does not grant the lessee exclusive rights to the lease premises, and reserves an easement to the public for Public Trust-consistent uses. Upon termination of the lease, the lessee may be required to remove all improvements from State land.

The proposed lease requires the lessee to insure the lease premises and indemnify the State for any liability incurred as a result of the lessee's activities thereon. The lease also requires the payment of annual rent to compensate the people of the State for the occupation of the public land involved.

## STAFF REPORT NO. C85 (CONT'D)

### **Climate Change:**

Climate change impacts, including sea-level rise, increased wave activity, storm events, and flooding are not limited to the open coast. The existing structures subject to the proposed lease are located within the Huntington Harbour development, along an inland, navigable, tidally influenced channel, and may be vulnerable to the impacts of sea-level rise.

Huntington Harbour is built near sea-level elevation, and as a result is vulnerable to flooding and storm surge events. Huntington Harbour is adjacent to two wetlands, Bolsa Chica and the Seal Beach National Wildlife Refuge, which could act as natural buffers to storm surges and lessen flood risks.

Compared to year 2000 levels, the region could see up to 1 foot of sea-level rise by the year 2030, 2 feet by 2050, and possibly over 5 feet by 2100 (National Research Council 2012). As stated in *Safeguarding California* (California Natural Resources Agency 2014), climate change is projected to increase the frequency and severity of natural disasters related to flooding, drought, and storms (especially when coupled with sea-level rise). The combination of these conditions will likely result in increased wave run up, storm surge, and flooding in coastal and near coastal areas. In tidally influenced waterways, more frequent and powerful storms can result in increased flooding conditions and damage from storm-created debris. Climate change and sea-level rise will further influence coastal and riverine areas by changing erosion and sedimentation rates. Beaches, coastal landscapes, and near-coastal riverine areas will be exposed to increased wave force and run up, potentially resulting in greater beach or bank erosion than previously experienced.

This increase in sea level combined with more frequent and stronger storm events will likely expose the lease area structures to higher flood risks, comprised of greater total water levels for longer periods of time. Flooding conditions could cause structures to be damaged or dislodged, presenting hazards to public safety as well as dangers for navigation within the channel. The lease area contains fixed features, such as pilings and an overhanging cantilevered deck, and movable features, including a floating recreational dock and access ramp. The floating nature of the movable features will allow them to rise and fall with tides and waves, increasing their resiliency to some sea-level rise impacts. The pilings and deck may need to be raised or reinforced to withstand future conditions. Although the bulkhead underneath the deck is not under the Commission's jurisdiction, any sea-level rise impacts to the bulkhead could also affect the structures under the Commission's jurisdiction

STAFF REPORT NO. **C85** (CONT'D)

because it serves to stabilize the bank. Therefore, any loss or degradation of the bulkhead would result in property damage and public safety concerns within the lease area and the surrounding waterways.

More locally based knowledge of sea-level rise impacts and adaptation strategies will be available to Huntington Harbour residents as a result of the ongoing efforts to update the City of Huntington Beach's Local Coastal Program and General Plan, and through the city's Coastal Resiliency Task Force. Regular maintenance, as required by the terms of the lease, will reduce the likelihood of severe structural degradation or dislodgement. Pursuant to the proposed lease, the Applicant acknowledges that the lease premises and adjacent upland are located in an area that may be subject to the effects of climate change, including sea-level rise.

**Conclusion:**

For all the reasons above, staff believes the issuance of this lease will not substantially interfere with Public Trust needs and values at this location at this time and for the foreseeable term of the proposed lease; and is in the best interests of the State.

**OTHER PERTINENT INFORMATION:**

1. This action is consistent with Strategy 1.1 of the Commission's Strategic Plan to deliver the highest levels of public health and safety in the protection, preservation, and responsible economic use of the lands and resources under the Commission's jurisdiction.
2. Staff recommends that the Commission find that this activity is exempt from the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) as a categorically exempt project. The project is exempt under Class 1, Existing Facilities; California Code of Regulations, title 2, section 2905, subdivision (a)(2).

Authority: Public Resources Code section 21084 and California Code of Regulations, title 14, section 15300 and California Code of Regulations, title 2, section 2905.

**EXHIBITS:**

- A. Land Description
- B. Site And Location Map

STAFF REPORT NO. **C85** (CONT'D)

**RECOMMENDED ACTION:**

It is recommended that the Commission:

**CEQA FINDING:**

Find that the activity is exempt from the requirements of CEQA pursuant to California Code of Regulations, title 14, section 15061 as a categorically exempt project, Class 1, Existing Facilities; California Code of Regulations, title 2, section 2905, subdivision (a)(2).

**PUBLIC TRUST AND STATE'S BEST INTERESTS:**

1. Find that the existing and, for a limited period, continuing use and maintenance of the existing boat dock and access ramp will not substantially interfere with Public Trust needs and values at this location and are consistent with the common law Public Trust Doctrine; and,
2. Find that the existing and, for a limited period, continuing use and maintenance of the cantilevered deck is not generally consistent with the Public Trust Doctrine, but the current use does not substantially interfere with the trust; and,
3. Find that issuing the proposed lease is in the best interests of the State.

**AUTHORIZATION:**

Authorize issuance of a General Lease – Recreational Use to the Applicant beginning August 23, 2018, for a term of 10 years, for the use and maintenance of an existing boat dock, access ramp, and cantilevered deck not previously authorized by the Commission, as described in Exhibit A and shown on Exhibit B (for reference purposes only) attached and by this reference made a part hereof; annual rent in the amount of \$3,334, with an annual Consumer Price Index adjustment; and liability insurance in an amount no less than \$1,000,000 per occurrence.

