

**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**

June 5, 2017

TO: California Coastal Commission and Interested Parties

FROM: John Ainsworth, Executive Director

SUBJECT: Executive Director's Report, June 2017

---

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

**LCP Program Status – North Coast (Del Norte, Humboldt, Mendocino Counties) (SP Goal 4)****County of Del Norte**

Del Norte County has about 49 miles of shoreline extending from the Oregon border to the Humboldt County line. Roughly half is sandy beaches and half is rocks and rugged beaches that provide significant habitat. The coastal zone area totals approximately 64 square miles of the County's 1,230 square miles of total land area and contains the County of Del Norte and the incorporated City of Crescent City. The County contains special rural communities and tribal lands of several Native American tribes. Del Norte County also includes significant forest, agriculture and fisheries resources, state beaches and parks that protect coast redwood habitat and provide access and recreation, and extensive coastal dunes. Key wetland areas are at Lakes Earl and Talawa and at the mouth of the Smith and Klamath Rivers. In addition, the Crescent City Harbor lies just south of the City of Crescent City, and provides significant moorage for commercial fishing and recreational vessels alike.

The Del Norte County LCP has four segments (the County segment certified in 1983, the Harbor Segment certified in 1987, the Lopez Creek segment certified in 1987 and the Point Saint George segment which remains uncertified). The Pacific Shores Subdivision is also an Area of Deferred Certification (ADC). The City of Crescent City LCP has two segments, the Crescent City segment certified in 1983 and the McNamara-Gillespie segment certified in 1984. The City segment, including the Little Mo-Peep ADC and McNamara-Gillespie segment, was comprehensively updated in 2011. The County is working with the Crescent City Harbor District on an update of the Crescent City Harbor segment, expected for submittal to the Commission for certification in 2019.

**County of Humboldt**

With approximately 180 miles of coastline, plus an additional 102 miles of shoreline along Humboldt Bay, Humboldt County leads the state as the county with the greatest intertidal frontage. The coastal zone area totals approximately 203 square miles of the County's 4,052 square miles of total land area. There are five LCP jurisdictions in Humboldt County: the County and the Cities of Trinidad, Arcata, Eureka, and Fortuna (the City of Ferndale was removed from the coastal zone in 1979). The County's LCP has six geographic segments, each certified between 1982 and 1985, with the exception of three Areas of Deferred Certification (ADCs): Stagecoach Hill and Big Lagoon Estates Subdivision in the North Coast Area Plan segment, and the Trinidad Area Shoreline Lots in the Trinidad Area Plan segment. In January of 2014, the Commission awarded the County an LCP grant of \$29,000 in part to resolve issues related to the ADCs.

### Eureka, Arcata, and the Humboldt Bay Region

Humboldt Bay is the second largest natural bay in California and the largest estuary between San Francisco Bay and Coos Bay, Oregon. The bay is a significant harbor for port-related commercial and industrial uses as well as valuable for its ecological, aesthetic, and recreational resources. Historically the bay supported 10,000 acres of tidal marsh habitats. Since the mid-1800s, the majority of the historic tidelands were diked or filled, and today, only 10% of the historic tidal marsh habitat remains. The tidelands and submerged lands of the bay are administered by the Humboldt Bay Harbor, Recreation, and Conservation District and the Cities of Arcata and Eureka pursuant to legislative grants.

Humboldt Bay has the unfortunate distinction of being identified as having the highest rate of sea level rise in the State due to active land subsidence associated with the Cascadia Subduction Zone that lies offshore extending from Cape Mendocino to Vancouver Island, Canada. In 2013 the [Humboldt Bay Shoreline Inventory, Mapping and Sea Level Rise Vulnerability Assessment](#), funded by the State Coastal Conservancy, was completed.<sup>1</sup> The assessment found that 50% of Humboldt Bay's 102-mile long shoreline is composed of artificial dike and railroad structures constructed over 100 years ago and in varying stages of disrepair. Some 26 miles of shoreline is rated as highly vulnerable to breaching and/or overtopping under today's higher high tide events. In 2015 the final [Humboldt Bay Sea Level Rise, Hydrodynamic Modeling, and Inundation Vulnerability Mapping report](#) was completed (also funded by the State Coastal Conservancy),<sup>2</sup> which projects between 2.0 feet and 5.3 feet of relative sea level rise by 2100. Together with the Adaptation Planning Project [Phase 2 report](#),<sup>3</sup> the studies show that numerous critical regional assets and coastal resources are located in areas vulnerable to inundation if the shoreline is breached or overtopped, including municipal utility and stormwater infrastructure, state highways and local roads, urban residential and commercial areas, and thousands of acres of agricultural lands.

