

**CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION**

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**W7a**

November 8, 2019

TO: California Coastal Commission and Interested Parties

FROM: John Ainsworth, Executive Director

SUBJECT: Executive Director's Report, November 2019

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

**LCP Program Status – North Central Coast District 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 five public workshops throughout the summer. In November 2018, the Coastal Commission awarded the County an LCP grant to support continued efforts on the LCP update. This grant will focus on developing policies to address sea level rise adaptation; programs to reduce fuel loads through forestry management; watershed management strategies; improved methodologies for habitat assessment and conservation; and options to encourage infill development to both reduce vehicle miles traveled and greenhouse gas emissions, as well as to support affordable housing.

The County process of public workshops and hearings is still ongoing. In October 2019, Commission staff participated in the creation of an informational video that has been made available to the public in order to address frequently asked questions about the LCP process, the Coastal Act, and the role of the Coastal Commission. The County plans to submit their next draft by fall of 2020. Commission staff continues to work closely with the County on the LCP update.

**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 (82,168 acres) of the County's 520 square miles of total land area. Of this total, approximately 53 square miles (33,913 acres) are owned and managed by the federal government, mostly within either Point Reyes National Seashore or Golden Gate National Recreation Area. Approximately 75 square miles (48,255 acres) comprise the County's LCP jurisdiction. The protection of agriculture is a primary LCP concern -- nearly two-thirds of the County's LCP jurisdictional area (30,781 acres out of the total 48,255 acres) 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. Commission and County staff are currently working together to complete the remaining chapters and sections, including predominantly updates to the "Environmental Hazards" chapter, and the County aims to release a draft of these to the public in 2020. 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 LCP update. 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**

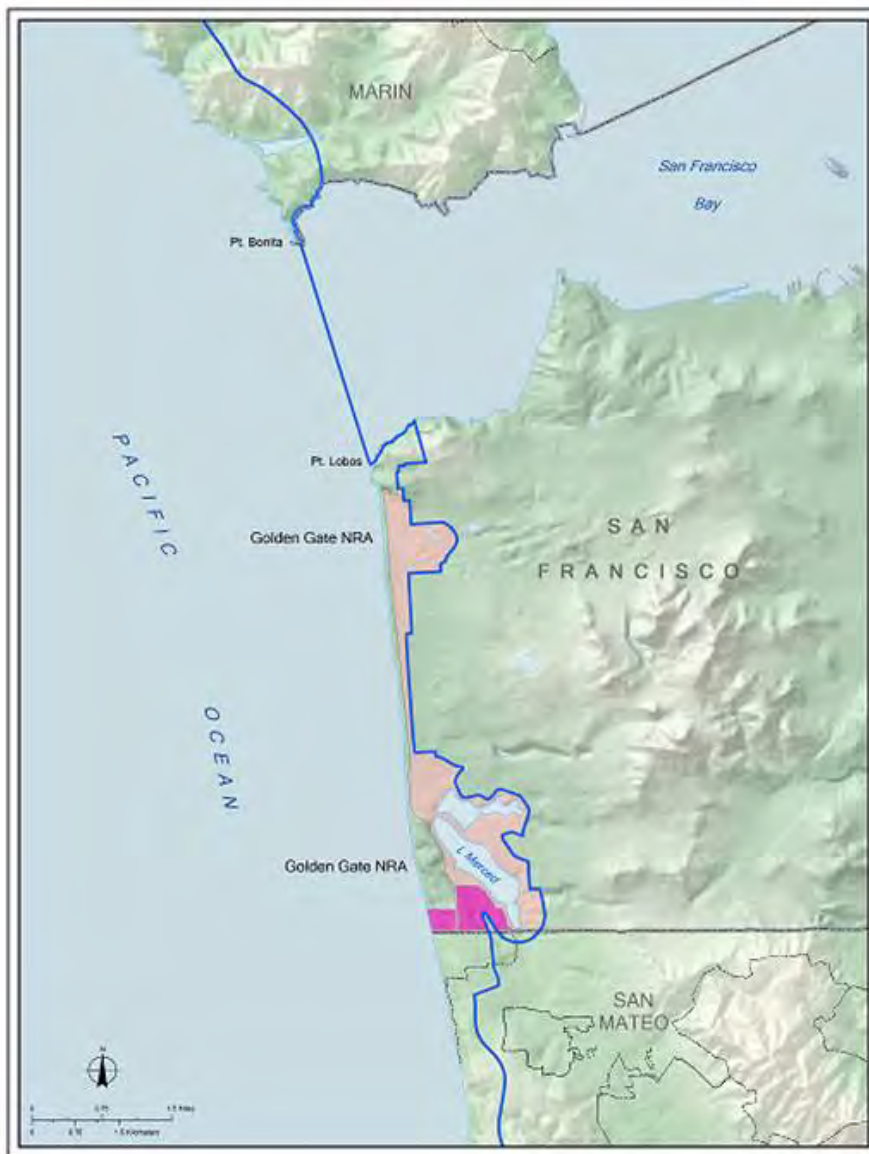
The City and County of San Francisco's coastal zone area extends approximately 6 miles from the Fort Funston cliff area north to the Golden Gate Bridge. Most of the 1,771 acre coastal zone is publically owned. Golden Gate Park, the San Francisco Zoo, and Lake Merced, which are owned by the City and County 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 to reflect 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. Commission staff worked closely with the City and County, as well as with numerous other stakeholders, throughout the grant term. In May 2018, the resultant LCP amendment was approved as submitted by the Coastal Commission. This LCP amendment sets the foundation for how to address existing erosion and flooding impacts as well as long-term sea level rise at Ocean Beach. In particular, the LCP calls for the incremental retreat of Great Highway; public access improvements including extension of the Coastal Trail and construction of a multi-use pathway; beach nourishment and dune restoration; and continued adaptation planning to identify options to protect wastewater infrastructure.