**EXHIBIT A**

**W 27023**

**LAND DESCRIPTION**

A parcel of submerged land situate in Huntington Harbour, in the City of Huntington Beach, Orange County, California, described as follows:

BEGINNING at the most easterly corner of Lot 30, as said lot is shown and so designated on that certain map of Tract No. 8040 filed November 22, 1974, in Book 250, Pages 27 through 37, Official Records of said County; thence northwesterly along the northeasterly line of said Lot 60.00 feet to the intersection with the northwesterly line of said Lot; thence northeasterly along the prolongation of the northwesterly line of said lot 60.00 feet to the Pierhead Line is described in Resolution No. 5197, passed and adopted December 6, 1982 by the City Council of said City; thence southeasterly along said Pierhead Line 60.00 feet to a point of intersection with the northeasterly prolongation of the southeasterly line of said lot; thence southwestery along said northeasterly prolongation 60.00 feet to the POINT OF BEGINNING.

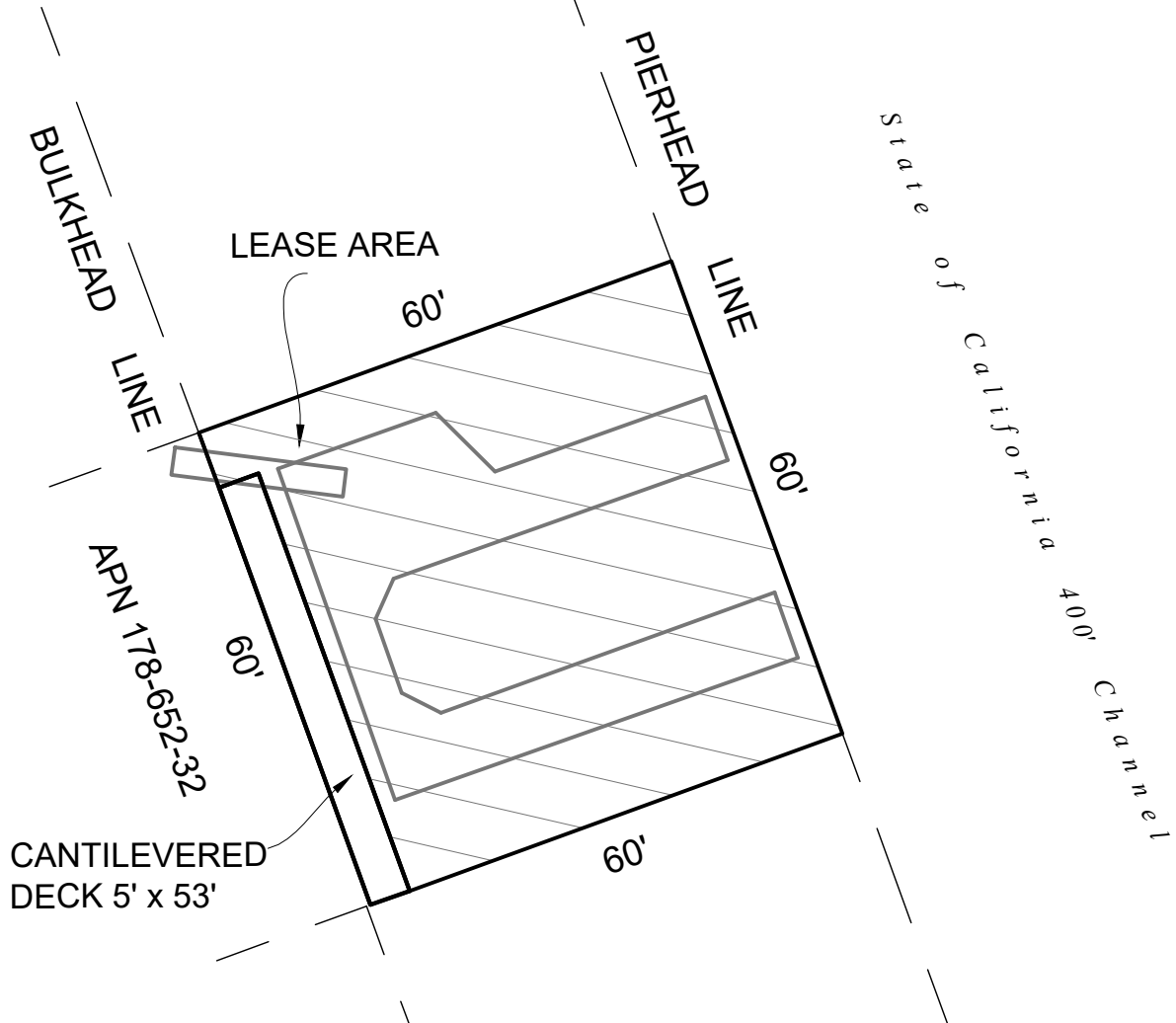
**END OF DESCRIPTION**

Prepared May 29, 2018 by the California State Lands Commission Boundary Unit.



NO SCALE

# SITE



16672 CORAL CAY LANE, HUNTINGTON BEACH

NO SCALE

# LOCATION



MAP SOURCE: USGS QUAD

# Exhibit B

W 27023  
 JOHNSON FAMILY TRUST  
 APN 178-652-32  
 GENERAL LEASE -  
 RECREATIONAL USE  
 ORANGE COUNTY



This Exhibit is solely for purposes of generally defining the lease premises, is based on unverified information provided by the Lessee or other parties and is not intended to be, nor shall it be construed as, a waiver or limitation of any State interest in the subject or any other property.

MJJ 5/09/18