



# HUMBOLDT BAY HARBOR, RECREATION AND CONSERVATION DISTRICT



P.O. BOX 1030  
Eureka, California 95502  
phone (707) 443-0801  
fax (707) 443-0800

## PERMIT APPLICATION

Date Filed 2/5/26

| General Information                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | For District Use                                                                                                                                                                   |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1.) Name, Address, phone # and email of Developer, Project Sponsor and Legal Owner<br>Humboldt Bay Harbor, Recreation, and Conservation District<br>Contact: Rob Holmlund, Development Director<br>Email: rholmlund@humboldtbay.org: (707) 443-0801<br>601 Startare Drive, Eureka, California 95501-0765 | A. Application No. <u>A-2026-02</u><br><br>Application Type:<br>Franchise <input type="checkbox"/><br>Permit <input checked="" type="checkbox"/><br>Lease <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2.) Address of Project and Assessor's block, lot and Parcel Number<br>Three Sites in Humboldt Bay, see attached Project Description<br>40.824873°N, 124.168699°W, 40.830°N, 124.165°W,<br>40.737054°N, 124.220698°W                                                                                      | B. Date Received by Harbor District <u>02/05/2026</u>                                                                                                                              |
| 3.) Contact person Name, Address, phone #<br><br>GHD<br>Adam Wagschal<br>adam.wagschal@ghd.com<br>718 3 <sup>rd</sup> St, Eureka, CA 95501<br>+1 707 496-2088                                                                                                                                            | C. Date Accepted for filing by Commission                                                                                                                                          |
| 4.) Attach list of names and addresses of all adjoining property owners: Attached                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | D. Date of Public Notice                                                                                                                                                           |
| 5.) List and describe any other related Project Permits & Other Public Approvals required, including those required by City, Regional, State & Federal Agencies.<br><br>See attached Project Description                                                                                                 | E. Date of Environmental Compliance                                                                                                                                                |
| 6.) Existing City/County Zoning<br>MC (Industrial/Coastal Dependent)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | F. Date of Public Notice                                                                                                                                                           |
| 7.) Proposed Site Use (Project Title)<br><br>Eelgrass Joint Mitigation Program:<br>SAP Implementation                                                                                                                                                                                                    | G. Date of Public Hearings                                                                                                                                                         |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | H. Date of Commission Action<br><br>Approval: _____<br>Conditional _____<br>Disapproval _____                                                                                      |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | I. Expiration Date                                                                                                                                                                 |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Comments                                                                                                                                                                           |

Describe in detail the proposed project:

See attached Project Description

## PRE-PROJECT EELGRASS CHECKLIST

Please complete the Eelgrass Pre-project Checklist below. Note that the checklist questions relate to the Area of Potential Effect (APE) associated with your project, which incorporates a surrounding buffer inclusive of the limits of potential construction and/or maintenance-related activities that could affect eelgrass habitat. Provide a copy of the completed questionnaire along with your permit application and a map depicting the proposed project location, potential eelgrass depth range -10 to +4 feet, and benchmark eelgrass distribution in the vicinity of the proposed project. Maps should be of an appropriate scale to clearly depict the preliminary/proposed APE boundary in relation to both existing and potential eelgrass resources as provided in the Humboldt Bay Eelgrass Comprehensive Management Plan and associated webpage ([humboltdbay.org/eelgrass-management-plan](http://humboltdbay.org/eelgrass-management-plan)). Here you'll find information and links including [eelgrass information for permit applicants](#), a [baseline eelgrass distribution map](#), and the [Humboldt Bay Eelgrass Comprehensive Management Plan](#). Contact the Harbor District office with questions (443-0801).

### **For New Projects:**

|    |                                                                                                                                                                         | YES | NO |
|----|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|----|
| a) | Is the project located within 100 feet of previously mapped (known) eelgrass habitat?                                                                                   | x   |    |
| b) | Will any construction or new operational traffic occur within the vicinity of existing eelgrass?                                                                        | x   |    |
| c) | Is any portion of the project located in an area with depths ranging from -10 to +4 feet?                                                                               | x   |    |
| d) | Does the project result in new cover, shading or other form of light reduction of open water areas ranging in depth from -10 to +4 feet?                                |     | x  |
| e) | Is the project anticipated to affect wind or tidal circulation patterns within the bay?                                                                                 |     | x  |
| f) | Could the project affect ambient water temperature or clarity or result in new effluent (including stormwater) discharge point?                                         |     | x  |
| g) | Does the project result in any placement of fill, including shoreline armor?                                                                                            |     | x  |
| h) | Is the project anticipated to lead to an increase in boat traffic that could affect nearby eelgrass habitat through grounding, prop scarring, wake, or shading impacts? |     | x  |