**Figure 3. San Francisco County Coastal Zone LCP Jurisdictions**

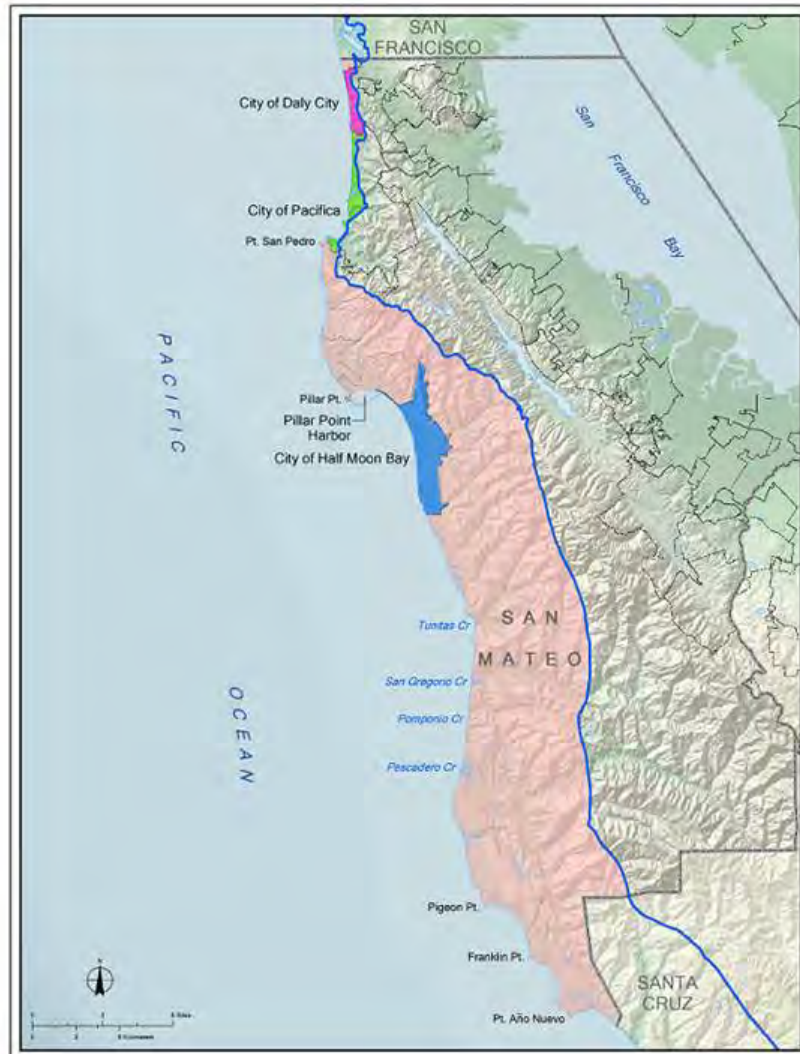


## **San Mateo County**

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. The coastal zone includes unincorporated San Mateo County lands and three incorporated cities: the Cities of Daly City, Pacifica and Half Moon Bay. Each of the cities as well as the County has 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 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 presents a balance of providing for urban development and services, while protecting significant wetland resources, and maintaining a small town character, in part through an existing urban/rural boundary established in the LCP. 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.

**Figure 4. San Mateo County Coastal Zone LCP Jurisdictions**

LCP update planning is underway throughout the County. Pacifica completed an administrative draft of their LCP update in April of 2014. Following a City Council election and appointment of a new Planning Director and a new City Manager, City staff discussed 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. In October 2019, following discussion with City elected officials, the City published a consultation draft of the LCP for review by Commission staff. Portions of additional policy development that were the products of grant funding (a vulnerability assessment, an adaptation plan, and updates to address coastal hazards and sea level rise) have been incorporated into the earlier update efforts, and City and Commission staff are continuing to work closely on this consultation draft to resolve issues.

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. The second round of grant funding supported some additional technical studies, as well as final revisions and local hearings for the updated LCP. In September 2019, Commission staff provided overarching feedback to the City on the draft LUP and offered line-by-

line edits. As the draft LUP is further reviewed by the Planning Commission and City Council, Commission staff continues close coordination 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.