Both the Commission and the Ocean Protection Council have awarded LCP grants to fund LCP updates in the Humboldt Bay region that include policies addressing SLR and adaptation strategies to address SLR-related impacts and hazards. The OPC awarded a \$250,000 LCP grant to the City of Eureka in 2014 to update its LCP, which was certified in 1984 and partially updated in 1999. The City recently completed a vulnerability assessment (VA) and draft adaptation plan, which Commissions staff is currently reviewing and plans to provide comments on. The Commission awarded a \$54,000 LCP grant to the City of Arcata in 2014 to update its LCP, which was effectively certified in 1986. The City of Arcata has completed both its VA and draft policies for a comprehensive LCP update, which is expected to be transmitted to the Commission for certification in 2017. The OPC awarded a \$90,000 LCP grant to Humboldt County in 2014 to update the Humboldt Bay Area Plan segment of the County's LCP, which was certified in 1983. The County currently is building off of the City of Eureka's VA to complete its assessment identifying critical assets at risk in the unincorporated communities around Humboldt Bay. Concurrent updates of the three LCPs is facilitating a regional approach to developing SLR policies and adaptation strategies for the Humboldt Bay region.

In addition to sea level rise issues, Humboldt Bay also is considering changes to many of the land use and zoning designations around the bay. Both the County and the City of Eureka are examining their respective inventories of land designated and zoned for coastal dependent industrial (CDI) uses, and both are considering potentially redesignating/rezoning CDI land to other uses as well as developing LCP policies to allow for interim uses on vacant under-utilized CDI lands. In January of 2014, the Commission awarded the County an LCP grant of \$29,000 in part to complete an inventory of coastal

---

<sup>1</sup> [A. Laird 2013](#) is available at the [Humboldt Bay Harbor District's website](#), which also contains links to the GIS data and Google Earth data for viewing shoreline vulnerability and sea level rise inundation maps.

<sup>2</sup> [Northern Hydrology and Engineering 2015](#)

<sup>3</sup> [A. Laird 2015](#)

dependent industrial (CDI) sites in the Humboldt Bay Area Plan segment to facilitate development of interim use policies for these currently under-used sites. Recently the County submitted an application for a major LCP amendment that would change the Humboldt Bay Area Plan and coastal zoning regulations to allow for the use of vacant and underutilized CDI land around the bay on an interim basis by a variety of other, non-CDI uses (e.g., general industrial and light industrial uses). This amendment is expected to be brought to the Commission for action in August of 2017. In addition, in November of 2014 the Commission awarded a grant of \$35,000 to the County to complete a CDI land inventory and related mapping product and to update policies related to tsunami hazards, since the region is high risk for severe flooding associated with a near-shore tsunami event generated by a major Cascadia earthquake.

#### Uncertified Areas of Humboldt County

In January of 2014, the Commission awarded an LCP grant of \$29,000 to Humboldt in part to certify the County's three Areas of Deferred Certification in the Trinidad and Big Lagoon areas. Uncertified lands in the two County planning segments (Trinidad Area Plan and North Coast Area Plan) total approximately 1,200 acres and constitute a significant portion of the North Coast District's permit workload. The County Planning Commission has approved draft land use plan designations and zoning districts for these areas, including overlay zones related to geologic hazards and ESHA protection. The County plans to schedule the LCP amendments for action by the Board of Supervisors after receipt of additional feedback on the draft designations, policies, and ordinances from Commission staff.

#### City of Trinidad

The City of Trinidad has the oldest certified LCP in the state, certified in 1980. The City is on the semi-enclosed Trinidad Bay, both a harbor-of-refuge to transient vessels and home to numerous commercial fishing, charter, and recreational boats. Trinidad is presently in the process of updating its LCP, including policies and standards for resolving issues associated with its one ADC, the Trinidad Harbor and Upland Support Area. In November of 2014, the Commission awarded an LCP grant in the amount of \$80,000 to the City to assist with the preparation of their comprehensive update, with the work program focusing on the resolving the uncertified harbor area, development of policies and procedures for the protection of cultural resources, and identifying adaptation measures for responding to sea level rise and climactic changes. Commission staff has been meeting regularly with the City, who is on target to transmit an LCP amendment application for a comprehensive update to the Commission for certification in April of 2018.

