

**CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION**

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June 7, 2016

TO: California Coastal Commission and Interested Parties

FROM: John Ainsworth, Acting Executive Director

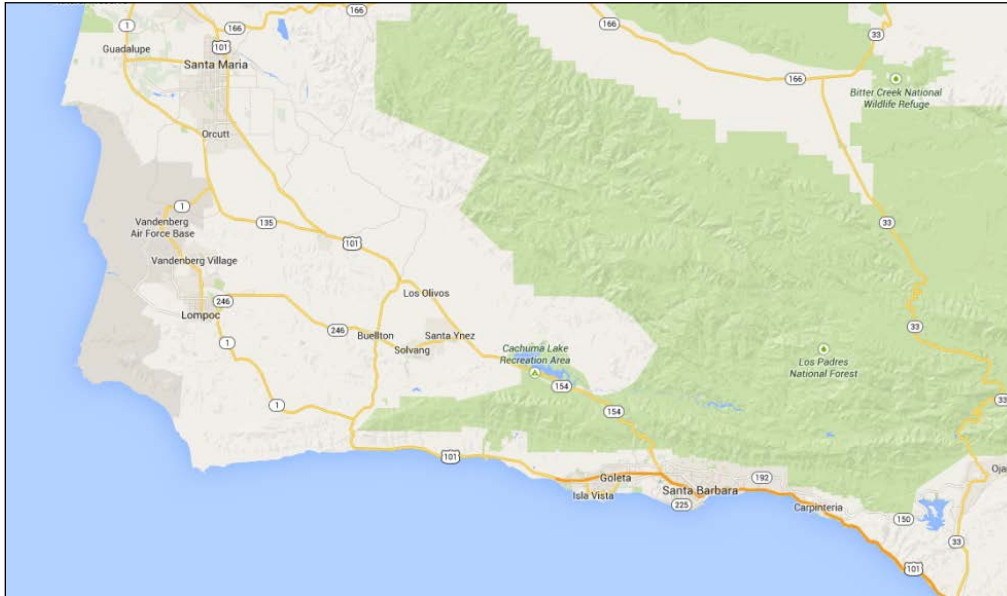
SUBJECT: Executive Director's Report, June, 2016

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Significant reporting items for the month. [Strategic Plan](#) (SP) reference provided where applicable:

**LCP Program Status – Santa Barbara County**

There are 5 LCP jurisdictions in Santa Barbara County: the Cities of Guadalupe, Goleta, Santa Barbara, and Carpinteria; and the County of Santa Barbara, including the Channel Islands. The County of Santa Barbara's LCP was certified in 1982, though it includes the Channel Islands Area of Deferred Certification (ADC). The County's LCP was partially updated in 2004. The County is currently working on other significant updates that include the Gaviota Coast Plan, the Eastern Goleta Valley Community Plan, and the Coastal Resiliency Project. The Commission and the Ocean Protection Council awarded the County a Round 2 LCP grant of \$183,000 in 2014 to work on an LCP update (Coastal Resiliency Project) to identify and plan for mitigation of coastal hazards in consideration of climate change and sea level rise. The City of Carpinteria was also certified in 1982, and the Land Use Plan (LUP) was updated in 2002 and 2005. The City of Carpinteria has recently applied for a grant to work toward an LCP update. The City of Santa Barbara LCP was certified in 1986, and partially updated in 1996. The Commission awarded the City a Round 1 LCP grant of \$123,000 in January 2014 to work on an LCP update, including an emphasis on addressing climate change and sea level rise. After significant coordination between City staff and Commission staff, the City provided a draft updated Land Use Plan in March 2016. Commission staff reviewed the draft LUP and provided detailed comments in April 2016. The grant work was completed on April 30, 2016. The City of Santa Barbara has recently applied for a new grant to conduct additional focused hazard and sea level rise studies. The City of Guadalupe LCP was certified in 1991 (not updated). The City of Goleta, which was incorporated in 2002, is working on LCP certification, supported by a Commission Round 1 LCP grant of \$125,000 awarded in January 2014. City staff and Commission staff coordinated extensively regarding the City's draft Land Use Plan, culminating with Commission staff providing detailed comments on the LUP's consistency with the Coastal Act. The grant work was completed on April 30, 2016. Finally, Santa Barbara County includes the University of California, Santa Barbara, which completed a comprehensive update of the UCSB Long Range Development Plan (LRDP) that was certified by the Commission in 2015.