### **For Maintenance/Repair Projects and Construction Activities:**

|    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | YES | NO |
|----|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|----|
| i) | Is project construction likely to increase turbidity? To what extent and for what duration?                                                                                                                                          | x   |    |
| j) | Will construction require the use of a barge or other vessel that may temporarily impact the bay floor (e.g. spud poles, anchoring, prop scarring, etc.) within known eelgrass habitat or within depths ranging from -10 to +4 feet? | x   |    |
| k) | Will construction require the use of turbidity curtains in proximity to eelgrass habitat?                                                                                                                                            |     | x  |
| l) | Will project construction result in temporary shading from moored/anchored working vessel(s)?                                                                                                                                        | x   |    |

If you responded yes to any of the questions above, your project may have the potential to affect eelgrass habitat and you'll need to conduct a preliminary eelgrass survey. Please refer to the District's [Eelgrass Management Plan webpage](#) for further guidance and a list of local agency contacts should you have additional questions.

Answer all questions completely on a separate page. If the question does not apply to your project, so indicate by marking N.A. Contact Harbor District Office with questions.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION (See attached Project Description)

8. Site Size
9. Square Footage
10. Number of floors of construction
11. Amount of off-street parking provided
12. Attach plans
13. Proposed scheduling
14. Associated projects
15. Anticipated incremental development
16. If residential, include the number of units, schedule of unit sizes, range of sale prices or rents, and type of household size expected.
17. If commercial, indicate the type, whether neighborhood, city or regionally oriented, square footage of sales area, and loading facilities
18. If industrial, indicate type, estimated per shift employment & loading facilities.
19. If institutional, indicate the major function, estimated per shift employment, occupancy, loading facilities, and community benefits derived from the project.
20. If the project involves a variance, conditional use or recognizing application, state this and indicate clearly why the application is required.

Are the following items applicable to the project or its effects? Answer yes or no.  
Discuss all items answered yes.

21. Change in existing features of any bays, tidelands, beaches, lakes or hills, or substantial alteration of ground contours. **No**
22. Change in scenic views or vistas from existing residential areas or public lands or roads. **No**
23. Change in pattern, scale or character of general area of project. **No**
24. Significant amounts of solid waste or litter. **No**
25. Change in dust, ash, smoke, fumes or odors in vicinity. **No**
26. Change in ocean, bay, lake, stream or ground water quality or quantity, or alteration of existing drainage patterns. **No**
27. Substantial change in existing noise or vibration levels in the vicinity. **No**
  - A. During Construction
  - B. During Project Utilization
28. Site on filled land or on slope of 10% or more. **No**

29. Use of disposal or potentially hazardous materials, such as toxic substances, flammable or explosives. **No**
30. Substantial change in municipal services demand (police, fire, water, sewage, etc.) **No**
31. Substantially increase fossil fuel consumption (electricity, oil, natural gas, etc.). **No**
32. Relationship to larger project or series of projects **Yes - This project involves sampling to inform the Humboldt Bay Eelgrass Mitigation Program**

#### ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING:

33. Describe the project site as it exists before the project including information on topography, soil stability, plants and animals, and any cultural, historical, or scenic aspects. Describe any existing structures on the site and the use of the structures. Attach photographs of the site. Photos will be accepted.
- The three sample sites are located within waters of Humboldt Bay, with existing bathymetry ranging from -2.5 to 5.5 feet mean lower low water (MLLW). The sites cover approximately 59 acres total across three locations: RMMT North and RMMT North Expansion near the Samoa Peninsula, and King Salmon near King Salmon. Previous sediment characterization indicates the areas contain a mixture of fine-grained sediments and sandy material typical of estuarine bay environments. The sites may be used by shorebirds and waterfowl. Numerous aquatic species (including fish listed under the state and federal Endangered Species Acts) occur in Humboldt Bay and could occur at the Project sites. The areas currently support marine benthic habitat including patchy eelgrass. No structures, other than unused and dilapidated piles, exist within the mitigation areas.
34. Describe the surrounding properties, including information on plants and animals and any cultural, historical, or scenic aspects. Indicate the type of land use (residential, commercial, etc.) intensity of land use (one-family, apartment houses, shops, department stores, etc.) and the scale of development (height, frontage, set-back, rear yard, etc.) Attach photographs of the vicinity. Photos accepted.

#### **RMMT North and RMMT North Expansion Sites (Samoa Peninsula):**

The surrounding properties are located on the Samoa Peninsula adjacent to Humboldt Bay. The area has a significant industrial history, with timber processing, pulp mills, and lumber operations from 1920 to 2005, including the former Louisiana Pacific Kraft Pulp and Lumber Mill. Current land uses are industrial/coastal-dependent with moderate intensity development including log storage yards, commercial fishing facilities (equipment storage, fish landing and holding operations), limited forest product storage, and mariculture operations. Development consists of low-scale industrial structures and storage facilities oriented toward water access. The scenic character includes views of Humboldt Bay, the Samoa Bridge, and surrounding industrial waterfront.

