Meeting Date: 10/21/26
Application Number: 5517
Staff: L. Ward

Staff Report 30

APPLICANT:

County of Sacramento

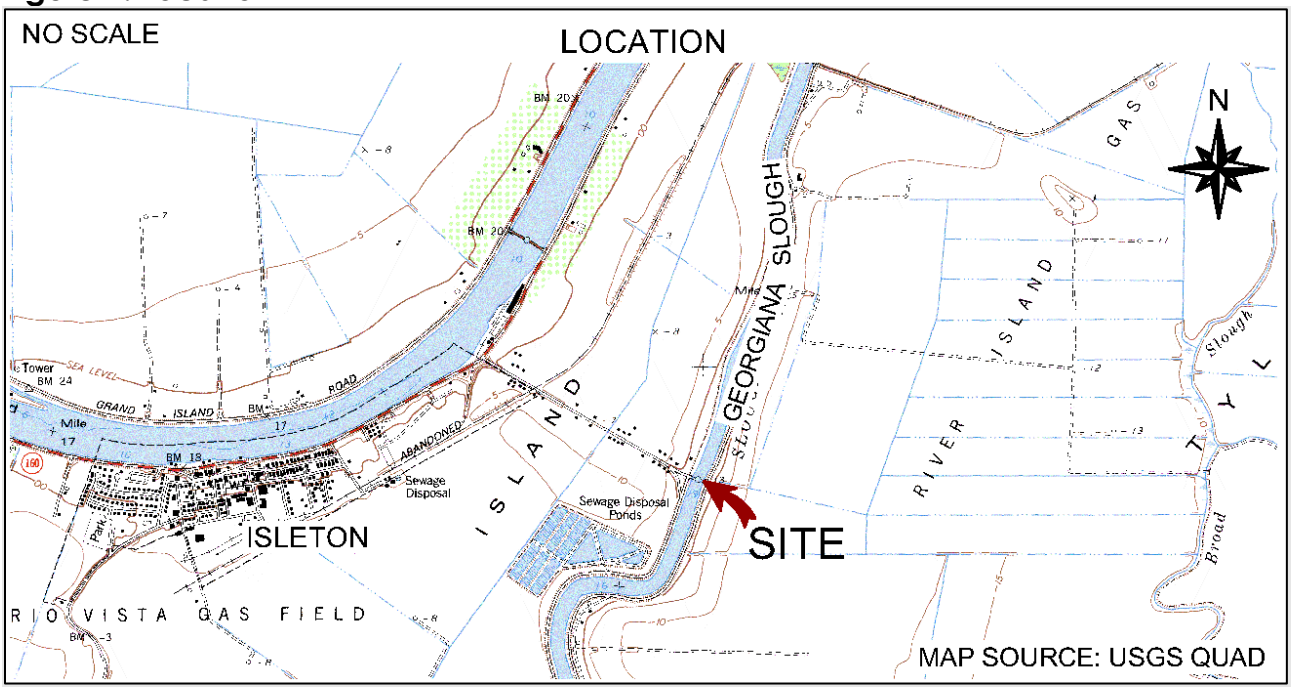
PROPOSED ACTION:

Issuance of a General Lease – Public Agency Use.

AREA, LAND TYPE, AND LOCATION:

Sovereign land located in a portion of Georgiana Slough, adjacent to Assessor's Parcel Numbers (APN) 156-0240-013, 157-0100-062, and 157-0211-015, near Isleton, Sacramento County (as shown in Figure 1).