#### City of Fortuna

Finally, the City of Fortuna has only a portion of a single 3½-acre developed parcel situated in the coastal zone. Consequently, given the small physical extent of this area, the City has not undertaken efforts to adopt an LCP and to date has deferred to the Commission's retained coastal development permit authority at this site (City-owned "River Lodge").

#### **Mendocino County**

Mendocino County has about 159 miles of shoreline. The coastal zone area totals approximately 145 square miles of the County's 3,878 square miles of total land area and includes the County of Mendocino and two incorporated cities: Fort Bragg and Point Arena. The area also contains Noyo Harbor (Noyo Harbor District), from which a viable commercial fishing fleet and numerous recreational water craft are based.

The County includes numerous rural coastal communities, and state beaches and parks that provide significant public access and recreation opportunities, from the remote, rugged northern shoreline within the Sinkyone Wilderness State Park, to the resort destination / visitor-serving accommodation oriented towns of Mendocino, Little River, Albion, Elk, and Gualala. In addition, substantial

agricultural and timberland resources exist along the uplifted marine terraces and within the lower watersheds of the Ten Mile, Big, Albion, Navarro, Garcia, and Gualala Rivers.

The Land Use Plan of the Mendocino County LCP was certified in November 1985. Subsequently two geographic segments were created: the Town of Mendocino segment, at the County's behest in 1990, and the "Pygmy Forest Vegetation" segment, as the result of a judicial ruling in 1995. The Implementation Plan of the "balance" of Mendocino County and thus the LCP was effectively certified in September 1992, followed by the Mendocino Town Plan segment in November 1996. In October 2014, the County submitted a comprehensive amendment to the Town Plan that addresses myriad changes to its visitor-serving accommodation provisions, establishes two new public facility sites, and institutes sustainable development policies for rainwater harvesting and incorporating low impact development design features in new development. In the interest of expediting its certification, is currently conducting local hearings on further refinements to its October 2014 Town Plan update amendment submittal was resubmitted to the Commission for certification review in January 2016. Hearings on the Town Plan Amendment commenced at the Commission's October meeting 2016 in Ukiah and are scheduled for action on June 6, 2017 at the Commission's June 2017 meeting. The Pygmy Forest Vegetation segment remains uncertified.

The City of Fort Bragg's LCP, originally certified in February 1984, and was comprehensively updated in 2008. The City is also engaged in developing a specific plan based LCP amendment for redevelopment of the 320-acre former Georgia-Pacific California Wood Products Manufacturing Facility, which is expected to be submitted to the Commission for certification in late 2018. The City of Point Arena's LCP was initially certified in December 1981. A comprehensive update was subsequently certified in August of 2006.







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

Commission staff have been providing regular outreach and training sessions to support implementation of the Commission's Sea Level Rise (SLR) Guidance and in support of LCP Grant work. Recently staff participated in several events:

### **Ocean Protection Council and Ocean Science Trust Workshops**

In May 2017, Coastal Commission staff participated in public workshops in San Francisco and Los Angeles about the planned update to the State Sea Level Rise Guidance document. The workshops were hosted by the Ocean Protection Council and Ocean Science Trust, and they provided opportunities for public comment on a new science report entitled *Rising Seas in California*. This report provides a synthesis of recent research on sea level rise and will inform the update to the state guidance.

### **2017 National Adaptation Forum**

On May 5-8, 2017, Coastal Commission NOAA Coastal Fellow Sumi Selvaraj (with NOAA funding), participated in the 2017 National Adaptation Forum, a biennial, national gathering of adaptation professionals in Saint Paul, Minnesota. Staff presented a poster on ongoing Coastal Commission efforts to implement the Commission's Sea Level Rise Policy Guidance and participated on a panel sharing lessons learned from working with FEMA, State Coastal Conservancy, NOAA, USC Sea Grant, USGS and San Mateo County on aligning local efforts in hazard mitigation and coastal management to minimize local vulnerability to sea level rise and coastal hazards.

### **Safeguarding California Plan 2017 Update – May 2017 Workshop**

Coastal Commission staff participated in [public workshop](#) in San Francisco on the [Safeguarding California Plan Draft: 2017 Update](#). The workshop was hosted the Natural Resources Agency to provide opportunities for public comment on the Safeguarding California Plan Draft, which was released to the public in April 2017. Prior to attending the workshop, Coastal Commission Staff provided comments on earlier versions of the Ocean and Coastal Resources Chapter through the Coastal and Ocean Climate Action Team (CO-CAT) working group organized by the Ocean Protection Council.