## King Salmon Site (Buhne Point):

The surrounding properties near Buhne Point are characterized by mixed commercial and recreational uses with moderate intensity development. The area is the former site of the Humboldt Bay Power Plant (1963-1976, fully decommissioned 2021). Current uses include a marina, restaurants, commercial fishing operations, charter boat facilities, and an RV park. Development is low to moderate scale with waterfront-oriented commercial buildings, dock facilities, and recreational amenities. The scenic character includes views across Humboldt Bay toward the entrance and surrounding coastal landscapes.

----- Questions 35; and 36 MUST BE ANSWERED! -----

35. How will the proposed use or activity promote the public health, safety, comfort, and convenience? **The sediment characterization sampling will promote public health, safety, comfort, and convenience by ensuring that the future eelgrass habitat restoration activities are conducted safely and in accordance with environmental protection standards.**

36. How is the requested grant, permit, franchise, lease, right, or privilege required by the public convenience and necessity?  
**To ensure environmental protection standards are in place prior to the Eelgrass Mitigation Program implementation.**

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37. Financial statement:

- A. Estimated project cost. **\$100,000**
- B. How will the project be financed? **State Grant(s)**

38. Describe fully directions necessary to arrive at project site.

**Three mitigation sites are only accessible by boat. See attached Project Description**

39. The Applicant agrees to as a condition of the permit being issued, to indemnify and hold harmless the Humboldt Bay, Harbor Recreation and Conservation District from any and all claims, demands, or liabilities for attorneys' fees obtained from or against demands for attorney's fees, costs of suit, and costs of administrative records made against District by any and all third parties as a result of third party environmental actions against District arising out of the subject matter of this application and permit, including, but not limited to, attorney's fees, costs of suit, and costs of administrative records obtained by or awarded to third parties pursuant to the California Code of Civil Procedure Section 1021.5 or any other applicable local, state, or federal laws, whether such attorneys' fees, costs of suit, and costs of administrative records are direct or indirect, or incurred in the compromise, attempted compromise, trial, appeal, or arbitration of claims for attorneys' fees and costs of administrative records in connection with the subject matter of this application and permit

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## NOTE

The District hereby advises the Applicant that, under California Public Resources Code (PRC) Section 21089, the District when a lead agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) of 1970, as amended, pertaining to an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) or a Negative Declaration (MND/ND) may charge and collect from the Applicant a reasonable fee in order to recover the estimated costs incurred by the District in preparing an EIR or MND/ND for the project and the procedures necessary for PRC compliance on the Applicants project.

In the event your project contains an analysis of issues pertaining to CEQA, for which District staff is not competent to independently review, or District requires the same in preparation of an EIR or MND/ND for the project, the District may retain a reviewing consultant to evaluate the content of the Administrative-Draft EIR and Final EIR or MND/ND with respect to these issues. The cost of such reviewing consultant services shall be borne by the Applicant.

CERTIFICATION: I hereby certify that the statements furnished above and in the attached exhibits present the information required for this initial evaluation to the best of my ability, and that the facts, statements, and information presented are true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief. And I agree to indemnify the District as described in part 39 of this application.

Dated: 2/5/26

Rob Holmlund   
\_\_\_\_\_

For \_\_\_\_\_

### **Adjoining Property Owners**

|                                                        |                                                                              |                                                                                 |
|--------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Friends of the Dunes<br>PO Box 186<br>Arcata, CA 95518 | Gabrych Family Limited<br>Trust<br>2006 Old Hwy. #395<br>Fallbrook, CA 92028 | Table Bluff Reservation –<br>Wiyot Tribe<br>100 Wiyot Drive<br>Loleta, CA 95551 |
|--------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

# Humboldt Bay Eelgrass Joint Mitigation Program

## Sediment Characterization Sampling and Analysis Plan Implementation

### Project Description

February 2, 2026

## Background

The Humboldt Bay Harbor, Recreation and Conservation District (Harbor District) and the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) have established a joint Eelgrass Mitigation Program (Mitigation Program) to mitigate for the collective impacts of several projects within Humboldt Bay. The proposed Mitigation Program involves dredging shallow bay areas to a depth that maximizes the growth and long-term resiliency of eelgrass at the mitigation sites.

