

**CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION**

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# W4.5

December 21, 2012

**TO:** California Coastal Commissioners and Interested Public

**FROM:** Charles Lester, Executive Director  
Susan Hansch, Chief Deputy Director  
Michelle Jespersion, Federal Programs Manager

**SUBJECT: Draft Strategic Plan. Public Hearing and Discussion Item. No Commission action at January 2013, meeting. Commission action scheduled for April or May 2013.**

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Attached please find the **public review draft** of the **California Coastal Commission's Strategic Plan 2013-2018: Protecting California's Coast for Present and Future Generations**.

## **Background**

In 2008, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) conducted a review of the Commission's federally approved program. Section 312 of the Coastal Zone Management Act requires NOAA to continually review and evaluate all federally approved coastal management programs. As a result of their review, NOAA issued a necessary action which requires the Commission to update its 1997 Strategic Plan "...to prioritize the functions, programs, and processes that it administers in light of insufficient staff and financial resources to fully address its workload and to provide a framework that ensures transparency and logic in decision-making in the face of challenging budgets" (Final Evaluation Findings of the California Coastal Management Program March 2005 through December 2008, issued in March 2010). This Draft Strategic Plan is the result of Commission staff efforts to respond to the NOAA requirement and to develop a strategic plan that will provide a blueprint for Commission's priorities to implement the Coastal Act.

## **Development and Review of Draft Strategic Plan**

The Draft Strategic Plan contains seven major and multiple associated goals, objectives and specific actions. Considerable time and effort went into developing the proposed Draft Strategic Plan, including conducting an all staff survey, holding two Management Team Workshops (one in San Francisco and one in Long Beach), and many meetings and deliberations by the Commission's Executive Management Team. All staff members were provided an opportunity to review and comment on the Draft Strategic Plan before its issuance as a public review draft.

Commission staff is now seeking input from the Commission and the public on the proposed goals, objectives and actions in this Draft Strategic Plan. The Draft Strategic Plan was released for public review on the Commission's web page on December 21, 2012. The public is invited to provide comments on the Draft Strategic Plan in writing or verbally at the Commission's January 2013

meeting. The public comment period for written comments will remain open for 45 days through February 4, 2013.

**Written comments need to be received by February 4, 2013 and should be mailed to**

**California Coastal Commission  
Executive Division  
45 Fremont Street, Suite 2000,  
San Francisco, CA 94105**

**or sent by e-mail to [StrategicPlanComments@coastal.ca.gov](mailto:StrategicPlanComments@coastal.ca.gov).**

After the January 2013 Commission public hearing and close of the written public comment period on February 4, 2013, Commission staff will incorporate feedback from the Commission members and the public into a proposed Final Strategic Plan. The Final Strategic Plan will be brought back to the Commission for a second public hearing and final review and Commission action. This will likely occur at the April or May 2013 Commission meeting. The Final Strategic Plan is due to NOAA by June 30, 2013.

**CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION  
STRATEGIC PLAN 2013-2018**

**PROTECTING CALIFORNIA'S COAST  
FOR PRESENT AND FUTURE GENERATIONS**

**PUBLIC REVIEW DRAFT  
12/21/2012**

**WRITTEN COMMENTS MUST BE RECEIVED BY FEBRUARY 4, 2013 AND CAN BE MAILED TO:**

**CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION  
EXECUTIVE DIVISION  
45 FREMONT STREET, SUITE 2000  
SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94105**

**SEND VIA EMAIL TO:**

**[STRATEGICPLANCOMMENTS@COASTAL.CA.GOV](mailto:STRATEGICPLANCOMMENTS@COASTAL.CA.GOV)**

**COMMENTS CAN ALSO BE PROVIDED ORALLY AT THE FIRST PUBLIC HEARING: THE FIRST PUBLIC HEARING WILL TAKE PLACE ON JANUARY 9, 2013 AT THE COASTAL COMMISSION'S JANUARY MEETING IN PISMO BEACH, CA. FINAL REVIEW AND COMMISSION ACTION WILL TAKE PLACE AT A SUBSEQUENT HEARING IN APRIL OR MAY 2013.**

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## Table of Contents

	Page
<b>I. Introduction</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>II. Agency Background and Legal Mandates</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>III. Vision, Mission and Core Values</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>IV. Strategic Goals, Objectives and Actions</b>	
<b>a. Policy Goals, Objectives and Actions</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>b. Organizational Goals, Objectives and Actions</b>	<b>25</b>

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## Commonly Used Acronyms and Agency Names

### Terms:

LCP – Local Coastal Program  
CDP – Coastal Development Permit  
ESHA – environmentally sensitive habitat areas  
CCT – California Coastal Trail  
FLAN – Final Local Action Notice  
ADCs – Areas of Deferred Certification  
SLR – Sea Level Rise

### Agency Names:

CCC/Commission – California Coastal Commission  
BCDC – San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission  
Conservancy – State Coastal Conservancy  
Caltrans – California Department of Transportation  
CDFG – California Department of Fish and Game  
NOAA – National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration  
NMFS – National Marine Fisheries Service  
OPC – Ocean Protection Council  
OSPR – Office of Oil Spill Prevention and Response  
State Parks – California Department of Parks and Recreation  
SWRCB – State Water Resources Control Board  
USFWS – United States Fish and Wildlife Service  
USGS – United States Geological Survey

## I. INTRODUCTION

Since its creation forty years ago, the California Coastal Commission has become nationally and internationally recognized as a leader in coastal resource protection and management. The passage of Proposition 20 in 1972 and the California Coastal Act in 1976 enabled the Commission to protect thousands of public coastal accessways and recreational visitor-serving resources from Oregon to Mexico. Scenic rural and agricultural areas like the Gaviota coast, Big Sur, the Santa Cruz-San Mateo County coastline, and Mendocino County are largely unchanged even while new development has continued apace in already urbanized coastal areas. Critical open space and resource areas that provide public access near dense urban areas have been protected, such as in the Santa Monica Mountains, along Bolsa Chica, the Newport Coast, and the lagoons in San Diego County. Much of the rich ecological diversity of California's coastal habitats, wetlands and sensitive coastal and marine waters has been protected and restored. Public support for the program is strong, and 85% of the geographic area of the coast is governed by local government coastal programs in partnership with the Commission. Since 1976 the Commission and local governments have approved more than 165,000 permits for new development in the coastal zone and experts estimate that the coast and ocean economy contributes more than 40 billion dollars to the state each year.

The Commission also faces many challenges that must be addressed directly and strategically if its success in protecting California's coastal resources is to endure. These challenges include continued population growth and development pressure, growing demand for public access and recreation, and global climate change. In addition, many organizational challenges must be addressed to effectively implement the Coastal Act. These include chronically flat or declining budgets, inadequate staffing levels, increasing retirements of senior staff resulting in loss of institutional knowledge, insufficient resources for new information technologies, and a limited capacity to work with local governments to maintain and update increasingly out-of-date Local Coastal Programs (LCPs).