### **Adapting to Sea Level Rise on Humboldt Bay's Agricultural Lands – Public Forum**

Commission staff organized a public forum in Eureka on May 4, on "Adapting to Sea Level Rise on Humboldt Bay's Agricultural Lands," which was co-hosted by Humboldt County. The 120 participants represented a diverse array of agricultural landowners, resource management agencies, local governments, and community members. The forum focused on projected sea level rise impacts and potential adaptation strategies for Humboldt Bay's vulnerable agricultural lands that are diked former tidelands. Commission staff gave an overview of coastal development permitting for agricultural lands, and the planning directors for the three local governments around the bay (Humboldt County, and the cities of Arcata and Eureka) spoke about updating their Local Coastal Programs to address sea level rise. The forum concluded with a panel discussion to answer questions and receive input from the participants. A recording of the forum will be available soon on the Commission's new Coastal Agriculture webpage at <https://www.coastal.ca.gov/agriculture/>. Financial assistance for the forum was provided by a NOAA Coastal Zone Management Act grant.

## Meetings and Events

### **NOAA's Annual National Office of General Counsel Enforcement Training Event (SP 5.4)**

On May 9, members of enforcement staff were invited to attend NOAA's annual national Office of General Counsel Enforcement Section attorney staff in-training event. This year's event was held at NOAA's Greater Farallones Marine Sanctuary Visitor Center at Crissy Field in San Francisco. Commission staff gave a presentation on the Coastal Act and our enforcement program, generally to NOAA's Chief of Enforcement, and staff attorneys from around the nation, including their west coast office in Long Beach. A round table discussion about our program followed the presentation. It was a great opportunity for the two programs to learn more about each other and the interplay between NOAA's marine sanctuaries in California and the coastal zone. This opportunity will likely result in improved coordination with one another in the future on matters in which we share jurisdiction, and they indicated a strong interest in working with the Coastal Commission in the future.

### **Coastal Cleanup Day Coordinators' Workshops. (SP 1.3)**

The Public Education Program held a series of three workshops in May for the local coordinators of California Coastal Cleanup Day. The workshops were held in different locations – the Bay Area, Long Beach, and in the Sierra Nevada town of Auburn – in order to maximize participation among the coordinators from across the state. Over 40 participants took part, joining together to discuss their successes and challenges in coordinating the cleanup and kicking off local planning for the 2017 event. Participants left the workshops energized and ready to continue their work preparing for the Commission's 33<sup>rd</sup> Annual cleanup, coming up on September 16<sup>th</sup>.

### **Kids' Ocean Day Cleanups. (SP 1.3.)**

Starting in May and wrapping up June 1, six Kids' Ocean Day Adopt-A-Beach cleanup events took place in Monterey, San Francisco, San Diego, Los Angeles, Huntington Beach, and Orange County. About 8,000 kids from underserved schools enjoyed a day at the beaches, cleaned them up, and then sat in formation on the sand to spell out "Come Together" messages encouraging the public to come together for the ocean. These events were funded by the CCC's Whale Tail grants. Chair Bochco and Vice Chair Turnbull-Sanders attended the LA event at Dockweiler State Beach.



*(Mission Beach, San Diego)*

### **CSAC 2017 Legislative Conference - Coastal Counties Regional Association (SP 1.1.4 & 7.2.5)**

On May 17, Executive Director Ainsworth and Elizabeth Fuchs (*Statewide Planning Manager*) gave a presentation at the California State Association of Counties Legislative Conference – Coastal Counties Regional Association. The presentation addressed the Commission's commitment to a strong partnership between the Commission and local governments related to LCP planning work and establishing effective working relationships; the agency's work on sea level rise adaptation planning across the State; and the Commission's focus on public access for underserved, low income communities of color.

### **Extension of the Newport Trail – Mendocino County (SP 1.1.4 & 1.4.3)**

On May 21, Commissioner Brownsey, Executive Director Ainsworth and Linda Locklin (*Public Access Manager*) attended the ribbon cutting for a new trail extension and scenic overlook for [The Newport trail](#) in Mendocino County. This trail easement was secure through a coastal development permit for a small inn on the beautiful Mendocino coast. The Mendocino Land Trust is the non-profit entity that has accepted constructed and is now managing this new trail and scenic overlook. The Mendocino Land Trust has accepted, constructed and is managing 15 Coastal Commission required public access easements for trails to the beach and scenic overlooks in Mendocino County. These beach access points and scenic overlooks would not be possible without a strong partnership between the Mendocino Land Trust, the Coastal Commission and our great sister agency the Coastal Conservancy.