The Mitigation Program includes three sites within Humboldt Bay: the Redwood Marine Multipurpose Terminal (RMMT) North Mitigation Area, the RMMT North Expansion Mitigation Area, and the King Salmon Mitigation Area. These three mitigation areas cover approximately 59 acres in Humboldt Bay, with existing bathymetry ranging from -2.5 to 5.5 ft mean lower low water (MLLW). The estimated total dredge volume for all three mitigation areas is 693,000 cubic yards (cy) including a 2 ft overdepth allowance.

**The currently proposed Project is sediment sampling that will characterize sediments that will ultimately be dredged as part of the Mitigation Program. No dredging or other activities will occur as part of this Project, only sediment sampling.** The purpose of the Project is to characterize sediment conditions in the three mitigation areas (Figure 1) to support future permitting and dredging design for the Eelgrass Mitigation Program. Sediment samples will be evaluated for suitability for unconfined open water placement at the Humboldt Open Ocean Disposal Site (HOODS).

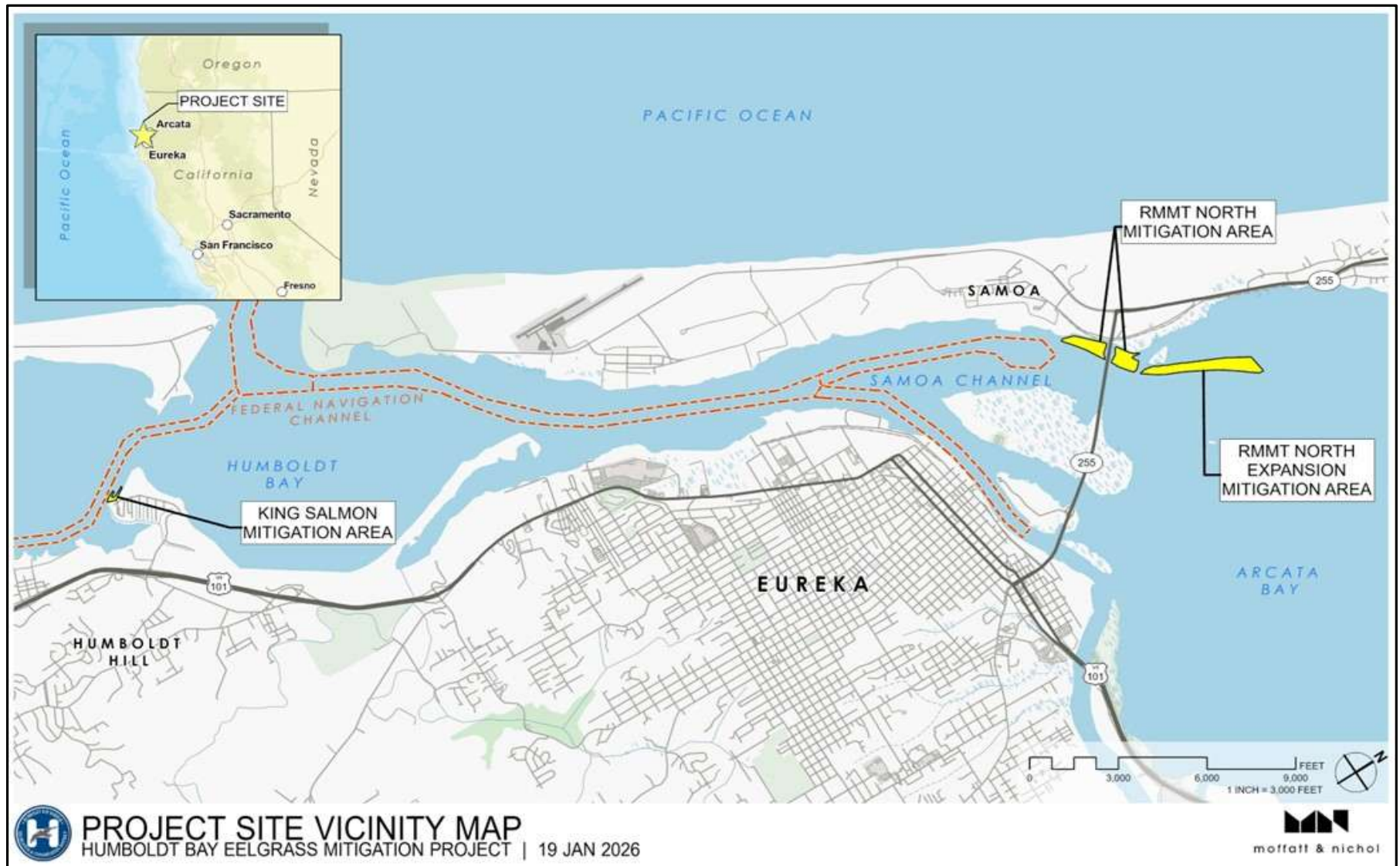


Figure 1: Eelgrass Mitigation Areas in Humboldt Bay

## Project Description

The Harbor District is requesting permits to complete a sediment characterization investigation to support design and permitting of the Mitigation Program. This investigation is referred to as the Project. It is anticipated that the Project will require the following permits and approvals:

