

CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION

455 Market Street, Suite 300
San Francisco, CA 94105
OFFICE: (415) 904-5200
FAX: (415) 904-5400



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February 3, 2021

TO: California Coastal Commission and Interested Parties

FROM: John Ainsworth, Executive Director

SUBJECT: Executive Director's Report, February 2021

Annual Form 700 – Statement of Economic Interest Filings

The Annual Form 700 – Statement of Economic Interest filings are due for Commissioners and Alternates postmarked by **March 1, 2021**. Failure to submit the Form 700 on time can result in a significant fine. Notifications were sent out via email from the Fair Political Practices Commission (FPPC) in early January to those who have email addresses on file. Commissioners and Alternates may submit their filings electronically directly to the FPPC by logging in at http://www.fppc.ca.gov/Form700/Link_To_Efiling_Portal.html. The option of filing hardcopies is still available; please send these to the Commission's Human Resources office. Email notifications were also sent with the documents attached on February 1, 2021 from the Commission's Human Resources Office.

Meetings and Events

Congressional Briefing on Assessing Community Vulnerability to Climate Change and Coastal Hazards.

On January 13, 2021, Coastal Commission staff participated in a Congressional briefing on assessing community vulnerability to climate and coastal hazards. The event was organized by NOAA's National Centers for Coastal Ocean Science (NCCOS) and co-sponsored by University of Southern California Sea Grant and the Coastal Commission. Through the NCCOS program, NOAA is partnering with communities to identify and assess social, structural, and natural resource vulnerability profiles in relation to regional, place-based, climatic risks such as flooding, erosion, drought, heat, and wildfire. In the briefing, NOAA NCCOS staff provided an overview of their "integrated vulnerability assessment framework" as applied in the [Chesapeake Bay](#) and [Los Angeles County](#), exploring key findings and explaining how assessment results can be used by

communities to prepare for climate change and coastal hazards. Representatives from the L.A. County's Chief Sustainability Office and the county's consulting team described the application of the assessment results to the county's sustainability planning efforts. The Coastal Commission staff presentation provided context for the application of this work in the coastal zone, emphasizing the need for social science data and the importance of stakeholder engagement in assessing vulnerability for sea level rise planning. The briefing was attended by approximately 25 Congressional staffers for Congressional members that are part of the Congressional Climate Caucus as well as other committees and the California delegation.

CalTrans/Coastal Commission Interagency Management Meeting

On January 29, over 70 members of Commission and Caltrans staff met virtually for our annual Directors' meeting. The event included a series of presentations highlighting our accomplishments and lessons learned in 2020, including the approval of several significant projects such as the Gleason Beach Hwy 1 Realignment and the ongoing sea level rise planning for the Eureka-Arcata 101 Corridor. Staff also debuted a new data base dashboard and provided an overview of the permit and planning workload anticipated in 2021. In addition, each of the six Caltrans and Coastal Commission Districts had productive breakout group discussions about how we can improve early coordination on projects and brainstormed on what is needed to better support Caltrans in integrating analysis of sea level rise into their planning efforts and project designs.

The number of transportation projects and activities in the coastal zone are expected to increase dramatically in the next few years due to maintenance and operations needs across the state and the influx of gas tax funding. The Commission's Transportation Team will be working on programmatic tools and processes with Caltrans Coastal Program to enhance information analysis and exchange to improve the outcomes and efficiencies of processing permits. And, along with advancing efforts to manage and adapt critical rail and highway infrastructure to sea level rise, our interagency work will focus on a new advance mitigation program and expansion of public access and active transportation such as completing the Coastal Trail. Finally, the staff of both agencies renewed their commitments to continue to build strong interagency relationships and to advance our shared priorities through the complementary implementation of our strategic plans.

Coastal Commission 2020 Year in Review

Attachment A to this report is the Annual Year in Review Report outlining the many Commission accomplishments achieved in 2020. The report also includes a look ahead to the challenges and opportunities facing us in 2021. The 2020 year-end review report is also available on the Commission's homepage: [Year in Review](#).

2020 Coastal Commission Workload Review Report

Attachment B to this report is the annual Commission Workload Review Report for 2020. This report is a comprehensive review of the Commission's workload over the past year.

ATTACHMENT A



Irene Hong
2020 Honorable Mention
Coastal Art & Poetry Contest

Year in Review 2020

California Coastal Commission





Sutro Baths. Photo credit: Charlotte Gibb

California Coastal Commission

2020 Hindsight: The Year in Review

If you would rather not spend much time re-living 2020, you're not alone. Who could have known the new decade would usher in a global pandemic claiming hundreds of thousands of American lives, throwing millions out of work and devastating California's robust economy? Three months into the year, the Commission's Chair tested positive for COVID-19, after experiencing symptoms at the March meeting. Overnight, Commission offices were closed, site visits were cancelled, and staff and Commissioners were advised to self-quarantine for 14 days.

Fortunately Chair Padilla recovered fully, becoming one of the state's first public officials to publicly share his [personal story](#) of surviving this dangerous illness. But shortly after his initial diagnosis, as the pandemic escalated, and the Governor issued state-wide shelter in place orders, triggering a massive, immediate, statewide transition to remote work and

virtual meetings that continues today. In April, the Commission made the unprecedented announcement that it was cancelling its regularly scheduled monthly hearing for the first time in its 47-year history. This was necessary to work out the technical aspects of conducting virtual public hearings supported by a staff transitioning to a 100% work from home schedule. While not seamless, the shift to virtual hearings has been completely successful, thanks to the indefatigable tech team at AGP Video, the Commission's Information Services unit, a staff team of virtual meeting managers, and a combination of ingenuity, patience and humor on the part of the Commissioners, staff, and a forgiving public.

In June, the Commission's chronic staffing shortages were compounded by a new requirement for all state workers to take two days of unpaid leave each month, effectively reducing agency productivity by 10%. This was followed by an Executive Order for all departments to contribute 5% of their workforce to the state's COVID-19 tracing team, resulting in the temporary reassignment of seven Commission staff. The volunteers who stepped forward to fulfill this critical need are heroes among their colleagues, who are now shouldering the additional workload despite a 10% cut in hours and pay.

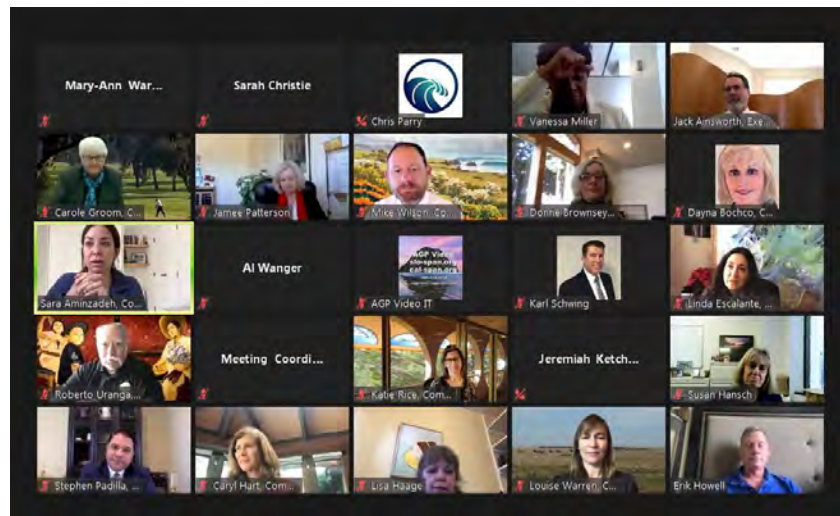
As spring turned toward summer, the Pandemic worsened. With schools, restaurants and businesses closed, the stir-crazy and the defiant turned to California's beaches in record numbers for respite and a last grasp at normalcy, in many cases flouting "social distance" mandates. This triggered emergency beach closures in some regions of the state, outraging beach goers and vaulting the issue of public access squarely into the middle of the Culture Wars, just as racial justice protests began to escalate and acrimonious political fights marked the run-up to a historic presidential election.

As the year wore on, California shattered all previous records for heat waves and wildfires, causing wide-spread evacuations and claiming lives, structures, and millions of acres, including the homes of some current and former staff. Tens of thousands of Californians again sought refuge at the coast, from the choking smoke that blanketed the entire state. "Purple air" entered our public lexicon and our cell phone apps.

Are we there yet?

Nevertheless, we persisted. It has been noted that opportunity rides the wind of every crisis. Looking back over the entire arc of the preceding year, it's clear that 2020 was also a petri dish of resourcefulness, resilience, and willingness to go above and beyond the call of public service, with surprising silver linings for coastal protection, environmental justice and new ways to serve the public in challenging times. The crisis fostered interagency teamwork, and COVID has deepened the Commission's collaborative relationships with the administration, local governments and sister agencies, from CalFire to HUD. The virtual work space, though far from ideal, has created new opportunities for increased public participation. And the urgency of the transformation has led to technology upgrades and innovative efficiency measures at a scale and pace that would never have been possible otherwise.

While nobody could have predicted the ways in which our work would be transformed by the pandemic's fallout, neither could we have predicted the myriad ways in which the Coastal Commission would rise to meet those challenges in ways that have strengthened and enhanced California's coastal program.



Environmental Justice

The year began on an optimistic note, as the Environmental Justice Unit, in collaboration with EJ community leaders, conducted two full days of training on implicit bias, equity and inclusion for all Commission staff. The training sessions were integral to helping agency planners understand how to implement the recently-adopted EJ Policy, as well as advancing the goal of integrating EJ goals and principles throughout the agency's internal work and culture.



EJ Training. Photo credit: CCC

As the Commission's fluency in these issues increases, we are finding new opportunities to advance EJ principles, from simple projects such as requiring [bilingual interpretive signs](#) and educational components about [Black history](#) in new development projects, to hosting all-staff discussions about race and equity, and drafting complex EJ analyses that lift up voices of underserved residents and take a closer look at the impacts of proposed projects on their communities. Collectively, these public and private conversations are helping to promote a deeper understanding of how the Commission can do its part to help dismantle institutional racism and reverse historic development patterns caused by exclusionary land use decisions and patterns of development in the coastal zone.

A few examples of how analyzing the equitable distribution of benefits and burdens are informing Commission actions include an application by the City of Pacifica to re-authorize a [parking fee program](#) and allow for beach parking lot maintenance activities. After considering how the project would impact lower-income populations, the Commission added a condition for the city to create the “Pacifica Resource Pass” for families whose beach access could be negatively affected by rate increases.

In July, the Commission heard an appeal of a [48-lot subdivision](#) on 14 acres in Encinitas. The four affordable units were initially going to be clustered on a corner of the complex with capped, contaminated soil. The project included two private parks for residents within the complex, but there was no provision for public coastal access, even though the site is located between the first public road and the sea. After a public discussion of these issues, the Commission worked with the applicant on a re-design that moved the four affordable units away from the toxic site and disburses them more evenly throughout the subdivision, and also includes a public trail along the northern perimeter of the site, providing new access to Batiquitos Lagoon.

In Orange County, a proposal to [re-design Dana Point Harbor](#) would have reduced the number of public slips by 389, while increasing the number of private slips available for yacht club members and enlarging many of the remaining slips to accommodate bigger, more expensive vessels for a higher fee. The Commission approved the project, which also included needed upgrades to the existing facility. But to offset impacts to lower-cost recreational opportunities, the Commission required the applicant to work with local partners to create and implement an outdoor environmental education program for underserved youth in Orange County that will exist for the lifetime of the development.



Small craft at Dana Point Harbor

In September, staff recommended denial of the [Cal Am desalination project](#) in Monterey County, due to its impacts on ESHA and public access, projected sea level rise impacts, and identification of a feasible and less environmentally preferable alternative available to meet the region’s water needs. The proposed project also would have had significant impacts on the disadvantaged communities of Marina, Seaside and Sand City, which were the most detailed EJ findings staff has researched to date. Although the applicant withdrew the item shortly before the hearing, the comprehensive analysis validated the local residents’ lived experience of struggling to survive economically in a coastal community that historically has received a disproportionate share of industrial development. Cal Am is working on revisions to the proposal.

