



**Date of Notice:** January 8, 2026

# **NOTICE OF RIGHT TO APPEAL**

## **ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION**

### **STORMWATER DEPARTMENT**

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**PROJECT NAME/NUMBER:** Famosa Slough Eutrophication Monitoring and Algae Removal Project

**COMMUNITY PLAN AREA:** Peninsula

**COUNCIL DISTRICT:** 2

**LOCATION:** Central Coordinates: 32.752, -117.228; Assessor Parcel Numbers: 441-090-44; 449-870-03; 449-870-02; Community Planning Area: Peninsula; Council District: 2.

Famosa Slough and Channel is a 37-acre wetland bisected by West Point Loma Boulevard, directly adjacent to the Interstate 8 eastbound lanes on the north and two condominium complexes on the east and west. South of West Point Loma Boulevard, the Famosa Slough (Slough) pond area is bordered by an existing service station and convenience store on the east, Famosa Boulevard on the west and residential uses on the west, Valeta Street and a public school on the southwestern edge of the Slough in a primarily multifamily residential neighborhood. The proposed project and staging area are located within the southern central basin of Famosa Slough, on the southside of West Point Loma Boulevard, directly adjacent to Famosa Boulevard. The entire Famosa Slough is located within the City of San Diego's (City) Multiple Species Conservation Program (MSCP) Multi-Habitat Planning Area (MHPA).

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION:** The proposed Famosa Slough Eutrophication Monitoring and Algae Removal Project will allow for the removal of eutrophic algae blooms in the southern central basin (basin) of Famosa Slough caused by excessive nutrient loading from urban runoff and trash/debris which will reduce negative impacts to water quality, and biological and recreational resources in the Slough area. Eutrophication or hypertrophication is when a body of water becomes overly enriched with minerals and nutrients which induce excessive growth of algae. The Famosa Slough and Channel are hydrologically affected by three distinct systems. The tidal circulation of seawater is the primary parameter which created and maintains the coastal wetland ecosystem. Runoff from the local watershed and freshwater flow from the San Diego River Flood Control Channel are the other two sources which provide various amounts of input on a seasonal basis. Famosa Slough is on the Clean Water Act Section 303(d) list of water quality limited segments for eutrophication, with nutrients as the pollutant category (State Water Resources Control Board, 2024), and the 2024 California Integrated Water Quality Report and 303(d) List.

The proposed Project involves the recurring inspection and maintenance of an impaired water body on the Clean Water Act Section 303(d) list for eutrophication, which has been caused by excessive nutrients (total nitrogen and total phosphorus). The City has been directed by the San Diego Regional Water Quality Control (San Diego Water Board) to develop and implement a total maximum daily load (TMDL) alternative to address eutrophication in the Famosa Slough. One of the activities the City is required to

conduct to address eutrophication in the Slough is to remove floating algal mats from the southern central basin portion of the Slough under specific circumstances. Under the Alternative TMDL, algal mat removal would be required if algae within the basin reaches the combined regulatory action triggers of 50 percent or greater cover and a measured algal biomass of 80 grams per square meter. Algal monitoring is conducted at the locations and frequency described in the Famosa Slough Eutrophication Monitoring Plan and Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) (City 2023).

The proposed Project does not involve permanent development. All work would be performed and/or overseen by the City Stormwater Department staff. Algae removal regulatory action triggers are most likely to be met during the summer months when algal cover is greatest. If algal removal is required, a crew of two to four City staff and a qualified biologist will remove algae by skimming algae mats from the surface of the water. Hand tools will be used to perform this work; no mechanized equipment will be used to remove the algae from the Slough waterbody. Staff will work from the open water, wearing waders, to remove excess algae mats by hand with one or more of the following: rakes, nets, kayaks, canoes, and/or stand-up paddleboards. All work will be conducted by City staff and pre algae removal and removal activities will be monitored by a qualified biologist. Since algal mats are floating, algal removal will not require excavation or soil disturbance. No other vegetation will be removed or indirectly impacted as part of the Project. The Project will not include permanent development or modifications within the Slough. Algae removal will occur as needed to maintain the algal biomass and percent cover below the required thresholds as established by the QAPP.

No Grading would occur in the Slough or surrounding vicinity. Access to the basin will be provided via an existing City Park and Recreation maintained hard-packed access trail that leads from Famosa Boulevard to a disturbed and unvegetated area adjacent to the basin. The unvegetated area is roped off from the surrounding vegetation and will be used as the landing and staging area for the Project. Once removed, algae would be brought to the staging area onshore and manually placed within a temporary containment basin to allow the algae to dry out. Once dry, City crews will use a Vactor Truck to remove the algae from the temporary containment. The Vactor Truck will be parked on Famosa Boulevard and has a vacuum boom long enough to reach the staging area without disturbing existing vegetation. It is anticipated that the Vactor Truck will be able to vacuum out the algae from the temporary containment in approximately 5 to 10 minutes. Algae will be disposed at a landfill.

The Project does not involve any permanent development or associated construction and would not negatively impact storm water flow; as such, the Project would not require the preparation or use of construction storm water Best Management Practices (BMPs) or a Storm Water Quality Management Plan. Conversely, the Project would serve as a BMP by improving water quality in the Famosa Slough. Therefore, it is not necessary to develop a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan or Water Pollution Control Plan.