While the challenges are many, the commitment of the Commission to its mission – to protect California's coast – is strong. The Commission's institutional framework operates efficiently and its actions are guided by strong core values such as commitment to public service, stewardship, science, and the rule of law. The agency's mission and core values inspire this Draft Strategic Plan. It identifies seven priority goals with potential associated objectives and actions for guiding strategic implementation of the California Coastal Act over the next five years (2013-2018). Three goals focus on core Commission policy concerns:

- ❖ *Maximize Public Access and Recreation*
- ❖ *Protect Coastal Resources*
- ❖ *Address Climate Change through Local Coastal Program Planning, Coastal Permitting, Inter-Agency Collaboration, and Public Education*

Four other goals focus on critical organizational needs to improve how the agency works and to build the capacity of the agency for the future. These are:

- ❖ *Strengthen the LCP Program*
- ❖ *Improve the Regulatory Process, Compliance, and Enforcement*
- ❖ *Enhance Information Management and E-Government*
- ❖ *Build Agency Capacity*

Together these seven goals frame out 35 objectives with 155 potential specific actions. All of the objectives and actions identified are considered important, but not all of them can be priorities; thus the Commission will not be able to successfully implement all of them without additional agency funding and staffing. Based on Commission and public comment, and further evaluation, the Final Strategic Plan will identify the highest priority objectives and actions, and those that must await additional resources or be implemented at a later date.

The Commission will continue to allocate most of its resources to its core statutory work, including reviewing LCPs and amendments, monitoring local coastal program implementation, making determinations on federal consistency matters, and regulating coastal development. Nonetheless, the Commission is committed to focusing on policy priorities as identified in this plan, and on strategically allocating available staff resources and funding to the identified actions to improve the overall functioning of the organization, which will ultimately benefit the core mission.

Finally, the identification of strategic resource protection objectives and actions does not mean that any policies or programs not directly discussed in this draft Strategic Plan are unimportant, only that they are not the primary focus of directed strategic action over the next five years. The Commission's vision for the coast embodies all of the goals and policies of the Coastal Act, and it will continue to do its utmost to apply the entirety of the Act as necessary in any regulatory or planning matter before it. The Commission is deeply committed to sustaining and building on its forty-year history of successful coastal protection and management in California.



## II. AGENCY BACKGROUND AND LEGAL MANDATES

The California Coastal Commission is charged with implementing the California Coastal Act of 1976 (<http://www.coastal.ca.gov/coactact.pdf>). The Coastal Act was enacted by the Legislature to carry out the original mandate of Proposition 20, which was passed by the citizens of California in 1972. Proposition 20 created the Coastal Zone Conservation Commission, which both performed an interim regulatory function and created the Coastal Plan for consideration by the Legislature in the drafting of the Coastal Act. See <http://www.coastal.ca.gov/legal/proposition-20.pdf> for more information on Proposition 20.

The Coastal Act establishes strong resource protection and coastal development policies for California's coastal zone, which extends 3 miles seaward to the outer extent of state jurisdiction, and which on land can be as narrow as several blocks in certain urban areas and up to 5 miles inland in rural areas (see <http://www.coastal.ca.gov/lcps.html> to view regional maps of the coastal zone). The Act's core development policies are found in Chapter 3 and include policies to protect and provide maximum public access to and along the shoreline, protect sensitive coastal resources, and provide for priority coastal dependent development and visitor-serving land uses. The Act establishes an independent Commission within the Natural Resources Agency, with twelve Commissioners appointed (four each) by the Governor, the Senate Committee on Rules, and the Speaker of the Assembly. The Commission is supported by and receives recommendations from an independent professional civil service staff. The Executive Director is directly appointed by the Commission.

The Coastal Act is implemented through a permit requirement for new development, and required local planning and regulation, through which most development review authority is delegated to local government. All local governments in the coastal zone must prepare Local Coastal Programs (LCPs), which are Commission certified land use plans, zoning ordinances, and other implementing actions designed to implement the statewide policies of the Coastal Act. Once an LCP is certified, most permitting review and enforcement authority of the Commission is delegated to local governments, subject to appellate review by the Commission in certain circumstances. The Commission retains permitting and enforcement jurisdiction below the mean high tide line, on public trust lands, and in areas not governed by a certified LCP. Development in the coastal zone must be evaluated through a permit review process for consistency with the LCPs where they are in place, or the Coastal Act where the Commission may retain permitting jurisdiction.

Since 1976 the Commission has reviewed more than 125,000 coastal development permits (CDPs), including more than 1,300 appeals of local government permit approvals. As of 2012, 80% of local governments in the coastal zone have certified LCPs (includes jurisdictions with only a certified Land Use Plan), covering more than 85% of the geographic area of the coastal zone. Since 1981, more than 40,600 coastal development permits have been issued by local governments pursuant to their certified LCPs. The Commission also works with local governments to keep LCPs up to date and in recent years on average processes 60 LCP amendments a year.

The Coastal Commission's planning and regulatory program is also part of the federally-approved California Coastal Management Program (CCMP) under the national Coastal Zone Management Act (CZMA). The CCMP also includes the planning and regulatory program of the San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC), and the State Coastal Conservancy's (Conservancy) program. As a certified federal program, the Commission receives significant funding from the federal government to support implementation of the Coastal Act. Under the CZMA, the Commission also has "federal consistency review authority," which enables the Commission to review federal and federally-approved activities that may affect coastal resources for consistency with the California Coastal Act. The Commission uses the federal consistency authority to review many federal activities, including federally-licensed offshore oil development plans and projects, federal dredging activities, and various military activities that have potential impacts on coastal resources.

### III. VISION, MISSION & CORE VALUES

#### THE COASTAL ACT'S VISION FOR THE COAST

The Coastal Act's vision for the coast inspires us in the pursuit of the agency's mission.

***Our Vision:** The California coast is available for all to enjoy through thousands of public accessways to and along the shoreline, a completed California Coastal Trail, a well-supported network of parks and open spaces, and a wide range of visitor-serving facilities, including lower-cost campgrounds, hostels, and hotels. The rich ecological diversity of the coast and ocean, including beaches, rocky shorelines, wetlands, riparian areas, and sensitive terrestrial habitats, is protected and thriving. Scenic rural landscapes are maintained and coastal agriculture is flourishing. The California Coastal Commission works collaboratively with local governments, other agencies, and an engaged and knowledgeable public committed to coastal stewardship to support and manage environmentally-sustainable development, including assuring priority for coastal-dependent and related uses of land and water, facilitating smart growth in existing urban areas, and promoting well-adapted, resilient communities in the face of global climate change. The coast endures as a vital part of California's social and cultural fabric and the coastal and ocean economy is strong.*

#### OUR MISSION: PROTECTING & ENHANCING CALIFORNIA'S COAST

The Commission's mission is to protect and enhance California's coast for present and future generations. The coast is a public resource of enduring significance. It embodies natural and cultural resources, scenic beauty, public access, recreation and enjoyment, coastal dependent and related land uses, and vibrant and sustainable coastal communities and economies – all of which must be protected and enhanced.

#### **OUR MISSION: PROTECTING & ENHANCING CALIFORNIA'S COAST**

*The Commission is committed to protecting and enhancing California's coast and ocean for present and future generations. It does so through careful planning and regulation of environmentally-sustainable development, strong public participation, education, and effective intergovernmental coordination.*

## OUR CORE VALUES: GUIDING IMPLEMENTATION

The core values of the Commission guide its implementation of the mission and shape the norms of behavior for the Commission, its staff, and an engaged public.

**Public Service:** The Commission is a public agency comprising appointed public officials, civil service staff and volunteers. The agency is charged with implementing the California Coastal Act to benefit all citizens of California. The Commission and staff strive to serve the public, respond to public inquiries, and provide effective customer service.