Focused discussion of environmental justice has begun to increase the participation of marginalized groups at Commission hearings. Switching to virtual hearings made meetings more accessible to those with the technology and experience to follow the new procedures for remote testimony. Yet staff continued to hear from underserved stakeholders that the process was still confusing. To facilitate a smoother transition to virtual meetings, staff listened to EJ groups’ suggestions on how to improve the Zoom meeting procedures and instructions. The Commission’s [homepage](#) now makes the

process more easily accessible to first-time users, and agendas include more simplified directions and contact information for Spanish-speakers to connect with a staff person who can answer questions by phone or email. The Commission has also purchased the necessary equipment to produce short instructional videos which will be available in early 2021.

Internally, staff made steady progress implementing the Commission's Racial Equity Action Plan (REAP) throughout the year. The agency's racial equity team conducted an internal staff survey to better understand where the Commission needs to focus additional training, created an on-boarding packet for new employees.

As protests and outrage mounted across the nation over the murders of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmed Arbery and countless other unarmed Black Americans, the EJ Unit responded to staff's growing anxiety and grief by launching a series of interactive Racial Equity Discussions (the RED series) open to all staff seeking a safe space to discuss the complicated history of racial issues in America. In response to several questions and requests, EJ team leaders compiled an internal resource library of books, articles, documentaries and other materials for staff seeking to deepen their understanding of race, equity and systemic discrimination. Executive leadership authorized staff to review and discuss these materials to fulfill personal development hours during the work day as appropriate.

The key goals and objectives of both the REAP and the Commission's EJ Policy were incorporated into the new Environmental Justice and Equity Section of the [2021-2025 Strategic Plan](#), adopted unanimously by the Commission in November 2020. The Strategic Plan provides the bridge between the outward-facing EJ Policy that informs the Commission's public actions, and the internal, structural commitments of the REAP that will guide institutional reforms for a more inclusive, diverse, equitable workplace for all.

Public Access Meets Public Health

Initial statewide shelter in place orders made an exception for socially distanced outdoor activities, and encouraged solo or socially-distant outdoor activities. This thrust California beaches into the vital but unexpected role of providing mental health services for stressed-out Californians seeking solace and a sense of normalcy. Unfortunately, as more and more people flocked to the beaches, social distance requirements were often ignored. With all State Beaches and



Cayucos Beach, pre-COVID. Photo credit: Danna Dykstra-Coy

campgrounds closed until further notice, more and more people congregated on city and county beaches. As Labor Day approached, temperatures began to climb and news reports of record-breaking crowds, packed towel to towel in large groups prompted the

Governor to limit or prohibit state beach gatherings on holiday weekends, and local park districts struggled with whether and how to close their beaches to the public. Many local governments contacted the Commission requesting the ability to temporarily limit or prohibit beach access to protect their constituents and slow the spread of the virus.

Under normal circumstances, closing public beaches and visitor-serving facilities would be antithetical to the Commission's core mandate for public access. But in these extraordinary times, the [Executive Director authorized temporary closures](#) to protect public health and safety, provided that access would be limited to the minimum extent necessary, and consistent with public health department guidelines. Over the next several weeks, the Commission issued approximately 100 permit waivers for temporary beach and facility closures and maintained a [public data base](#) which was widely used by the press to keep the public informed on the [status](#) of their local beaches. Fortunately, by the end of the year most beaches had reopened, with the exception of campgrounds, visitor centers, and similar facilities.



Hollister Ranch Public Access Workshop, Goleta. Photo Credit: State Coastal Conservancy

Just prior to the shutdown, the Commission officially launched the much-anticipated public planning process mandated by [AB 1680 \(Limón\)](#) to create new coastal access at Hollister Ranch in Santa Barbara County. Working with the State Coastal Conservancy, State Parks, and the State Lands Commission, the interagency team convened the first in a planned series of public workshops in February in Goleta. More than 170 people attended the 2-hour session to provide input on every aspect of the future access

program. At the time, nobody realized this would be the only “in-person” workshop of the year. After COVID travel restrictions were instituted just one month later, the team shifted gears and developed a strategy for moving ahead with a “virtual” planning process, circulating 3 on-line surveys, and team putting together a 17-person Working Group with members of diverse backgrounds and perspectives, such as activists, ranch owners, tribal leaders, surfers and representatives of underserved communities. The Working Group convened three times before the end of the year, conducted a site visit, and adopted planning objectives and evaluation criteria. The statutory deadline to complete the access plan is April, 2022, with some level of public access by April 2021. COVID-related delays make these deadlines increasingly ambitious, but sticking as close to them as possible remains the team’s primary goal.

Sometimes the best way to provide a public access is to just preserve the status quo. That’s what happened in February, when the Commission unanimously denied a permit request from Union Pacific to install a [chain link fence across a ½ mile section of rail road right of way](#) in Pacific Grove. Built in 1879, the former rail way has long-since been decommissioned, and is now a well-developed and widely used multi-modal public access trail around Monterey Bay. The segment in question is an undeveloped portion that provides a well-worn dirt path linking the terminus of the developed trail with the Del Monte Forest. The Commission found that interfering with public access would be inconsistent with the public access policies of the Pacific Grove Land Use Plan, and the trail remains open for the public.

In August, another denial preserved Fisherman’s Wharf at Channel Islands Harbor in Oxnard. The Ventura County Harbor District was asking the Commission to override the City of Oxnard’s LCP to allow a developer to construct a mixed use, residential/commercial project on what is now public space. Although this was an unfortunate situation where two local governments had not been able to reach a common agreement, the Commission’s denial clears the way for a more appropriate project that puts a higher priority on public access and recreational opportunities, and ideally includes a wider range of housing opportunities.



Photo credit: Surfrider Foundation

Sea Level—It's Still Rising, and We're Still Here

Thanks in no small part to the Commission's Sea Level Rise Subcommittee, in May the Commission was one of several agencies to adopt a set of [Statewide Planning Principles for Aligned State Action](#). Developed through an unprecedented inter-agency planning effort convened by the Secretary of Natural Resources and the CalEPA Secretary, the group included the State Controller's office and 17 state agencies convened for the purpose of guiding unified, effective action toward sea level rise resilience for



Avalon, Catalina Island. Photo credit: Surfrider Foundation

California's coastal communities, ecosystems, and economies. The adopted Principles are also consistent with and complementary to the Coastal Commission's ongoing work to address sea level rise, and align state actions in six main areas:

- Develop and use the best available science
- Build coastal resilience partnerships
- Improve resilience communications
- Support local leadership
- Strengthen coastal resilience
- Learn from implementing coastal resilience projects.

Later in the year, the Commission made additional progress in collaborative planning with local governments by adopting a [Joint Statement of Shared Sea Level Rise Principles](#), developed in collaboration with the California State Association of Counties (CSAC) and the League of California Cities (League) and consistent with the aforementioned Statewide Principles. These principles were developed over the year through the Local Government Working Group which is made up of a Commission subcommittee and local elected officials from CSAC and the League. While these principles won't resolve every area of disagreement, this joint statement identifies a set of guiding principles, and acknowledges the challenges, opportunities, and necessary actions associated with proactive and effective sea level rise adaptation for California's coastal communities. The Joint Statement is consistent with and complementary to the Coastal Commission's ongoing work to address sea level rise. It focuses specifically on what the three entities can do to address sea level rise, specifically relating to Local Coastal Program (LCP) policy development, adaptation planning, and project decision making.

In the Spring of 2020, Coastal Commission staff worked with Graduate students from the University of California Santa Barbara Brenn School to develop an interactive story map and a new infographic to help the public better understand the science of sea level rise, what's at risk, and what we as a society can do about it. Fortunately for us, two talented students, Shelby Johnson and Adrienne Hewitt, selected this topic as their Capstone

Project, which is designed to give students hands-on experience with a science-based communications project. They presented their final version to the Commission in August, and the [Sea Level Rise Story Map](#) is now posted on the Commission's website.



Battery Point Lighthouse, Crescent City. King Tides Project

King Tides are the highest high tides of the year, about a foot or two higher than average high tides, corresponding to the 1-2 foot rise in sea level expected during the next few decades. King Tides are not caused by sea level rise, but they do provide a window to what higher sea levels will look like. The Commission is the lead agency in the [California King Tides Project](#), which helps people visualize how sea level rise will impact their lives in the future by inviting them to take and share photos of the highest high tides of the year. The Coastal Commission engaged partner organizations and members of the public in this community science project in January and February. Organizations up and down the coast held at least 61 in-person events, and individuals uploaded nearly 2,300 photos that were [mapped](#) for ease of access for planners, scientists, media, students, and other members of the public. It also expanded the photo collection process, and added resources for educators and parents to find ways to [incorporate King Tides into student learning](#), through the [Climate Video Challenge](#), and elementary-level science journal downloadable in English or Spanish.

The Commission also continued to forge ahead with the hard work of not just planning, but actually implementing adaptation principles. Fifteen years in the making, the [Gleason](#)

[Beach Highway Roadway Realignment Project](#), approved by the Commission in November, was a model of interagency coordination for managed retreat. Relocating 0.7-mile stretch of Highway One between Bodega Bay and Jenner, the design developed by Caltrans, Sonoma County and the Commission realigns an iconic section of highway under extreme threat from Sea Level Rise. In addition to raising and relocating the highway eastward, the project includes an 850' bridge over Scotty Creek, complete with bicycle lanes and a separated pedestrian bridge and walkway. In addition to moving the highway from harm's way for at least 100 years, the project will improve riparian habitat and fish passage in Scotty Creek, secure new public beach access, construct a new segment of the California Coastal Trail and remove damaged structures and associated rubble from the beach and bluff. Construction is slated to begin summer of 2021.



Proposed bridge over Scotty Creek, which elevates and realigns Highway 1.

Photo credit: California Department of transportation

Another example of managed retreat was the compromise worked out with the Ritz Carlton's Bacara Resort in Santa Barbara County. Although a previous permit required the hotel to provide a public access trail to Haskell's Beach along with several amenities such as a snack bar and bathrooms, the hotel had a history of non-compliance. Meanwhile, sea level rise was rendering some of the development unusable, and threatening sections of the trail. In November, the Commission approved a [permit amendment](#) to relocate the trail, demolish the unusable snack bar structure and replace it with a mobile food truck, and resolve multiple outstanding violations.

By the Numbers: Annual Workload Roundup

One might assume that COVID restrictions would have translated into a significant reduction in the Commission's workload in 2020. But that was not the case. Despite the economic slowdown, the Commission received 2,359 submittals over the course of the year, and acted on a total of 620 permits, appeals, LCP amendments and federal consistency items. This is only about 18% lower than the total number of action items in 2018 and 2019.

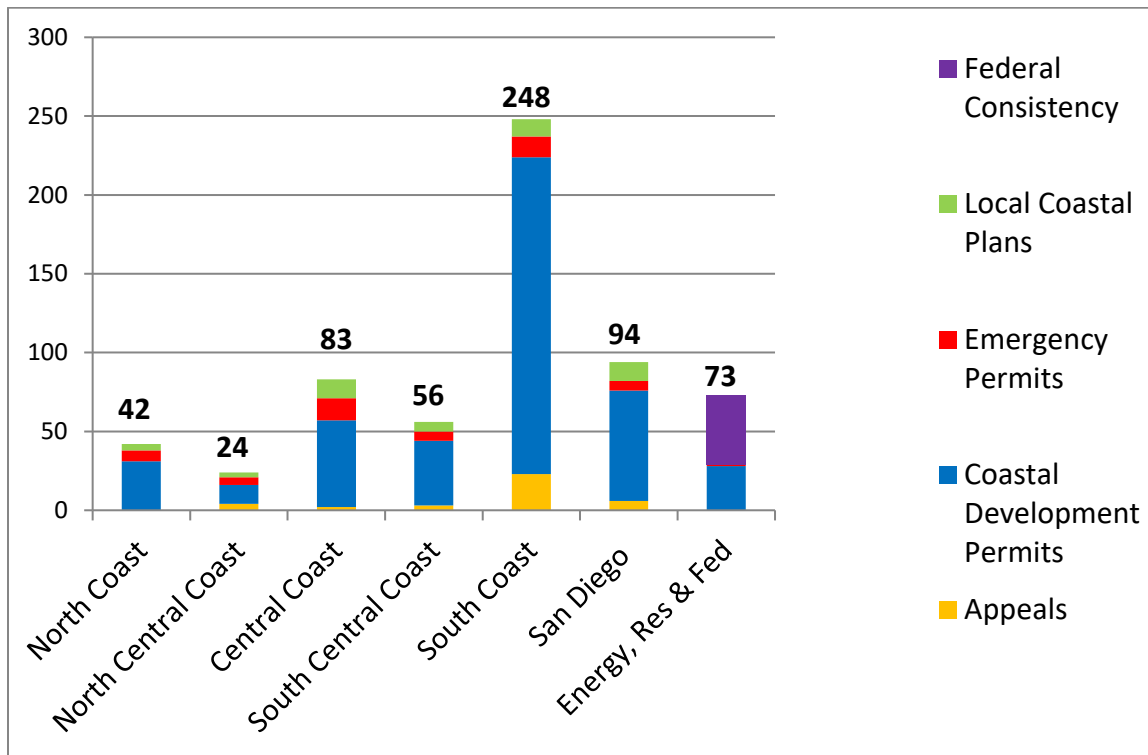


Figure 1. Total Commission actions by district.

