



CITY OF

NEWPORT BEACH

Harbor Commission Staff Report

May 12, 2021
Agenda Item No. 6.1

TO: HARBOR COMMISSION

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TITLE: Caulerpa in Newport Harbor

ABSTRACT:

The invasive algae, *Caulerpa prolifera*, was recently found growing in the Entrance Channel area of Newport Harbor. Staff will provide an update to the Harbor Commission on the current efforts to eradicate the algae.

RECOMMENDATION:

- 1) Determine this action is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Sections 15060(c)(2) and 15060(c)(3) of the CEQA Guidelines because this action will not result in a physical change to the environment, directly or indirectly; and
- 2) Receive and file.

FUNDING REQUIREMENTS:

There is no fiscal impact related to this item aside from staff time dedicated to the coordination efforts.

DISCUSSION:

Caulerpa prolifera does not pose any danger to humans. Rather, it is an invasive algae species native to Florida and other tropical / subtropical regions, and it can grow quickly and overtake the underwater marine community. Other species of *Caulerpa* are well documented as having aggressively displaced native habitats when introduced in regions such as California, Mediterranean waters and Australia. The seriousness and acknowledged threat from its close relative, *Caulerpa taxifolia*, prompted effective and highly successful eradication efforts in Huntington Beach and Agua Hedionda Lagoon in northern San Diego county within the past 20 years.

Staff will update the Harbor Commission on the coordination efforts and eradication plans currently underway with the local, state and federal agencies.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW:

Staff recommends the Harbor Commission find this action is not subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Sections 15060(c)(2) (the activity will not result in a direct or reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment) and 15060(c)(3) (the activity is not a project as defined in Section 15378) of the CEQA Guidelines, California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Chapter 3, because it has no potential for resulting in physical change to the environment, directly or indirectly.

NOTICING:

The agenda item has been noticed according to the Brown Act (72 hours in advance of the meeting at which the Harbor Commission considers the item).