

**CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION**

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May 3, 2019

TO: California Coastal Commission and Interested Parties

FROM: John Ainsworth, Executive Director

SUBJECT: Executive Director's Report, May 2019

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

**LCP Program Status – Ventura County (SP Goal 4)**

Ventura County comprises about 85 miles of shoreline. This includes two Channel Islands, Anacapa Island (part of the Channel Islands National Park) and San Nicolas Island (military lands). The coastal zone area totals approximately 78 square miles of the County's 2,208 square miles of total land area and contains the County of Ventura and 3 incorporated cities: the Cities of Ventura, Oxnard and Port Hueneme. In addition, the area contains one of the four major Ports identified in Chapter 8 of the Coastal Act: the Port of Hueneme (Oxnard Harbor District), the only deep-water harbor between Los Angeles and the San Francisco Bay.

The County includes beach communities, state beaches and parks that provide significant access and recreation, agricultural resources of the Oxnard plain, the Ventura and Santa Clara River estuaries, Mugu Lagoon (one of the largest remaining salt marshes in southern California), Ormond Beach wetland complex (subject of an extensive future wetland restoration project sponsored by the Coastal Conservancy, City of Oxnard and The Nature Conservancy), recreational harbors at Ventura Harbor and Channel Islands Harbor, a portion of the Santa Monica Mountains, and U.S. Navy lands.

All jurisdictions in this area have LCPs certified in the early to mid-1980s. The Ventura County LCP was certified in October 1983, the City of Ventura in February 1984, the City of Oxnard in April 1985 and City of Port Hueneme in November 1984. The Port Master Plan for the Port of Hueneme was approved in May 1979. A Public Works Plan for Channel Islands Harbor was certified in September 1986.

LCP update planning is underway in this area. A phased update is currently underway for the Ventura County LCP, with the first portion of the update certified in 2013, and the second portion of the update certified in 2017. In addition, an update of the environmentally sensitive habitat policies and provisions is underway and expected to be submitted to the Commission in 2019. Further, the County of Ventura was awarded a Coastal Commission Local Assistance grant of \$225,000 in August 2016 to complete a sea level rise vulnerability assessment and a standalone adaptation plan that includes an economic/fiscal impacts study of sea level rise hazards and various adaptation options. This information will be used to update relevant LUP policies and will be integrated with the ongoing work to update the County's LCP. In December 2019, the County finalized its Vulnerability Assessment Report. It also recently closed the public review period for its draft Sea Level Rise Adaptation Report and plans to finalize this document in summer 2019. The County also

plans to submit its draft LUP hazard and sea level rise policies for Commission review in Fall 2019. Portions of the City of Ventura LCP in the Downtown and Midtown areas were updated in 2011. The cities of Oxnard and Pt. Hueneme have not been comprehensively updated since certification, but a comprehensive update that will be primarily focused on addressing climate change and sea level rise, is underway in the City of Oxnard for which the City initially received an LCP Update grant of \$150,000 (including an \$110,000 grant directly from the Commission and a \$40,000 grant from OPC to be administered by the Commission) in June 2015. Due to additional funding made available from the OPC, the City received an extra \$25,000 to continue its LCP update and submitted draft LUP policies in April 2019.



### **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. In April, staff participated in several events:

#### **2019 Humboldt Bay Symposium**

District Manager Bob Merrill of the North Coast District gave a presentation at the biennial Humboldt Bay Symposium held April 11-12 in Eureka. The symposium is facilitated by California Sea Grant Extension for the purpose of sharing current information about Humboldt Bay, including the results of recent scientific studies, land use policy initiatives, restoration and

conservation efforts, and economic development. The event is sponsored by the Humboldt Bay Initiative, an informal collaboration of scientists, agency staff, Tribes, non-profits, local government officials, and other professionals and interested community members. The District Manager gave a presentation regarding Coastal Commission guidance for sea level rise adaptation planning for Humboldt Bay as part of a session of the symposium devoted to issues related to sea level rise.