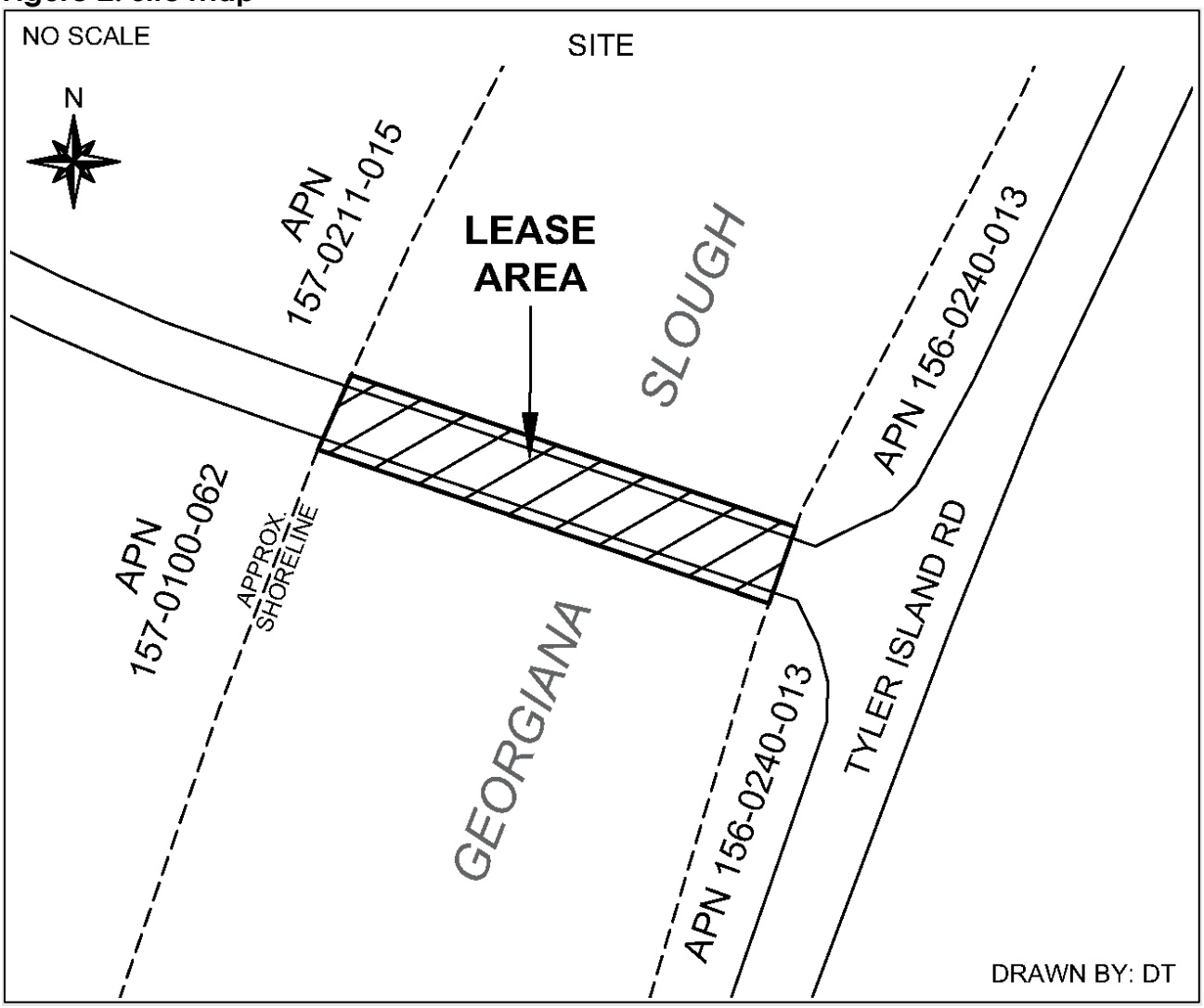
Figure 1. Location



AUTHORIZED USE:

Use of an existing bridge, known as the Tyler Island Bridge (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 21, 2026.

CONSIDERATION:

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 interests.

SPECIFIC LEASE PROVISIONS:

- Lessee shall indemnify, hold harmless, and, at the option of Lessor, defend Lessor from all damages, injuries, or claims arising from the installation, maintenance, or operation of Lessee's facilities on State lands, including any attached, suspended, or otherwise fixed to the improvements.

STAFF ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATION:

AUTHORITY:

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

PUBLIC TRUST AND STATE'S BEST INTERESTS:

The Applicant is applying for a General Lease – Public Agency Use for the use of sovereign land located in Georgiana Slough, adjacent to APNs 156-0240-013, 157-0100-062, and 157-0211-015, near Isleton, Sacramento County, for an existing bridge, known as the Tyler Island Bridge. The bridge has existed for many years but was never under lease. An application was submitted after staff became aware and informed the Applicant that the bridge was occupying sovereign land.

Tyler Island Bridge is a two-lane moveable wing bridge designed in 1927 and completed in 1940, rotating around the center to provide passage to vessels. The bridge serves as a vital conduit connecting Tyler Island with Isleton and Highway 160, allowing public access and movement of agricultural goods. Tyler Island Bridge also provides the nearby communities with an additional emergency evacuation route.