- California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Categorical Exemption with the Harbor District acting as the CEQA Lead Agency,
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Section 10/404 permit (it is anticipated that the Project will qualify for a USACE Nationwide Permit #6 - Survey Activities),
- 401 Water Quality Certification (or other approval) from the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board, and
- Coastal Development Permit or De Minimis Waiver from the California Coastal Commission.
- Humboldt Bay Harbor District Administrative Permit

Sediment characterization sampling will be conducted at three mitigation areas within Humboldt Bay using vibracore methods deployed from a low draft research vessel provided by Leviathan Environmental Services LLC. A total of 16 sediment cores will be collected: 6 cores from the RMMT North Mitigation Area, 6 cores from the RMMT North Expansion Mitigation Area, and 4 cores from the King Salmon Mitigation Area (Table 1, Figures 2-4). Reference sediment will also be collected from the HOODS reference site, and water will be collected from each mitigation area to support elutriate testing.

Sampling operations will be scheduled during optimal tides to ensure adequate access to the shallow water areas. At each predetermined location, the vessel will be positioned using GPS coordinates, and a 4-inch diameter aluminum core tube will be lowered using an A-frame mounted winch. The vibracore sampler will be vibrated into the sediment to the target depth, which extends to the proposed dredge design depth (-2.0 ft MLLW) plus a 2 ft overdepth allowance and an additional 0.5 ft z-layer. Core lengths will range from approximately 4.7 to 9.0 feet depending on location. If refusal occurs (penetration less than 2 inches per minute), up to three attempts will be made at each station.

Upon retrieval, each core will be processed on the vessel. The core liner will be cut lengthwise to expose the sediment, and each core will be photographed and logged to document sediment properties including color, texture, grain size, and any visible stratification. Using decontaminated stainless-steel spoons, equal portions along the entire core length will be collected and homogenized in a bowl until a consistent color and texture is achieved. If distinct stratification layers potentially related to contaminant patterns are observed, those layers may be sub-sampled separately.

The homogenized material from each individual core will be placed in food-grade polyethylene sediment bags. Proportionate volumes from all cores within each mitigation area will be combined to create three composite samples (one per mitigation area). These composites will be thoroughly homogenized and divided into laboratory-supplied containers for the various analytical tests. Individual core samples and z-layer samples will be archived for potential future testing.

Throughout sampling operations, comprehensive field notes will be maintained documenting personnel, weather conditions, tide levels, water depth, GPS coordinates, penetration depths, core recovery, and any deviations from the sampling plan. All sampling equipment will be decontaminated between locations using an Alconox rinse, and core liners will be replaced at each station to prevent cross-contamination.

Table 1. Eelgrass Mitigation Sediment Core Information.

| Mitigation Area      | Station ID | Latitude  | Longitude   | Core Current Depth (ft MLLW) | Design Depth (ft MLLW) | Core Length to Dredge Design Depth (ft) | Core Length to Dredge Design Depth + 2 ft Overdepth + z-layer (ft) |
|----------------------|------------|-----------|-------------|------------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|
| RMMT North           | RN-01      | 40.821053 | -124.176509 | 2.5                          | -2.3                   | 4.8                                     | 7.3                                                                |
|                      | RN-02      | 40.821316 | -124.175336 | 2.8                          | -2.8                   | 5.7                                     | 8.2                                                                |
|                      | RN-03      | 40.822416 | -124.174245 | 2.8                          | -2.5                   | 5.3                                     | 7.8                                                                |
|                      | RN-04      | 40.824233 | -124.171796 | 2.5                          | -2.2                   | 4.7                                     | 7.2                                                                |
|                      | RN-05      | 40.824001 | -124.170815 | 3.0                          | -2.6                   | 5.6                                     | 8.1                                                                |
|                      | RN-06      | 40.824634 | -124.169234 | 3.1                          | -3.0                   | 6.1                                     | 8.6                                                                |
| RMMT North Expansion | NE-01      | 40.825294 | -124.168041 | 3.3                          | -2.5                   | 5.8                                     | 8.3                                                                |
|                      | NE-02      | 40.827170 | -124.166928 | 3.9                          | -2.4                   | 6.3                                     | 8.8                                                                |
|                      | NE-03      | 40.829545 | -124.165448 | 4.1                          | -2.4                   | 6.5                                     | 9.0                                                                |
|                      | NE-04      | 40.831433 | -124.164084 | 3.7                          | -2.5                   | 6.2                                     | 8.7                                                                |
|                      | NE-05      | 40.833411 | -124.162722 | 3.2                          | -2.4                   | 5.6                                     | 8.1                                                                |
|                      | NE-06      | 40.834074 | -124.161168 | 2.3                          | -2.5                   | 4.8                                     | 7.3                                                                |
| King Salmon          | KS-01      | 40.737873 | -124.220968 | 0.0                          | -2.2                   | 2.3                                     | 4.8                                                                |
|                      | KS-02      | 40.737252 | -124.220474 | 2.5                          | -2.7                   | 5.2                                     | 7.7                                                                |
|                      | KS-03      | 40.736803 | -124.220720 | 1.9                          | -2.7                   | 4.6                                     | 7.1                                                                |
|                      | KS-04      | 40.737145 | -124.221188 | -0.1                         | -2.7                   | 2.6                                     | 5.1                                                                |
| HOODS Reference Site |            | 40.874240 | -124.247970 | -                            | -                      | -                                       | -                                                                  |

