

CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION

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November 2, 2018

TO: California Coastal Commission and Interested Parties

FROM: John Ainsworth, Executive Director

SUBJECT: Executive Director's Report, November 2018

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

LCP Program Status – North Central District (SP Goal 4) LCP Program

The North Central Coast district stretches from the north end of Sonoma County at the Gualala River to the San Mateo/Santa Cruz County border near Año Nuevo State Reserve in the south, approximately 258 miles of coastline. It encompasses three offshore National Marine Sanctuaries (Gulf of Farallones, Cordell Bank, and Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuaries).

The district has four coastal counties (Sonoma, Marin, San Francisco, and San Mateo) and four incorporated cities (San Francisco, Daly City, Pacifica, and Half Moon Bay), each with certified LCPs. There are also two major harbors (at Pillar Point in San Mateo County and Bodega Bay in Sonoma County), two public entities with Public Works Plans (the San Mateo County Resource Conservation District and the Montara Water and Sanitary District), and one with a coastal long range development plan (University of California's Bodega Marine facility).

The North Central coastal zone is diverse, with rugged Sonoma and Marin County coastlines to the north giving way at the Golden Gate Bridge to more urban areas of San Francisco, Daly City, and Pacifica, and even through to Half Moon Bay, then transitioning to more rural landscapes all the way to the Santa Cruz County border and beyond. Planning issues include protecting agriculture and scenic rural areas and responding to coastal erosion and sea level rise in the more urban parts of the district. The district also has significant public park lands and popular visitor destinations, intensifying the need to provide visitor-serving facilities and opportunities. As summarized below, almost all of the North Central Coast District LCPs are undergoing some form of update currently, including comprehensive updates in Marin, Sonoma, Pacifica and Half Moon Bay.

Sonoma County

Sonoma County has about 69 miles of shoreline. The Sonoma County coast supports agricultural lands, timber preserves, open space areas, and an extensive network of recreational lands, parks, and beaches. About one-half of coastline property is in public ownership, including holdings of the Sonoma County Regional Parks Department and the University of California's Bodega Marine facility. California State Parks owns Fort Ross State Historic Park, Salt Point State Park, Kruse Rhododendron State Natural Reserve, and Sonoma Coast State Park, which includes 17 miles of coastline from Bodega Point to Jenner. The Sonoma County coast also supports an important harbor facility for commercial and recreational boating at Bodega Bay.

The Sonoma County LCP was originally certified in 1981, and a major update was approved by the Commission in 2002. Work for another major update to the LCP has been underway since 2009, during which time Commission and County staff have regularly coordinated. The update will focus on sea level rise, biotic resources, water quality, geologic hazards, and public access. The County was a recipient of grant funding from the Ocean Protection Council in 2013 for sea level rise assessment and adaptation work for the LCP update. County staff released a preliminary draft version of the updated LCP in June of 2015 for public review and held 5 public workshops throughout the summer. The County anticipates additional public review of a revised LCP draft early in 2019 with action by the Board of Supervisors later in 2019. Commission staff continues to work closely with the County to provide early comments on the preliminary draft and help move this update forward.

Figure 1. Sonoma County Coastal Zone



Marin County

Marin County has approximately 106 miles of coastline from Sonoma County to Point Bonita near the Golden Gate Bridge. The coastal zone contains approximately 128 square miles of the County’s 520 square miles of total land area. About 40% of this coastal zone area (or approximately 53 square miles) are owned and managed by the federal government, mostly within either Point Reyes National Seashore or Golden Gate National Recreation Area, and thus generally not subject to the LCP but rather to the Commission’s Federal Consistency review procedures. The remaining 60% (or roughly 75 square miles) of the Marin County coastal zone is

subject to the County’s LCP where protection of agriculture is a primary LCP concern, including because nearly two-thirds of the area subject to the County’s LCP (roughly 48 square miles) is zoned Coastal Agricultural Production Zone (C-APZ), the LCP’s primary agricultural zoning classification.