## Santa Barbara County

### Sea Level Guidance Implementation Outreach (SP 3.1)

Commission staff have been providing regular outreach and training sessions to support implementation of the newly adopted Sea Level Rise (SLR) Guidance and in support of LCP Grant work. In May staff participated in one event:

- On May 17<sup>th</sup> Coastal Commission staff attended the *Fourth Ocean Climate Summit: Resilience through Climate-Smart Conservation* in San Francisco. The event was hosted by the Greater Farallones National Marine Sanctuary and included presentations on the latest scientific information on climate change impacts for North Central California coast and ocean, and panel discussion of tools and resources and examples of climate adaptation planning efforts underway in the region. Commission staff provided two posters that were showcased at the event's reception to highlight the Sea Level Rise Guidance and other project information related to planning for sea level rise and climate change through LCPs.

### Meetings and Events

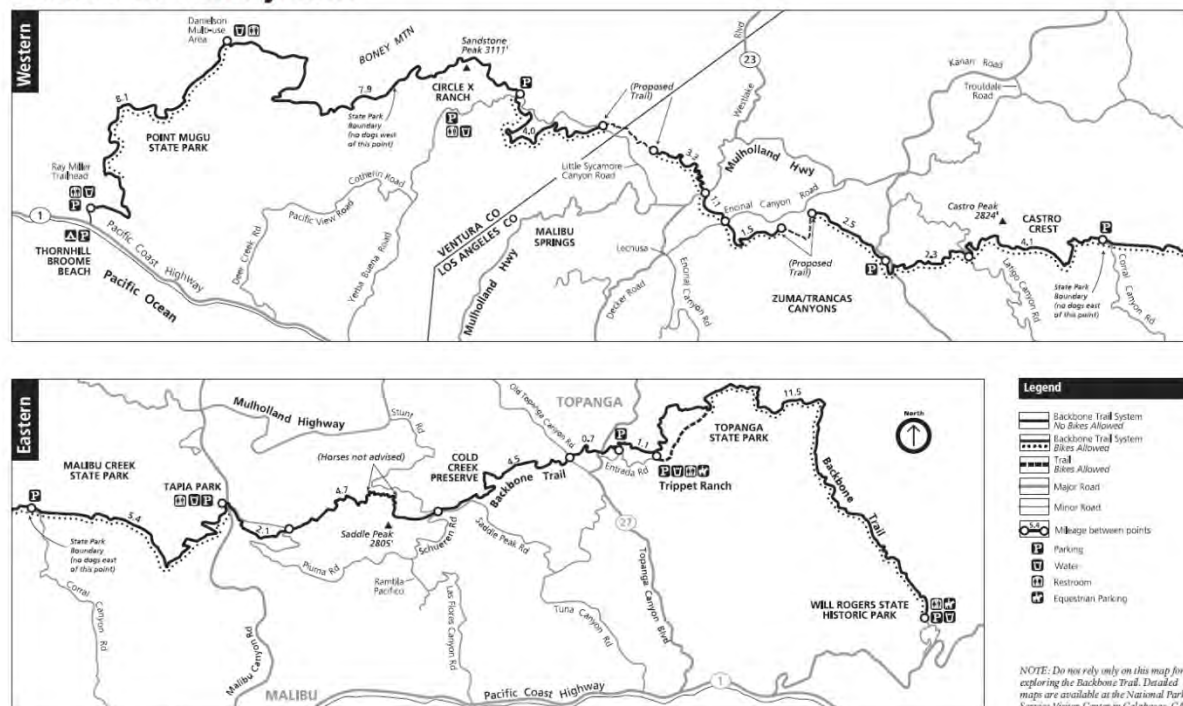
On May 18<sup>th</sup>, at invitation of the California State Association of Counties (CSAC) Coastal Cities group leadership (Supervisors Bruce Gibson and Virginia Bass) Commission staff spoke at the meeting of the Coastal Counties Regional Association at the 2016 CSAC Legislative Conference. Liz Fuchs, Statewide Program Manager, followed up on topics that were discussed at the 2015 LCP Workshop, including the CCC staff priority to work with grantees of the CCC LCP Grant Program to facilitate sharing of information and lessons learned related to LCP development. She also spoke about staff's continued commitment to early coordination with local governments and addressed questions related to partial LCP updates. Carey Batha, LCP Grants and Climate Change analyst, gave an update on the LCP Grant Program as well as the ongoing implementation of the Sea Level Rise Policy Guidance document.

