

# Staff Report 26

## APPLICANT:

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Ronald Chambers Jr. and Cynthia Chambers

## PROPOSED ACTION:

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Issuance of a General Lease – Recreational and Protective Structure Use

## AREA, LAND TYPE, AND LOCATION:

Sovereign land in the Sacramento River, adjacent to 6575 Garden Highway, near Sacramento, Sacramento County.

## AUTHORIZED USE:

Continued use and maintenance of an existing boat dock, three steel pilings, gangway with stairs, and bank protection previously authorized by the Commission and a boat lift and two personal watercraft ramps not previously authorized by the Commission.

## TERM:

10 years, beginning February 25, 2022.

## CONSIDERATION:

\$553 per year, with an annual Consumer Price Index adjustment and \$383 to compensate for the unauthorized occupation of state sovereign land for the period beginning June 18, 2021 through February 24, 2022.

## SPECIFIC LEASE PROVISIONS:

- Liability insurance in an amount no less than \$1,000,000 per occurrence.
- Lessee agrees and acknowledges hazards associated with sea level rise may require additional maintenance or protection strategies regarding the improvements on the Lease Premises.

## STAFF ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATION:

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### AUTHORITY:

Public Resources Code sections 6005, 6216, 6301, 6321, 6321.2, 6501.1, 6503, 6503.5, and 6505.5; California Code of Regulations, title 2, sections 2000 and 2003.

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

On September 1, 2011, the Commission authorized a General Lease - Recreational and Protective Structure Use for a boat dock, gangway with stairs, three existing steel pilings, and bank protection to Mark D. Copeland and Kathleen A. Copeland, Trustees of the Copeland Family Trust, established November 19, 1999 ([Item C13, September 1, 2011](#)). On June 18, 2021, the upland parcel was deeded to Ronald Chambers Jr. and Cynthia Chambers. The lease expired on August 31, 2021.

The Applicant is now applying for a General Lease – Recreational and Protective Structure Use for the continued use and maintenance of the existing boat dock, three steel pilings, gangway with stairs, and bank protection previously authorized by the Commission and a boat lift and twopersonal watercraft ramps not previously authorized by the Commission. The Applicant owns and maintains the facilities. The Applicant also owns the upland parcel adjoining the lease premises.

Staff recommends issuance of a new lease beginning February 25, 2022. Since the expired lease did not require payment of rent, staff further recommends the Commission accept compensation from the Applicant for the unauthorized occupation of State land in the amount of \$383 for the period beginning June 18, 2021, the day the Applicant took ownership of the upland parcel, through February 24, 2022, the day before the proposed lease begins.

The subject facilities are privately owned and maintained, used for the docking and mooring of boats, and facilitate recreational boating. Recreational boating is a water-dependent use that 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 land (Pub. Resources Code, § 6503.5). The bank protection has existed at this location for several years. The bank protection will maintain and improve the integrity of the upland parcel and river channel, which helps protect **the Applicant's parcel as well as the** Public Trust resources for recreational and navigational use by the public.

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 and restore the lease premises to their original condition.

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.

CLIMATE CHANGE:

Climate change impacts, including sea level rise, more frequent and intense storm events, and increased flooding and erosion, affect both open coastal areas and inland waterways in California. The facilities are located on the Sacramento River, in a tidally influenced site vulnerable to flooding at current sea levels and at a higher risk of flood exposure given projected scenarios of sea level rise.

The California Ocean Protection Council updated the State of California Sea-Level Rise Guidance in 2018 to provide a synthesis of the best available science on sea level rise projections and rates. Commission staff evaluated the "high emissions," "medium-high risk aversion" scenario to apply a conservative approach based on both current emission trajectories and the lease location and structures. The San Francisco tide gauge was used for the projected sea level rise scenario for the region as listed in Table 1.

Table 1. Projected Sea Level Rise for San Francisco

Year	Projection (feet)
2030	0.8
2040	1.3
2050	1.9
2100	6.9

Source: Table 13, State of California Sea-Level Rise Guidance: 2018 Update

Note: Projections are with respect to a 1991 to 2009 baseline.