The Marin County LCP was originally certified in 1982. In recent years the County worked on developing its first major update to the LCP. In May of 2014, the Commission conditionally certified the LUP portion of the update following a public hearing in Inverness, and in April of 2015 considered the IP portion of the update at a public hearing in San Rafael. At that 2015 hearing, the County withdrew its proposed IP update, preferring to spend more time addressing their concerns with the Commission-certified LUP and staff’s recommendations on the IP. The County then submitted a revised LCP update for Commission consideration, and the Commission certified most of the Update subject to modifications, which the County accepted in part in April of 2018. This portion of the LCP Update was certified by the Commission in June of 2018 but will not become effective for land use planning and coastal permitting purposes unless and until the remaining chapters and sections of the LCP update are certified. Marin County received a FY 13-14 LCP planning grant from the Commission designed to further refine coastal hazard policies in light of sea level rise. The County completed their sea level rise vulnerability assessment, and has been working on their adaptation strategy since then, including through the revised updated LCP. Commission staff continues to work closely with the County to help move this update and the sea level rise planning grant efforts forward.

Figure 2. Marin County Coastal Zone



San Francisco City and County

The City and County of San Francisco’s coastal zone area extends approximately 6 miles from the Fort Funston cliff area north to the Golden Gate Bridge. Most of the 1,771 acre coastal zone is publically owned. Golden Gate Park, the San Francisco Zoo, and Lake Merced, which are owned by the City and County of San Francisco, make up 60% of the coastal zone area. Another 25% of the coastal zone is within the Golden Gate National Recreation Area. Only 14% of the land in the coastal zone is privately owned, 5% of which is private residential and commercial property, and the remaining 9% is within the Olympic Club area.

The City and County of San Francisco LCP, called the Western Shoreline Plan, was certified in 1986. However, because of an issue regarding whether the Olympic Club property should be zoned for future use as either residential or open space use in the event the Club ever ceases operation, the segment of the LCP covering the Olympic Club property within San Francisco was not certified.

The City and County received a FY 14-15 LCP planning grant from the Commission and the Ocean Protection Council to amend its LCP. The amendment was designed to reflect at least part of the vision of the multi-stakeholder process which resulted in the Ocean Beach Master Plan, including addressing the shoreline erosion and hazard challenges at South Ocean Beach. The amendment also includes sea-level rise adaptation policies. Commission staff participated in the development of the Ocean Beach Master Plan for several years, and coordinated closely with staff from the City over the last several years as the City worked with an LCP advisory group and interested parties on their proposed LCP language. The subject LCP language was approved by the City in January of 2018 and adopted by the Commission at the May 2018 hearing in Santa Rosa.

Figure 3. San Francisco City and County



San Mateo County

San Mateo County has about 59 miles of shoreline. The coastal zone area totals approximately 153 square miles (or just over a third) of the County's 448 square miles of total land area. This coastal zone area includes unincorporated San Mateo County lands as well as the Cities of Daly City, Pacifica and Half Moon Bay, each of which have certified LCPs. In the County, the Commission has also approved Public Works Plans for the San Mateo County Resource Conservation District and the Montara Water and Sanitary District.

The unincorporated San Mateo County coast supports significant agricultural lands, a commercial fishing harbor at Pillar Point, and major public access to parks, beaches and other recreational lands, substantial marine and other natural resource areas, and extensive scenic resources. San Mateo County has many popular coastal visitor destinations for millions of residents of the Bay Area. The rugged northern coast of the County through the suburban cities of Daly City and Pacifica contain rocky bluff tops and significant beach resources that provide important recreational opportunities but present significant development hazards challenges. The MidCoast County area supports unincorporated communities such as Montara, Moss Beach, Princeton-by-the-Sea, El Granada, and Miramar extending to the City of Half Moon Bay. The City of Half Moon Bay includes both more urban-style development and services, as well as open space and habitat areas, where a key issue continues to be the way in which to best maintain such a balance while also maintaining a small town character. South of the City of Half Moon Bay to the Santa Cruz County line, mountains drop down to rolling agricultural and grasslands on marine terraces, with redwood forests, oak woodland and chaparral found inland. This area includes the communities of San Gregorio and Pescadero, and contains significant access and recreation areas, agricultural resources, extensive scenic resources, and a major wetland at Pescadero Marsh.