### **Ocean Climate Summit**

On April 18, several members of the Commission's statewide and technical staff attended the [5<sup>th</sup> Ocean Climate Summit](#) at Fort Mason in San Francisco, a biannual event organized by the Greater Farallones National Marine Sanctuary meant to advance research and management of ocean resources in the face of climate change. Sessions addressed issues such as the state of the science on climate impacts to the coast and ocean, habitat supporting resilience, ocean acidification, living shorelines, multi-stressor management, and communication and engagement. Commission Ecologist, Dr. Lauren Garske-Garcia, presented on a panel at the living shorelines session. The presentation by Dr. Garske-Garcia offered insight on the Commission's progressive approach to shore protection, emphasized the dynamic nature of the shoreline, the challenges in these early stages of living shoreline implementation, and the opportunities for collective pursuit of resilience through project design, implementation, monitoring, and adaptive management.

## **Meetings and Events**

### **Coastal Counties Regional Association Meeting**

On April 24, the Commission's Statewide Planning Manager, Madeline Cavalieri, attended the Coastal Counties Regional Association meeting at the California State Association of Counties (CSAC) Legislative Conference. Staff provided a briefing for the group on the status of various Commission efforts, including the LCP Grant Program, sea level rise adaptation planning, including the draft Adaptation Guidance, as well as the recently released informational memo on cannabis, entitled Cannabis in the Coastal Zone and the Regulatory Requirements of the Coastal Act, which can be accessed here: <https://documents.coastal.ca.gov/assets/agriculture/Cannabis-Information-1-Document-4.29.19.pdf>

### **SONGS Mitigation Reef Workshop**

On April 29, Dr. Kate Huckelbridge, staff senior environmental scientist, and CCC UCSB contract scientists, Dr. Dan Reed and Dr. Steven Schroeder, presented the 2018 San Onofre Nuclear Generating Station (SONGS) mitigation reef monitoring results and information on reef remediation at the 2019 SONGS Wheeler North Reef Public Workshop held in Dana Point at the Ocean Institute. Dr. Jonna Engel, staff senior ecologist, and Scientific Advisory Panel members, Dr. Richard Ambrose, Dr. Russell Schmidt, and Dr. Pete Raimondi, also attended the workshop. The Commission's technical oversight and independent monitoring program provides for periodic public review of the performance of the SONGS mitigation projects. Concurrent monitoring of physical and biological attributes of the Wheeler North Reef and the two reference reefs is being used to evaluate whether the Wheeler North Reef meets the performance criteria set forth in the SONGS permit.

The annual public workshop provides an opportunity to review the results from the previous year's monitoring surveys, discuss the overall status of the Wheeler North Reef in meeting the performance standards required by the Commission's permit conditions, address potential problems and recommendations for solving them, and plans for the 2019 monitoring. This year

the workshop also included a status update on Southern California Edison's expansion of the Wheeler North Reef as a remedial measure.

### **Public Education Meetings & Events**

#### **U.S. Department of State's Bureau of International Information Programs.**

In early April, our Public Education Marine Debris Program Manager Eben Schwartz traveled to Poland as a Guest Speaker for the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of International Information Programs, which financed the trip. While in Poland, Eben was hosted by the U.S. Embassy and brought to speak and exchange ideas on plastic pollution and marine debris with a wide variety of groups in both Warsaw and the Baltic seaside city of Gdansk. Activities included formal lectures to the Polytechnic Universities of both Warsaw and Gdansk, informal exchanges with local NGOs and activists, meetings with local and national government agencies, and public presentations. Eben was able to share our current state of knowledge about marine debris and the progress the Commission and California in general has been able to make while learning - and assisting where possible - about efforts in Poland to address the issue.

#### **Boating Clean and Green Program**

Boating Clean and Green Program staff attended several events in April including the Pacific Sail & Power Boat Show on April 4<sup>th</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup>), where Vivian Matuk shared clean and safe boating information with over 300 boaters and conducted a clean boating seminar with the Seabird Protection Network. Boating staff also held a Marina and Yacht Clubs Oil Spill Response Communication Workshop on April 26 in partnership with the Office of Spill Prevention and Response and the California Office of Emergency Services at the USCG San Diego Base, and held three Dockwalker trainings around the state.

The 2018 Boating Clean and Green Online Quiz received the Digital Communication Award at the International Boating and Water Safety Summit on March 27. Sponsored by the National Safe Boating Council, National Water Safety Congress, and the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators, the award recognizes creativity in communicating with the public about safe and responsible boating.