As usual, workload in the Commission's South Coast District office in Long Beach outpaced all of the other district offices, accounting for 40% of all submittals and actions. This is due to the fact that the largest number of uncertified jurisdictions, including the City of LA, are within the jurisdictional boundaries of the South Coast office.

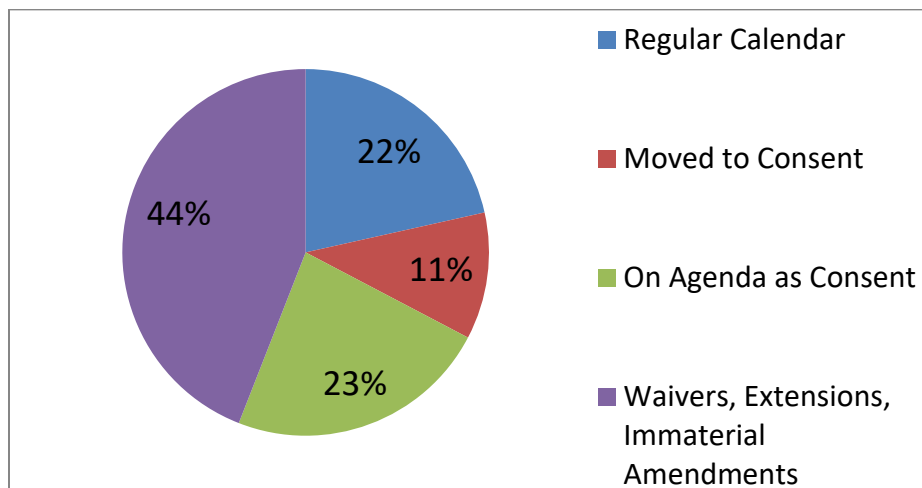


Figure 2. 2020 Regulatory actions processed under Commission Calendars

Certified local governments stayed busy as well, issuing 1,031 coastal development permits, 957 of which were appealable to the Commission. Of these, 38 were actually

appealed, for a 6% rate of appeal statewide. In addition, both local governments and the Commission issued a greater number of permit waivers in 2020, largely from the number of local government requests to temporarily close public beach and park areas due to the COVID-19 public health emergency. Fortunately, access has been fully or partially restored to all of these previously closed areas.

Advances in Local Coastal Planning

Local Coastal Programs (LCPs) are the local blueprints for Coastal Act policies, implementing statewide resource protection policies in a locally specific context. Although certified LCPs allow cities and counties to assume more local control through the issuance of their own coastal development permits, not all jurisdictions have completed their LCPs as required by the Coastal Act, and Commission still remains the permit authority in several areas.

In 2020, the County of San Diego became the most recent coastal county with a certified LCP when the Commission's approved the [San Diego County Implementation Plan](#). All of California's 15 coastal counties are now issuing their own coastal development permits through certified Local Coastal Programs, an important milestone for California's Coastal Management Program. This brings the total number of certified jurisdictions up to 63, with 31 segments still outstanding.

Local Coastal Programs are living documents that must be updated as needed to respond to changing needs and circumstances, particularly in light of sea level rise and climate change. In October, the Commission certified a comprehensive update to a stand-alone segment of the City of Long Beach's LCP that was originally certified in 1980. [The South East Area Specific Plan](#), or SEASP, repealed and replaced the previous segment, revising and expanding it in several key areas. It prioritizes lower-cost accommodations over higher cost accommodations; requires 25% of new higher cost hotel rooms to be provided at a lower cost; sets in-lieu fees for lower cost rooms, which are only required if providing 25% of the rooms at lower cost is infeasible, at \$100,000 per room plus land costs; establishes 1977 as the date for defining an "existing structure"; requires preparation and certification of community-scale and/or City-wide sea level rise adaptation plans; adds policies that will allow for and encourage more affordable residential density in non-hazardous areas; disallows new or expanded oil production uses unless already approved by the Commission; certifies the previously deferred Los Cerritos Wetlands area and adds wetland habitat and ESHA protection policies, including requiring 100 foot buffers between new development potential wetlands or ESHA; adds a Tribal, Cultural, Archeological and Paleontological Resource section that addresses the importance of tribal cultural



Los Cerritos wetlands

resources; adds a Natural Resources Chapter with policies to protect sensitive habitat areas; and generally strengthens Chapter 3 policies throughout the document. This significant LCP amendment involved substantial state/local coordination to protect coastal resources, promote local livability, and enhance visitor-serving amenities.

Also in October, the Commission approved a new waste water treatment facility at [Lawson's Landing](#), a popular low cost campground in Marin County. This was the final chapter in a long-running planning effort to resolve decades-old enforcement issues involving illegal development and antiquated septic systems at this environmentally sensitive and visually spectacular site. The original after-the-fact permit was issued in 2011, with measures to protect habitat, water quality and agricultural soils while still providing for overnight camping, public access and recreational opportunities. Designing the wastewater management center in manner that does not impact water quality, habitat or public access required extensive technical site planning. The newly approved wastewater system will allow for the construction of bathrooms and showers, replacing existing porta-potties, greatly enhancing the recreational experience.



The Commission made good progress with several coastal cities grappling with how to regulate vacation rentals (STRs) in their jurisdictions. While STRs provide additional options for coastal visitors and financial profits for owners, they also reduce permanent housing stock, hollowing out entire neighborhoods in some popular destination areas. This has been an issue of long-standing controversy before the Commission for decades, with opponents pushing for local bans on STRs, while hosts, hosting platforms, and realtors arguing that the practice should be expanded.

The Commission worked out a series of creative compromises with the cities of [Laguna Beach](#), [Oxnard](#), [Torrance](#) and [Carmel-by-the-Sea](#). Each ordinance or program was crafted to address the unique aspects of the city, striking a balance between providing reasonable options for visitors while ensuring that residential use remains the primary land use in neighborhoods zone exclusively for this use. They all featured some combination of allowing hosted “home stays,” grandfathering in existing STRs, allowing new STRs only in commercial or visitor-serving areas, and caps the number of STRs that can be allowed in specific zoning or geographic areas. By tailoring each policy to reflect the unique community character and priorities of each jurisdiction, the Commission helped these coastal cities achieve a good balance between the needs of coastal visitors and those of residential neighborhoods.

In addition, Torrance became the first coastal city *without* an LCP to seek and receive a coastal development permit from the Commission for its short term rental ordinance. While only a small part of the city is located in the coastal zone, the city wanted to make sure that its program was consistent with the Coastal Act. In December, the Commission approved [the permit](#) with modifications that would allow for more hosted stays, and it is now pending concurrence the City.

Healthy Habitats for Coastal Species



Photo credit: Dante Vasco

Protecting and restoring coastal habitats and the special species that depend on them is more important than ever, as climate change rapidly transforms ecosystems in myriad ways. From sea level rise and floods to wildfires and droughts, environmentally sensitive habitats in the coastal zone are under increasing pressure. Fortunately, Coastal Act policies protecting these areas are some of the strongest in the country, and an October [Executive Order from Gavin Newsom](#) to advance efforts to preserve the state's biodiversity underscored the urgency of protecting California's natural and lands and watersheds from the growing climate crisis.

In July, the Commission took a decisive action to protect snowy plovers at the Oceano Dunes State Vehicular Recreation Area (ODSVRA) in San Luis Obispo County through a consent [Executive Director's Cease and Desist Order](#) (EDCDO) to limit ongoing beach grading activities and other activities. Although the park, which is the only California



Photo credit: Gary Meredith

beach that allows off-road recreational vehicles, had been closed to vehicles since March due to the pandemic, grading of the beach and fore dunes continued, along with other measures intended to discourage the endangered snowy plover from expanding its habitat into the riding areas during nesting season. The EDCDO prohibited non-essential activities harmful to the birds through the end of the October nesting season. State Parks reopened the park to street legal vehicles on October 30, with plans to return to previous levels of use in phases, while simultaneously pursuing a Habitat Conservation Plan and a Public Works Plan to guide future access management at ODSVRA.



Oceano Beach during vehicle closure. Photo credit: Caron Krauch

The Commission has been working closely with the State Lands Commission to [permit the abandonment, clean-up and removal](#) of several major oil and gas structures in SB and Ventura Counties this year. Some of these older wells were improperly capped, and have been leaking into the marine and coastal environment for decades. In September, the Commission approved a permit to address not only the well abandonment, but also several outfalls and shoreline structures in Summerland, Goleta, Mussel Shoals and Solimar. The permit conditions included temporary parking to provide access, and protections for marine wildlife, water quality and eelgrass habitat.



Summerland decommissioning barge. Photo credit: State Lands Commission



San Dieguito Restoration in process. Photo credit: Marathon Construction

The Commission also worked closely with Caltrans and SANDAG all year to design a [restoration project at San Dieguito Lagoon](#) that would improve approximately 154 acres of coastal wetland and upland habitat, construct a mile of public trail, relocate existing utility poles and enhance nearby beaches in San Diego County. Approved in November, the project is intended to provide mitigation for future infrastructure projects contained in the North Coast Corridor Public Works Plan, and will enhance the effectiveness of several adjacent restoration and public access projects.



Coral Tree, Long Beach. Photo credit: California Coastal Commission

While most of the Commission's actions to preserve and enhance habitat are taken on a landscape scale, sometimes the environment needs protection one tree at a time. That was the case in October when the Commission approved an [appeal](#) by the Sierra Club and Citizens About Responsible Planning. The groups appealed a project in Long Beach that would have cut down an enormous, heritage coral tree used for nesting by local shorebirds, asserting that it was not a threat to public safety, and that the proposal to install LED lights and other features would deter nesting in nearby trees. The Commission agreed, citing an LCP policy that prevents tree removal if active nests have been observed within the last 5 years, noting that the city's tree removal and excessive trimming has been an ongoing issue of concern for the Commission. In approving a revised permit for some associated work, the Commission also required an independent arborist review and ED approval for any future proposed trimming of the tree.

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The Commission's final action for the year was to concur with the consistency determination for Phase I of the BLM's [Management Plan for Cotoni-Coast Dairies](#), a 5,800 coastal property near the town of Davenport in Santa Cruz County. Purchased in 2014 by the Trust for Public Lands (TPL), it is now part of the [California Coastal National Monument](#) created by President Clinton in 2000 and expanded by President Obama in 2017. Since that time, BLM conducted extensive public outreach for the preparation of a Management Plan, which will be implemented in phases. The final version reflects input from the Commission on Phase I activities, with no fees charged for public access, biological monitoring for each phase of the plan, an adaptive management approach to balance and manage public day-use, cattle grazing, resource protection and restoration, and Native American cultural access for traditional practices. The northwestern section of the property was burned during the CZU Lightning Complex Fire, and residents in the surrounding area are understandably concerned about increased risk of future fires from increased public access and recreation. No fire grills will be installed in day-use areas and campfires will be prohibited year-round. Cattle grazing on approximately 2,200 acres of Cotoni-Coast Dairies will manage fuel loads, reduce non-native species, and improve wildlife habitat.



Cotoni-Coast Dairies National Monument

Public Education: Cultivating Awareness, Inspiring Stewardship



Whale Tail Grantees: Brown Girls Surf Día de los Muertos beach outing.

The Commission awarded \$657,015 in [Whale Tail® grants](#) to 35 projects for educational activities like beach field trips, habitat restoration projects, watershed clean ups, science supplies and curriculum, and SCUBA education research outings, with an emphasis on reaching underserved communities. A few examples of funded projects include: student lessons and teacher training on Indigenous fire management and

Chinook Salmon health in Butte County; environmental education and leadership at a surfing camp

for Oakland youth; and a camping trip for youth and young adults from Los Angeles to learn about otters and their habitat. The Commission worked with Youth Outside to provide training in cultural relevancy, equity, and inclusion for Whale Tail® grantees.