\*Slight modifications to vibracore locations may be required to account for field conditions.

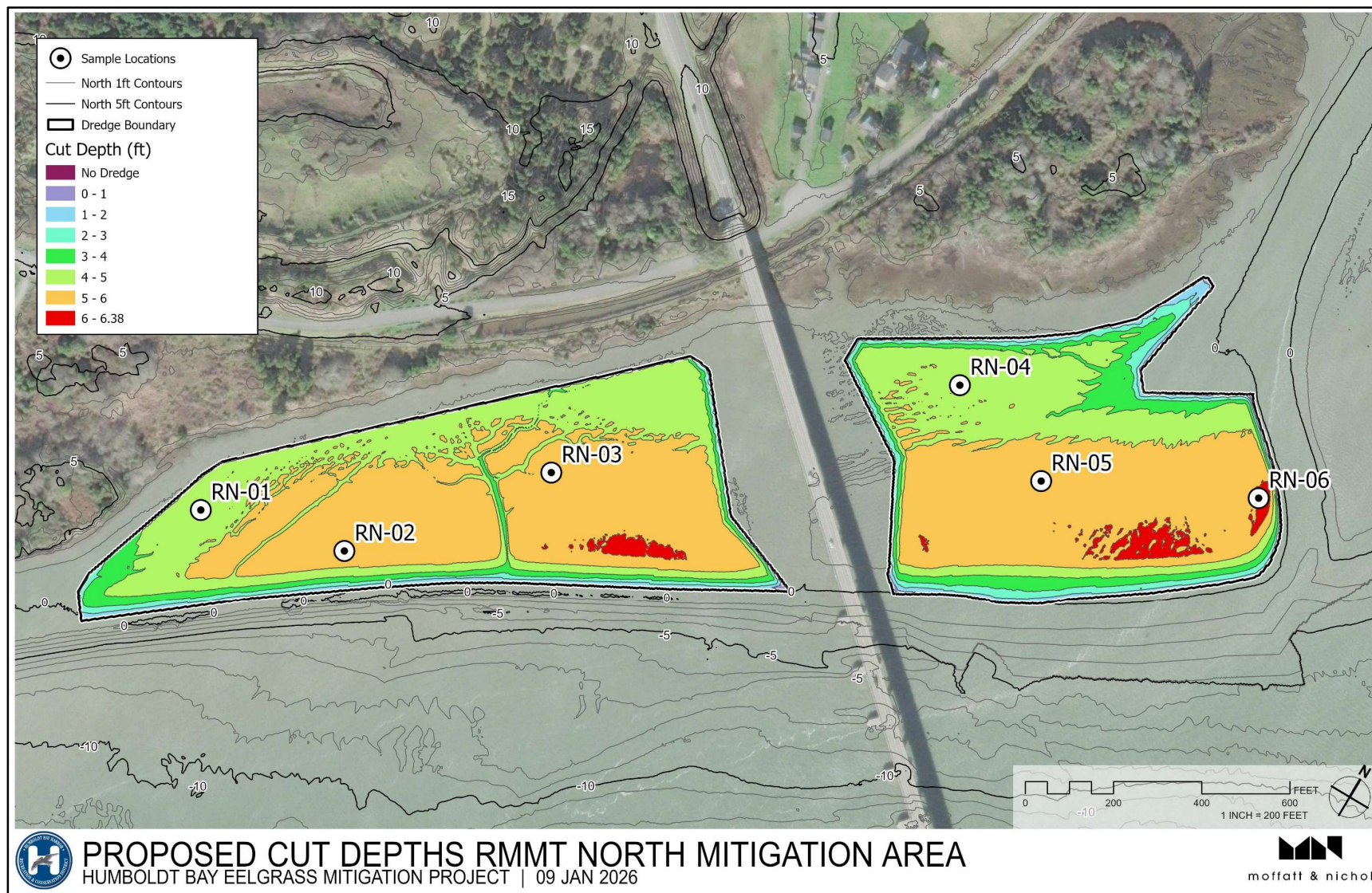


Figure 2: Sampling Locations and Dredge