

CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION

45 FREMONT, SUITE 2000
SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94105-2219
VOICE (415) 904-5200
FAX (415) 904-5400
TDD (415) 597-5885



W6a

January 6, 2015

TO: California Coastal Commission and Interested Parties

FROM: Charles Lester, Executive Director

SUBJECT: Executive Director's Report, January, 2015

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

LCP Program Status – Los Angeles County (SP Goal 4)

Los Angeles (LA) County includes 135 miles of mainland shoreline (include the ports) as well as Santa Catalina Island (65 shoreline miles) and San Clemente Island (57 shoreline miles). The coastal zone area totals approximately 276 square miles of the County's 4,751 square miles of total land area and includes portions of the County of Los Angeles and 12 incorporated cities. These cities are: Malibu, Los Angeles, Santa Monica, El Segundo, Manhattan Beach, Hermosa Beach, Redondo Beach, Torrance, Palos Verdes Estates, Rancho Palos Verdes, Long Beach and Avalon, on Santa Catalina Island 22 miles off the coast. The coastal zone in LA County also includes the Port of Los Angeles and Port of Long Beach.

The County includes the resources of the Santa Monica Mountains in the northwest, a series of broad sandy beaches in several beach cities extending around Santa Monica Bay, the hills, rocky beaches and coves of the Palos Verdes Peninsula to industrial harbor complexes at San Pedro Bay and sandy beaches from Long Beach to Alamitos Bay. There are also thousands of recreational and commercial boating slips at facilities throughout the county. Over 10 million residents (around 26% of the state)¹ reside in the County and cities in Los Angeles, and the area is among the most diverse in the state. The coastal jurisdictions support significant urban development, beaches, visitor and commercial recreation and varied natural resources.

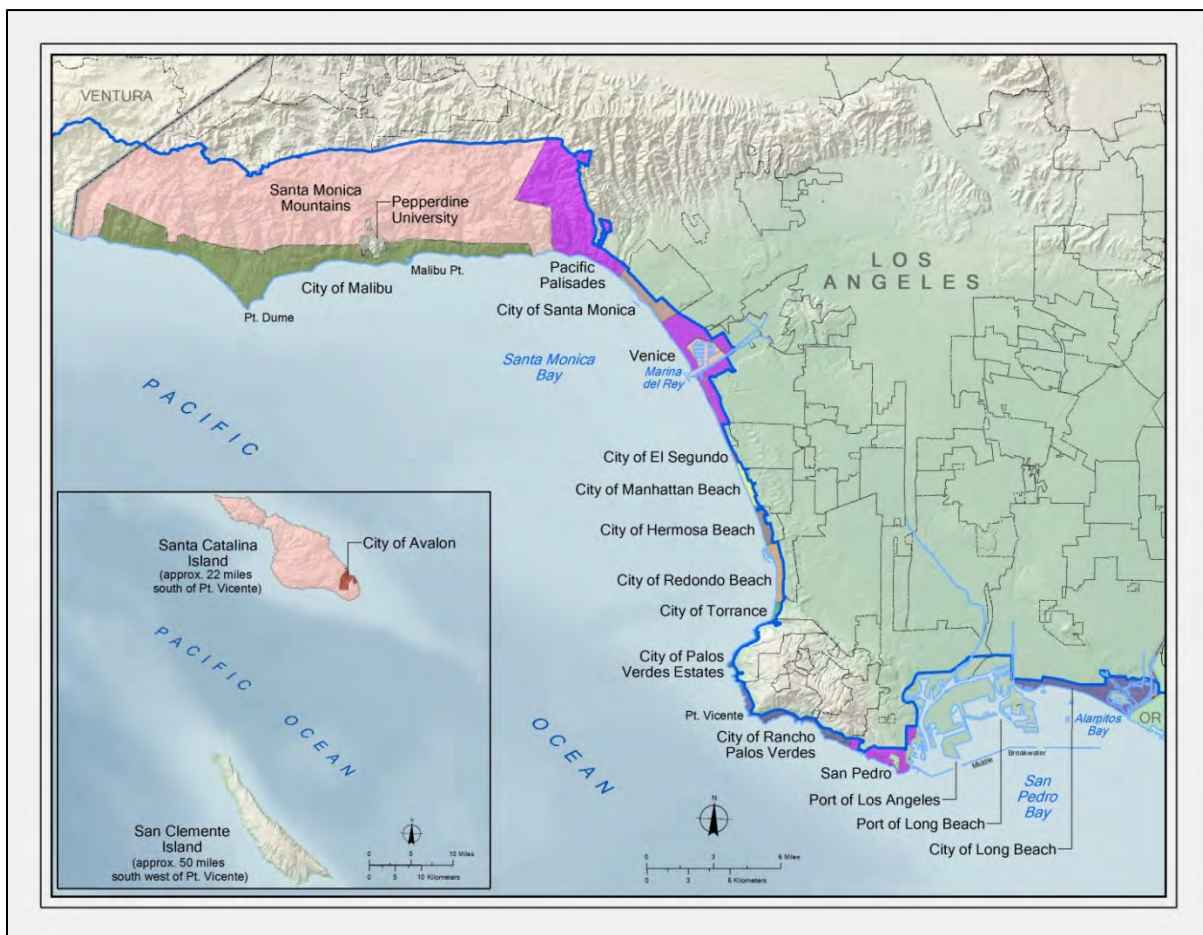
With the certification of the Santa Monica Mountains Local Coastal Program (LCP) segment in 2014, the County of Los Angeles LCP now has 3 of 4 segments certified. The remaining uncertified segment is the Playa Vista A segment. The remaining Playa Vista A segment consists of lands that were transferred to the State in 2003 to be managed by the Wildlife Conservation Board. Management and/or restoration plans have not been developed and thus no LCP is currently being developed.