But understandably, the unique challenges of 2020 forced some grantees to delay or redesign their projects. With large gatherings and field trips canceled, staff and grantees responded to the situation by getting creative and adapting programming to fit the moment. Some organizations transitioned to creating engaging and informative videos, hosted community webinars, designed new online curriculum, or shifted to smaller outdoor efforts that could be conducted safely. School programs were adapted to on-line platforms and virtual learning, in-person trainings morphed into webinars. The Commission's grantees have been creative problem-solvers as they determine how best to serve their communities.

The Commission staff's focus shifted to providing structure and encouragement for self-directed stewardship activities while emphasizing safety and physical distancing, and developing new on-line educational resources and programs.

To help with the "virtual" school year, staff compiled a collection of educational resources for teachers and parents engaging in [at-home learning](#), and a new portal for [Environmental Justice Resources for Educators](#), including a five-lesson unit for middle and high school classrooms. The Commission also launched a new [Climate Video Challenge](#) for middle and high school students and announced the [first winner](#) in March.

The 36th annual [Coastal Cleanup Day](#) in September looked dramatically different from cleanups in past years. Rather



Art contest winner Awesome Clever Sea Otters, Cassidy Cheng

than focusing on a single day, the Commission spread activities out throughout the entire month, encouraging volunteers to clean up the coast from their own front doors. Neighborhood cleanups of streets, local parks and creeks, and other natural areas took place all month, all around the state as volunteers responded to the Commission's call to action.



New Coastal Commission Publication: [Environmental Justice for Educators](#)

Volunteers were encouraged to use a data collection app called Clean Swell to record their participation and the trash items they removed. More than 3,000 cleanups were recorded, which far and away led the world in cleanup activity during the month. Close to 13,000 volunteers participated in these cleanup events, which truly encompassed the entire watershed, from inland neighborhoods, to shorelines, to on-the-water cleanups in kayaks, canoes, and dinghies. While participation levels certainly weren't at the level they would have been during a "normal" year, thousands of Californians demonstrated their desire to give back to our environment, with many planning to continue DIY cleanups throughout the year.

The [California Boating Clean and Green Program](#) (jointly implemented with the California State Parks) created a series of virtual trainings and webinars to replace its usual in person workshops, including Dockwalker trainings, oil spill response communication webinars, and clean boating webinars. Over 5,000 boaters took an online clean boating quiz. Ten new California Fishing Line Recycling stations were

installed for a total of 300 stations statewide, which recycled 1,975 pounds of fishing line.

Drivers purchased 4,416 [Whale Tail® License Plates](#) in fiscal year 2019-20. These sales combined with renewal fees for existing plates provided over \$4.7 million for environmental programs. Of this total, \$1.2 million went to the California Beach and Coastal Enhancement Account, which funds the Commission's Public Education Programs, and \$3.5 million went to the Environmental License Plate Fund for a range of environmental conservation projects. Since its launch in 1997, Whale Tail® License Plate revenue has totaled \$111 million (\$31 million to the CBCEA and \$80 million to the ELPF). The [Protect Our Coast and Ocean fund](#) received over \$401,000 in donations from more than 32,000 individuals from January through September 2020, who "checked the coast" on their state tax forms. These donations support marine education and stewardship through Whale Tail® Grants.

Visit www.coast4u.org to learn how to get involved, view winning coastal art and photography, and learn about the Whale Tail® License Plate, the Protect Our Coast and Ocean fund tax checkoff, and other ways to support the Commission's public education work. Stay connected on CCC social media channels ([Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#)).



Emily Li

Enforcement Highlights

The Commission's Enforcement Unit is charged with ensuring that new development is carried out consistent with the Coastal Act. This includes both compliance with permit conditions as well as addressing unpermitted activities and structures. Working directly with alleged violators, local governments and other public agencies, over 90% of the cases resolved by the Commission are done with the agreement and consent of the land owner. Achieving this level of cooperation takes a significant amount of time and resources, but the resulting settlement agreements provide long-lasting public benefits while avoiding costly litigation.

As sea levels rise and beaches narrow, population continues to rise, increasing demand for public beach space. Yet coastal access and recreation is also threatened by illegal private encroachments into public beach space. Coastal Act policies and environmental justice principles emphasize the need to fully protect existing public beach areas for public use by all. In 2020, the Commission's enforcement unit continued to place a high priority on resolving public access violations.

In February, the Commission approved a [Consent Cease and Desist Order](#) and [Administrative Penalty](#) directing the Tivoli Cove Homeowners' Association in Malibu to unblock a Commission-required beach accessway up and over a revetment, build a previously-required public stairway, and remove hazardous boulders and other debris that had fallen onto the beach and into the surf.



Boulders to be removed at Tivoli Cove.

The design of the original revetment blocked access to the other side of Latigo Beach. Decades ago, the Commission required a permit condition for a public pathway up and over the revetment, including stairways and access signs, so that the public could reach the other side of Latigo Beach. However, the Tivoli Cove HOA failed to maintain one of the stairways, rendering it unusable to the public, and privatized the other stairway for their exclusive use. As boulders from their revetment migrated onto the public beach, the cumulative impact of these violations compounded, resulting in a significant loss of public access.

The Commission's resolution of this violation included removing the unpermitted development, constructing and maintaining a public beach access path and stairway, removing all concrete blocks, rebar, pipes, boulders, and other debris on the adjacent public beach, regardless of its origins. Tivoli Cove HOA also agreed to provide a beach shower, drinking fountain, benches, and interpretive signs, and to maintain them and provide them for public use, at their expense.

In June, the Commission issued consent orders to the [City of Newport Beach](#) and dozens of beachfront homeowners to resolve numerous longstanding coastal access violations consisting of private encroachments on public beach. Homeowners had essentially extended their yards, including landscaping, hardscaping, outdoor furniture and other amenities, onto public land, including sensitive dune habitat, claiming it as private space.



Newport Beach private encroachments to be restored to sandy beach

Through the Commission's consent orders, the City and homeowners collectively agreed to remove all unpermitted encroachments from the beach, restore native habitat, and remove any future encroachments. The homeowners agreed to pay, in aggregate, an administrative civil penalty that totals just over \$1.7 million to improve public access opportunities and restore coastal habitats.

In November, the Commission approved a [Consent Order](#) involving the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (LADWP). To replace 220 power poles near Pacific Palisades, the utility had conducted extensive grading without a coastal development permit, damaging sage scrub and chaparral habitat in the Santa Monica Mountains without a permit. In addition to installing erosion control measures and implementing a long-term monitoring plan, LADWP will restore the nine acres it bulldozed within the coastal zone and 17 acres outside the zone. The city also agreed to pay \$1.9 million in fines.

Mapping and GIS

The Commission's Mapping/GIS Unit has continued its efforts to implement ArcGIS Online, a web-based mapping and analysis platform that provides access to creative online tools, maps, data and other online content to create and share custom web maps and applications. Enhanced data sharing has increased collaboration across the agency as well as with our partners. One popular feature is the Story Map, which communicates complex information to the public in a visually creative format. In the summer of 2020, the Statewide Planning Unit published [Sea Level Rise in California: Planning for the Future](#); a Story Map that showcases the Commission's efforts and dedication to addressing sea level rise and integrating sea level rise into the Commission's planning and decision making processes. The Public Education department also used Story Maps to create the [California King Tides Project Story Map](#) which presents a geographic view of citizen science data of extreme high tides in an interactive and engaging way. So far, the California King Tides Project mapped 61 events and received over 2,300 photo submissions from the public showcasing extreme high tides in their communities. Moving forward, the Mapping Unit is dedicated to utilizing latest developments in GIS technology to best support agency staff, our federal, state, and local partners, and the general public.



[Mission Bay, King Tide Project](#)

Post-certification maps are an essential component of LCPs, and the Mapping Unit works closely with local governments to ensure that these maps are accurate, current, and publicly accessible. In March, the Commission certified the city of Pacific Grove's [Permit and Appeal Jurisdiction Map](#), depicting the areas within Pacific Grove that are subject to the Commission's permit and appeal jurisdiction following the recent certification of the

city's LCP. In May, the Commission approved revisions to the City of San Buenaventura's [Permit and Appeal Jurisdiction Map](#).

The Commission also accomplished a significant milestone by completing the dual permit maps for the City of Los Angeles. These maps, referred to as the Coastal Development Permit Program maps, will be the basis of the City's Post LCP Certification Permit and Appeal Jurisdiction maps once the city has a certified LCP.

Aquaculture

Throughout the year, the Commission conducted extensive public outreach to complete the [CDP Application Guidance for Aquaculture and Marine Restoration](#), which was finalized in December. The guidelines incorporate feedback from interested parties, state and federal agency staff, and key stakeholders solicited throughout development of the document. The guidance was a requirement of SB 262 (McGuire, 2019), which the Commission supported as a positive step toward the agency's goal of increasing state and federal agency coordination, regulatory certainty and improving the industry's understanding of and compliance with Coastal Act policies and procedures.

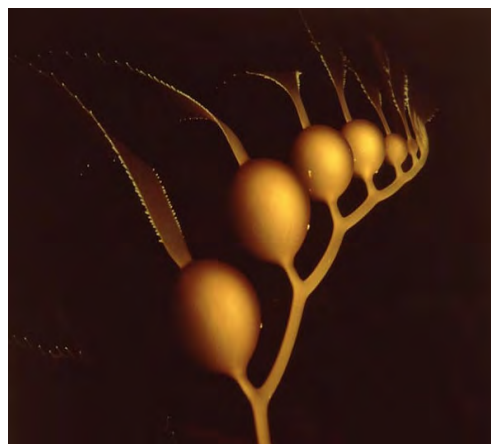


Photo credit: Richard Lang

In addition to meeting the requirements of SB 262, the application guidance is intended to help applicants for marine aquaculture and restoration projects effectively navigate the CDP application process and provide partner agencies and other stakeholders with a better understanding of the Commission's CDP process as well as opportunities to coordinate with Commission staff.

Transportation

The Commission views interagency coordination as integral to improving the efficiency of government and achieving better outcomes in our work to protect California's coast and ocean. The Commission has built a particularly strong relationship over the years with the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) aimed at promoting important public access and transportation projects consistent with Coastal Act and LCP policies. Through multi-year interagency agreements, Commission staff has worked with Caltrans Headquarters as well as Caltrans' six coastal District Offices to continue to provide a safe, sustainable and resilient transportation system. In 2020, Caltrans and the Commission renewed their Interagency Agreement for another five years, enabling the Commission to recruit new Transportation Program staff, including a Senior Environmental Scientist who will focus on mitigation issues relating to transportation projects, such as Caltrans' new Advanced Mitigation Program.

This overall interagency coordination facilitated the coordinated review of Caltrans planning documents throughout the year, including District climate change vulnerability

and adaptation plans, Regional Advanced Mitigation Needs Assessments and Active Transportation Plans. In addition, the Transportation Team processed several major transportation infrastructure projects in 2020, such as, the [Gleason Beach Highway Roadway Realignment Project](#), and the [restoration project at San Dieguito Lagoon](#) mentioned earlier in this report.

Over the past year the Commission also continued participating in the AB 1282 Transportation Permitting Task Force, consisting of the State Transportation Agency, Natural Resources Agency, CalEPA, California Transportation Commission, Caltrans, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, the State Resources Control Board, Regional Water Quality Control Board and the Commission. Under the AB 1282 legislation, the Task Force's mission was to explore ways to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of permitting for transportation projects while protecting our state's natural, historic, and cultural resources. The Taskforce's Final Report was delivered to the Legislature in October and makes 40 specific recommendations across six categories for delivering needed infrastructure projects while furthering the missions of both transportation and environmental protection agencies. Through 2020, the Taskforce continued with working group meetings to pursue four initial recommendations, including ones aimed at incorporating resource considerations into Caltrans cost/benefit analyses, expanding Caltrans' Corridor Management Plan guidelines to address environmental factors such as sea level rise, and improving how Caltrans responds to emergency repairs.