This effect could increase Sacramento River's inundation levels within the lease area. In addition, as stated in *Safeguarding California Plan: 2018 Update* (California Natural Resources Agency 2018), climate change is projected to increase the frequency and severity of natural disasters related to flooding, fire, drought, extreme heat, and storms (especially when coupled with sea level rise). In rivers

and tidally influenced waterways, more frequent and powerful storms can result in increased flooding conditions and damage from storm-created debris as well as decreased bank stability and structure. Conversely, climate-change induced droughts could decrease river levels and flow for extended periods of time. Climate change and sea level rise will further influence riverine areas by changing erosion and sedimentation rates. Flooding and storm flow, as well as runoff, will likely increase scour and decrease bank stability at a faster rate.

The combination of these projected conditions could increase the likelihood of damage and affect access to structures within the lease premises during the term of the lease. For example, the potential for more frequent and stronger storm events may expose the lease area structures to higher flood risks and cause facilities to be damaged or dislodged, presenting hazards to public safety as well as dangers for navigation within the channel. Conversely, prolonged drought conditions could lower water levels, exposing previously submerged structures to the elements and potentially leading to increased wear-and-tear on the pilings and dock. Lowered water levels could also reduce navigability of the channel, thereby increasing hazards and impacting the function and utility of the lease area structures.

The existing floating boat dock, gangway, boat lift, and personal watercraft ramps would be adaptable to variable water levels, allowing them to rise and fall with storms and droughts and increasing their resiliency to some climate change impacts, but may require more frequent maintenance or replacement to ensure continued function during and after storm seasons and to avoid dislodgement. The fixed features, such as the pilings and bank protection may need reinforcement and possibly replacement to withstand higher levels of flood exposure and more frequent storm events. The bank is covered with riprap and contains some vegetation, which provides additional stability and will reduce the amount of erosion and scour pressure experienced during future events because of the vegetation's **underground root system; but remains** at risk of accelerated deterioration from currents and floods.

Regular maintenance, as referenced in the lease, may 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 impair the public rights to navigation and fishing or substantially

interfere with Public Trust needs and values at this location, at this time, and for the foreseeable term of the proposed lease; is consistent with the common law Public Trust Doctrine; and is in the best interests of the State.

## OTHER PERTINENT INFORMATION:

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1. Approval or denial of the application is a discretionary action by the Commission. Each time the Commission approves or rejects a use of sovereign land, it exercises legislatively delegated authority and responsibility **as trustee of the State's Public Trust lands as authorized by law.** If the Commission denies the application, the Applicant, as the owner of the improvements on state land, may be required to remove the boat dock, boat lift, two personal watercraft ramps, three steel pilings, gangway with stairs, and bank protection and restore the premises to their original condition. Upon expiration or prior termination of the lease, the lessee also has no right to a new lease or to renewal of any previous lease.
2. This action is consistent with the "Meeting Evolving Public Trust Needs" Strategic Focus Area of the Commission's 2021-2025 Strategic Plan.
3. 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:

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

## RECOMMENDED ACTION:

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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:

Find that the proposed lease will not substantially impair the public rights to navigation and fishing or substantially interfere with Public Trust needs and values at this location, at this time, and for the foreseeable term of the lease; is consistent with the common law Public Trust Doctrine; and is in the best interests of the State.

### AUTHORIZATION:

1. Authorize acceptance of compensation from the Applicant in the amount of \$383 for the unauthorized occupation of State land for the period beginning June 18, 2021 through February 24, 2022.
2. Authorize issuance of a General Lease – Recreational and Protective Structure Use to the Applicant, beginning February 25, 2022, for a term of 10 years, for the continued use and maintenance of an existing boat dock, three steel pilings, gangway with stairs, and bank protection previously authorized by the Commission; and boat lift and two personal watercraft ramps 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 \$553 per year, with an annual Consumer Price Index adjustment; and liability insurance in an amount no less than \$1,000,000 per occurrence.