**Stewardship:** In partnership with local government and other state agencies, the Commission is charged with protecting California's coastal resources and providing for priority coastal land uses. Through LCP planning, implementation oversight, and coastal development permitting, the Commission assures that the Coastal Act resource protection policies are effectively implemented statewide. The Commission fully embraces the Legislative findings of the Coastal Act, and applies the precautionary principle in the face of scientific uncertainty to avoid irreparable harm to the environment. Through education and outreach, the Commission fosters public stewardship of coastal resources.

**Rule of Law:** The Commission follows and applies the law fairly and consistently in each matter before it. The Coastal Act, certified LCPs, and Commission regulations govern the Commission's decisions. The Commission abides by all applicable state and federal laws, administrative procedures, and Constitutional requirements.

**Science/Objectivity:** The Commission applies the scientific method and reasoned analysis in its daily work. The Commission identifies facts, uses the best available science, and produces objective evaluations. The Commission strives to be dispassionate in its analysis of impacts and consideration of alternatives.

**Maximum Public Participation:** The Coastal Act mandates the right of the people to understand and participate in the coastal program. The Commission welcomes public input into our daily work and we strive to provide complete and useful information about our program. The Commission believes its procedures for participation are fair to all participants.

**Excellence:** Commission staff members are professionals seeking to be effective and efficient. We treat each other with respect as professional colleagues, work hard, and strive for excellence in all of our work products, recognizing t responsibility to use public funds effectively and wisely.

**Teamwork:** The Commission embraces teamwork within the agency and with outside entities, recognizing that teamwork is essential to producing excellent work. The Commission strives to take full advantage of the diverse expertise and experience of our staff and other organizations. We support each other and acknowledge the critical role that each unit of the agency plays in achieving the Commission's mission.

**Integrity:** The Commission adheres to the highest ethical standards for interpersonal and civil service behavior. The Commission recognizes the humanity of all persons, and treats individuals with respect, fairness, and compassion. We are patient, honest and forthright with each other and the public.

**Problem-Solving:** The Commission uses common sense and seeks practical solutions to the planning and regulatory challenges we face and listens carefully to find positive alternatives. We avoid rigid bureaucratic response and embrace the role that learning, discovery, and creativity play in the Commission's daily work.

**Balance:** The Commission seeks balance between our personal and professional lives. We recognize that a productive workplace requires healthy minds and bodies, and that the Commission's work suffers without sufficient personal and family time and relaxation. Commission staff members communicate openly with supervisors and managers about maintaining balance and identifying priorities. We embrace flexibility to support the need for professional and personal balance.

#### IV. STRATEGIC GOALS, OBJECTIVES, & ACTIONS

The Commission has identified seven strategic goals with associated objectives and actions for the next five years. While the Commission will seek to implement all of the policies of the Coastal Act as necessary in any given case before it, the three policy goals and the four organizational goals are identified as *strategic* priorities to strengthen and improve the Commission's achievement of its core mission of protecting the coast. Many of these objectives and actions are already underway and on-going. This Draft Plan includes some actions that may take longer than five years and are only feasible if there are sufficient funds. Commission staff believes that it is important to capture these actions in the Draft, and the Final Strategic Plan will differentiate between five year actions and longer term actions.

##### A. POLICY GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND ACTIONS

The Coastal Act's resource management policies are captured in three fundamental goals:

- ◆ *Maximize Public Access and Recreation*
- ◆ *Protect Coastal Resources*
- ◆ *Address Climate Change through Local Coastal Program Planning, Coastal Permitting, Inter-Agency Collaboration, and Public Education*

The goal "Maximize Public Access and Recreation" expresses the mandates of Coastal Act sections 30210-30214 and 30220-30224, 30234-30234.5, 30240(b), 30250(c), 30251, 30252, and 30253(e). "Protect Coastal Resources" addresses sections 30222.5, 30230-30236, 30240-30244, 30250-30255, and 30260-30265.5. "Addressing Climate Change" will involve application of most if not all of the Coastal Act policies, but particularly those concerning hazards, the protection of public access and coastal resources, and providing for smart urban growth (e.g. concentrating development, minimizing energy use and vehicle miles traveled, and promoting public transportation, walking and bicycling). While distinct, the three goals are mutually supportive. Responding to climate change will help protect coastal resources (including natural resources); protecting coastal resources enhances effective climate change response; and both of these goals contribute to a vital public access and recreational experience and a thriving economy along the coast.

## **GOAL 1: Maximize Public Access and Recreation**

The Commission historically focuses on three major aspects of the Coastal Act mandate to protect public access and recreation: (a) protecting existing public access to and along the shoreline, (b) maximizing new public access opportunities including mitigating new development impacts to public access, and (c) protecting and providing visitor-serving commercial and recreational land uses, particularly lower-cost recreational opportunities like affordable overnight accommodations.

Commission success in all three of these areas include securing more than 2,000 public access easements statewide, protecting innumerable existing access resources, and providing lower-cost recreational opportunities, such as securing millions of in-lieu fee dollars to support new lower-cost visitor-serving uses.

Nonetheless public access and recreation on the coast is under continual and increasing pressure. California's population continues to grow and demand for coastal recreation and tourism opportunities increase. At the same time, public access continues to be threatened by private development, illegal encroachments or blockages, beach curfews and other restrictions on local beach access, and lack of adequate public parking or other restrictions, such as preferential residential parking programs, particularly in highly urbanized areas. These threats are magnified when coupled with fiscal pressures at the state and local level that both limit the ability to open and maintain new accessways and lead to closures or reductions of existing public access.

The draft Strategic Plan focuses on four primary areas for achieving the goal of maximizing public access and recreation. First, there is a need to better understand, inventory, and assess current public access resources, including the state of vertical access to the coast and existing public parking resources or restrictions that support or inhibit public access. The Commission plays a central role in its own permitting and in working with local governments in their permitting processes to ensure that public access is maintained consistent with principles and methodologies, responsive to the local context, and applied statewide. Objective 1.1 is intended to strengthen the Commission's informational and analytic resources in this area.

Second, the Commission is increasingly confronted with projects that have unavoidable impacts to access and recreation that must be mitigated. In particular, the Commission grapples with shoreline armoring projects that result in adverse impacts to beach recreational areas. There is a need for improved mitigation strategies, including methodologies to measure beach impacts. This need will be even greater with accelerated coastal erosion due to sea level rise (see Goal 3 also). The Commission must

also continue to improve its implementation of previous mitigation requirements, including use of in-lieu fees for access, recreation, and overnight visitor-serving amenities, so that the impacts of previously-approved projects will be offset. Objective 1.2 frames multiple actions to improve the Commission's implementation of impact mitigation strategies.

Third, while the Commission has done a good job over the years providing public information about the state's public access resources, through the statewide Coastal Access Guide, the more recent Regional Guides, and on its website, improving the delivery of this information in digital form, through updated website information and social media would benefit public access. There is also a need to increase outreach out to all Californians, particularly those in inland communities and in areas where the coast is less accessible, so that all Californians, not just those who live along the coast, have the ability to access the wide array of coastal resources in the state. Objective 1.3 frames six actions to address these needs.

Finally, over the last decade the Commission has been directly involved with the Coastal Conservancy, Coastwalk California, and other stakeholders in the planning, designation, permitting, and implementation of the California Coastal Trail (CCT). There is an increasing need to focus on completion of the CCT as more of it is planned and designated. Community-level planning exercises are underway, and projects on or around Highway 1 continue to raise CCT issues. It is important, therefore, that the Commission focus its support of the CCT and its implementation through LCP planning and on-going permit reviews where applicable. Objective 1.4 provides for this work.