Also in 2020, Commission staff continued discussions with Caltrans and other partners to expand multi-modal opportunities within the coastal zone. With the support of the interagency agreement, Commission and State Coastal Conservancy staff completed extensive collaborations to prepare GIS maps of the California Coastal Trail that will allow Caltrans and other partners to more comprehensively address completing the Trail through planning and project processes. Work will continue in 2021 for making this information available to the public.



Photo credit: Charmaine Coimbra

Partnerships: Coastal Act

As always, the Coastal Commission carried out its visionary mandate in close collaboration with its state and federal agency partners, including California Native American tribes, the State Lands Commission, Caltrans, Housing and Community Development, the Ocean Protection Council, the State Coastal Conservancy, State Parks, the Bay Conservation and Development Commission, California State Water Board, Cal EPA, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, CalFire, California Board of Forestry, the California Natural Resources Agency, US Army Corps of Engineers, US Department of Interior, National Park Service, US Navy, The Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM), and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).

Along with our local government partners, these public agencies each play a unique role in ensuring coastal resources are protected and enhanced for the welfare of present and future generations. Despite chronic staffing shortages, the Commission continued to participate in numerous multi-agency committees, task forces, panels and working groups statewide.

CLIMATE CHANGE AND SEA LEVEL RISE

- California Coastal Sediment Management Working (CSMW) Group
- Caltrans Integrated Planning Team (IPT) Sea Level Rise Working Group
- Climate Change Action Coordination Team
- Coastal and Ocean Working Group of the Climate Action Team (CO-CAT)
- Humboldt Bay Natural Shoreline Infrastructure TAG
- Public Trust Coordination Group
- Safeguarding California Climate Action Team (SafeCAT)
- State Agency Sea Level Rise Leadership Team
- West Coast Governors Alliance Action Coordination Team

COASTAL HAZARDS AND SEDIMENT MANAGEMENT

- California Geological Survey Tsunami Policy Working Group
- California Geological Survey Tsunami Technical Advisory Panel
- North-Central California Coastal Sediment Coordination Committee
- Sand TAC for San Francisco BCDC
- Southern California Dredged Material Management Team
- Southern Monterey Bay Opportunistic Beach Nourishment Program TAC

COASTAL ZONE MANAGEMENT, STATE AND FEDERAL

- Coastal States Organization Ex-Officio Representatives
- Tijuana River National Estuarine Research Reserve (NERR) Advisory Committee
- USC Sea Grant Advisory Board
- West Coast Regional Coastal Zone Programs and National Estuarine Research Reserve Managers Work Group
- Federal-State GIS Informational Meetings
- SF Estuary Geospatial Working Group

ECOLOGICAL RESOURCES

- Beach Ecology Coalition
- Board of Forestry Cal VTP Implementation Working Group
- California Natural Resources Agency Sea Grant Advisory Panel
- California Natural Resources Agency Statewide Monitoring Coordination Group
- California Wetlands Monitoring Group
- Caltrans Advanced Mitigation Program Interagency Team
- Contaminated Sediments Task Force
- Fish Passage Advisory Councils (FishPACs) for Northern California, Bay Area, Central Coast, and Southern Steelhead
- Goleta Slough Management Committee
- Integrated Watershed Restoration Program TAC for San Mateo, Santa Cruz and Monterey Counties
- Interagency Review Teams for wetland mitigation banking
- Loma Alta Slough Wetlands Enhancement TAC
- Los Cerritos Wetlands TAC
- NOAA Ocean Acidification Resilience Project Advisory board

- Ocean Protection Council Estuary Marine Protected Area Mgmt Advisory Council
- Ormond Beach Restoration Committee
- Interagency Pesticide Working Group
- Santa Cruz County Regional Conservation Investment Strategy TAC
- Seabird Protection Network
- Southern California Wetlands Recovery Group
- Topanga Lagoon TAC
- U.S.F.W.S. Oregon Silverspot Butterfly Working Group
- Wetlands Recovery Project Wetlands Managers Group

JOINT ENFORCEMENT

- Santa Monica Mountains Enforcement Task Force
- Mendocino County Environmental Crimes Task Force
- Del Norte Environmental Crimes Task Force
- Humboldt County Environmental Crimes Task Force
- Humboldt County Code Compliance Working Group

ENERGY AND OCEAN RESOURCES

- California's Critical Coastal Areas Program (Joint Lead Agency)
- CDFW Aquaculture Development Committee
- California Intergovernmental Renewable Energy Task Force
- Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Group
- Coastal and Marine Spatial Planning Regional Working Group
- Diablo Canyon Independent Peer Review Panel
- Greater Farallones National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council
- Interagency Oil & Gas Platform Decommissioning Working Group
- Joint Strategic Advisory Committee for Ca Coastal Ocean Observing System
- Monterey Bay NMS Advisory Council
- OSPR Technical Advisory Committee
- Ports of San Diego, Long Beach, LA, Hueneme, SF and Humboldt Harbor Safety Committees
- Southern California Coastal Ocean Observing System
- Statewide Advisory Committee on Cooling Water Intake Structures
- Statewide Marine Protected Area Leadership Team

PROJECT-SPECIFIC WORKING GROUPS

- Arana Gulch Adaptive Management Working Group TAC
- Broad Beach Restoration Project TAC
- LOSSAN San Diego Regional Rail Corridor Working Group
- ODSVRA Technical Review Team
- ODSVRA TRT Scientific Subcommittee
- Russian River Estuary Management Advisory Management Panel
- Scott Creek Lagoon Restoration TAC
- Senior Technical Advisory Committee for BCDC
- Surfers Beach Technical Advisory Group

PUBLIC ACCESS AND RECREATION

- Hollister Ranch Public Access Interagency Working Group
- Gleason Beach Coastal Access Task Force
- AB 1282 Transportation Permitting Taskforce
- Barriers to Coastal Access Working Group
- Big Sur Multi-Agency Advisory Council
- California Coastal Trail Working Group
- Caltrans IPT Public Access Working Group
- Lower-Cost Visitor-Serving Working Group

PUBLIC EDUCATION

- California Environmental Education Interagency Network
- Pacific Oil Spill Prevention Education Team

WATER QUALITY

- California Nonpoint Pollution Control Program (Joint Lead Agency)
- California's Critical Coastal Areas Program Interagency Working Group
- Marinas and Recreational Boating Interagency Coordination Committee
- Ocean Protection Council Plastic Pollution Steering Committee
- West Coast Marine Debris Alliance
- US EPA's Regional Response Team Region 9 Applied Response Technology Workgroup

Headquarters Office Move

After 27 years at 45 Fremont Street in San Francisco, the Coastal Commission now has a new address. In August, the San Francisco Headquarters/North Central District Office completed its transition to 455 Market Street. Office moves always require a significant effort on the part of all affected staff, but relocating the agency headquarters during a pandemic under shelter in place orders presented additional challenges, particularly when it involves a location that is accessible primarily by public transit. Commission



Management worked out a rotating schedule to enable staff to pack their offices safely while minimizing travel and time inside. The I.T. unit worked tirelessly to migrate all systems to the new building in a manner that minimized disruption for the public as well as on the staff production schedule. Although the office was necessarily closed for several days, the agency was largely able to maintain continuity due to the fact that staff was already working from home.

Photo credit: CCC



For Auld Lang Syne

The Commission bid a bittersweet farewell to 10 valuable, long-term staff in 2020, as they transitioned into well-deserved retirement. All of these committed public servants contributed in lasting ways to California's coastal protection legacy, dedicating a significant portion of their lives to the cause. Their institutional knowledge is irreplaceable. Their collective contribution will remain on permanent display along California's 1,200 mile shoreline. And although COVID-19 prevented the send-off they deserved from their colleagues, we look forward to a combination celebration/reunion when it's safe to travel again.

These departures are the latest manifestation of a longer-term trend, the "Silver Wave" of retirees: of the Commission's approximately 182 staff members, 59 are currently eligible for retirement. We thank them for their service, we will miss them each and every day, and wish them all the best.

- Susan Hansch – Chief Deputy, 46 years
- Mark Delaplaine - Coastal Program Manager, 44 years
- Jeff Staben - Administrative Assistant II, 40 years
- Larry Simon – Federal Consistency, 33 years
- Jay Banaag - Information Technology Associate, 30 years
- Diana Chapman - Associate Governmental Program Analyst, 28 years
- Clarita Tagab - Management Services Technician, 21 years
- Doug MacMillan - Research Data Specialist II, 20 years
- Gabe Buhr - Coastal Program Manager, 12 years
- Owen Omphua - Associate Business Management Analyst, 11 years

Where We Go From Here

After two full years of preparation and review, the Commission unanimously adopted the [2021-2025 Strategic Plan](#) in November. Complied with significant public input, its 9 goals, 50 objectives and 199 specific actions will guide the Commission's actions on priority focus areas



Photo credit: Bonnie Ernst

over the next five years. It's an aspirational document that considers how the Coastal Act can best protect coastal resources in a rapidly changing California, and it will require additional staff and funding resources to fully achieve all of its objectives. But it is an essential document for making the case for those resources, and will be a touchstone for staff, commissioners and the public to reference when considering future Commission efforts and initiatives.

While nobody can't predict what 2021 will bring, we can anticipate some of the more consequential items that will be coming before the Commission. Staff anticipates that several desalination proposals will come before the Commission in 2021, including new facilities proposed by Cal-Am on the Monterey Peninsula, Poseidon in Huntington Beach, South Coast Water District at Doheny Beach (Orange County), and the Cambria Community Services District (San Luis Obispo County), as well as modifications to existing facilities on Catalina Island, the Poseidon facility in Carlsbad, and the City of Santa Barbara's facility.

BOEM is also pursuing leasing in federal waters for offshore wind development. In October 2018, BOEM issued a Call for Information and Nominations requesting information and expressions of interest for three offshore Call Areas in Northern and Central California. The Call closed at the end of January 2019, and staff anticipates BOEM will submit a federal consistency determination on potential lease areas in mid-2021.



Photo credit: Elizabeth Levy

Other significant project proposals likely to come before the Commission in 2021 include: the Pt. Reyes National Seashore General Management Plan Amendment for beef and dairy ranch operations and management of Tule elk; State Parks' Public Work Plan for Oceano Dunes, the Farallon Islands National Wildlife Refuge program to

eradicate invasive house mice; a Management Plan for the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary; the Federal Highway Administration North Santa Cruz County Rail Trail project; SANDAG's Del Mar Bluffs Stabilization Project 5; the U.S. Navy's Old Town San Diego Re-development Project; Implementation of the NOAA and CDFW Garcia River Estuary Enhancement Program; NOAA's proposal for restoration of coastal dunes and wetland habitat at the Eel River estuary; and, potentially, a five year NPDES General Permit for Offshore Oil and Gas Platforms and two industrial scale fish farms, one in federal waters offshore of San Diego and another along the shore of Humboldt Bay.

Here's hoping for a better, brighter 2021, with an end to the Pandemic, a national turn toward civility, a resurgence of empathy and creative responses to climate change, sea level rise and all the other challenges facing our coast and ocean. The coast is never saved, it's always being saved by the people and partner agencies that care about its irreplaceable resources.

In Memorium



Diana Chapman



Gabe Buhr

This report is dedicated to the memory of former Commission staff Diana Chapman (Santa Cruz office) and Gabe Buhr (San Diego office). We will forever miss their good humor, compassion, integrity, dedication and kindness. Their contributions to this agency over their combined 40 years of service enabled us to achieve the kind of successes chronicled above. Diana and Gabe, we love you, and you will always be with us.



A fitting tribute to Gabe's peerless contributions to the multi-year efforts on the I-5 San Diego North Coast Corridor Public Works Plan, the San Dieguito Nature Bridge has been dedicated in his honor.

