

**CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION**

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DATE: August 1, 2024

TO: California Coastal Commission and Interested Persons

FROM: Dr. Kate Huckelbridge, Executive Director  
Sarah Christie, Legislative Director  
Linda Locklin, Public Access Program Manager

SUBJECT: **HOLLISTER RANCH COASTAL ACCESS PROGRAM –**  
Update for August 7, 2024, Coastal Commission Meeting

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This briefing identifies interagency planning steps taken by the Hollister Ranch Coastal Access Program (HRCAP) State Agency Team since the last update was submitted to the Coastal Commission on March 8, 2023. The State Agency Team is comprised of staff from Coastal Commission, Coastal Conservancy, State Lands Commission, and California State Parks. This planning work is required by AB 1680 (Limón, 2019) (PRC §30610.81) which requires that an updated contemporary Public Access Program that provides for land based access to the Hollister Ranch beaches be prepared.

**Funding for consultant contracts:**

Acting through the Coastal Conservancy, the State Agency Team (SAT) hired two consultants earlier this year to undertake a Tribal and Cultural Resource Assessment and to prepare a Programmatic Environmental Impact Report (PEIR). Funding for the planning work is being provided by the Coastal Conservancy, which was initially authorized by their Board on May 5, 2022. That authorization provides \$300,000 for the Tribal and Cultural Resource Assessment and \$ 1.5 million for the PEIR preparation. Since the selection of the PEIR consultant, the PEIR funding has been augmented to reflect the final scope of work and the current amount is \$2.65 million. This funding is part of the \$10 million General Fund appropriation to the Coastal Conservancy authorized for public access at Hollister Ranch.

**Cultural and Tribal Resource Assessment:**

The consulting firm Applied Earthworks conducted a Cultural and Tribal Resource Assessment in May. The consultant's team conducted a pedestrian survey (which means that no subsurface activity was involved), and they were accompanied by members of the four Native American tribes who responded to a 2022 invitation through the HRCAP planning process and now comprise the

Chumash Working Group. The Chumash Working Group includes: Coastal Band of the Chumash Nation, Barbareño Band of Chumash Indians, Barbareño/Ventureño Band of Mission Indians, and the Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians, The results of the study were submitted to the Coastal Conservancy in June and have been reviewed by the SAT members. The results of the study are confidential and cannot be shared publicly at this time. Through the upcoming PEIR process, the extent of any known sensitive resources will be considered to ensure protection of those resources.

**Programmatic Environmental Impact Report (PEIR):**

The State Lands Commission is overseeing the preparation of the PEIR on behalf of the Coastal Commission, the CEQA lead agency, with funding provided by Coastal Conservancy through an Interagency Agreement. State Lands Commission hired the consulting firm Ascent, and the firm has initiated the first steps of the planning process. The contract is for a three-year period, which concludes in early 2027. As the consultant works through the environmental analysis, we will update both the Commission and the general public.

**Native American Tribal Consultation:**

As lead for the CEQA process, the Coastal Commission staff is preparing to initiate tribal consultation as required by AB 52 (Gatto, 2014) (PRC §21080.3.1). As part of the HRCAP planning process, the SAT had previously contacted all Chumash tribes listed with the Native American Heritage Commission and four of those tribes have been participating in the Chumash Working Group. Through the consultation process we will learn whether those four tribes wish to continue consultation and if there are additional tribes that wish to participate.

**Next Steps:**

The consultant team Ascent will be holding public meetings later this year. At those meetings, they will inform the public about the PEIR work program steps and will also seek public input.

Updates to the HRCAP planning process will continue to be posted at:

<https://www.coastal.ca.gov/hollister-ranch/>

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Thank You,  
HRCAP Planning Team:  
California Coastal Commission  
California Coastal Conservancy  
California State Lands Commission  
California State Parks