

**CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION**

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**RESOLUTION BY THE CALIFORNIA COASTAL  
COMMISSION COMMITTING TO MAINTAINING AND  
ENHANCING CALIFORNIA'S BEACHES, SHORELINE AND  
RELATED COASTAL HABITATS IN THE FACE OF GLOBAL  
CLIMATE CHANGE AND SEA LEVEL RISE**

**AUGUST 9, 2018**

**EXHIBIT 1**

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**RESOLUTION BY THE  
CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION  
COMMITTING TO MAINTAINING AND ENHANCING CALIFORNIA'S BEACHES,  
SHORELINE AND RELATED COASTAL HABITATS IN THE FACE OF GLOBAL  
CLIMATE CHANGE AND SEA LEVEL RISE**

**Whereas:** The California Coastal Commission was established by the people of the State of California through initiative statute in 1972 and made permanent in 1976 by the California Legislature as the state's principal coastal management agency with diverse responsibilities, including but not limited to protecting, maintaining, and where feasible, enhancing and restoring the overall quality of the coastal zone environment, including by maximizing public access and public recreation opportunities to and along the coast for all; and

**Whereas:** the Commission is committed to protecting and enhancing California's coast and ocean for present and future generations, and does so through planning and regulation of environmentally-sustainable development, protection of sensitive marine and terrestrial natural resources, provision for maximized public recreational access, and prioritizing other coastal resource protection, all while using rigorous science, strong public participation, education, and intergovernmental coordination; and

**Whereas:** the California coast stretches over 1,200 miles and sustains some of the most biodiverse habitat and wildlife populations in the world, providing the people of California and visitors with a multitude of unique recreational, educational, cultural, and economic opportunities; and

**Whereas:** California's beaches, bays, and ocean are major international, national, regional, and local attractions, helping draw over 250 million tourists to the state each year and maintain the nation's largest ocean and coastal economy worth more than \$44 billion per year; and

**Whereas:** one out of every fifteen Americans lives in one of California's fifteen coastal counties and global and state population is rising, leading to increased demand on coastal resources, including recreational areas; and

**Whereas:** the people of California expressed strong support for maximum public access to California's coasts and beaches through passage of Proposition 20 in 1972 and this support remains today, with a 2017 survey of the Public Policy Institute of California finding that 73% of Californians across age, income, and racial and ethnic groups say the condition of California's ocean and coastal beaches is very important to its future coastal economy and quality of life; and

**Whereas:** climate change has and will continue to result in rising sea levels and more intense storm activity, which in turn pose a grave threat to California's shoreline, including its sandy beaches, offshore recreational areas, dunes, rocky intertidal areas, coastal bluffs, wetlands,

sensitive habitats, and other coastal resource areas, as well as to its iconic culture, communities, infrastructure, and coastal and ocean economy; and

**Whereas:** the California Ocean Protection Council’s 2017 ‘Rising Seas in California’ report and the State’s ‘Sea Level Rise Guidance 2018 Update’ highlight potential for extreme sea level rise scenarios, finding that Antarctic ice sheet loss may lead to sea level rise of approximately 10 feet by 2100, which would lead to dramatically increased losses of beaches and other shoreline areas, including coastal habitat areas; and

**Whereas:** a 2018 State Coastal Conservancy and The Nature Conservancy assessment on statewide coastal habitat vulnerability found that 55% of current coastal habitat is highly vulnerable to 5 feet of sea level rise, including 60% of California’s beaches, 58% of rocky intertidal habitat, 58% of coastal marshes, and 55% of tidal flats, that sea level rise will further stress populations of 39 rare, threatened, or endangered species, and that 41,000 acres of public conservation lands are projected to be drowned out by rising waters; and

**Whereas:** a 2017 study conducted by researchers from the University of Chicago and the U.S. Geological Survey found that 31% to 67% of southern California’s sandy beaches may be lost under 3.3 to 6.5 feet of sea level rise by 2100 respectively if actions aren’t taken to protect them; and

**Whereas:** the use of shoreline armoring to protect threatened development, including public infrastructure, as well as the presence of the armoring structures themselves, prevents the landward migration of the shoreline and coastal habitats, causing further degradation and loss of beaches, shorelines, and related coastal habitats, and these effects, in concert with sea level rise, will further degrade the public’s ability to access and recreate along the coast; and