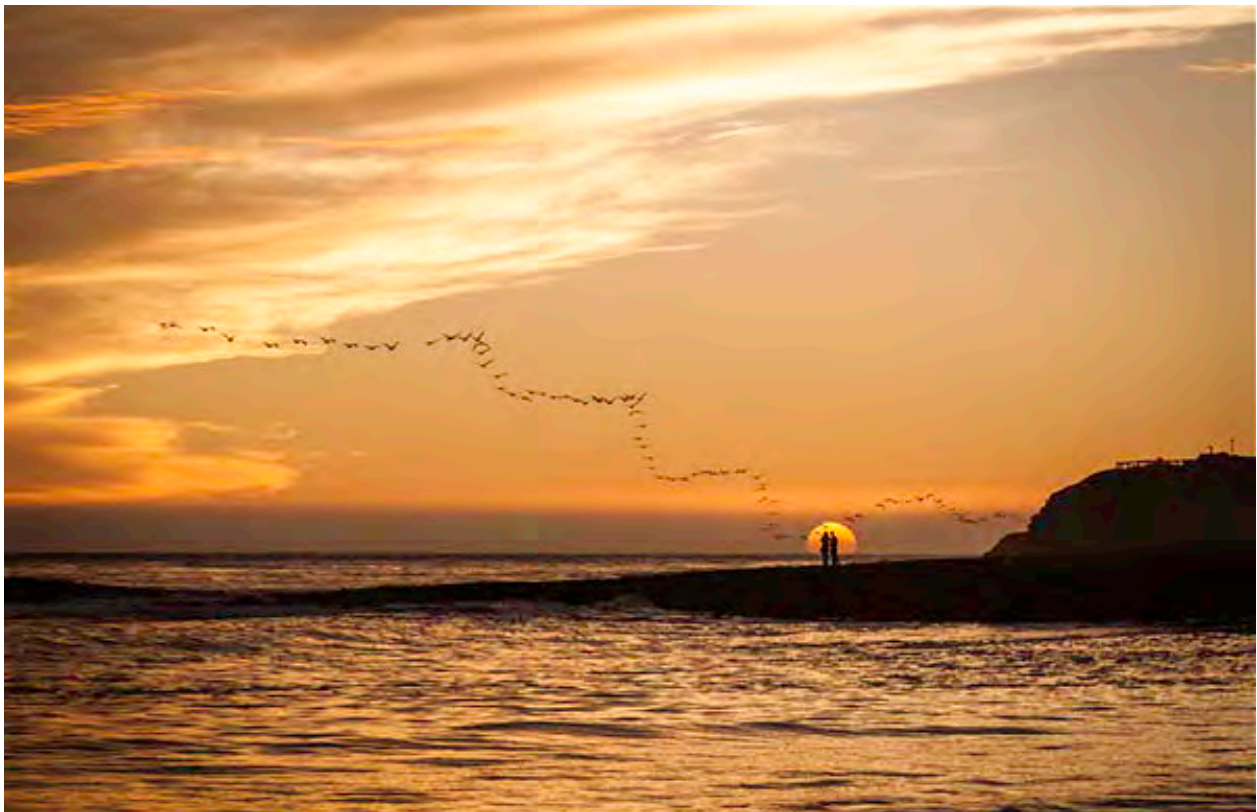


Photo credit: David Kerbyson

Attachment B

2020 Commission Workload Review Report

2020 Workload Challenges

2020 was a year of monumental challenges for the Commission that had far-reaching effects on the Commission's programs, functions and workload. The COVID 19 pandemic and the resulting stay at home orders that hit us in early March required the Commission to close our offices across the state and work remotely from home. Staff had to develop new systems and processes to work remotely on the fly. The agency also had to scramble to provide our staff with the tools, resources and support they needed to effectively work from home. In addition, COVID related budget cuts and redirection of staff to contact tracing adversely impacted our operations.

On top of that staff had to move our Headquarters office at one of the worse times in the pandemic. In addition, some of our staff and offices were impacted by the unprecedented wildfires and power outages that impacted many areas of our State. In April, the Commission made the unprecedented announcement that it was cancelling its regularly scheduled monthly hearing for the first time in its 47-year history. This was necessary to work out the technical aspects of conducting virtual public hearings supported by a staff transitioning to a 100% work from home schedule. The constraints associated with virtual meetings has resulted in fewer items being scheduled for hearings, which has resulted in a backlog of hearing items in some of our offices with higher workload demands. On the positive side the virtual meeting format has increased the public's accessibility to Commission meetings.

Staff's workload challenges before the COVID crisis were significant and demanded a lot from our staff. The difficulties and challenges resulting from COVID have exponentially exacerbated our workload challenges. The physical, mental and emotional impact of the COVID pandemic coupled with challenges working remotely and dealing with a crushing workload has taken a toll on our staff. However, at every step on this difficult journey Commission staff has stepped up to the challenge with a steely determination, creativity, teamwork, and an undying commitment to carry on our noble mission and work protecting our precious coast and ocean.

Even in light of the many challenges over the last year the Commission and staff achieved a number of significant accomplishments:

- Completion of the 2021 – 2025 Strategic Plan;
- Full certification of the San Diego County LCP;
- Authorizing the CalTrans/SANDAG 154 acre San Dieguito Restoration/Mitigation Project;
- Approved the CalTrans Gleason's Beach Highway 1 relocation and bridge project/CDP;

- Conducted the Local Government Workshop and Adopted a Joint Statement of Sea Level Rise Principles;
- Adopted the Statewide Sea Level Rise Principles for Aligned State Action;
- Approved the Consent Enforcement Orders to remove a number encroachments of off the beach in Newport Beach; and
- Completion of CDP Application Guidance for Aquaculture and Marine Restoration Projects.

These are just a few of the Commission's many accomplishments for 2020. Please see the [2020 Year in Review Report](#) for all of the Commission accomplishments in 2020.

Despite the economic slowdown, the Commission received 2,359 submittals, and acted on a total of 620 permits, appeals, LCP amendments and federal consistency items. This is only 2 fewer actions than the Commission took in 2017, and only about 18% lower than the total number of actions in 2018 and 2019.

As usual, the workload in the South Coast District office in Long Beach outpaces all the other district offices, accounting for 40% of all submittals and actions. This is due to the fact that the largest number of uncertified jurisdictions, including the City of Los Angeles, are within the jurisdictional boundaries of the South Coast District.

Certified local governments stayed busy as well, issuing 1,031 coastal development permits, 957 of which were appealable to the Commission. Of these, 38 were actually appealed, for a 6% rate of appeal. In addition, both local governments and the Commission issued a greater number of permit waivers in 2020, largely from the number of requests from local governments to temporarily close public beach and park areas due to the Covid-19 public health emergency. Fortunately, access has been fully or partially restored to all of these previously closed areas.

Regulatory and Planning Work

Commission and local government planning and permit activity for the year is reported below, as provided by the Commission's Coastal Data Management System (CDMS). As shown in the chart below (**Figure 1**), in 2020, the Commission processed a total 620 total actions. The Commission acted on 38 appeals; 438 coastal development permits (CDPs); 52 emergency permits; 48 LCP amendments; and 51 federal consistency items. Of the 438 CDPs the Commission acted on in 2020, 428 were approved and only 10 (.02%) were denied. The below chart also includes 2020 total Commission actions by District for comparison.

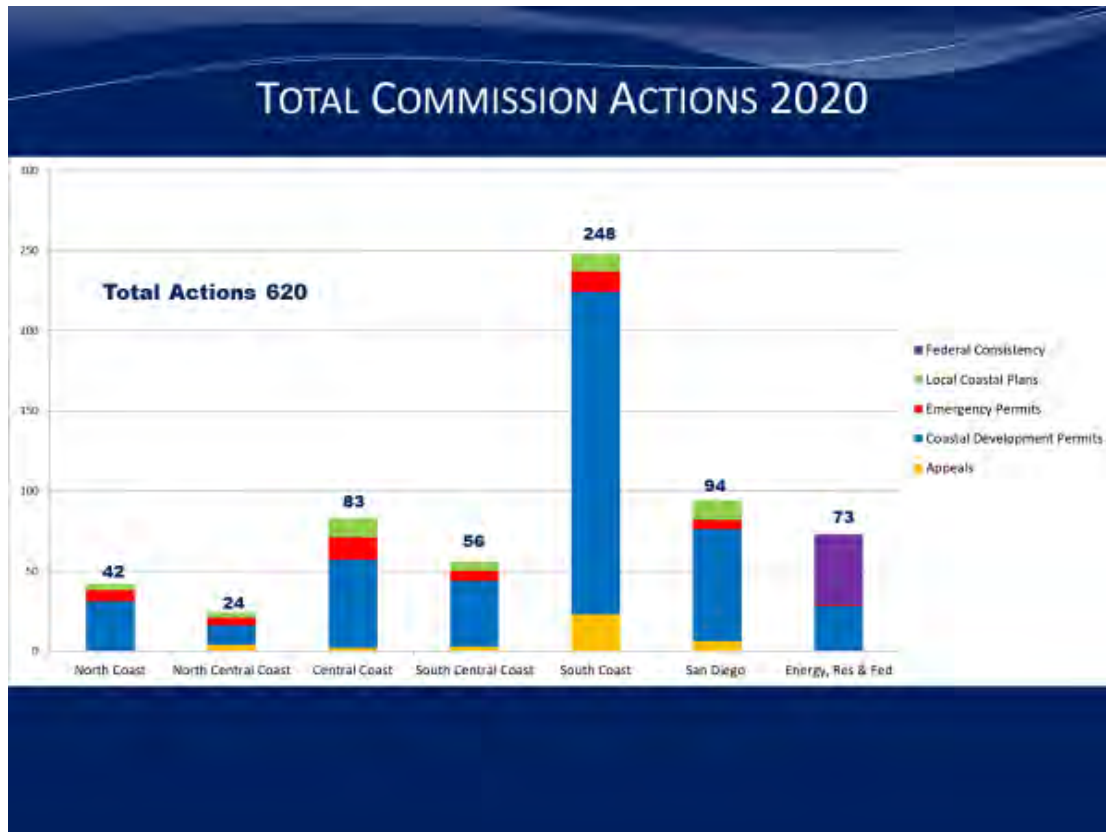
The total number of Commission actions for 2020 is down from 779 in 2019 to 620 in 2020. The other notable differences are fewer appeal and LCP actions. In 2018, the Executive Director issued only 18 emergency permits, but in 2019 that number increased to 51. In 2020, the Executive Director issued 52 emergency permits, 14 of which were for emergency shoreline armoring projects.

Figure 1. 2020 Commission Actions

2020 Commission Actions						
District	Appeals	Coastal Dev. Permits	Emergency Permits	Local Coastal Plans	Fed. Consistency	Total
North Coast	0	31	7	4	0	42
North Central Coast	4	12	5	3	0	24
Central Coast	2	55	14	12	0	83
South Central Coast	3	41	6	6	0	56
South Coast	23	201	13	11	0	248
San Diego	6	70	6	12	0	94
Energy, Res & Fed	0	28	1	0	44	73
Total	38	438	52	48	51	620
2019 Totals	62	543	51	72	51	779

The chart below (**Figure 2**) illustrates the total 2020 Commission actions by district office. The large number of actions out of the South Coast District Office is due to the significant number of uncertified jurisdictions in this district (7 uncertified jurisdictions). The Commission retains permit authority in these jurisdictions which is why there is such a large number CDPs actions out of the South Coast District.

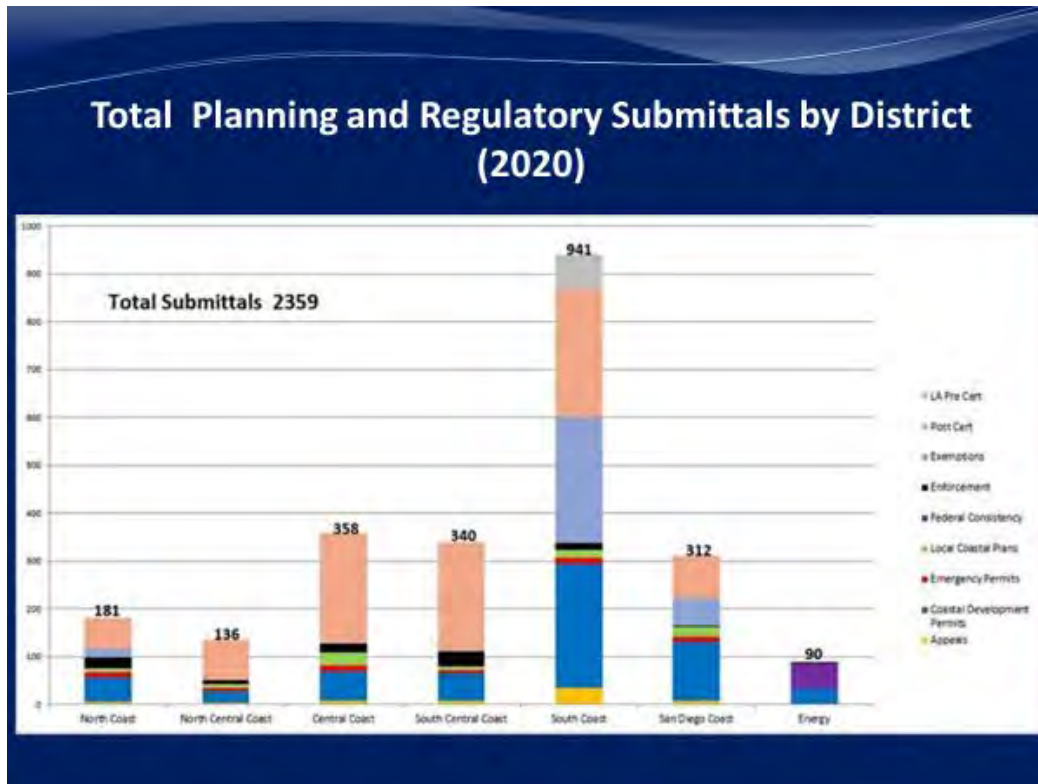
Figure 2 Total Commission Actions by District



The following chart (**Figure 3**) illustrates the total number of planning and regulatory submittals in each district office. Last year, the Commission received a total of 2,359 total planning and regulatory submittals. The number of total submittals was down 708 submittals or 18% from 2019. These submittals include items such as CDP actions reported by local governments (Post Certification work), exemptions, emergency permits, enforcement reports, City of Los Angeles CDP actions (LA City Pre-Certification), LCPs and CDP submittals. Some of these items do not require an action by the Commission, such as exemption determinations. Again, the South Coast Office received significantly more submittals than the other district offices because of the large number of uncertified jurisdictions in that district.

