

Staff Report 23

APPLICANT:

City of Isleton

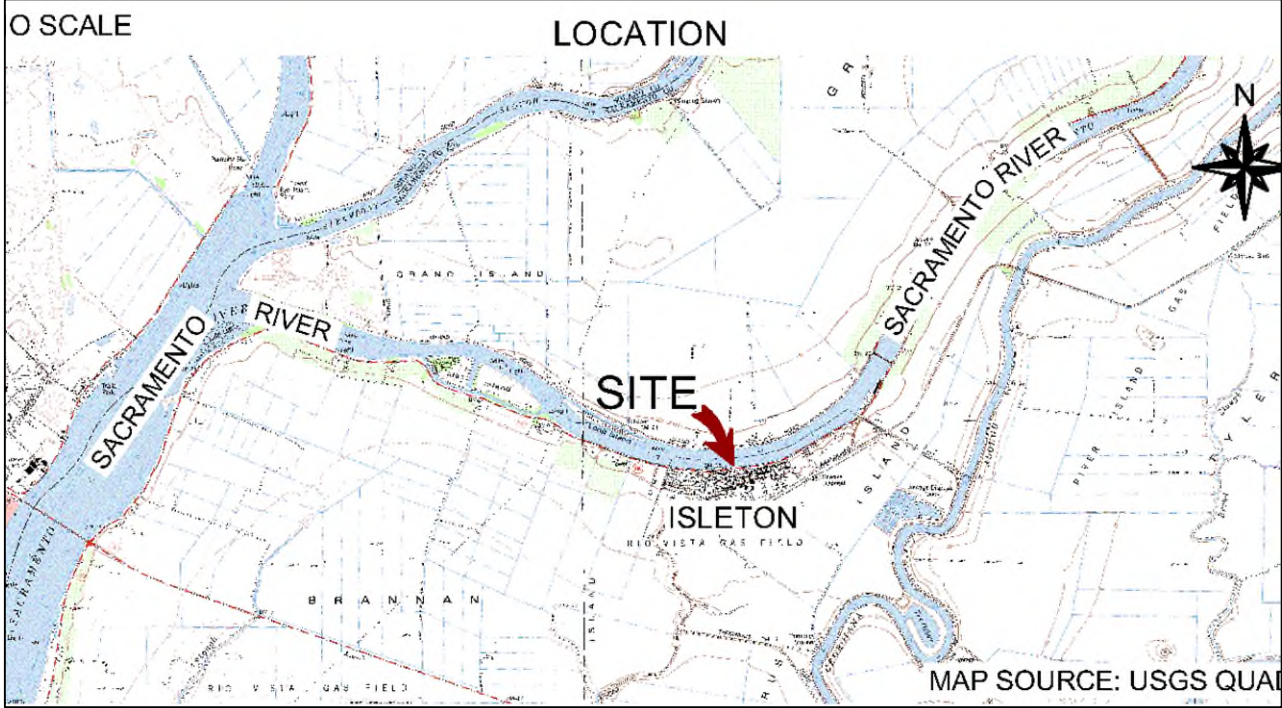
PROPOSED ACTION:

Issuance of a General Lease – Public Agency Use.

AREA, LAND TYPE, AND LOCATION:

Sovereign land in the Sacramento River, adjacent to 307 2nd Street, Isleton, Sacramento County (as shown in Figure 1).