The proposed Project does not have the potential to impact potentially significant cultural resources because: 1) no grading or landform modification would occur on upland landforms that have the potential to have supported prehistoric occupation. The proposed Project staging area was previously disturbed and would not be modified further; 2) proposed algae removal would be undertaken with hand tools such that no mechanical equipment would be placed on upland landforms where the potential for prehistoric occupation is greatest; 3) proposed algae transport from staging area to the Vactor Truck parked on Famosa Boulevard would be undertaken by extending a vacuum boom from the City's Right-of-Way to the staging area. Famosa Boulevard is situated approximately 5-10 feet above the staging area and the Vactor Truck's vacuum boom can extend above the ground surface and existing vegetation to reach the temporary containment basin, such that there is no mechanical equipment placed on upland landforms where the potential for prehistoric occupation is greatest; and 4) the

removed algae material would be placed within a temporary containment basin in the previously graded staging areas, and then transported to a licensed landfill or solid waste facility for disposal, such that there would be no potential for unknown archaeological resources to be indirectly impacted by placement of the organic materials.

**ENTITY CONSIDERING PROJECT APPROVAL:** City of San Diego

**ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION:** Categorically exempt from CEQA pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Sections 15304(d) (Minor Alterations to Land) and 15307 (Actions by Regulatory Agencies for Protection of Natural Resources)

**ENTITY MAKING ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION:** City of San Diego Mayor-Appointed Designee.

**STATEMENT SUPPORTING REASON FOR ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION:**

The City of San Diego conducted an environmental review that determined the project would not have the potential for causing a significant effect on the environment pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15304(d) which allows for minor alterations in land, water, and vegetation on existing officially designated wildlife management areas or fish production facilities which result in an improvement of habitat for fish or wildlife resources or greater fish production; Section 15307 which consists of actions taken by regulatory agencies as authorized by state law or local ordinance to assure the maintenance, restoration, or enhancement of a natural resource where the regulatory process involves procedures for protection of the environment; and where none of the exceptions listed in CEQA Section 15300.2 would apply in that no cumulative impacts were identified; no significant effects on the environment were identified; the project is not adjacent to a scenic highway; no historical resources would be affected by the action; and the project was not identified on a list of hazardous waste sites pursuant to Section 65962.5 of the Government Code.

This environmental determination is supported by a Biological Reconnaissance Survey Update and analysis conducted by WSP (WSP 2025 which concluded that the Project would not have significant impacts on sensitive species and biological resources and any potential impacts would be reduced or avoided by limiting work activities to open water, disturbed, and developed habitats, and working outside of the typical breeding season for migratory birds (February through August). Algae removal activities would be planned towards the end of the nest season (late July-September) to the extent feasible, and pre-activity surveys would be conducted for any work conducted during the nest period. This survey provides an update of a biological reconnaissance survey conducted in 2019 by Wood Environment and Infrastructure Solutions, Inc. (now WSP) that also concluded that the Project would not have significant impacts noted above (Wood 2019). The cultural determination is supported by qualified staff review of the California Historical Resources Information System (CHRIS), in-house resources and a site visit which concluded that the activity would not adversely affect known or recorded resources within proximity to project location in Famosa Slough.

**CITY CONTACT:** Mariah Mills, Senior Planner

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On January 8, 2026, the City of San Diego made the above-referenced environmental determination pursuant to CEQA. This determination is appealable to the City Council. If you have any questions about this determination, contact the City Contact listed above.

Applications to appeal the CEQA determination to the City Council must be filed with the Office of the City Clerk within five (5) business days from the date of the posting of this Notice (**January 15, 2026**). Appeals to the City Clerk must be filed via e-mail or in-person as follows:

1. Appeals filed via Email: The Environmental Determination Appeal Application Form [DS-3031](#) can be obtained at <https://www.sandiego.gov/sites/default/files/legacy/development-services/pdf/industry/forms/ds3031.pdf>. Send the completed appeal form (including grounds for appeal and supporting documentation in pdf format) by email to [Hearings1@sandiego.gov](mailto:Hearings1@sandiego.gov) by 5:00 p.m. on the last day of the appeal period; your email appeal will be acknowledged within 24 business hours. You must separately mail the appeal fee by check payable to the City Treasurer to: City Clerk/Appeal, MS 2A, 202 C Street, San Diego, CA 92101. The appeal filing fee must be United States Postal Service (USPS) postmarked before or on the final date of the appeal.
2. Appeals filed In-Person: The Environmental Determination Appeal Application Form [DS-3031](#) can be obtained at: <https://www.sandiego.gov/sites/default/files/legacy/development-services/pdf/industry/forms/ds3031.pdf>. Bring the fully completed appeal application [DS-3031](#) (including grounds for appeal and supporting documentation) to the City Administration Building— Public Information Counter (Open 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday excluding City approved holidays), 1st Floor Lobby, located at 202 C Street, San Diego, CA 92101, by 5:00 p.m. on the last day of the appeal period. The completed appeal form shall include the required appeal fee, with a check payable to: City Treasurer.

The appeal application can also be obtained from the City Clerk, 202 'C' Street, Second Floor, San Diego, CA 92101.

This information will be made available in alternative formats upon request.

**POSTED ON THE CITY'S CEQA WEBSITE**

**POSTED: 01/08/2026**

**REMOVED: \_\_\_\_\_**

**POSTED: M. Mills**