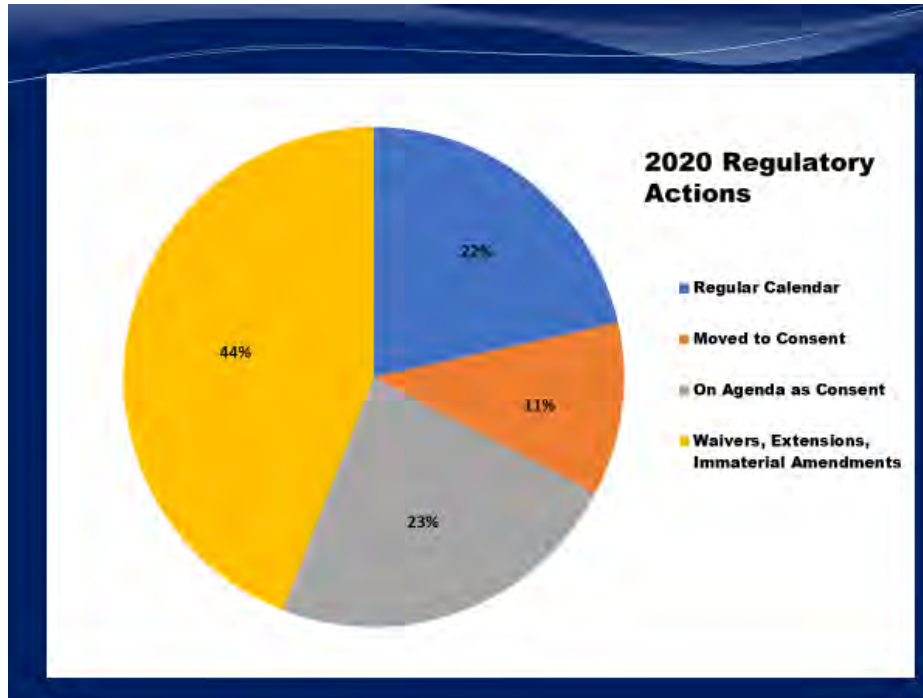
In 2017, in order to deal with the heavy regulatory and planning workload in the South Coast District office, Commission management moved three analyst positions from other districts to cover this heavy workload and some work was transferred to the Statewide Planning Unit. Then in 2018 and 2019, the District Manager and two senior Supervisors retired which continued the staffing challenges in that office. In late 2019 and early 2020, the agency appointed two new district managers and two new district supervisors. In addition, Statewide Planning Unit staff have been assigned to assist the South Coast District staff with this heavy workload.

Figure 3. Total Planning & Regulatory Submittals by District



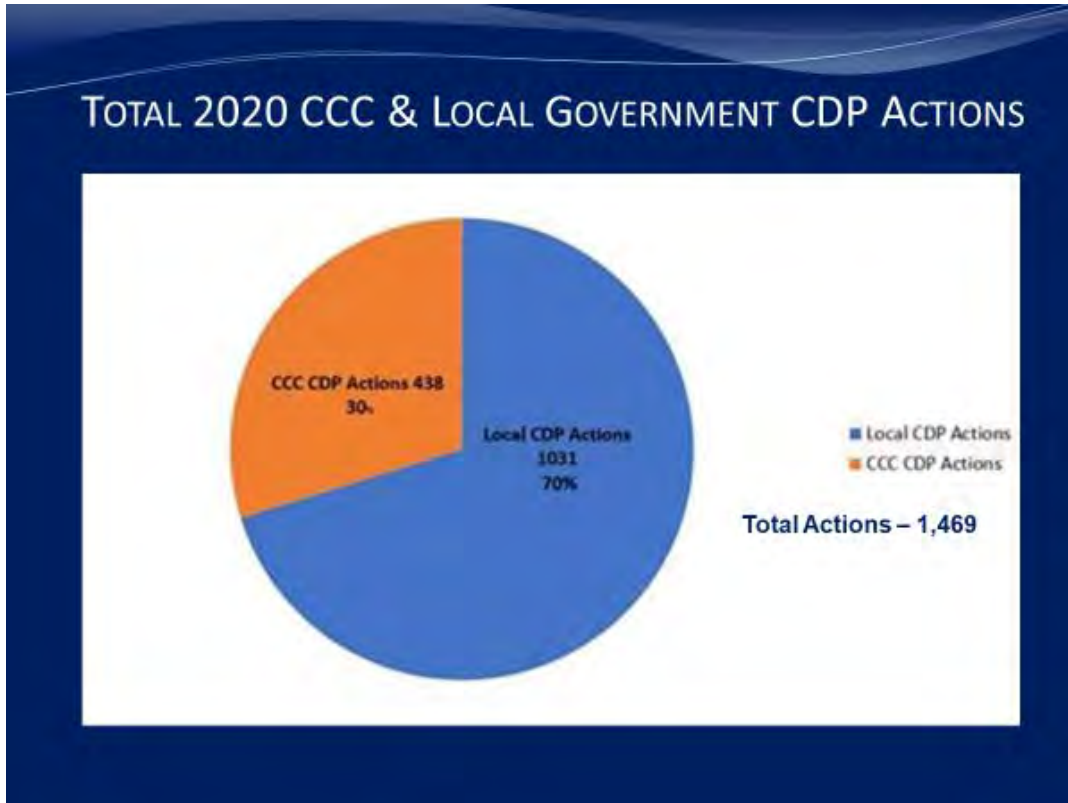
The chart below (**Figure 4**) shows the percentage breakdown of regulatory actions under the various agenda calendar categories for 2020. In order to focus our efforts on LCP and LCP grant work, staff has made it a priority to process as many regulatory items as possible as waivers, administrative or consent items. In 2020, 78% of our regulatory items were processed as waivers, administrative or consent items. In 2019, staff processed 73% of our regulatory items as waivers or administrative/consent items. Last year, the number of items staff processed as waivers, administrative or consent items is slightly higher than 2019.

Figure 4. 2020 Regulatory Actions Processed Under Commission Calendars



The following chart (**Figure 5**) shows the total number of local government and Commission CDP actions for 2020. Local governments processed a total 1,031 CDPs and the Commission processed 438 CDPs for a total 1,469 CDP actions. In 2019, local governments processed 1,157 CDPs and the Commission processed 543 CDPs for a total of 1,700 total CDP actions. In 2020, the Commission processed 105 fewer CDPs than in 2019 and local governments processed 126 fewer CDPs than in 2019.

Figure 5. Total CDPS Processed by CCC & Local Governments.



The following chart (**Figure 6**) illustrates the number of appealable and non-appeal CDPs from certified local governments for 2020. Of a total of 604 appealable local actions the Commission considered 38 appeals for an appeal rate of 6.057%. The Commission found that 31 of these appeals raised a substantial issue under the certified LCPs, seven were found to raise no substantial issue. Of the 9 appeals brought to the Commission for de novo hearing – 4 were denied and 5 were approved subject to conditions.

Figure 6. Final Action Notices and Appeals

FINAL ACTION NOTICES AND APPEALS 2020					
Final Action Notices and Appeals					
Month	Appealable	Not Appealable	Total	Appeals	Appeal Rate
January	40	35	75	0	0.00%
February	59	24	83	3	5.08%
March	55	27	82	4	7.27%
April	33	21	54	0	0.00%
May	43	17	60	2	4.65%
June	60	47	107	3	5.00%
July	49	26	75	2	4.08%
August	58	30	88	3	5.17%
September	55	28	83	7	12.73%
October	47	35	82	9	19.15%
November	54	29	83	3	5.56%
December	51	34	85	2	3.92%
YTD	604	353	957	38	6.05%

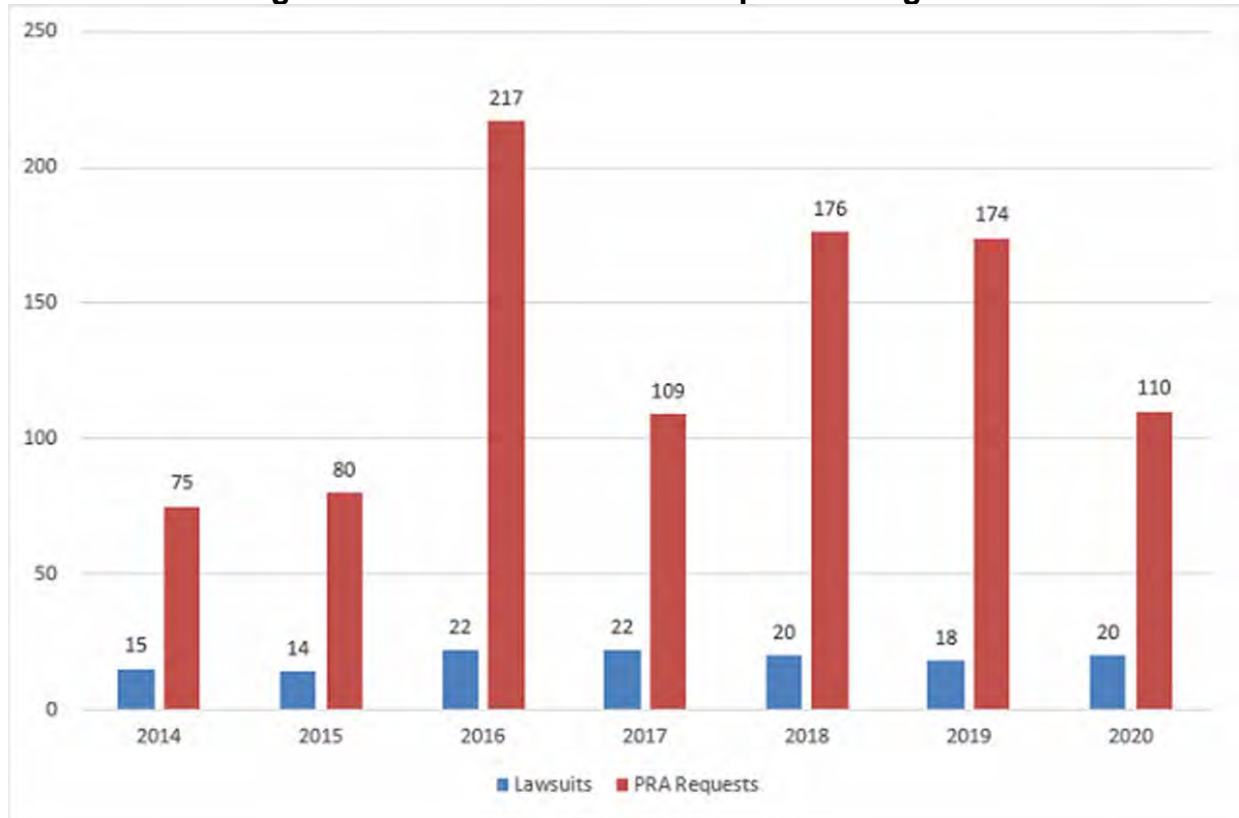
The chart below (**Figure 7**) illustrates the total number of Commission planning actions in 2020 by month. The Commission acted on a total of 48 planning actions in 2020 which includes actions on LCPs, Public Works Plans, University Long Range Development Plans, and Port Master Plans. In 2019, the Commission acted on 72 planning actions.