### **Objective 1.1 – Enhance Public Access through Updated Beach Access Assessment and Constraints Analysis**

#### **Actions:**

- 1.1.1 Document and assess existing public access facilities including vertical and lateral public accessways, parking constraints and fees, beach curfews, hours of operation, physical impediments, encroachments, and other unpermitted development that may be blocking or limiting public access.
- 1.1.2 Coordinate with local governments to develop guidelines regarding beach curfews, parking, hours of operation, and other access and management issues.



- 1.1.3 Coordinate with State Department of Parks and Recreation on statewide shoreline access and parking management issues at state parks.
- 1.1.4 Conduct an assessment of existing and potential future public accessways, including unsecured Offers to Dedicate (OTD) vertical and lateral accessways, deed restrictions, etc.; ensure those accessways are secured in permanent protection; identify the steps and work with partners to open accessways for public use.
- 1.1.5 Evaluate lateral access for locations where access may be limited in the future due to sea level rise and begin planning for new verticals or other options to maintain maximum beach access (see also Action 3.2.1).

### **Objective 1.2 – Protect Public Access and Recreation by Implementing Improved Mitigation Strategies**

#### Actions:

- 1.2.1 Evaluate methodologies for valuing and mitigating impacts to beach and coastal recreation and ecology from shoreline armoring. Provide updated guidance to applicants and local governments on assessing and mitigating impacts to access and ecology from shoreline armoring.
- 1.2.2 Work with the State Coastal Conservancy, State Parks, and other state and local partners to use existing and potential future in-lieu fees to identify, plan for, and provide new public access and recreational opportunities.
- 1.2.3 Pursue development of new lower-cost visitor-serving accommodations by working with partners to effectively allocate available and future mitigation monies.

### **Objective 1.3 – Improve Public Information about Public Access Opportunities and the California Coastal Trail (CCT) through Outreach and Education**

#### Actions:

- 1.3.1 Update the statewide Coastal Access Guide book to include information produced for the Commission's regional guide series and other new features that enhance the public's knowledge about coastal access and how to experience

coastal areas. Identify funding to support the provision of the Coastal Access Guide book in multiple languages.

- 1.3.2 Create county-level regional public access guide maps where feasible.
- 1.3.3 Develop a web-based and/or mobile web application that provides maps and descriptions of coastal access and recreation resources.
- 1.3.4 Evaluate and pursue opportunities to increase public access and recreation for inland communities and other areas of the state to which the coast is less accessible.
- 1.3.5 Integrate the Commission's existing database of secured public accessways into the new Coastal Data Management System (see Objective 6.1).
- 1.3.6 Develop recommended signage for new public accessways required by regulatory and enforcement decisions that recognizes the role of the Commission.

#### **Objective 1.4 – Expand the California Coastal Trail through Planning and Implementation**

Actions:

- 1.4.1 Evaluate the public access component of LCPs proposed for update to identify trail gaps, potential alignments, and policies and programs to establish and enhance CCT segments.
- 1.4.2 Coordinate with partners including the Conservancy, State Parks, and local governments to plan for and implement new CCT segments through an updated joint coastal access program.
- 1.4.3 Improve coordination with Caltrans, State Parks and the Conservancy to assure effective CCT implementation through transportation project planning and development.
- 1.4.4 Identify locations of the CCT that might be at risk from rising sea and begin planning for trail relocations or other alternatives to insure continued functionality of the CCT (see also Action 3.2.1).

## **GOAL 2: Protect Coastal Resources**

Protecting and restoring sensitive coastal resources is also one of the highest priorities of the Commission. The Commission implements strong Coastal Act policies to protect and restore environmentally sensitive habitats, wetlands, and the marine environment. The Coastal Act also protects public access and recreation (see Goal 1), coastal agriculture, scenic and cultural resources, and priority coastal dependent and related land uses. All coastal resources are important, and when faced with a need to address potential impacts to these resources under the Coastal Act, the Commission does so.

However, there are certain priority needs under the broad goal of protecting coastal resources that require strategic action. In particular, the coastal environment is a dynamic system. Over the years the Commission continues to gain important knowledge and experience about coastal habitats and other resources. Coastal planning and regulatory work incorporates and reflects this knowledge and experience, both to benefit the coastal environment and to provide clear and informative planning and regulatory policies for local government, applicants, and the public.

Objective 2.1 outlines various actions to develop, synthesize and update policy guidance materials concerning the protection, enhancement, restoration, and mitigation of wetlands and environmentally sensitive habitat areas (ESHA). The Commission has developed significant expertise in wetlands definition, identification, delineation, restoration, and mitigation in the last decade. Provision of this knowledge to local governments, applicants, and professional staff would support LCP planning and coastal permitting. A similar need exists for the Commission's expertise and policy guidance concerning terrestrial habitats. In particular, there is a need to provide guidance on the types of habitats and species that may trigger an ESHA concern, as well as on recommended policy approaches for identification, protection, restoration, mitigation, and buffering of ESHAs. Actions related to addressing climate change impacts on coastal resources like ESHA and wetlands are discussed in Goal 3.

Objective 2.2 specifically addresses a variety of marine resource protection actions to further the goal of protecting coastal resources. The Commission has been involved in statewide policy discussions and coordination concerning such topics as Marine Protected Areas, desalination, aquaculture, ecologically sound beach management, beach nourishment, and renewable energy, and the actions provided recognize the need to continue this work. Updated policy guidance on these topics is needed, as is on-going coordination with the Ocean Protection Council (OPC) and other state agencies. The Commission continues to play an important role in the acquisition and provision of valuable marine mapping data.

Objective 2.3 identifies high priority actions for continuing the Commission's work in the areas of oil spill prevention and response. As identified in the Lempert-Keen-Seastrand Oil Spill Prevention and Response Act, the Commission has responsibilities and receives funding from the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) Office of Oil Spill Prevention and Response (OSPR) to support coordination and other work to prevent oil spills that could adversely affect coastal resources.

Objective 2.4 identifies priorities for the Commission's water quality program, guided by information needs and statewide efforts to address polluted runoff. The Commission's water quality staff implements California's Nonpoint Source Program in cooperation with the State Water Board. The actions proposed will evaluate the effectiveness of implementing this Program over the past decade and propose updated guidance to improve effectiveness and evolving storm water requirements. In addition, staff will continue to promote measures, such as Low Impact Development, that minimize runoff from development in coastal areas through working with other state and local partners, developing tools, and conducting public education and outreach.

Finally, Objective 2.5 concerning coastal agriculture has several actions designed to further the Commission's mandate to protect agriculture in the coastal zone, as well as address the potential resource impacts of agriculture-related development. Updated guidance is needed to address changing agricultural economics and demographics and to assure that agriculture is not undermined by development pressures. The Commission also plans to conduct a public workshop on agricultural issues.

### **Objective 2.1 – Strengthen Implementation of Coastal Act ESHA and Wetland Policies with Updated Policy Guidance**

#### Actions:

- 2.1.1 Develop a coastal habitats compendium that includes habitat characterizations and a summary of related planning and regulatory issues to support review of coastal development permit applications and LCP amendments by local governments and the Commission.
- 2.1.2 Collaborate with state and federal partners such as DFG and USFWS to improve understanding and implementation of best methods for avoiding and mitigating impacts to sensitive habitats.