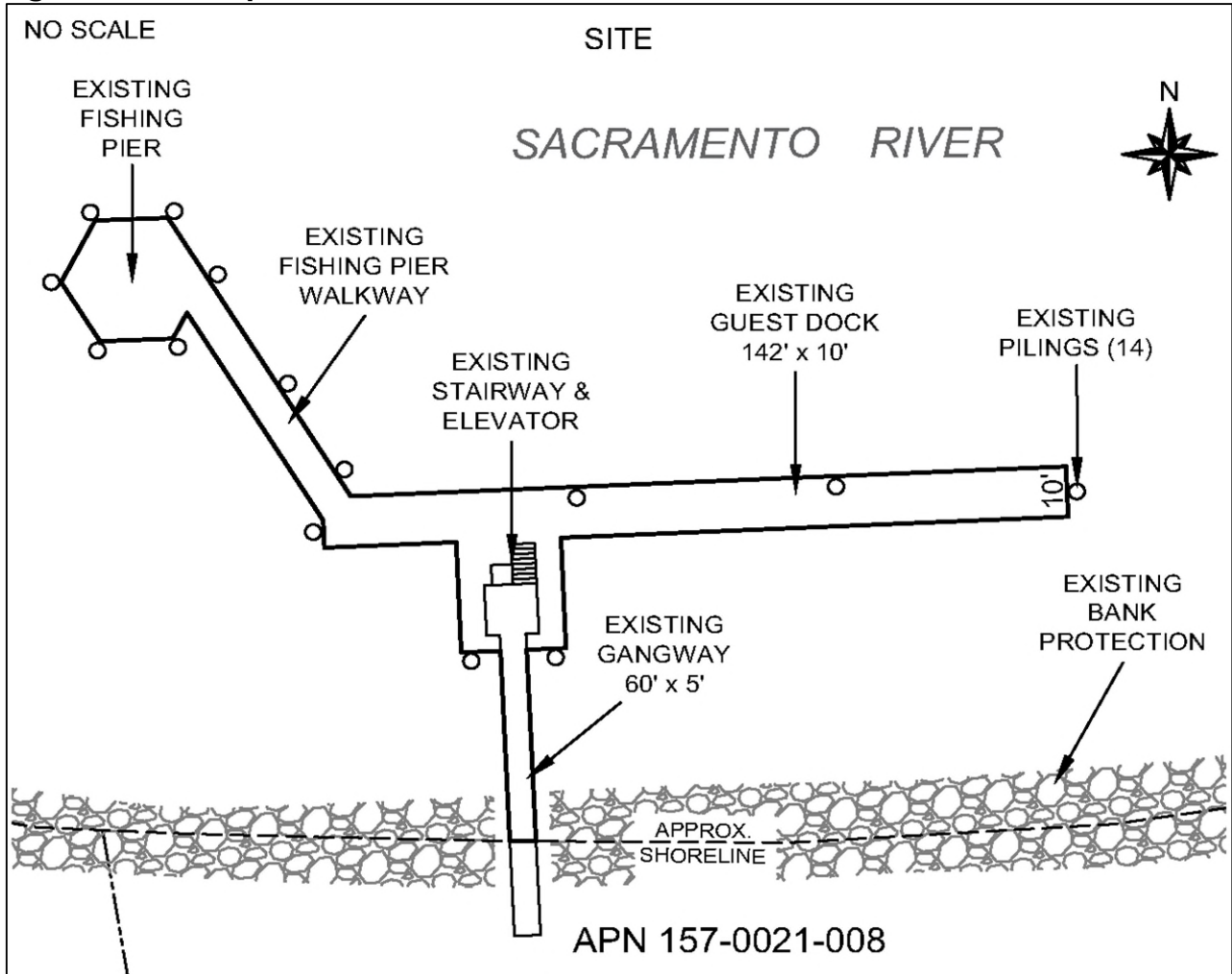
Figure 1. Location



AUTHORIZED USE:

Use of an existing public fishing pier with tour boat landing, guest dock, 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:

20 years, beginning October 17, 2024.

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.

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, 6321, 6321.2, 6501.1, 6503, and 6503.5; California Code of Regulations, title 2, sections 2000 and 2003.

PUBLIC TRUST AND STATE’S BEST INTERESTS:

On February 2, 2004, the Commission authorized the issuance of a General Lease - Public Agency Use to the City of Isleton to construct and maintain a public fishing pier with a tour boat landing and guest dock and proposed public side-tie guest dock ([Item 1, February 2, 2004](#)). The lease expired February 1, 2024.

The Applicant is applying for a General Lease – Public Agency Use for an existing public fishing pier with tour boat landing and guest dock previously authorized and bank protection that was not previously authorized.

The side-tie guest dock was never installed, and the Applicant does not intend to install it as the existing docking facilities already meet their needs. Within the last five years bank protection was installed to comply with Central Valley Flood Protection Board requirements. The adjacent uplands are part of the Applicant’s riverfront upgrade project within the Old Town Historic District. The bank protection protects the shore from erosion and the adjacent upland from flooding and is part of the Sacramento County flood management system.

The public fishing pier with tour boat landing and guest dock are maintained by the Applicant and are accessible at no charge to the public. The public may use the pier to participate in water-related recreation, such as fishing and boating. The Applicant does not have any contracts with any tour boat company. The Applicant charges a fee for overnight mooring, but the fee goes to the maintenance of the facilities and overnight mooring is infrequent. The facilities are wheelchair accessible and increase public access. No boat storage will be allowed onsite. Garbage disposal will be provided by the Applicant in the adjacent upland area as use warrants.

The proposed lease does not alienate the State’s fee simple interest or permanently impair public rights. The lease is limited to a 20-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 proposed 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.

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 lease area 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.

Sea level rise could increase the Sacramento River’s inundation levels within the lease area. In addition, as stated in the [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 foundations and supports for the fishing pier, dock, and gangway. 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 boat dock and gangway are adaptable to higher 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 of the facilities. However, the pilings and bank protection are fixed and therefore more vulnerable to sea level rise and more frequent flood events. These structures may need maintenance, due to increased flood exposure and more frequent storm events, to ensure they do not become dislodged or degraded and to reduce risks to public safety and navigation.

The bank is vegetated, which provides additional stability and will reduce the amount of erosion and scour pressure experienced during future events because of the underground root system. However, the bank remains at risk of accelerated deterioration from currents and floods and could be vulnerable to future events. In addition, the bank may suffer increased erosion from sea level rise and storm flooding. In the future, if erosion impacts require modifications to the bank, Commission staff suggests the lessee consider nature-based solutions such as planting or restoring vegetation (e.g., native shrubs, trees, grasses) along the river to provide flood and erosion risk management benefits. For more information regarding nature-based strategies, please refer to the 2023 [Shoreline Adaptation](#)

[and the Public Trust](#) report. Any future construction or activities on state land would require a separate authorization from the Commission.

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 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 Applicant may be required to remove the improvements and restore the premises to their original condition. The 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. 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 15061 and California Code of Regulations, title 2, section 2905.

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:

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

AUTHORIZATION:

Authorize issuance of a General Lease – Public Agency Use to the Applicant beginning October 17, 2024, for a term of 20 years, for the use of an existing public fishing pier with four boat landing, guest dock, and bank protection; consideration being 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; and liability insurance in an amount no less than \$1,000,000 per occurrence.