

# Staff Report 22

## LESSEE:

Loche M. Johnson and Susan M. Johnson, and successors in trust, as Trustees of the Johnson Family Trust dated August 13, 1999

## APPLICANT:

Ty Sambrailo and Alex Sambrailo

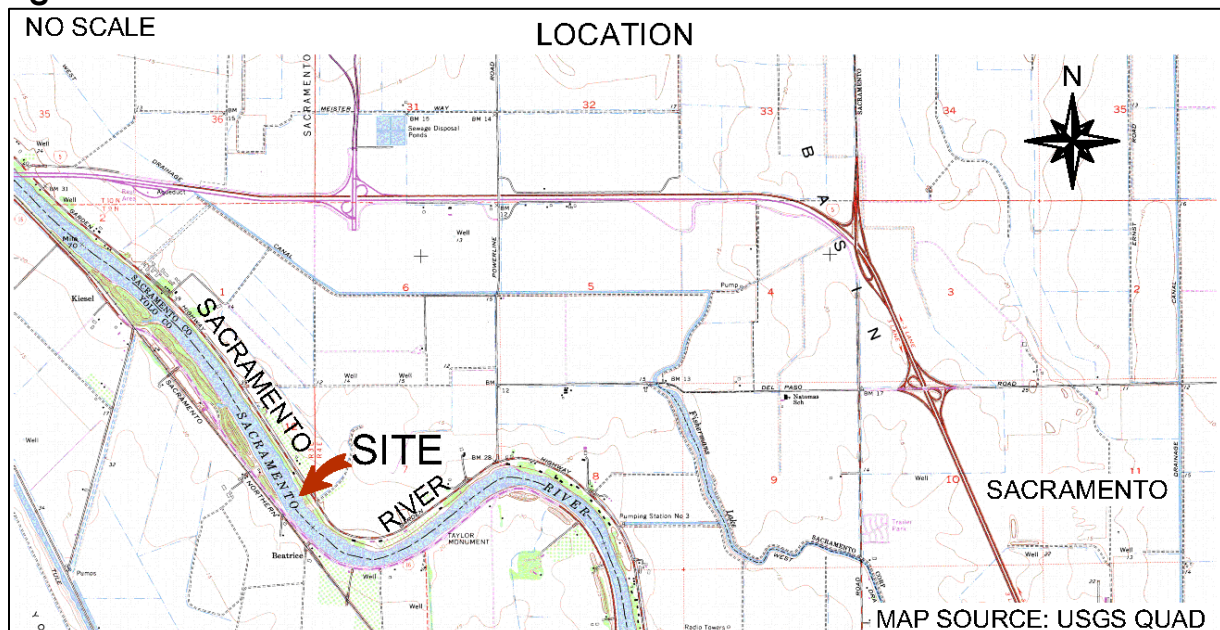
## PROPOSED ACTION:

Acceptance of a lease quitclaim deed and Issuance of a General Lease – Recreational Use and Protective Structure Use.

## AREA, LAND TYPE, AND LOCATION:

Sovereign land in the Sacramento River, adjacent to 4603 Garden Highway, Sacramento, Sacramento County (as shown in Figure 1).