**Whereas:** beach replenishment is one alternative to shoreline armoring, but replenishing beaches with sand is replete with challenges, including high costs, impacts to natural resources, limited sand sources, and the temporary nature of the replenishment; and

**Whereas:** ‘The Safeguarding California Plan: 2018 Update’ acknowledges that climate change will affect all Californians, but disproportionately burden members of communities that have faced historical injustices and disinvestment, such as tribal groups, disadvantaged and other vulnerable communities who have greater sensitivity and less capacity to adapt to the impacts of climate change; and

**Whereas:** a 2016 Stanford Law Review study found populations within 1 km (0.62 miles) of the coast are disproportionately more white, affluent, and older than populations further inland, demonstrating a correlation between proximity to the coast and income, age, and ethnicity; and

**Whereas:** temperatures and number and intensity of heat waves are increasing, causing impacts especially in inland areas of the state, leading to increased demand for beach and shoreline recreation areas that provide free or low cost opportunities to recreate and exercise in cooler temperatures and cleaner air; and

**Whereas:** loss of beach areas and increased demand for beaches will disproportionately impact the ability of people who cannot afford to live in close proximity to the ocean to access and recreate along the coast, including those from disadvantaged and otherwise vulnerable communities; and

**Whereas:** the Commission has an important role in carrying out the requirements of the Coastal Act together with local governments through planning for sea level rise adaptation and shoreline and beach preservation at the local level in a manner that is appropriate for each community; and

**Whereas:** the Commission adopted its ‘2015 Sea Level Rise Policy Guidance’ as interpretive guidelines for helping to address the effects of sea level rise in California through Local Coastal Programs and Coastal Development Permits, and remains committed to working with local governments, federal and state agencies, non-profit and other active coastal groups, native American tribes, disadvantaged communities, permittees and others committed to California’s coast and ocean in implementing this guidance;

**Therefore, be it Resolved:** the California Coastal Commission strongly and unequivocally commits to continuing its efforts towards maintaining, protecting and enhancing as much or more of California’s beaches, shoreline and related coastal habitats as sea levels rise, and in so doing supporting the social, economic, and recreational benefits they provide for current and future generations;

**Be it Further Resolved:** the Commission commits to using its authority to assist the state with achieving this goal, including by:

- 1) Incorporating the best available science on climate change, including new information and innovative strategies to address sea level rise, other climate change-related impacts, and beach, shoreline and related habitat loss, into agency guidance, policies, and planning and permitting decisions;
- 2) Encouraging all of California’s coastal cities and counties to complete updates to their Local Coastal Programs to address sea level rise vulnerability, including vulnerability to beaches, shoreline and related coastal habitats, and supporting them in their efforts to educate the public about sea level rise and its impact on their communities;
- 3) Ensuring that shoreline armoring is only permitted if necessary and if no less environmentally damaging feasible alternative is available;
- 4) Requiring mitigation that offsets the impacts of shoreline armoring on beaches, shorelines, offshore areas, and shoreline habitats, including to ensure continued public access to the ocean and sandy beaches and to avoid loss of coastal habitats;
- 5) Supporting implementation of adaptation strategies that seek to increase resilience of at-risk habitats such as beaches, dunes, salt marshes, and estuaries, including living shorelines, coastal restoration projects, and approaches that allow habitats to migrate inland as sea levels rise;
- 6) Seeking partnerships and funding to regularly assess coastal habitat losses and gains on a per acre basis, to identify implementation methods and strategies for protecting, maintaining and enhancing such coastal habitats, and to proactively implement associated projects; and

- 7) Committing to working with federal, state, and local agencies with jurisdictional responsibility over California’s ocean and coastal areas, and to engaging and collaborating with other industry and not-for-profit groups, as well as native American tribes, disadvantaged communities, and others committed to California’s coast and ocean and whose activities and missions are influenced by the Commission’s coastal management decisions;

**Be it Further Resolved:** the Commission commits to continued engagement with tribal groups, disadvantaged and other vulnerable communities who live, visit, and recreate along the coast to ensure equitable participation in the coastal planning process and equitable access to the coast for all.

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Dayna Bochco, Chair  
California Coastal Commission

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Effie Turnbull-Sanders, Vice Chair  
California Coastal Commission

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Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

This resolution was adopted by the California Coastal Commission on August \_\_\_\_, 2018 by  
a \_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_ vote.