Cut Depths at RMMT North Mitigation Area

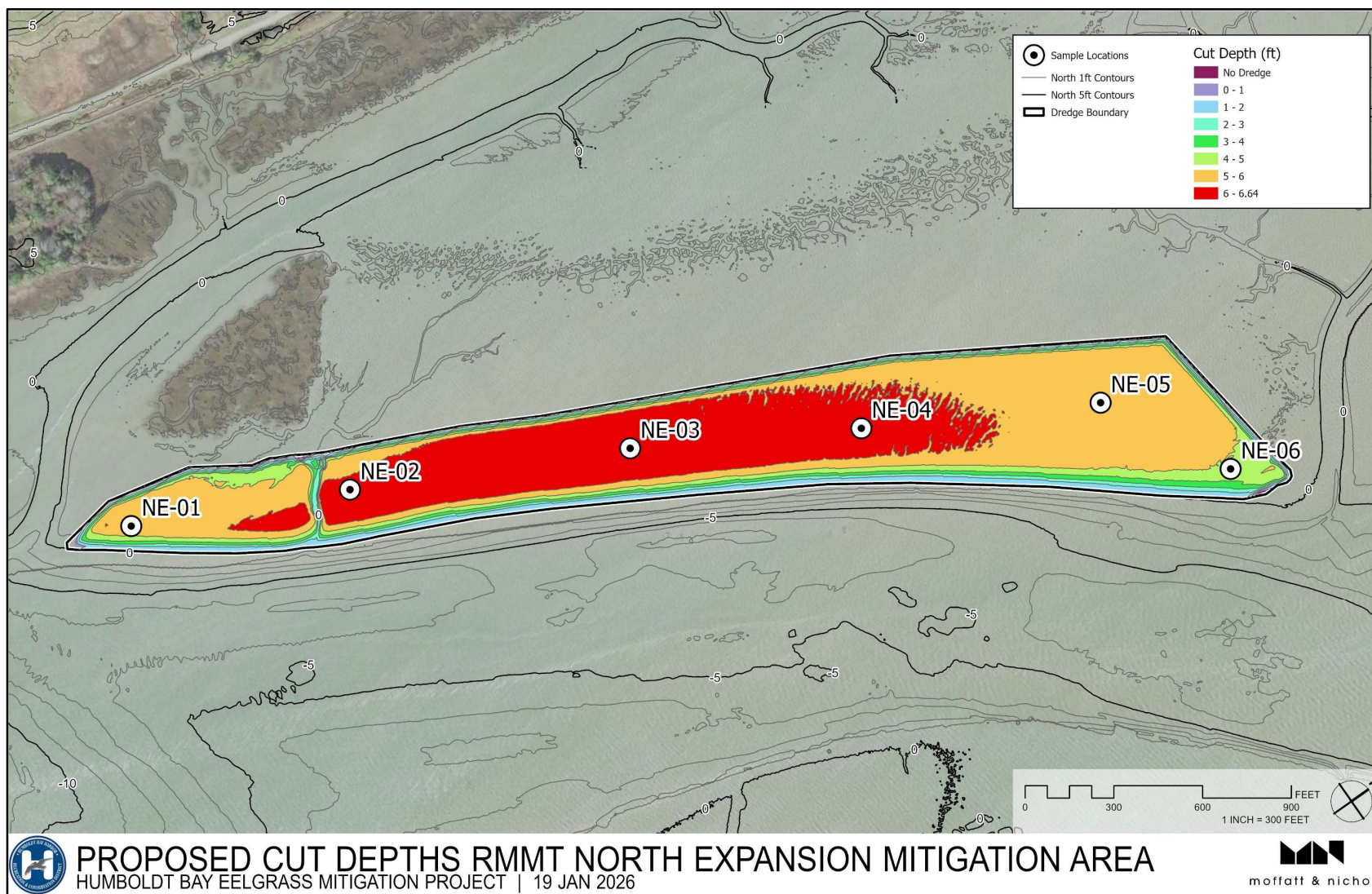


Figure 3: Sampling Locations and Dredge Cut Depths at RMMT North Expansion Mitigation Area