All jurisdictions in this area have certified LCPs. The San Mateo County LCP was one of the earliest LCPs submitted. The entire LCP was first certified in April 1981 and addressed major growth, agricultural, resource and development issues. The LCP for the MidCoast area of the County was comprehensively updated in 2012. The LCP for the City of Daly City was first certified in April 1984 and the LCP for the City of Pacifica was first certified June 1994. The LCP for the City of Half Moon Bay was first certified in April 1996. Both Pacifica and Half Moon Bay are currently involved in full LCP updates, with the City of Half Moon Bay awarded FY 13/14 and FY 16/17 LCP grants and the City of Pacifica awarded a FY 16-17 LCP grant by the Commission.

LCP update planning is underway throughout the County. Pacifica completed an administrative draft of their LCP update in April of 2014. After a new City Council election and a new Planning Director and City Manager, the City staff is re-discussing the goals of an updated LCP with City elected officials. The City also received a third round grant from the Commission to support the completion of a vulnerability assessment, adaptation plan, and updates to the LCP to address coastal hazards and sea level rise. The City is currently working on draft coastal hazard policies as part of its LCP update, and the City and Commission staff will continue to work closely on this update to resolve issues as early in the process as possible.

The Commission awarded two grants to the City of Half Moon Bay to help support an LCP update effort. Half Moon Bay has completed a sea level rise vulnerability assessment and an administrative draft of the updated LUP, and is currently working on updates to the IP. The

current round of grant funding will support some additional technical studies as well as final revisions and local hearings for the updated LCP. Commission staff continues to work closely with the City to support development of their draft LCP.

The County is working to complete an update for the Princeton Planning Area. This update is to be accomplished through “Plan Princeton” which is currently in process. A Preferred Plan has been drafted based upon the public’s comments and input on the alternatives. The Preferred Plan will serve as a base for the drafting of amendments for the LCP. Commission staff continues to work closely with the County to help move this update forward.

Figure 4. San Mateo County Coastal Zone LCP Jurisdictions



Meetings and Events

2018 Environmental Law Conference at Yosemite

On October 19, 2018, Alison Dettmer, Deputy Director for the Energy, Ocean Resources and Federal Consistency Division, represented the Coastal Commission on a “*Drill, Baby, Drill*” panel at the 27th Annual 2018 Environmental Law Conference at Yosemite. The panel, moderated by Jordan Diamond from the UC Berkeley School of Law, also included Lisa Halko with the California Department of Conservation and Miyoko Sakashita with the Center for Biological Diversity. Alison specifically addressed the Coastal Commission’s federal consistency authority, under the Coastal Zone Management Act, over the U.S. Department of the Interior’s proposed 2019-2024 Five-Year Oil and Gas Leasing Program.

Southern California Wetlands Recovery Project Board of Governor’s Meeting

On October 18, 2018, Susan Hansch, Chief Deputy Director and Kate Huckelbridge, Senior Environmental Scientist attended the annual meeting of the Southern California Wetlands Director’s Group Meeting at the Living Coast Discovery Center in Chula Vista. Susan serves as an alternate Board member for the Commission’s Executive Director and Dr. Kate Huckelbridge is a member of the Southern California Managers Work Group. The Southern California Wetlands Recovery Project is a multi-agency group of state and federal agencies involved in protecting and restoring wetlands in southern California. The Commission staff has actively participated in the ongoing work of the group. The Director’s Group took action to approve an updated Regional Strategy 2018 “*Wetlands on the Edge*” that provides a comprehensive approach to addressing the future of Southern California wetlands.