- 2.1.3 Review and update as necessary policy guidance for coastal permitting and revising LCPs to address changed circumstances (ESHA definition and identification), habitat mapping, buffer and mitigation policies and emerging issues (e.g. bird safe buildings, beach grooming, fuel modification, native plant landscaping), to protect, enhance, and restore sensitive habitats.
- 2.1.4 Provide guidance on wetland identification, delineation, protection, enhancement, restoration and mitigation in the coastal zone for use by project applicants and local government.
- 2.1.5 Provide guidance to staff and local planners to facilitate projects that propose to enhance or restore coastal resources.
- 2.1.6 In cooperation with other agencies and local governments, identify habitat areas in need of restoration and protection in order to direct mitigation monies to projects.

## **Objective 2.2 – Protect Marine and Ocean Resources through Inter-Agency Coordination, Policy Review, and Updated Guidance**

### Actions:

- 2.2.1 Develop guidance for desalination, marine renewable energy, beach nourishment, beach grooming, shoreline armoring, and near/offshore aquaculture applicants/interested parties describing applicable Coastal Act policies, necessary information for project review, appropriate impact avoidance and mitigation approaches, examples of permitted projects, and lessons learned.
- 2.2.2 Contribute data and design guidance to the OPC and State Technology Officer for the development of a State of California Data Portal for Ocean and Marine Geospatial Information.
- 2.2.3 Participate through interagency work groups, workshops, and reviewing and commenting on documents in the State Water Resources Control Board's (SWRCB) effort to develop a statewide "desalination policy" that addresses the use of marine intakes, in-plant dilution and brine disposal.
- 2.2.4 Participate in implementing the SWRCB's Once-Through Cooling (OTC) Policy and retirements/modifications to power plant OTC systems through membership on the Statewide Advisory Committee on Cooling Water Intake Structures

("SACCWIS") and the Nuclear Review Committee (for Diablo Canyon and the San Onofre Nuclear Generating Station (SONGS)).

- 2.2.5 Work with the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) on the development of a state-wide California Eelgrass Mitigation Policy.
- 2.2.6 Contribute as a member of the OPC's multi-agency work groups (e.g., the California Coastal and Marine Geospatial Working Group, the California Marine Renewable Energy Working Group, the California Emerging Industrial Uses of Ocean Working Group, and the Marine Debris Steering Committee).
- 2.2.7 Contribute to the CDFG Aquaculture Development Committee.
- 2.2.8 Work with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Aquaculture Office in the development of the National Aquaculture Research and Development Strategic Plan.
- 2.2.9 Participate as a member or stakeholder in the Coastal and Marine Spatial Planning Regional Working Group organized by the West Coast Governors Alliance (WCGA) to develop a West Coast Region Coastal and Marine Spatial Plan. Continue participation in other WCGA work groups such as the Marine Debris Action Coordination Team and the Ocean Awareness and Literacy Action Coordination Team.

### **Objective 2.3 – Improve Oil Spill Prevention and Response with Educational Materials**

Actions:

- 2.3.1 Produce and disseminate public outreach educational materials explaining the Coastal Commission's role and responsibilities in oil spill prevention and response.
- 2.3.2 Participate in efforts to improve communication between state and federal agencies, county offices of emergency services, and boating facilities in the event of a large oil spill, such as helping to disseminate the Oil Spill Prevention and Response Toolkit for Boating Facilities.

### **Objective 2.4 – Avoid and Mitigate Adverse Impacts of Development on Water Quality through Evaluation, Updated Guidance, and Education**

## Actions:

- 2.4.1 Assess effectiveness of permit conditions and LCP amendments in protecting coastal water quality. Use the assessment to create new or revise existing guidance for coastal planners and project applicants in consultation with state and local agencies.
- 2.4.2 Provide guidance to local governments for updating LCPs to be consistent with evolving storm water requirements and the Coastal Act.
- 2.4.3 Participate in state and interstate efforts to promote water quality protection policies and practices in the areas of Low Impact Development, hydro-modification, watershed-based storm water planning, harmful algal blooms, marinas and recreational boating activities, harmful algal blooms, and ocean acidification.
- 2.4.4 Develop tools to track proposals for development in California's Marine Protected Areas (includes state marine reserves and areas of special biological significance) that could negatively impact water quality. Recommend policies that avoid adverse impacts to those high quality coastal waters to coastal planners and other constituencies.
- 2.4.5 Educate marina operators and the boating community on potential adverse water quality impacts of their activities and provide guidance to reduce or eliminate those impacts.

**Objective 2.5 – Protect Coastal Agriculture and Maximize Agriculture Production on Prime Agricultural Lands by Developing Updated LCP Guidance and Conducting Public Workshops**

## Actions:

- 2.5.1 Update LCP guidance on coastal agriculture to address changing agricultural economies, demographics and development pressures, and the need to maximize agricultural production on prime agricultural lands.

- 2.5.2 Assess and inventory potential impacts that agriculture-related development may have on coastal resources to support coastal planning. Explore streamlined or expedited permit review for appropriate agricultural development.
- 2.5.3 Conduct one or more Commission workshops with local governments, stakeholders and the public to discuss coastal agriculture.
- 2.5.4 Promote agricultural land protection and mechanisms to make these lands available to willing farmers.

### **GOAL 3: Address Climate Change through LCP Planning, Coastal Permitting, Inter-Agency Collaboration, and Public Education**

Global sea level rise is accelerating and exacerbating coastal shoreline hazards that the Commission must address, including coastal erosion and flooding. Public beaches and public access will be placed at increased risk in urban areas where there may be significant coastal armoring and little opportunity for natural retreat of the beach. Wetland protection and restoration decisions will need to account for changes in sea level rise. Coastal terrestrial and marine habitats are already changing with shifts in climate patterns. Hazards related to the frequency and severity of storms, floods, and wild fires will also change and potentially increase as the climate changes. Therefore, efforts to reduce greenhouse gas contributions are important and the Commission can take action to support reductions in greenhouse gases through its planning and regulatory decisions.

Objectives 3.1 – 3.3 establish a broad set of tasks to begin systematically addressing the challenges of climate change. The Commission's first priority will be to prepare and provide updated guidance to local governments and permit applicants to address sea level rise in both LCP planning and project design. The Commission will also identify other topical areas implicated by climate change where updated policy guidance is needed.

More broadly, the Commission will pursue strategies to work closely with local governments to update LCPs to address coastal adaptation, including providing for resilient community development and infrastructure and ensuring the long term protection of public coastal resources such as vulnerable coastal habitats, recreational beach environments, and public access. And while the immediate implications of climate change cannot be reversed, Objective 3.3 includes actions to implement smart growth and other strategies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to affect climate change



over the long term. Overall, climate change affects nearly every coastal policy area that the Commission addresses; thus, Goal 3 is a high priority for strategic action.