Some of the discussion that followed addressed the continued need to provide financial support for local planning, the importance of considering a range of sea level rise adaptation strategies including phasing that accounts for the useful life of structures, and the importance of coordination with FEMA efforts. (*SP 4.4 – Improve Communications with Local Government*)

## Completion of the Backbone Trail in the Santa Monica Mountains

On June 4<sup>th</sup>, Linda Locklin, Public Access Program Manager, and Jack Ainsworth, Acting Executive Director, attended an event sponsored by the National Park Service, California State Parks and the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority celebrating the completion of the 67 mile Backbone trail. The Backbone Trail which runs the length of the Santa Monica Mountains from Point Mugu State Park to Will Rodgers State Historic Park has been in development for over 40 years and represents a major recreational milestone in the Santa Monica Mountains. Through the efforts of an army of volunteer trail builders, private foundations and the cooperative efforts of Federal, State and Local agencies this trail was made possible. The celebration of the opening of Backbone trail also coincides with the National Park Service Centennial celebrations taking place across the country.

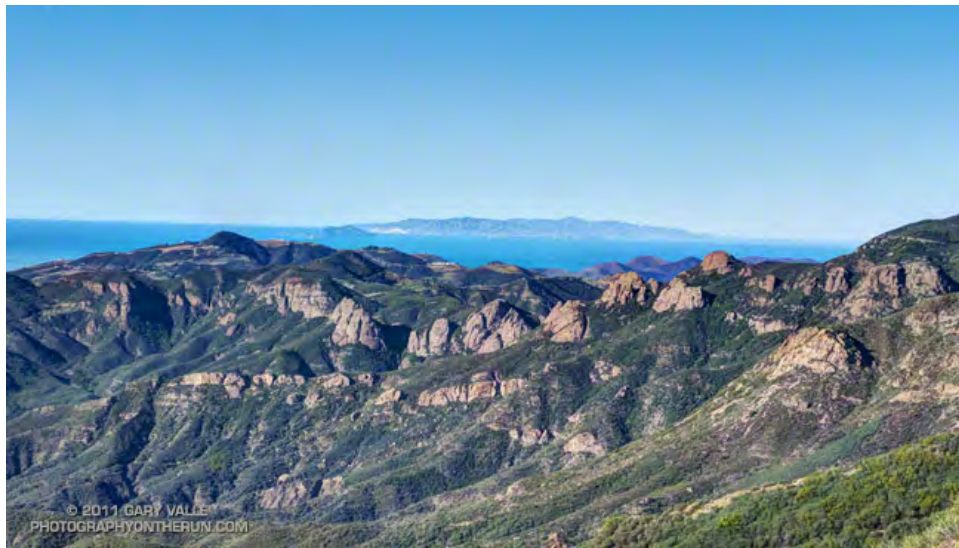
### Backbone Trail System



The Coastal Commission has played a major role, for decades, in protecting the Santa Monica Mountains and promoting preservation of open space and recreation opportunities. Carrying out the mandate of the Coastal Act in thousands of permit, enforcement, and other regulatory actions, the Commission has limited development footprints, sited development in the least harmful way, required that development not block scenic views or be obtrusively visible from public roads and trails, and kept development out of sensitive habitat. Permit and enforcement actions have required a number of trail easements that have provided critical trail connections to

the Backbone Trail and two easements on the Backbone trail itself. In addition, through enforcement and permit actions the Commission has preserved and protected approximately 3,000 acres of critical habitat and scenic open space through transfer of development credits, open space easements/deed restrictions and restoration of damaged lands.