The City of Los Angeles has six segments, all of which are uncertified. The Commission awarded LCP grants in FY 13 and FY 14 to the City of LA to work toward certification of the Venice LCP segment. The Cities of Santa Monica and Hermosa Beach are uncertified but also received LCP grants to complete their LCPs. The City of Torrance is also uncertified. LCPs were certified for the other jurisdictions in the county: the City of Malibu (2002), the City of El Segundo (1982), the City of Manhattan Beach (1994), the City of Redondo Beach (2010), the

¹ http://www.dof.ca.gov/research/demographic/reports/estimates/e-2/documents/July2014_packagew.pdf accessed 12/18/14.

City of Palos Verdes Estates (1991), the City of Rancho Palos Verdes (1983), the City of Long Beach (1980 - one of the earliest) and the City of Avalon on Santa Catalina Island (1981). Port Master Plans were certified for both the Port of Long Beach (1978) and the Port of Los Angeles (1980).

In addition to the planning underway to achieve certification of new LCPs, some work is underway in the City of Long Beach to update portions of its LCP. The City is currently working on completing the LCP for the Los Cerritos Wetlands area and updating the Southeast Area Development and Implementation Plan (SEADIP), including related parts of the LCP (see http://www.lbds.info/seadip_update). The Port of Los Angeles updated its Port Master Plan in February 2014, although this update primarily involved reformatting and making the document more user-friendly.



King Tides and Sea Level Rise (SP Goal 3)

This winter, Coastal Commission staff is continuing to participate in the California King Tides Project as an organizing partner. The California King Tides Project, commemorating five seasons of outreach on sea-level rise, encourages the public to view and photograph ultra-high tides and add to a growing collection at flickr.com/groups/cakingtides. Project organizers aim to help the public envision how California may be affected by sea-level rise and to underscore the importance of taking proactive steps to prepare for sea-level rise. The first of the king tides occurred from December 21-23, providing a glimpse of what the state can expect as sea levels rise. King tides will also occur January 19-21, and February 17-19.

Commission staff took photos of the December high tides and found many areas where under existing ultra-high tide conditions, beaches, marshes, and roadways were all flooded, illustrating what could happen on a daily occurrence with one foot of sea-level rise. The photos help document areas at risk and also can be used to help validate flood models. The Coastal Commission is a founding partner of the California King Tide Project and this year staff helped the Project by sending out announcements about the king tides to more than 15,000 members of the Commission's Public Education Program's email list, speaking to the media about the king tides, promoting the project on social media, and by documenting at-risk areas through photos. Staff encourages the Commissioners and the public to go to the coast during the January and February high tides, to safely take photos of the high water conditions, and to post the photos to the Project's Flickr, Facebook, or Twitter. To find out more, visit <http://california.kingtides.net/>.

Marine Debris Spatial Data (SP Actions 2.2.2, 2.2.10)

On December 18, 2014, the [West Coast Governors Alliance](#) (WCGA) on Ocean Health announced the availability of new data and tools via the West Coast Ocean Data Portal to assist coastal managers and stakeholders to view and explore geospatial data about marine debris cleanup and prevention efforts in our region's coastal waterways. The Coastal Commission participates in the Alliance in various capacities, and Eben Schwartz, the Commission's Marine Debris Program Manager, chairs the WCGA Debris Action Coordination Team. The new data viewer was developed in consultation with marine debris experts and builds on an extensive network of partners contributing data, including the West Coast Marine Debris database and the Regional Associations of West Coast Integrated Ocean Observing System. The tool allows citizens and organizations to upload beach and derelict gear cleanup data for the West Coast and visualize them within a regional context. The Data Viewer allows users to filter this information by geography, time, and debris type while also providing contextual information on sensitive marine habitats. These tools will assist users in identifying priority cleanup locations and in assessing the potential impact of local debris prevention policies.

Protect our Coast and Oceans Fund (SP Actions 7.4.1, 7.4.6)

The 2014 tax year filing season has begun, and the Commission is again promoting the "[Check the Coast](#)" campaign to encourage voluntary donations to the Commission's public education grant programs through the California tax form.