Elkhorn Slough Designed as Wetland of International Importance

On October 5, 2018, Susan Hansch, Chief Deputy Director, represented the Coastal Commission at the special ceremony to commemorate the designation of Elkhorn Slough in north Monterey County, “Wetland of International Importance” per the [RAMSAR Convention](#). This is a major recognition of the ecological value of the Elkhorn Slough and the Elkhorn Slough National Estuarine Research Reserve. The event was well attended by local, state and federal staff and officials and scientists and volunteers. Congressman Jimmy Panetta, Senator Bill Monning, and Assemblyman Mark Stone (former Coastal Commissioner) all spoke at the event. This is a great honor to the work done by so many over the years to protect and restore Elkhorn Slough. The event was held adjacent to the site of the current wetland restoration project at Elkhorn Slough.

Staff Leadership and Communications Training (SP 7.7)

On October 2nd and 3rd, we repeated a two-day training program on leadership and communications for all Commission staff who were unable to participate in the trainings provided earlier this year. This included a number of new staff members who recently joined various offices and departments up and down the state. Developing leadership skills and the ability to effectively communicate both internally and externally are important elements for the success of the agency going forward.

The Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Bond

The Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Bond Action of 2006 (Prop 84) authorized research funding to be dispersed through both the University of California Sea Grant and the University of Southern California Sea Grant Programs. At the recent October 25th meeting of the Ocean Protection Council meeting, various projects were approved for funding in the categories of:

- (1) sea-level rise adaptation and coastal resilience,
- (2) coastal sediment management,
- (3) marine renewable energy,
- (4) marine pollution
- (5) ocean acidification, hypoxia, and other changes in ocean conditions from a changing climate and
- (6) sustainable fisheries and aquaculture.

Descriptions of the projects approved for funding can be found here:

<https://caseagrant.ucsd.edu/news/ocean-protection-council-awards-6-million-to-research-projects-that-advance-ocean-and-coastal>. As part of the ongoing collaboration between OPC and the Commission, Commission staff served on several of the Technical Review Committees for these funding categories and providing input on the various research proposals, covering both technical quality and utility of the research results to Commission actions.

Commission Public Education Events (SP 7.3)

Monterey Bay Aquarium's Plastic Pollution Summit

On October 5th, Public Education (PE) staff attended Monterey Bay Aquarium's Plastic Pollution Summit, engaging with teachers who have committed to completing ambitious projects with their students.

Whale Tail Grant Webinar

On October 10th, PE staff provided a live webinar providing extra guidance on completing the Whale Tail[®] grant application. It included walking the attendees through the application, explaining the priorities of the Coastal Commission, detailing the scoring criteria, and outlining how to complete the different sections, and ended with a question-and-answer period. Sixty-nine people attended, and the recording was posted online and has been viewed another 70 times.

North Bay Science Discovery Day in Santa Rosa & the Bay Area Science Festival in SF

On October 26th, Coastal Commission staff presented information and activities on ocean acidification to hundreds of adults and children at the North Bay Science Discovery Day in Santa Rosa, and at Discovery Day at AT&T Park in San Francisco on November 3rd, as part of the Bay Area Science Festival.

Fremont Library Presentation - *Rising Seas, Plastic Seas*

On October 29th, PE staff collaborated with the Commission's Sea Level Rise team to present a talk at the Fremont Public Library. The evening program was titled "*Rising Seas, Plastic Seas*", and provided an overview of the dual challenges of plastic pollution and sea level rise. The presentation coincided with the end of a month during which the library had been showing the Commission's amateur photo contest traveling display.

University Presentations

Noaki Schwartz, Commission's public information officer, spoke to students at Occidental College and Cal State Dominguez Hills on the agency, our work and environmental justice.

Coastal Trail Videos (SP 1.4)

The Coastal Commission funded a series of short videos about segments of the California Coastal Trail along California's coast. The videos are produced by Rigler Creative with support of a Commission Whale Tail grant. This month we are highlighting segments of the Coastal Trail in San Francisco: <https://www.kcet.org/shows/california-coastal-trail/exploring-the-sutro-baths-and-the-natural-beauty-of-san-franciscos>.