Today, there is a system of trails and parklands, managed by multiple agencies, offering Californians and visitors high quality opportunities to recreate in the unique Mediterranean landscape of the Santa Monica Mountains. The Backbone Trail and the area wide system of connector trails offers access and the ability to “get away from it all” in one of the nation’s most populated regions.



**View from the Backbone Trail**

## **Status Report on Discussions with California State Parks and Sonoma County on the Sonoma Coast Fee Parking Program Permit Application**

At the April 2016 Coastal Commission meeting in Santa Rosa the Commission continued the hearing on the de novo permit application for the Department of State Parks to institute a parking fee program within four State Park units across 35 miles of Sonoma County coast. At that time, individual Commissioners expressed a desire to understand if there was a willingness for State Parks to be able to work together with Sonoma County on a program that all could support, and suggested a meeting amongst the parties to explore if a framework for working together towards such a goal could be developed between State Parks, Sonoma County and Commission staff, with an eye towards trying to resolve the outstanding issues raised by the proposed parking fee program. Commission Chairman, Steve Kinsey, and Vice Chair, Dayna Bochco volunteered to facilitate a meeting between the three parties with the goal of determining if a framework for a path forward on the fee parking program was possible.

On May 4th, Chairman Kinsey and Acting Executive Director Jack Ainsworth met with Sonoma County Supervisor Efren Carrillo, County Regional Parks Director Caryl Hart, and County Permit and Resource Management Director Tennis Wick to discuss the outstanding issues related to the

proposed fee program and to explore if Sonoma County was interested in working on a framework to resolve these issues with State Parks and Commission staff. Sonoma County officials indicated that they would be willing to continue discussions with State Parks and Commission staff towards the goal of a mutually acceptable parking program.

On May 25th, Chairman Kinsey and Jack Ainsworth met with State Parks Director, Lisa Mangat and State Parks Deputy Director Karl Knapp, again to discuss the outstanding issues raised by the proposed fee program and to explore if State Parks was willing to continue discussions with Sonoma County and Commission staff on a revised parking program that could address issues raised in the hearing and staff report. State Parks Director Mangat indicated her willingness to continue the dialog with all parties with the goal of reaching a mutually acceptable path forward on Parks proposed parking program.

On June 1st, a meeting was held that included all of the above mentioned parties as well as Vice Chair Dayna Bochco and Commission Deputy Director Dan Carl. At that meeting, it was agreed that Commission staff, Sonoma County staff and State Parks staff would continue to meet over the next two months to explore potential alternatives and solutions with the goal of developing potential parameters for a revised parking program that would be acceptable to all parties. In general the group agreed to frame the discussion around the following:

- Explore potential operational partnerships between the County and State Parks that could allow the County to operate Bodega Head and Willow Creek State Park units. Explore other potential operational partnerships with non-profit land management entities such as the Wildlands Conservancy.
- State Parks staff is currently working on, and agreed to continue to develop, baseline information to assess potential adverse impacts that may result from a proposed parking program project. In addition, State Parks agreed to work with all parties on the development of a monitoring and adaptive management program to address and mitigate for any unforeseen impacts that may result from the project.
- Explore measures/programs to encourage and provide park access for low income users.
- Explore further refinements of the scope of the project and any additional physical park improvements that may be required as part of the project.
- Confirm appropriate consultation has, or is occurring, with Native American tribes and explore measures to assure the tribes have unfettered access to their sacred lands.
- Assist in consultation and coordination with Caltrans, CHP and County Sheriff's Department.
- Develop a stakeholder/public participation strategy to encourage public input on any revised parking program.
- Explore potential processing options for an alternative parking program for the Sonoma Coast moving forward (e.g., CDP review by the Commission, LCP amendment and CDP review by Sonoma County, etc.).

At the September 2016 meeting Commission staff will provide a status update of the progress of the discussions among the parties.