### **15th Annual Headwaters to Oceans (H2O) Conference (SP 3.1)**

On May 23<sup>rd</sup> & May 24<sup>th</sup> Commission staff attended the 15th Annual Headwaters to Oceans (H2O) Conference at UC Irvine. The plenary lunch-time speakers were Dr. Patrick Barnard, USGS, who covered many of the same topics as at the May Commission hearing and Julia Elkin, California Coastal Conservancy who discussed an In-Lieu Program for Tidal Restoration. The main program blocks were Coastal Planning and Climate Change; Wetlands Restoration, Ecology/Biology; Watershed/Water Quality; and Native Nations. Vice-Chair Turnbull-Sanders and Commissioner Garcia-Erceg sat on a panel with Jennifer Lucchesi (*Executive Officer for the State Lands Commission*) to discuss strategies for native nations and environmental justice groups to advocate and engage in government proceedings related to fresh water and coastal issues.

### **Meeting with Deputy Assistant Administrator for Ocean Services and Coastal Zone Management. (SP 7.8.3)**

On May 17, Commission staff, along with staff from the University of Southern California Sea Grant Program, met with Nicole R. LeBoeuf, Deputy Assistant Administrator for Ocean Services and Coastal Zone Management with the National Ocean Service based in Silver Spring, Maryland, on her visit to southern California. Ms. LeBoeuf was briefed on the Commission's core coastal resource management concerns regarding public access and recreation and sensitive habitat protection. Commission staff highlighted the Commission's ongoing efforts and challenges working with local governments to address these resource issues in the context of climate change. Commission staff also underscored the importance of having NOAA's ongoing support which has included resources to develop tools like the Commission's Sea Level Rise Policy Guidance document. Sea Grant staff discussed their work to educate and inform local communities about sea level rise, including their work in the Los Angeles region through their AdaptLA program and the importance of partnerships with Federal, State and local entities.

### **Commission's Environmental Justice (EJ) Policy Status Report**

Commission staff, working with Vice Chair Turnbull-Sanders, has created a work plan for moving forward with the Commission's EJ policy outreach efforts. The Commission has assembled an internal working group made up of staff from each district office with expertise and/or interest in the subject. They are an enthusiastic group, ethnically diverse, some with prior experience and language skills which will be helpful when we start reaching out to communities. The team will review some initial training options and begin reaching out to local and regional groups and stakeholders who are active or potential participants in coastal EJ issues, to listen to their perspectives and priorities for how the Commission can effectively develop and implement a comprehensive approach to EJ concerns. Commission staff will continue to work closely with the Vice Chair and the Chair with the goal of bringing a draft EJ policy and associated recommendations to the Commission at a future public hearing.

### **Budget**

The Senate and Assembly Budget Sub-Committees approved the Governor's May Revisions to the Coastal Commission's FY 17-18 budget. The changes to the Commission's budget include an addition of \$637,000 from the Coastal Act Services Fund (permit filing fees) to cover basic, existing office rental and archive costs. The May Revision includes two Associate Governmental Analyst positions to provide needed service in the Accounting and Business Services units (one position funded from Coastal Act Services Fund and one position from the General Fund). The May Revision also included two, 3-year analyst positions for a pilot program to enhance Enforcement staff capacity. These two positions will be funded from the Violation Remediation Account (VRA) which is held by the Coastal Conservancy and holds all violation related funds from Coastal Commission enforcement actions.

The Legislature is the last phase of consideration of the complete staff budget and is expected to complete their budget work and vote by June 15 and forward the budget to the Governor. The Governor will review the budget as approved by the Legislature and use his line item veto authority at his discretion. Once approved and signed by the Governor, the FY 17-18 Enacted State Budget would begin on July 1, 2017.

Commission staff will do a Commission briefing on the budget and budget process at the July Commission meeting and provide copies of the FY 17-18 Budget once signed by the Governor. Commission staff will continue to work with the Commission Budget Sub-Committee composed of Commissioners Groom and Luevano and will meet with the sub-committee prior to the July Commission meeting.