**EXHIBIT A**

**LEASE 8936**

**LAND DESCRIPTION**

A parcel of tide and submerged land situate in the bed of the Sacramento River, lying adjacent to Swamp and Overflowed Land Survey 899 patented January 29, 1868, County of Sacramento, State of California and more particularly described as follows:

All those lands underlying an existing single berth floating boat dock with boat lift, gangway with stairs, two personal watercraft floats and three pilings lying adjacent to that parcel described in Grant Deed, recorded June 18, 2021 in Book 20210618 at Page 1244 in Official Records of said County.

TOGETHER WITH any applicable Impact Area(s).

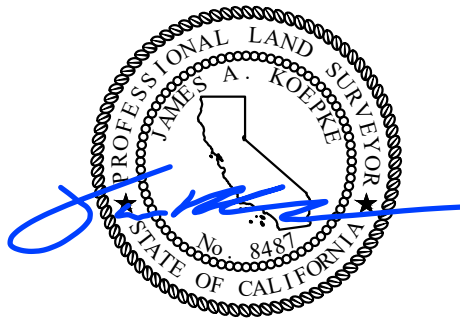
ALSO TOGETHER WITH that land lying immediately beneath any bank protection structure adjacent to said parcel.

EXCEPTING THEREFROM any portion lying landward of the ordinary high water mark of the left bank of said river.

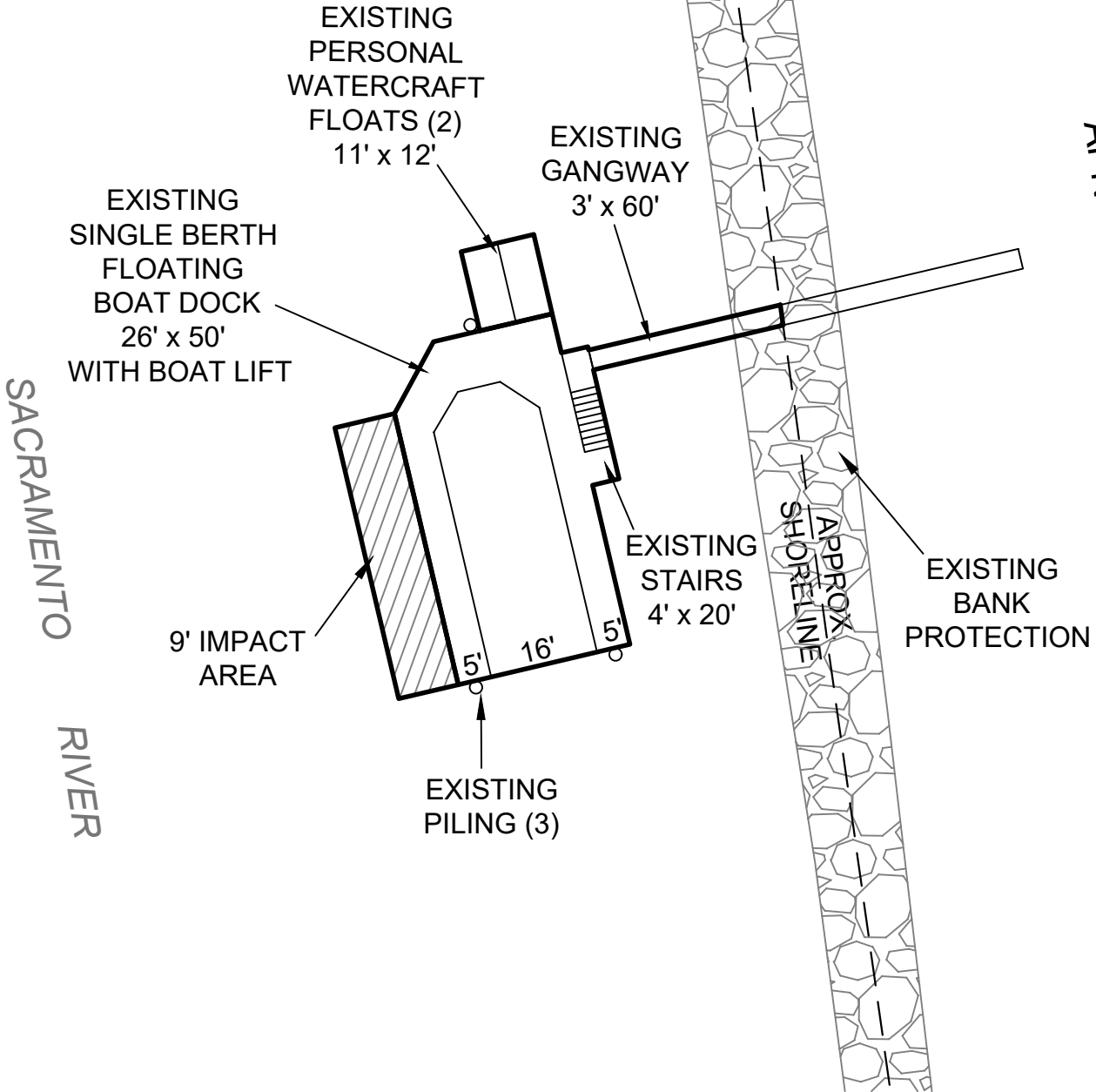
Accompanying plat is hereby made part of this description.