## **Meetings and Events**

### **Ocean Climate Action Summit**

On October 18, Commission Ecologist Dr. Lauren Garske-Garcia participated in the [\*Ocean Climate Action Summit\*](#) at the Middlebury Institute of International Studies in Monterey, which was hosted by the Center for the Blue Economy and Blue Frontier. The event brought together key stakeholders from across government, academia, industry, and the conservation community to inform a framework for an ambitious [\*Ocean Climate Action Plan\*](#) to address coast- and ocean-focused climate issues including investments in coastal infrastructure, offshore renewable energy, marine protected areas, aquaculture, and the greening of our ports and shipping industries. Products from the effort will be presented as a response to recent calls for a ‘Blue New Deal’ and will be introduced in Washington DC in spring 2020.

### **Environmental Justice Webinar**

On October 21, the Commission’s Environmental Justice Team hosted a public webinar on the Commission’s new Environmental Justice Policy. It highlighted the adopted policies, discussed some of the procedural changes and commitments, and a discussed how the EJ community can stay involved. We had a total of 79 attendees that joined the webinar, and it has already been viewed more than 50 times since posting it on our website October 22.

## **Commission Public Education Events (SP 7.3)**

### **Ocean Protection Council Marine Debris Steering Committee.**

On October 21, Public Education Staff participated in the first meeting on the newly reconstituted *Ocean Protection Council Marine Debris Steering Committee*. The inter-agency group is designed to allow for increased information sharing and collaboration among state agency staff currently working on marine debris issues. PE Staff, which previously chaired the initial Marine Debris Steering Committee from 2007 until it was disbanded in the early 2010’s, provided an overview of the committee’s previous history and work. The new committee will meet quarterly moving forward.

### **Whale Tail Grant Webinar**

Public Education staff held a webinar on October 3 to walk potential Whale Tail Grant applicants through the application process. The deadline for targeted Whale Tail Grants was extended from November 4 to November 9 due to the fires and power outages throughout the State.



### **California Science Teachers Association Conference**

Public Education staff attended the annual conference of the California Science Teachers Association in San Jose on October 18-20, staffed an exhibit hall table, and presented three workshops for conference attendees.

### **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 the Devil's Slide Trail in San Mateo County: <https://www.kcet.org/shows/california-coastal-trail/devils-slide-trail-from-treacherous-highway-to-breathtaking-pathway>