

RESOLUTION NO. 2023-44

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF CORONADO, CALIFORNIA, DECLARING A LOCAL EMERGENCY DUE TO THE DISCOVERY OF *CAULERPA PROLIFERA* IN THE CORONADO CAYS AND DETERMINING THAT THE PROJECT IS CATEGORICALLY EXEMPT UNDER CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT GUIDELINES SECTION 15307

WHEREAS, the California Emergency Services Act, including but not limited to Government Code section 8630 and Coronado Municipal Code Chapter 2.50, empowers the City Council to proclaim the existence or threat of a local emergency; and

WHEREAS, on Thursday, September 21, 2023, an approximately 24-square-meter patch of *Caulerpa prolifera* was discovered growing underneath and adjacent to boat docks along the eastern edge of Antigua Village within Unified Port of San Diego jurisdictional waters in the Coronado Cays, and subsequent surveys have revealed additional infestations within City of Coronado jurisdictional waters; and

WHEREAS, while *Caulerpa prolifera* is not harmful to humans, it is highly invasive with the ability to rapidly expand and harm native habits and sensitive native species; and

WHEREAS, South San Diego Bay is home to 1,900 acres of eelgrass which could be overgrown and displaced by *Caulerpa* and impact the Bay's 70 fish species and 60-80 threatened green sea turtles which reside in or forage on eelgrass; and

WHEREAS, since the discovery, staff has been working diligently with the Southern California Caulerpa Action Team (SCCAT) consisting of state and federal agencies to develop and implement an immediate response plan to prevent further infestation of this algae; and

WHEREAS, on October 9, 2023, the infestation of *Caulerpa prolifera* found in the Coronado Cays within Port jurisdiction, was treated by the placement of a benthic barrier to prevent the spread of the algae; and

WHEREAS, additional *Caulerpa prolifera* surveys were conducted from October 6 through October 25, 2023, which identified additional *Caulerpa prolifera* infestations within City jurisdictional waters in the Coronado Cays; and

WHEREAS, significant funding will be required to determine the extent of the *Caulerpa prolifera* infestation in San Diego Bay and for the eradication of the *Caulerpa prolifera* found to date; and

WHEREAS, the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) Cleanup and Abatement Account has up to \$500,000 in funds to support the eradication efforts and the additional surveys that are required to determine the extent of the algae infestation; and

WHEREAS, City staff has been informed that a local emergency declaration is require in order to secure funding through the SWRCB Cleanup and Abatement Account; and

WHEREAS, based on the facts recited hereinabove and detailed in the corresponding agenda report, the existing and threatened conditions to cause extreme peril to the safety of property within the City's jurisdiction caused by *Caulerpa prolifera*; the existing and threatened conditions are, or are likely to be, beyond the control of the services, personnel, equipment, and facilities of the City, and may require the supplemental efforts and available resources of other local government entities, the state and/or federal government, and/or disaster relief organizations to help alleviate the damage, loss, hardship, or suffering caused thereby.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that a local emergency now exists based on the discovery of invasive *Caulerpa prolifera* algae in Coronado Cays waterways; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Council of the City of Coronado hereby determines that this activity is categorically exempt from environmental review pursuant to Section 15307 of the California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines, Class 7 because the project 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

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that during the existence of said local emergency the powers, functions, and duties of the emergency organization of this City shall be those prescribed by state law, ordinances, and resolutions of this City, and approved plans of the City of Coronado in order to mitigate the effects of this local emergency, including the receipt, processing, and coordination of all inquiries and requirements necessary to obtain available state and federal assistance.

PASSED, ADOPTED, AND APPROVED by the City Council of the City of Coronado, California, at a regular meeting thereof this twenty-first day of November 2023 by the following vote to wit:

AYES:

NAYS:

ABSTAIN:

ABSENT:

APPROVED:

RICHARD BAILEY, Mayor of the
City of Coronado, California

ATTEST:

KELSEA HOLIAN, City Clerk of the
City of Coronado, California