**END OF DESCRIPTION**

Prepared 12/15/2021 by the California State Lands Commission Boundary Unit.



NO SCALE



APN 201-0270-051

### EXHIBIT A

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LAND DESCRIPTION PLAT  
LEASE 8936, CHAMBERS  
SACRAMENTO COUNTY

CALIFORNIA STATE  
LANDS COMMISSION





NO SCALE

# SITE



SACRAMENTO RIVER

EXISTING PERSONAL WATERCRAFT FLOATS (2)  
11' x 12'

EXISTING SINGLE BERTH FLOATING BOAT DOCK  
26' x 50'  
WITH BOAT LIFT

EXISTING GANGWAY  
3' x 60'

EXISTING STAIRS  
4' x 20'

9' IMPACT AREA

EXISTING PILING (3)

APPROX. SHORELINE

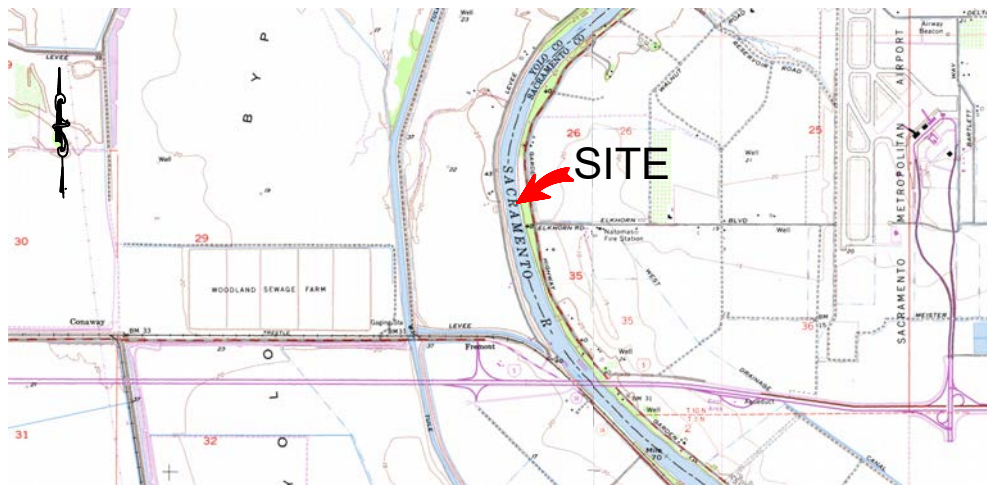
EXISTING BANK PROTECTION

APN 201-0270-051

6575 GARDEN HIGHWAY, SACRAMENTO

NO SCALE

# LOCATION



MAP SOURCE: USGS QUAD

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.

## Exhibit B

LEASE 8936  
CHAMBERS  
APN 201-0270-051  
GENERAL LEASE-  
RECREATIONAL &  
PROTECTIVE STRUCTURE USE  
SACRAMENTO COUNTY



TS 12/15/2021