### **Objective 3.1 – Develop Planning and Permitting Policy Guidance for Addressing the Effects of Climate Change on Coastal Resources**

Actions:

- 3.1.1 Adopt general sea level rise (SLR) policy guidance for use in coastal permitting and LCP planning and amendment.
- 3.1.2 Based on the general SLR policy guidance, identify and develop specific regulatory guidance for addressing coastal hazards, including recommendations for analytic methods for accounting for SLR and storm events in project analysis, standards for redevelopment and development in hazard zones (e.g. bluff top and flood zones), buffers for coastal wetlands, and policies for shoreline structure design and impact mitigation.
- 3.1.3 Develop policy guidance for coastal permitting and LCPs to account for other climate change related impacts and adaptation planning including wetland, marine and terrestrial habitat protection, habitat migration, risk of wildfires, water supply and groundwater protection, etc.
- 3.1.4 Provide public information and guidance through workshops, presentations to local government, etc. Assist local governments with interpretation of scientific or other technical information related to climate change and sea level rise that could be of use in adaptation planning.
- 3.1.5 Contribute to relevant state-wide efforts on climate change and adaptation as a member of the State's Climate Action Team – Coast and Ocean Working Group.
- 3.1.6 Coordinate with Natural Resources Agency, Office of Planning and Research, California Emergency Management Agency and others to provide consistent guidance on climate change in updating general plans, hazard mitigation plans and other planning documents used by local governments
- 3.1.7 Coordinate with the State Lands Commission to address sea level rise and shoreline change and implications for the management of public trust resources.

**Objective 3.2 – Assess Coastal Resource Vulnerabilities to Guide Development of Priority Coastal Adaptation Planning Strategies**

## Actions:

- 3.2.1 Conduct a broad vulnerability assessment of urban and rural areas to identify priority areas for adaptation planning, such as community development, public infrastructure, public accessways, open space or public beaches at risk from sea level rise. Identify and participate in on-going adaptation planning efforts as feasible.
- 3.2.2 Work with Caltrans and other public agency partners to assess and address roadway, rail, and other transportation infrastructure vulnerabilities, particularly along Highway One and other coastal roads and highways.
- 3.2.3 Work with the Department of Water Resources, SWRCB and local agencies to assess and address water and wastewater treatment plant vulnerabilities along the coast.
- 3.2.4 Work with the Conservancy, CDFG, US Fish and Wildlife (USFWS) and other partners to assess the vulnerability of wetlands and other sensitive habitat areas. Identify habitats that are particularly vulnerable climate change and/or habitats that may be important for future habitat migration (e.g. wetland transitional areas).
- 3.2.5 Work with the Coastal Observing Systems, researchers, and others to identify and develop baseline monitoring elements to better understand and monitor changes in coastal conditions related to sea level rise or climate change.
- 3.2.6 With the Conservancy and OPC, develop and implement a competitive grant program to provide funding to selected local governments to conduct vulnerability assessments and/or technical studies that can be used to assess a community's risks from climate change and information updates to LCPs.

**Objective 3.3 – Reduce Greenhouse Gas (GHGs) Emissions by Implementing Smart Growth, Other Mitigation Strategies, and Public Education**

## Actions:

- 3.3.1 Collaborate with other state agencies to evaluate policy options to promote Smart Growth strategies and green building, such as mixed-use and higher density development where appropriate, transit-oriented development, Blueprint Planning (SB 375), transportation demand management, and low-impact development strategies.
- 3.3.2 Prepare policy guidance to facilitate expedited permitting of alternative energy projects as appropriate such as solar and wind.
- 3.3.3 Provide information and resources to educators and to the general public to increase understanding and encourage action to reduce GHGs.
- 3.3.4 Identify and implement feasible measures to reduce the carbon footprint of the Commission's business operations.

## **B. ORGANIZATIONAL GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND ACTIONS**

The Agency also has four priority organizational goals that will strengthen its ability to achieve the program policy goals. These are to: Strengthen the LCP Program; Improve the Regulatory Process, Compliance and Enforcement; Enhance Information Management and E-Government; and Build Agency Capacity (including public communications and program funding, and addressing human resources concerns).

### **GOAL 4: Strengthen the LCP Planning Program**

While the Commission has achieved much through the Coastal Act's state-local partnership, the stresses of inadequate resources for on-going coastal planning have exacerbated conflict surrounding the LCP amendment process. There is a need to reinvest in LCP planning and comprehensive LCP updates to address on-going and dynamic coastal resource management challenges. There is also a need to consider changes in process at both the Commission and local level that may facilitate improved communication, notwithstanding inadequate resources. The continued success of the coastal program is directly tied to the state-local partnership and the program's ability to keep LCPs current and responsive to on-going and emerging resource management challenges.

One of the important LCP strategies explained below concerns completing the certification of LCPs. While most of the coast (approximately 85% of the geographic area) is governed by a certified LCP, the remaining uncertified areas continue to pose a significant coastal permit workload for the Commission that should be the

responsibility of local government. Actions are identified to pursue priority LCP certification targets, which should free up Commission resources over the long run to address on-going LCP planning needs in already-certified jurisdictions.

Other LCP objectives and actions are identified that will improve LCP program implementation. These include actions to support the updating of LCPs, to provide LCP documents in digital form and make them available online. Given the central role of LCPs in implementing the Coastal Act, it is critically important that they be up-to-date and available to the public. Objective 4.4 provides for continuing the Commission's on-going efforts to improve communication with local government and to improve Commission oversight and collaboration with local government concerning the coastal development process at the local level.

#### **Objective 4.1 – Pursue Completion of LCP Certification for uncertified segments and Areas of Deferred Certification (ADC) Where Feasible**

Actions:

- 4.1.1 Evaluate uncertified jurisdictions and ADCs; identify priority areas for LCP and ADC certification.
- 4.1.2 Conduct outreach and feasibility analysis for LCP and ADC certification(s) in identified priority areas.
- 4.1.3 Where local jurisdictions are willing, work together to identify funding and workload management strategies to support development and certification of LCPs and ADCs.

#### **Objective 4.2 – Work with Local Governments to Update LCPs Where Feasible**

Actions:

- 4.2.1 Identify LCPs most in need of a comprehensive update, and prioritize these LCPs by ongoing or potential impacts to coastal resources. Consider alternatives to full periodic reviews to identify issues that need addressing in certified LCPs.
- 4.2.2 For priority LCPS, work with local governments to evaluate feasibility of updates.

- 4.2.3 Provide and update online guidance to local governments for updating LCPs to improve the transmittal of key planning and policy information related to:
- (a) Climate change impacts, adaptation, and mitigation;
  - (b) Shoreline protective options and mitigation strategies;
  - (c) Evaluation of ESHA;
  - (d) Wetland delineations; and
  - (e) Protection of agricultural lands.
- 4.2.4 Identify and implement management strategies to allocate more staff time to LCP planning, coordination and updates.

### **Objective 4.3 – Provide and Maintain Certified LCPs Online**

#### Actions:

- 4.3.1 Develop a phased strategy to acquire and provide LCPs in a digital library format, as resources allow.
- 4.3.2 Implement a pilot project to identify issues and draft protocols and procedures related to acquiring and maintaining digital LCPs.
- 4.3.3 Under the phased strategy in 4.3.1, secure resources to support acquisition and review accuracy of existing LCPs. Identify and correct any discrepancies between certified versions and those in use by the affected jurisdictions.
- 4.3.4 Integrate the digital LCP library with Coastal Data Management System Design (see also Action 6.4.3).

### **Objective 4.4 – Continue to Improve Communication and Planning with Local Government**

#### Actions:

- 4.4.1 Work with League of Cities and California State Association of Counties to hold periodic Commission-local officials and/or local staff LCP workshops.
- 4.4.2 Convene District-level meetings as feasible with local government staffs on a regular or as-needed basis to enhance coordination and communication.

