CALENDAR ITEM

C36

A 19 08/22/08
WP 7831.9
S 5 N. Smith

REMOVAL OF A NON-OPERATIONAL UNDERSEA CABLE

LESSEE:

United States Department of Commerce
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)
1315 East West Highway
Silver Spring, MD 20910

AREA, LAND TYPE, AND LOCATION:

Sovereign lands in the Pacific Ocean, near Pillar Point, San Mateo County.

AUTHORIZED USE:

Maintenance of a non-operational 1.25-inch diameter undersea cable.

CONSIDERATION:

The public use and benefit; with the State reserving the right at any time to set a monetary rent if the Commission finds such action to be in the State's best interest.

OTHER PERTINENT INFORMATION:

1. Lessee has the right to use the uplands adjoining the lease premises.

2. On May 3, 1995, the Commission approved the issuance of a General Lease – Public Agency Use to the University of California, San Diego, Scripps Institute of Oceanography, for the installation, operation and use of an undersea research cable. Originally, the cable was installed as part of Scripps' marine mammal research program. The cable stretches from Pillar Point Air Force Station waterward to the underwater seamount known as Pioneer Seamount and is approximately 100 kilometers long.

3. In June 2001, NOAA began using the cable for its own acoustic monitoring project and on October 1, 2002, the Commission approved the issuance of a five-year lease to NOAA for the use and maintenance of the cable. At some point in time, the cable was damaged and became non-operational. NOAA's lease subsequently expired and on April 17, 2006, the

Commission approved the issuance of a new lease to NOAA for maintenance of the non-operational cable. That lease expired December 31, 2007 and is currently in holdover. As the cable is non-operational and NOAA no longer needs the cable for research purposes, NOAA is preparing to remove the cable.

4. It has taken NOAA longer than anticipated to prepare for removal of the cable, but they have now submitted a final plan for removing the cable. Removal operations are anticipated to begin in October of this year. A copy of NOAA's cable removal plan is on file in the Sacramento Office of the Commission. NOAA anticipates that removal of the cable from the seabed will occur by cutting the cable from the shoreward side and a cable ship will then retrieve the cable by moving towards the seaward cable end using industry standard cable practices for these types of removal operations. The cable removal is planned as a single continuous operation occurring 24 hours per day. As the cable is retrieved, it will be temporarily stored in on-board cable tanks with any sea growth removed from the cable during recovery. Undamaged cable will be reused by the Navy and damaged cable will be removed from sovereign lands and recycled

5. 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 as a categorically exempt project. The project is exempt under Class 4, Minor Alterations to Land; Title 14, California Code of Regulations, section 21084.

   Authority: Public Resources Code section 21084 and Title 14, California Code of Regulations, section 15300.

6. This activity involves lands identified as possessing significant environmental values pursuant to Public Resources Code sections 6370, et seq. Based upon the staff's consultation with the persons nominating such lands and through the CEQA review process, it is the staff's opinion that the project, as proposed, is consistent with its use classification.

APPROVALS REQUIRED:

California Coastal Commission and the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary

EXHIBIT:

A. Site and Location Map

RECOMMENDED ACTION:
IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT THE COMMISSION:

CEQA FINDING:

FIND THAT THE ACTIVITY IS EXEMPT FROM THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE CEQA PURSUANT TO TITLE 14, CALIFORNIA CODE OF REGULATIONS, SECTION 15061 AS A CATEGORICALLY EXEMPT PROJECT, CLASS 4, MINOR ALTERATIONS TO LAND; TITLE 14, CALIFORNIA CODE OF REGULATIONS, SECTION 15304(d).

SIGNIFICANT LANDS INVENTORY FINDING:

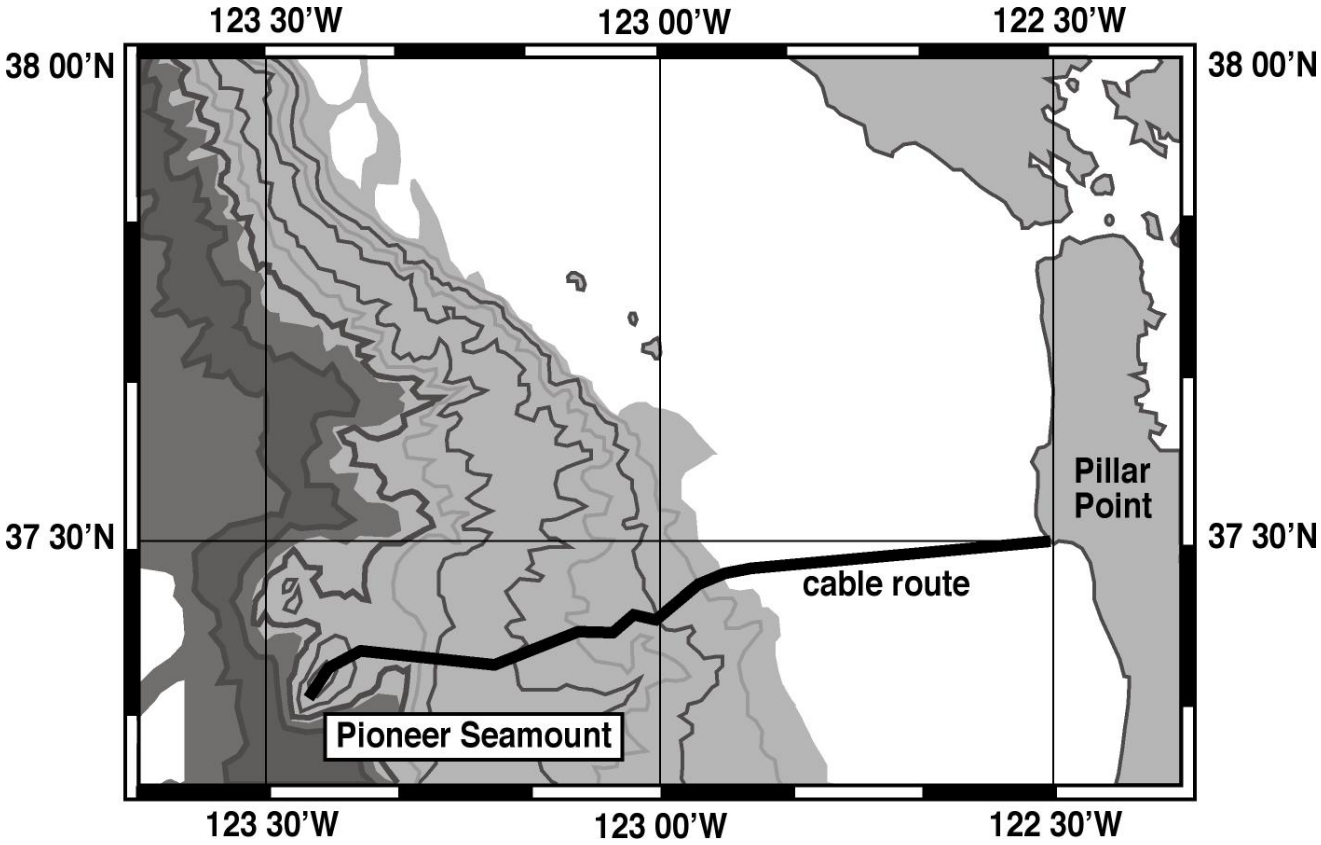
FIND THAT THIS ACTIVITY IS CONSISTENT WITH THE USE CLASSIFICATION DESIGNATED BY THE COMMISSION FOR THE LAND PURSUANT TO PUBLIC RESOURCES CODE SECTIONS 6370, ET SEQ.

AUTHORIZATION:

AUTHORIZE THE REMOVAL OF A NON-OPERATIONAL UNDERSEA CABLE BY THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION, AS SHOWN ON EXHIBIT A ATTACHED AND BY THIS REFERENCE MADE A PART HEREOF.

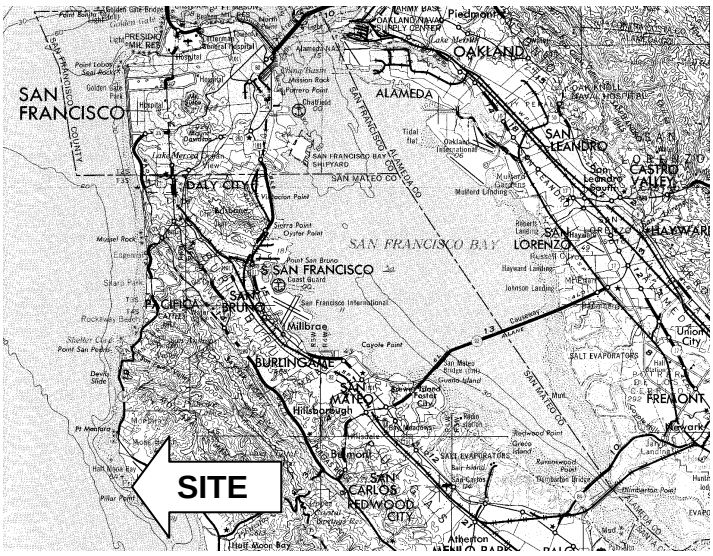
NO SCALE

SITE MAP



NO SCALE

LOCATION MAP



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.

Map Source: USGS

Exhibit A
PRC 7831
National Oceanic
Atmospheric Administration
SAN MATEO COUNTY

NS 3/06