Meetings, Presentations, and Outreach

On December 15, 2014, Commission staff hosted a meeting with representatives of California state and federal coast and ocean management agencies, and had the pleasure of meeting with Dr. Kathryn D. Sullivan, Under Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere and NOAA Administrator, to discuss NOAA and state management priorities for the coast and ocean.

Correspondence of Note

Two recent letters regarding the LCP program budget and the National Marine Sanctuary nomination process are attached.

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November 13, 2014

The Honorable Edmund G. Brown, Jr.
Governor of California
c/o State Capitol, Suite 1173
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Governor Brown:

On November 12, 2014, the California Coastal Commission awarded the final \$1 million in Local Coastal Program (LCP) assistance grants to 12 cities and counties seeking to certify and update their LCPs. All of the grant applications include a special emphasis on preparing for sea level rise. The Commission would like to thank you, again, for approving these funds in the Budget Acts of 2013 and 2014. These awards will support proposed certification of 8 new LCPs, updates to 12 existing LCPs and elimination of 7 Areas of Deferred Certification in currently certified LCPs. Your commitment to proactive sea level rise adaptation through this funding has established California as a national leader in climate change response.

Local governments and the Commission are on the front lines of responding to sea level rise. State assistance to support climate preparedness planning in Local Coastal Programs is an important demonstration of the State's commitment to partnering with local governments to address this complex problem. In the absence of a statutory mandate to update or certify new Local Coastal Programs to address sea level rise, incentives such as these modest grants are imperative.

The state has a direct interest in supporting local government efforts to complete, certify and update LCPs. LCPs are the lynchpin of California's Coastal Program as they are the primary tools to protect and manage coastal resources and public access, and plan for orderly development. LCPs affect critical infrastructure and protect resources of statewide importance, such as public accessways, roads, bridges, power plants, water treatment plants, wetlands, parks, airports, ports and harbors—many of which are in the path of rising seas. This is why the *Safeguarding California* plan calls for the update and certification of LCPs to address sea level rise.

As evident in the grant applications from local government as well as the public comments received by the Commission, these funds are critically important to local governments. The Commission received 16 applications for grants totaling \$2,068,232 for this grant round—more than twice the available amount. In the previous grant cycle, applications exceeded total funds by more than 500 percent.

Even though the LCP grants are relatively small when compared with total costs, the amounts are significant at the local level, particularly for small and/or rural jurisdictions. They have an important multiplier effect, as local jurisdictions have been able to leverage an additional \$13.7 million in federal, regional and local funds (\$5.5 million for FY 13-14 and \$8.2 for FY 14-15).

In closing, the Commission would like to express its sincere gratitude for your support for this strategically critical program. My colleagues and I are hopeful that continued support will be included in the Governor's 2015-16 Budget.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Steve Kinsey". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "S".

STEVE KINSEY, Chair
California Coastal Commission

cc: Coastal Commission

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January 6, 2015

William Douros
West Coast Regional Director
NOAA Office of National Marine Sanctuaries
99 Pacific Street, Suite 100F
Monterey, CA 93940

RE: Support for Chumash National Marine Sanctuary Nomination

Dear Mr. Douros:

I write on behalf of the California Coastal Commission in support of the nomination of the Chumash Heritage National Marine Sanctuary offshore San Luis Obispo and northern Santa Barbara Counties. These waters have nationally significant marine, geological, biological and cultural characteristics, including abundant populations of diverse marine mammals and fish species, sensitive benthic habitats and kelp forests, major oceanic upwellings, and areas of unique beauty and cultural significance for the region's indigenous peoples. There is also significant public support for the designation of coastal waters from Santa Rosa Creek to Gaviota Creek as a National Marine Sanctuary, reflecting a growing consensus that the marine waters off the Central Coast are worthy of additional study and protection.

National Marine Sanctuary status is complementary with the California Coastal Act policies including those protecting water quality, marine and coastal habitats, recreational access, and archeological and aesthetic resources. The Commission and NOAA have a long history of successful partnership with respect to coast and ocean stewardship in and around the four existing marine sanctuaries in California. Integrated coastal management also will be increasingly important as we move forward with climate change adaptation, including addressing sea level rise and ocean acidification, proposed desalination facilities, coastal erosion and a whole host of related challenges. Sanctuary status enhances coordination efforts, scientific research relating to marine ecosystems and conditions, and funding opportunities.

Should the current proposal move forward, the Commission is prepared to support the effort in a collaborative manner that furthers both state and federal goals. This review will include coordination and review between NOAA and the Commission under the Coastal Zone Management Act for the establishment and management of any new or expanded National Marine Sanctuary. We look forward to our on-going shared management and protection of California's marine waters, including potential designation of a new marine sanctuary. Please let me know how my staff or I can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Charles F. Lester".

CHARLES F. LESTER
Executive Director