- 4.4.3 Work with local government staff to establish regular working sessions/meetings on significant or comprehensive LCP updates prior to local approval of the LCP amendment. Conduct pre-submittal conferences on major LCP Amendments (see also Objective 4.2).
- 4.4.4 Provide information regarding the status of LCP Amendments online (see also Action 5.2.4).
- 4.4.5 Increase training on the LCP program and key coastal zone policy issues for local staff and officials as requested and feasible. Present background information on the Coastal Act and LCP implementation to local governments as requested and feasible.
- 4.4.6 Pursue joint LCP funding strategy with local government (see Action 7.4.2).

**Objective 4.5 – Improve LCP Implementation through Monitoring of Locally-issued Coastal Develop Permits and Instituting Feedback Mechanisms**

Actions:

- 4.5.1 Evaluate post-certification monitoring procedures and requirements; develop recommendations for improved final local action noticing, tracking, review, evaluation, reporting, and feedback to local governments.
- 4.5.2 Implement an online Final Local Action Notice (FLAN) posting system for locally-issued CDPs.
- 4.5.3 Provide guidance and staff training to improve and streamline post-certification monitoring as appropriate.
- 4.5.4 Evaluate the feasibility and consider implementing periodic LCP reviews to support LCP updates.

**GOAL 5: Improve the Regulatory Process, Compliance and Enforcement**

This goal identifies various objectives to improve the Commission’s regulatory processes ranging from updating the Commission’s regulations to building condition compliance and enforcement capacity. A variety of improvements and updates could be made to reflect the Commission’s experience and to facilitate streamlining of the permit process. This goal also includes actions to improve the accessibility, clarity, and

relevance of information and services to the public, such as improvements to the Commission's website and an online permit application system.

Condition compliance continues to be a major workload issue for the Commission and Objectives 5.3 and 5.4 lay out actions to improve the condition compliance work of staff, including efforts to evaluate and consider changes that may improve the efficiency of reviews of recorded documents that the Commission may require. Adequate review is time-consuming, though critical to the effectiveness of the Commission's program. Improvements that don't sacrifice levels of protection could be beneficial to both the program's resource protection goals and applicant desires for a stream-lined process. Objective 5.5 outlines actions for improving the federal consistency review process.

### **Objective 5.1 – Update Commission's Code of Regulations**

Actions:

- 5.1.1 Identify staff and workload management issues to perform an update of regulations. Assess feasibility of update.
- 5.1.2 Review regulations and identify needed changes, additions, corrections, deletions, etc. to provide for improved procedures, e-government, changed circumstances and improved and clarified compliance with Coastal Act and enforcement processes.
- 5.1.3 Initiate update of regulations with Office of Administrative Law (OAL).

### **Objective 5.2 – Improve Public Information and Services to the Public**

Actions:

- 5.2.1 Update the Commission's website to make it more user-friendly and transmit relevant information clearly.
- 5.2.2 Develop an on-line permit application system (See also Objective 6.4).
- 5.2.3 Conduct stakeholder feedback surveys on provision of public services.
- 5.2.4 Explore providing permit and LCP status information online.

### **Objective 5.3 – Ensure Compliance with Coastal Development Permit Conditions**

## Actions:

- 5.3.1 Evaluate, based on targeted review, status of compliance with CDP conditions and develop recommendations for improvements, including necessary staffing.
- 5.3.2 Implement improvements to condition compliance monitoring, such as using mapping tools for data collection and data entry, conducting tracking and priority-setting, and coordinating with local governments.
- 5.3.3 Evaluate options to streamline the review of required recorded documents required as conditions of permits.

**Objective 5.4 – Increase Compliance with and Enforcement of the Coastal Act**

## Actions:

- 5.4.1 Evaluate options for reducing unpermitted development; identify strategies and funding as required.
- 5.4.2 Develop outreach strategies to educate the public on what requires a permit, how to report violations, and to make the CCC permit requirements and enforcement programs more visible, in order to avoid and deter violations.
- 5.4.3 Improve public outreach tools, including the following: increase web presence; issue periodic reports on the enforcement program; develop and use outreach and education materials working with other state and local government entities, private parties including development community and environmental organizations.
- 5.4.4 Encourage efficiency and coordination between state, federal, and local agencies involved in enforcement by the establishment of government task forces to resolve Coastal Act violations. Reach out to locations without a task force program and work to establish such programs.

**Objective 5.5 – Improve efficiency and efficacy of the Commission’s federal consistency program**

## Actions:



- 5.5.1 Update the list of federal permits that automatically fall under the category of review under federal consistency by the Coastal Commission.
- 5.5.2 Develop geographic location descriptions (GLDs) for federally permitted activities to provide more clear notice, shorten review times and reduce staff work load in reviewing federal consistency.

## **GOAL 6: Enhance Information Management and E-Government**

Information management and e-government are critically-important to improving the Commission's implementation effectiveness of the Coastal Act. The highest priority is successful implementation of a new Coastal Data Management System for the LCP planning and coastal development permitting programs. This project is largely funded and implementation is underway. The new system is anticipated to provide the Commission an enhanced capability to manage pending projects and provide current information to the Commission and the public to support program implementation.

Upgraded Information Technology (IT) capacity and new technologies to support the public process will also improve the Commission's integration of geographic and project related information; provide for more transparent, digital processing of permit and LCP amendment applications; support digital delivery and archiving of Commission staff reports; and improve other aspects of information management. Ultimately the Commission seeks to maximize its use of digital technologies in support of program implementation. Long term goals include providing online permit application and use of digital media for noticing and other regulatory communications.

### **Objective 6.1 - Integrate existing Commission databases into the Coastal Data Management System (CDMS) (see also Objective 6.4).**

Actions:

- 6.1.1 Consolidate multiple stand-alone databases with information on permits, LCPs and other agency work.
- 6.1.2 Develop a web-based user interface for staff to have easy access to information.
- 6.1.3 Move historic data into the CDMS.
- 6.1.4 Train Commission staff on the use and support of the CDMS.

- 6.1.5 Create and deploy an online web-interface to support public access to the CDMS.
- 6.1.6 Make the Commission's permit and planning records, including final Commission actions and reports available to the public via the Internet.

### **Objective 6.2 – Improve integration of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and other Mapping Resources into Planning, Permit Analysis and Enforcement**

#### Actions:

- 6.2.1 Integrate the Commission's GIS with the CDMS.
- 6.2.2 Develop datasets, tools and access for Commission staff and local governments to cadastral (parcel) detail digital boundaries for the Coastal Commission's jurisdiction, including original permit, geographic appeal areas, categorical exclusion area and coastal zone boundary. Make the digital boundary maps and data available to the public.
- 6.2.3 Enhance tools, maps and imagery for staff reports and staff presentations.
- 6.2.4 Enhance staff use of digital tools and imagery in conducting spatial analysis of locations of proposed projects, permits, LCPs and enforcement cases.
- 6.2.5 Acquire aerial photo data of inland coastal areas within the coastal zone to assist with detection and monitoring of Coastal Act violations.
- 6.2.6 Train staff in GIS use and incorporate into investigation process. Acquire capability to use GPS systems in the field that can link to planning, permit, and enforcement information systems.

### **Objective 6.3 – Strengthen Information Technology (IT) Services Support and Availability of Those Support Services in the District Offices**

#### Actions:

- 6.3.1 Conduct on-going training for all staff for use and support of new technologies and data systems deployed by the Commission.