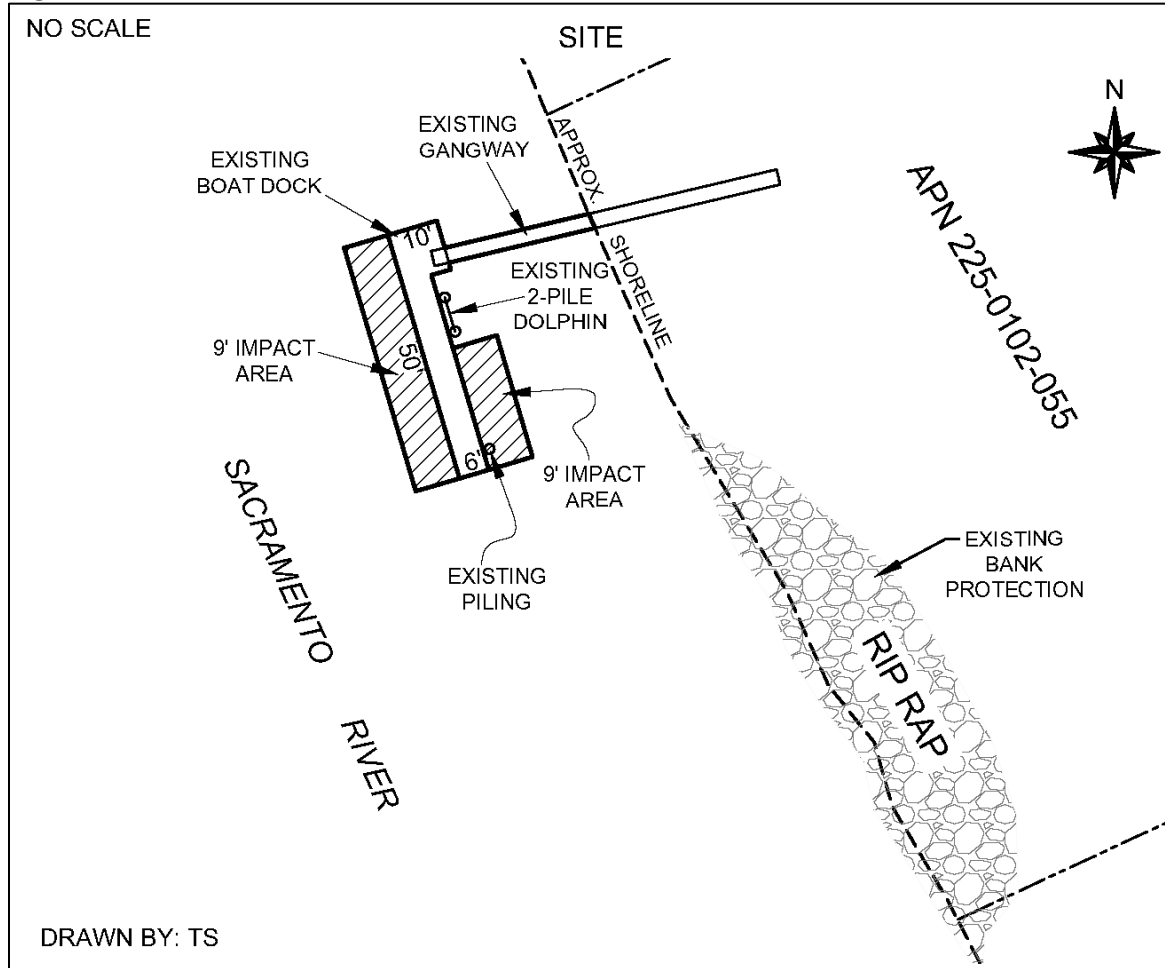
**Figure 1. Location**



**AUTHORIZED USE:**

Use of an existing boat dock, two-pile dolphin, gangway, and bank protection (as shown in Figure 2).

**Figure 2. Site Map**



NOTE: This depiction of the lease premises is based on unverified information provided by the Applicant or other parties and is not a waiver or limitation of any State interest in the subject or any other property.

**TERM:**

10 years, beginning October 19, 2023.

**CONSIDERATION:**

\$376 per year, with an annual Consumer Price Index adjustment, and \$65 to compensate for the unauthorized occupation of state sovereign land for the period from August 17, 2023 to October 18, 2023.

**SPECIFIC LEASE PROVISIONS:**

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

**STAFF ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATION:**

---

**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 February 21, 2014, the Commission authorized a General Lease – Recreational and Protective Structure Use for an existing boat dock, two-pile dolphin, gangway, and bank protection ([Item C24, February 21, 2014](#)). The upland parcel was deeded to the Applicant on March 10, 2023, and the Lessee signed a lease quitclaim on February 22, 2023. If the Commission adopts the recommended actions, this quitclaim deed will be effective on the date of the Commission action. The Applicant is now applying for a General Lease – Recreational and Protective Structure Use for an existing boat dock, two-pile dolphin, piling, gangway, and bank protection.

The Applicant owns the upland parcel adjoining the lease premises, and the existing docking facilities and bank protection have been under lease for many years. The existing facilities will be 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 protects the upland property and maintain the integrity of the Sacramento River, which will help protect the Public Trust resources for recreational and navigational use by the public. The facilities are located directly adjacent to the upland property and occupy a relatively small area of the river.

Staff recommends that the proposed lease start on October 19, 2023 the date of the Commission meeting. Staff also recommends that the Commission accept \$65 in compensation from the Applicant for the unauthorized occupation of State lands for the period from August 17, 2023 to October 18, 2023. The prior lessee paid

rent through August 16, 2023, the anniversary date of the prior lease. Accordingly, the State will be made whole by the proposed payment from the Applicant. The lease provisions regarding indemnity include the period of the Applicant's unauthorized occupation of State-owned lands prior to October 19, 2023.

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 the boat dock and appurtenant facilities 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 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**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Projection (feet)</b>
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 floating dock and gangway are 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 they may require more frequent maintenance or replacement to ensure continued function during and after storm seasons and to avoid dislodgement. The fixed features may need reinforcement and possibly replacement to withstand higher levels of flood exposure and more frequent storm events. The bank is heavily vegetated, 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. However, the bank remains at risk of accelerated deterioration from currents and floods and an alternative bank protection strategy, such as bank restoration, may be required in the future to protect the anchoring points of the other structures in the lease premise and reduce flood impacts to the upland parcel (not within the lease area).

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 (not within

the lease area) 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 term of the proposed lease; and is in the best interests of the State.

**OTHER PERTINENT INFORMATION:**

1. Approval or denial of an 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. If the Commission denies the application, the facilities may have to be removed. A lessee has no right to a new lease or to renewal of any previous lease.
2. This action is consistent with the "Leading Climate Activism" and "Meeting Evolving Public Trust Needs" Strategic Focus Areas of the Commission's 2021-2025 Strategic Plan.
3. Acceptance of the quitclaim deed is not a project as defined by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) because it is an administrative action that will not result in direct or indirect physical changes in the environment.

Authority: Public Resources Code section 21065 and California Code of Regulations, title 14, section 15378, subdivision (b)(5).

4. Staff recommends that the Commission find that issuance of the lease is exempt from the requirements of the 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.

## **RECOMMENDED ACTION:**

---

It is recommended that the Commission:

### **CEQA FINDING:**

Find that issuance of the lease 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 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 term of the lease; is consistent with the common law Public Trust Doctrine; and is in the best interests of the State.
2. Find that the existing and continuing use and maintenance of the bank protection does not substantially interfere with the trust.
3. Find that issuing the proposed lease is in the best interests of the State.

### **AUTHORIZATION:**

1. Authorize acceptance of a lease quitclaim deed from the Lessee for Lease Number PRC 7212, effective October 19, 2023.
2. Authorize acceptance of compensation from the Applicant in the amount of \$65 for unauthorized occupation of State land for the period prior to October 19, 2023.
3. Authorize issuance of a General Lease – Recreational and Protective Structure Use to the Applicant beginning October 19, 2023, for a term of 10 years, for the use of an existing boat dock, two-pile dolphin, piling, gangway, and bank protection; annual rent in the amount of \$376 with an annual Consumer Price Index adjustment; and liability insurance in an amount no less than \$1,000,000 per occurrence.