The proposed lease will require the Applicant to indemnify the State for a period of unauthorized occupation prior to October 21, 2026, sufficient to ensure the State is protected. The Applicant schedules inspections on an as-needed basis following triggers, such as regional weather events, flood warnings, or safety complaints from the local public. The bridge is inspected, at a minimum, twice a year, and the last inspection was performed in April 2026. The most recent inspection found that the bridge is in good condition and working order.

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 will have no significant impact on Public

Trust-consistent uses or resources in the area. Upon termination of the lease, the lessee may be required to remove any improvements from State land and restore the lease premises to their original condition. The proposed lease requires the lessee to indemnify the State for any liability incurred as a result of the lessee's activities thereon.

CLIMATE CHANGE:

INTRODUCTION:

The climate crisis and rising sea levels are impacting California's coastal and inland waterways now. Likely impacts to the lease premises include, but are not limited to, sea level rise, saltwater intrusion, prolonged drought, extreme heat, and changes to the intensity and timing of precipitation events. These impacts can exacerbate natural hydrological processes such as erosion, scour, and sedimentation. These impacts may affect the existing 2-lane movable bridge subject to the proposed lease, located over Georgiana Slough.

DATA & PROJECTIONS:

Water levels in tidally-influenced rivers will rise as sea levels rise. The California Ocean Protection Council updated the State of California Sea Level Rise Guidance in 2024 to provide a synthesis of the best available science on sea level rise projections and rates for multiple emissions scenarios. Commission staff evaluated the "intermediate" scenarios due to the lower vulnerability and exposure of the lease location. 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	Intermediate (feet)
2040	0.6
2050	0.8
2070	1.4
2100	3.1

Source: Table 6, State of California Sea Level Rise Guidance: 2024 Update
Note: Projections are with respect to a 2000 baseline.

In addition to rising seas, warmer temperatures have led California and the Southwest region to experience a megadrought from 2000 to 2022, measured as the driest 22 years in the past 1200 years, and more megadroughts are projected

through the end of the century (Fifth National Climate Change Assessment: Southwest Region, 2023). Hotter and drier conditions have led to declines in snowpack volumes, higher-elevation snow lines, earlier snowmelt, and reduced overall runoff. Streamflow and river volumes are lower and will be drawn down farther as temperatures continue to rise and demand for water increases. Despite the region's increasing aridity, flooding from extreme precipitation events is projected to increase, attributed to earlier snowmelt, sea level rise, and more intense and frequent atmospheric rivers. Minor and moderate flooding (flooding events defined as disruptive to damaging), attributed to higher water levels, is expected to increase five to ten orders of magnitude by 2100, according to NOAA's 2022 Sea Level Rise Technical Report.

ANALYSIS:

The lease premises are likely to experience more extreme conditions over the lease term than in the past, due to climate change. Changes to the timing and amount of runoff from the higher elevations of the watershed, stronger storm surge, and rising water levels will result in higher flood risks. Bank stability may be compromised due to increased channel erosion and undercutting from more intense precipitation and floods, compromising the integrity of the supports of the bridge that are located on the riverbank areas. Structures on the lease premises may be exposed to saltier water and corrode faster than before. Conversely, drought could lower water levels for longer portions of the year and expose structures that were historically designed to be submerged to more air, wind, and heat.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

To reduce the likelihood of adverse impacts to the lease premises and improvements, the lessee should consider the following adaptation strategies to improve resiliency to climate change including inspecting fixed structures frequently and monitoring for degradation, replacing damaged parts when necessary, and elevating or relocating structures when exposure to flooding compromises structural function and integrity. Any future construction or activities on State land would require a separate authorization from the Commission. For more information regarding nature-based strategies, please refer to the 2023 Shoreline Adaptation and the Public Trust report.

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 believe the issuance of this lease will not substantially interfere with Public Trust needs at this location, at this time, and for the 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:

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. If the Commission denies the application, the Applicant may be required to remove the improvements. The Lessee 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" and "Leading Climate Activism" 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 interfere with the public rights to navigation, fishing, and commerce or cause an unreasonable interference with Public Trust needs and values at this location, at this time, and for the term of the lease; is consistent with the Public Trust Doctrine; and is in the best interests of the State.

AUTHORIZATION:

Authorize issuance of a General Lease – Public Agency Use to the Applicant, beginning October 21, 2026, for a term of 20 years, for the use of an existing bridge, known as the Tyler Island Bridge; consideration being the public use and benefit, with the State reserving the right, at any time, to set a monetary rent as specified in the lease if the Commission finds such action to be in the State's best interests.