- 6.3.2 Establish regional meetings with IT staff at each District office to go over technical issues and improvements.

#### **Objective 6.4 – Develop and Implement E-Government Systems**

Actions:

- 6.4.1 Update Commission's Internet site using current state standards.
- 6.4.2 Evaluate, test and implement systems to support online filing of applications, noticing and related regulatory actions.
- 6.4.3 Complete the Commission's digital document library for all Commission actions from 1973 to the present, including converting paper records to a searchable digital format, linking to the Commission's final adopted reports, and linking all records to the CDMS. Make CDMS data available online as appropriate and as feasible.
- 6.4.4 Convert the Commission's monthly meeting agenda and staff reports to an e-packet format.
- 6.4.5 Standardize staff report templates.
- 6.4.6 Develop an online violation reporting system or other electronic means for the public to report potential violations.

#### **Objective 6.5 – Improve Business Services by Upgrading Accounting, Business Services, and Human Resources (HR) Data Management**

Actions:

- 6.5.1 Assess Accounting and Business Service needs for managing data. Use this information to identify, procure and deploy an appropriate software and/or database package to support integration of the business services and accounting systems.
- 6.5.2 Institute a staff-accessible online staff time tracking and reporting system.
- 6.5.3 Produce and maintain an up-to-date online staff directory for all Commission offices for easier access to staff contact information.

## **GOAL 7: Build Agency Capacity**

Goal 7 outlines eight objectives to build the Commission's organizational capacity for the future. For example, the Commission has long lacked a formal public information program capacity to support communication with the public about the Commission's program. In the digital media age of today, the Commission must take advantage of these new opportunities to communicate information about the Commission's program, including its accomplishments and challenges, to the public. Similarly, Objective 7.3 identifies priorities for the Commission's Public Education Program that will engage new audiences and build program capacity in support of efforts to foster coastal awareness and stewardship.

Building the agency's capacity also involves boosting program funding and support, staffing and training, and addressing key personnel issues like succession planning, staff retention and recruitment. Finally, this goal includes actions to improve internal communications, collaboration and coordination within the agency.

### **Objective 7.1 – Improve Public Relations by Establishing a Public Information Program**

Actions:

- 7.1.1 Pursue the establishment of a Public Information Officer/Social Media position.
- 7.1.2 Establish a Social Media Task Force to develop a strategy for using social media to implement agency programs and educate the public about the Commission, the coastal program and agency activities and accomplishments.
- 7.1.3 Work proactively with the media to provide information about Commission programs and decisions. Develop a press protocol, outreach strategy and model press releases to assist in providing information about planning, permitting, enforcement and other Commission actions.

### **Objective 7.2 - Revitalize the Coastal Program through Evaluation, Promotion, and Public Participation**

Actions:

- 7.2.1 Prepare Coastal Act 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Program Report to celebrate and highlight Coastal Commission accomplishments since the passage of Proposition 20 in 1972.
- 7.2.2 Evaluate the feasibility of preparing a bi-annual program assessment report. If feasible, develop an implementation strategy that includes funding and a work plan for completing the work.
- 7.2.3 Identify strategies for improving and/or integrating existing federal reporting requirements with desired program evaluation goals to provide for more effective and efficient program evaluation.
- 7.2.4 Develop a public outreach, communication, and education strategy regarding Commission policy issues and regulatory activities that considers the following: a) a regular newsletter/highlights publication, b) Commission briefings or workshops, and c) reporting significant Commission accomplishments and decisions.
- 7.2.5 Raise awareness about the Coastal Act and Commission accomplishments through Commission-led programs that engage the public in coastal stewardship activities (i.e. Coastal Clean-up Day, Adopt-A-Beach).

**Objective 7.3 – Improve and Expand the Commission’s Public Education Programs through Increased Public Participation and Improved Educational Materials**

Actions:

- 7.3.1 Increase public participation in programs such as Adopt-A-Beach and Coastal Cleanup Day through on-line registration; expand programs into new geographic areas throughout California watersheds.
- 7.3.2 Expand the “bring your own” campaign, which encourages participants to bring reusable supplies to beach cleanups, and create new initiatives to reduce the environmental footprint of Coastal Commission-led events and activities.
- 7.3.3 Update and increase educational resources offered to teachers, non-formal educators, and the public.

**Objective 7.4 – Increase Program Funding and Support through Program Evaluation and Information Sharing**

## Actions:

- 7.4.1 Evaluate funding opportunities and constraints within current funding streams (i.e. General Fund, Special Funds, federal fund, fees) and authorities; evaluate potential additional non-general fund revenue sources; examine budget allocations within existing funding streams and opportunities for streamlining.
- 7.4.2 Prepare a Budget Change Proposal (BCP) to request enhanced support for LCP planning. Work with partners, including local governments, on a joint budget enhancement strategy to secure additional funds.
- 7.4.3 Seek to increase staffing in core program responsibilities, including LCP planning, coastal permitting and enforcement.
- 7.4.4 Update the public information “fact sheets” used to inform the Legislature, Governor and their staff during the annual budget process.
- 7.4.5 Research and pursue opportunities for technical assistance from federal or other agency partners that could assist the Commission in achieving its goals (i.e. technical assistance available from NOAA).
- 7.4.6 Promote Whale Tail License Plate revenue and cultivate other funding sources to increase the Public Education Program’s capacity.

**Objective 7.5 – Develop a Succession Plan to Prepare for Pending Retirements**

## Actions:

- 7.5.1 Evaluate retirement projections and program implications for the next three to five years.
- 7.5.2 Identify and implement succession planning strategies/mechanisms.

**Objective 7.6 – Develop a Staff Recruitment Strategy**

## Actions:

- 7.6.1 Identify program areas where staffing needs are most critical; develop strategies to acquire necessary staff in core program areas.
- 7.6.2 Identify opportunities and strategies for enhanced outreach to recruit a diverse and highly qualified applicant pool for needed positions.
- 7.6.3 Expand the Commission's Internship Program.
- 7.6.4 Continue to take full advantage of fellowship opportunities offered by the NOAA Coastal Management Fellowship Program, California Sea Grant and others.

**Objective 7.7 – Increase Staff Satisfaction and Retention through Mentoring, Training and Professional Development Opportunities**

Actions:

- 7.7.1 Define, develop and implement a mentoring program.
- 7.7.2 Support new opportunities for staff professional development and training.
- 7.7.3 Update and disseminate staff training materials.
- 7.7.4 Conduct annual/bi-annual staff training, including technical services training (ecology, geology, coastal processes, and climate change).
- 7.7.5 Conduct specialized training for enforcement staff regarding inspections and information gathering, in addition to permit and enforcement issues.
- 7.7.6 Seek out specialized land use, real estate and other legal training for attorneys and paralegals.
- 7.7.7 Seek approval from California Human Resources (CalHR) to establish a new Senior Coastal Program Analyst (CPA) position (non-supervisory) to increase professional growth and development opportunities within the CPA job classification series.
- 7.7.8 Pursue structural salary increases for CPA and other job classifications.

- 7.7.9 Acknowledge staff accomplishments and years of service at Commission meetings and/or other opportunities.

**Objective 7.8 – Improve Intra-Agency Communication, Coordination, and Collaboration**

Actions:

- 7.8.1 Establish internal communication and coordination mechanisms to improve staff-to-staff communication and coordination; evaluate as needed to determine efficacy.
- 7.8.2 Consider establishing new task forces or work groups to implement strategic actions.

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