#### **Earth Day Celebrations**

Public Education staff tabled at a number of Earth Month celebrations in April:

- The [South Bay Earth Day](#) in Chula Vista on April 6th, hosted by the City of Chula Vista
- the [LA Sanitation Districts Earth Day](#) in Whittier on April 13th;
- the [Folsom Lake State Recreation Area Earth Day Open House](#) on April 13<sup>th</sup>, hosted the California State Parks Foundation;
- the [Santa Clara Arbor/Earth Day fair](#) hosted by the City of Santa Clara on April 25<sup>th</sup>;
- the [North County Earth Festival](#) in Oceanside on April 27th, hosted by the City of Oceanside and Green Oceanside;

#### **California King Tides Project**

On April 30, Annie Frankel presented about the [California King Tides Project](#) at the national InterpTech conference at Asilomar. The conference explores the intersection between technology and interpretation and is hosted by the National Association for Interpretation and California State Parks.

## **California Society for Ecological Restoration Conference**

On April 10-11, Matt Yurko, manager of Project Grow, a joint project of the Coastal Commission and the Tides Center, attended the conference for the California Society for Ecological Restoration in Santa Barbara. Among other things, the conference focused on impacts to coastal habitat and wildlife from recent catastrophic wildfires and debris flows in this area.

## **Oral History Project - Coastal Commission**

The Oral History Department at UC Berkley's Ann Bankroft Library unveiled a fantastic new project on the history and accomplishments of the Coastal Commission last month. Staff Historian and Researcher Todd Holmes has interviewed dozens of former commissioners, community leaders and coastal activists from the early days of the coastal program about some of the most commission's greatest success stories, and crafted a series of podcasts that tell those stories for a modern day audience. The interviews are delightful, and keeping these stories alive is critical because most people take California's pristine, beautiful, accessible coastline for granted, and yet many segments of our beautiful coastline have been contested at some point. The stories of how the Coastal Commission and the public have used the Coastal Act to preserve and protect the coast for all are dramatic and inspiring, and they are essential listening for today's public servants and advocates. Commission staff worked closely with Mr. Holmes to identify some of the more iconic success stories, as well as some of the individual to interview. We highly recommend listening to the entire series at <http://www.lib.berkeley.edu/libraries/bancroft-library/oral-history-center/projects/coast>

## **Coastal Commission Regulation Changes**

A public comment period for regulation amendments opened on April 26, 2019 and will close at the Commission's regular meeting on June 12, 2019. The amendments are part of regulation changes that the Commission adopted in November 2018, and were then proposed as nonsubstantive changes to the Office of Administrative Law (OAL). OAL accepted many of the changes as nonsubstantive but not all, and advised staff to re-propose this set as a regular rulemaking with a notice and comment period. The Notice was published on April 26, mailed to 147 interested persons, and emailed to all those who subscribe to Commission agenda announcements.

The Notice contains links to the Commission's rulemaking web page ([coastal.ca.gov/rulemaking](http://coastal.ca.gov/rulemaking)) and e-mail address. The web page contains all documents required by OAL for this stage. Additionally, the page has a comment button (similar to an agenda item) that sets up an email to the rulemaking e-mail address. Staff will also accept mailed comments during the comment period.

The agenda item will be part of the Executive Director's report on June 12, 2019. A staff report and adoption order will be drafted and published, with an attachment that responds to all comments received to date. The public may testify about the proposed regulation changes at this hearing.

Any further changes that are substantive in nature must be noticed, and a new 15-day comment period opened.

Assuming no further changes, once Commission action is finished, legal staff will prepare a submittal to the Office of Administrative Law, which must review the amendments within 30 working days. Staff will request an early effective date of August 1, 2019, a request that ordinarily is granted.

## **Public Service Recognition Week**

May 5 – 11 is Public Service Recognition Week. This is a national celebration to honor the men and women who serve our nation as federal, state, county and local government employees. We are very grateful for the Commission's dedicated staff who deserve to be honored for their tireless public service protecting California's magnificent coast.

## **Budget Update**

The Assembly and Senate Budget Sub-committees have both approved components of the Coastal Commission's budget for FY 19-20 including several spring finance letters, including two new staff positions for the Environmental Justice and Tribal Consultation Program.

There may be additional Budget Sub-Committee hearings in May after the May Revise is issued by the Department of Finance around May 15. We will provide updates for the Commission as the budget process moves forward and staff will continue to co-ordinate with the Commission's Budget Sub-committee.