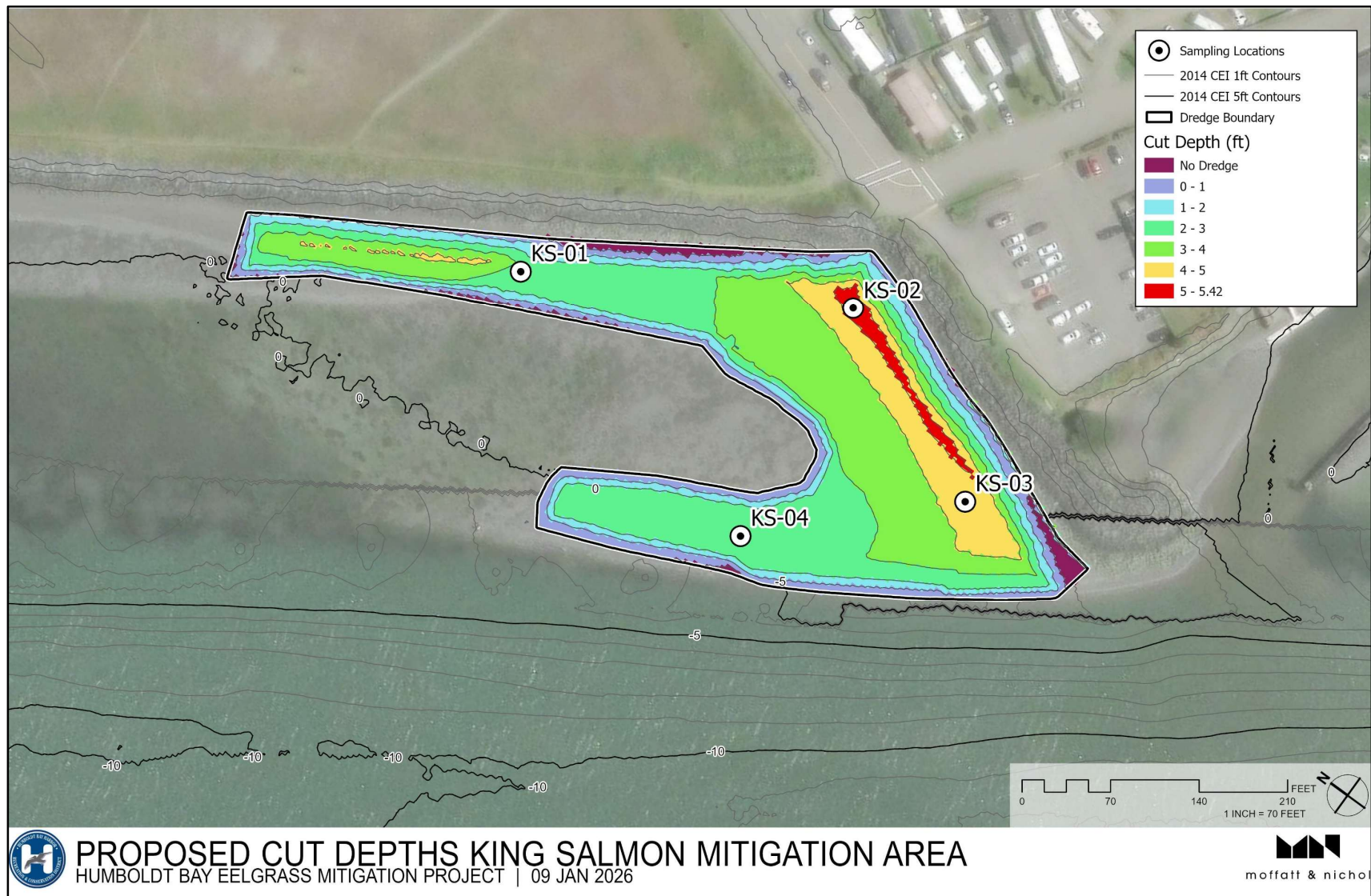


Figure 4: Sampling Locations and Dredge Cut Depths at King Salmon Mitigation Area.

## Best Management Practices

Eelgrass (*Zostera marina*) forms a sensitive habitat and requires protection from direct and indirect impacts or mitigation for impacts. There is patchy eelgrass growing at the mitigation sites. Based on ongoing observations by Humboldt Bay Harbor District staff, there are adequate areas without eelgrass to conduct vibracore borings and avoid eelgrass by a minimum of three meters. Implementation of BMP-1 will result in avoidance of eelgrass impacts.

**BMP-1.** Staff conducting vibracore sampling will be trained in the identification of eelgrass and all vibracore sampling and other contact (i.e., anchors) with the bay bottom will avoid eelgrass plants by a minimum of three meters.

BMP-2 will minimize any potential impacts to cultural resources if they are discovered.

**BMP-2.** If cultural resources are discovered, then the Harbor District's inadvertent discovery protocol (Attachment A) will be followed.

BMP-3 will minimize the potential for mobilization of contaminants during sampling.

**BMP-3.** Excess sediment from samples will be retained on vessels in drums and stored in an upland location until testing confirms the appropriate disposal pathway, which will be followed.