Figure 7. Commission Planning Actions by Month

Legal Division

The Commission's legal division's workload from Public Records Act requests remains very high as demonstrated by the chart showing the requests over the past six years (**Figure 8**). While the number of Public Records Act requests declined from about 175 in 2019 to about 110 in 2020, such requests were greater in scope and complexity than in prior years, necessitating review of significantly more emails and other documents. In addition, the challenges of the COVID19 pandemic made it more difficult to respond to such requests. Staff estimates that responding to Public Records Act requests took an excess of 850 hours of attorney time and about 900 hours of non-attorney time, as compared to 500 and 450 hours, respectively, in 2019.

The year 2020 was also a busy year from a litigation perspective, with the Commission becoming a party to 20 new cases, up from 18 in 2019. In addition, many older cases have not yet been resolved, so the workload created by litigation has increased. There are currently approximately 65 pending cases. Finally, the Commission continues to have limited staffing resources for its recorded document work, and those resources were further limited by the COVID19 pandemic. Thus, the drafting, review, and recording of such documents was another significant challenge in 2020.

Figure 8. Public Records Act Request & Litigation.

Statewide Planning Unit

Over the past several years, staff has been developing and expanding the Commission's Statewide Planning (SWP) Unit. The Unit's mission is to coordinate the agency's approach on issues of statewide importance by providing policy guidance and offering training support and outreach to staff, government agencies and the public. Our SWP has grown from three to ten employees to increase the capacity of the Unit.

The core functions of the Unit are to research and develop policy guidance, develop and provide training materials, conduct outreach to local governments and engage with partner agencies, administer the Commission's LCP grant program, address emerging issues through special statewide projects and programs, and gather and report data about the Commission's programs.

The SWP Unit is working on a series of federally funded 309 grant projects that are helping the Commission develop new guidance and training materials for staff and local governments. Together with the Commission's sea level rise (SLR) team and a steering committee of senior management and technical staff, in 2020, SWP staff completed the administrative draft of a new SLR adaptation guidance specific to addressing critical infrastructure. SWP Unit is also working with the SLR team to develop additional guidance and training materials on SLR, and to conduct training sessions with staff, local government and members of the public.

SWP staff is also working with the State Lands Commission on a project to better understand the effects that SLR will have on the State's public trust resources, and to develop an effective and cooperative program to work together with the State Lands Commission to protect public trust resources now and in the future. SWP staff hosted a virtual kickoff event in December 2020 to formally begin regular coordination between staff at both agencies.

In addition, the SWP Unit is undertaking a multi-year effort to develop an LCP training program. The program will reach Commission staff as well as local government staff, and it involves not only developing training materials, but also ensuring those training materials are easily accessible, through live and online training sessions, as well as through new and more accessible web pages.

The SWP Unit is responsible for administering the Commission's LCP grant program. Currently the Commission has awarded 68 local planning grants to 40 jurisdictions totaling some \$8.3 million dollars through six rounds of grants. The SWP Unit also provides assistance to our district offices on LCP and CDP work related to SLR issues, lower cost overnight accommodations, and short-term rentals. In addition, the SWP Unit worked with the Local Government Working Group, comprised of representatives from California State Association of Counties (CSAC) and League of Cities as well as a subcommittee of two Commissioners (Groom/Wilson), to develop a Joint Statement on SLR Adaptation and organized a local government workshop in December 2020 to provide an opportunity for the Commission and local government representatives to further discuss opportunities related to SLR planning.

With assistance from the Commission's Technical Services Unit, the SWP Unit also continued interagency coordination efforts related to fire prevention and living shorelines. Regarding fire prevention, staff worked closely with the Board of Forestry, CalFIRE and RCD staff to develop a framework for programmatic approvals of vegetation treatment projects in the coastal zone. Such a programmatic approval will ensure efficient review of fire prevention and forest health projects that are designed to improve biodiversity and reduce hazards. Regarding living shorelines, SWP Unit staff worked with technical services staff on a series of meetings with the State Coastal Conservancy and is working towards development of training memos for CCC staff on this issue.

The SWP Unit has a lot of important work coming in 2021, including coordinating the Local Government Working Group with CSAC and League of Cities representatives and helping to develop related guidance materials as part of the group's 2021 work plan; presenting a public review draft of the Critical Infrastructure Adaptation Guidance and conducting related public and stakeholder outreach; preparing for another local government workshop on sea level rise; preparing for an agriculture workshop; and continuing interagency coordination with the State Lands Commission, State Coastal Conservancy and CalFIRE, among others. The SWP Unit will also be updating parts of our public webpage meant for assistance to local governments and will continue administration of the LCP grant program.

Energy, Ocean Resources and Federal Consistency Division

Staff of the Energy, Ocean Resources and Federal Consistency (EORFC) Division managed a substantial workload for 2020 and anticipates a similar workload for 2021. In 2020, the EORFC Unit welcomed three new staff members and brought several significant items in front of the Commission. These included the review of the Inspection and Maintenance Program for the storage of spent nuclear fuel at San Onofre Nuclear Generating Station (SONGS), repair and maintenance to the Santa Barbara Desalination Facility intake, two fiber optic cable projects (one landing in Hermosa Beach and the other landing at Grover Beach), the permanent abandonment of 4 leaking legacy wells offshore of Summerland, remediation of contaminated soil at the Synergy Oil Field in the Los Cerritos Wetlands, and several reconductoring and pipeline repair projects. Commission staff also prepared for a hearing on the Cal-Am project on the Monterey Peninsula, although this hearing was postponed the day before it was scheduled to be heard.

The Commission also acted on several significant federal consistency items in 2020. These included two projects related to San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) Del Mar Bluffs Stabilization Program, EPA's expansion of the Humboldt Open Ocean Disposal Site, the USACE's East San Pedro Bay aquatic habitat enhancement project, continuation and expansion of U.S Navy military readiness training and testing activities on Point Mugu Sea Range and portions of San Nicolas Island, and a general management plan by the Bureau of Land Management for the Cotoni-Coast Dairies unit of the California Coastal National Monument.

For 2021, the Department of the Interior's Bureau of Ocean Energy Management ("BOEM") may release a final 2019-2024 Proposed Outer Continental Shelf Oil and Gas Leasing Program. 2018's Draft Proposed Program – the first step in developing a 5-year leasing program -- recommended that federal waters offshore Northern, Central and Southern California be leased for oil and gas development, despite opposition from the State of California. With the change in the federal administration, the status of this Program is unclear. BOEM is also pursuing leasing in federal waters for offshore wind development. In October 2018, BOEM issued a Call for Information and Nominations requesting information and expressions of interest for three offshore Call Areas. Since the Call closed at the end of January 2019, BOEM has been preparing a NEPA document in preparation for a lease sale. Staff anticipates BOEM will submit a federal consistency determination on potential lease areas on the North Coast and possibly on the Central Coast later this year.

Staff anticipates bringing several desalination proposals to the Commission in 2021 (including new facilities proposed by Cal-Am on the Monterey Peninsula, Poseidon in Huntington Beach, South Coast Water District at Doheny Beach (Orange County), and the Cambria Community Services District (San Luis Obispo County), as well as modifications to existing facilities on Catalina Island, the Poseidon facility in Carlsbad, and the City of Santa Barbara's facility). Staff also plans to bring three federal waters

aquaculture projects in the coming months, one each for fish, shellfish and kelp cultivation.

Other significant project proposals to go before the Commission this year include: a Pt. Reyes National Seashore General Management Plan Amendment for beef and dairy ranch operations and management of Tule elk, a Farallon Islands National Wildlife Refuge program to eradicate invasive house mice, a Management Plan for the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary, the Federal Highway Administration North Santa Cruz County Rail Trail project, SANDAG's Del Mar Bluffs Stabilization Project 5, the U.S. Navy's Old Town San Diego Redevelopment Project, the NRCS Eel River Estuary Restoration Project; the NOAA and CDFW proposal for restoration of coastal dunes and wetland habitat at the Ocean Ranch/Eel River estuary, and a possibly a private five-golf course and lodging project on Vandenberg AFB.

Additionally, staff will remain active on various multi-agency planning bodies including the Oil and Gas Platform Interagency Decommissioning Work Group, BOEM-California Intergovernmental Renewable Energy Taskforce, Statewide Advisory Committee on Cooling Water Intake Structures (SACCWIS), MPA Statewide Leadership Team, Interagency Aquaculture Coordination Committee, Southern California Dredged Material Management Team, Southern California Wetlands Recovery Project (WRP) and NOAA Restoration Center agency coordination team.

Enforcement Unit

Case Workload

As of December 2020, the Commission enforcement program had 2,723 cases pending: 109 at headquarters, and 2,614 at the district offices. In 2001 there were 783 total cases open. Many of these cases are high resource impact cases, complex legal issues that enforcement staff must analyze, and highly contentious and highly visible. The nature of these cases, i.e. their complexity, urgency, and gravity, prevent staff from investigating reports of moderate, low, and even other high priority cases.

Although the Enforcement unit resolved and closed cases, in every single year, there have been more cases coming in than can resolve, so the net number of pending cases has continued to grow. Pending cases include older cases that continue to require extensive staff time, particularly to ensure that resolutions that are reached, either at the district or headquarters level, are fully implemented. Often this "backend" work, like monitoring and managing restoration projects, requires as much staff time as reaching the initial resolution. Thus, a growing number of "resolved" cases means an ever growing number of active cases to manage and monitor as well as an increasing number of new cases to investigate, negotiate and resolve.

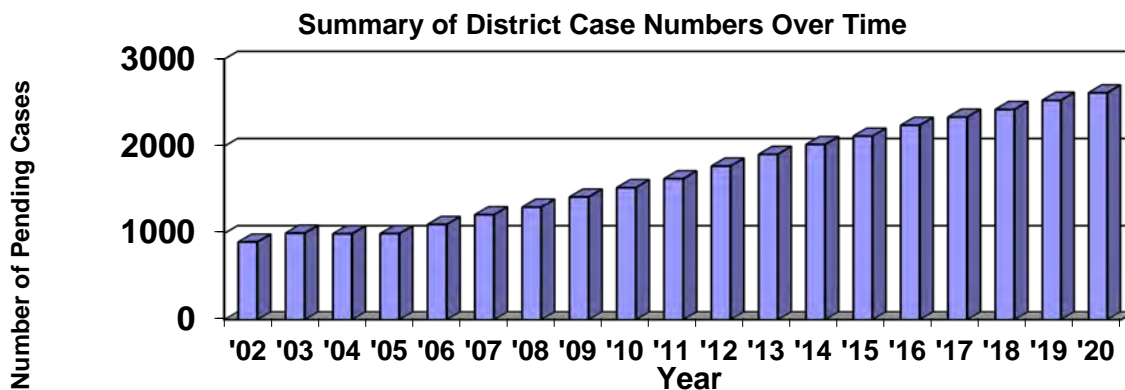
The Enforcement Unit has taken a number of steps to try and expedite case resolution and site restoration, and have resolved significant numbers of cases using the new administrative penalty authority, but despite these efforts, the overall numbers of cases has steadily increased over time. The real cost of an increased number of Coastal Act

cases is an increase in the loss of coastal resources that goes remedied, including impacts on public coastal access, which is increasingly needed to give all Californians adequate access to open space, and impacts on habitats for species that are nearing extinction.

Statewide Enforcement Open Case Numbers

The number of enforcement cases statewide has gone up every year since records have been kept, from 310 in 1997 to 2,723 as of December 2020 and the trend is continuing, even during the last year when the Unit was constrained by the impacts and inefficiencies created by COVID and working at home, furloughs and other impacts (**Figure 9**). This increase in open cases continued even though staff did not have access to the CDMS for a significant amount of this year, so recordkeeping was difficult. Moreover, these numbers actually are an understatement of the likely number of actual Coastal Act violations—the Commission has no inspectors or permit compliance monitoring staff, so the number of open cases is probably small fraction of actual violations. This is significant for a number of reasons including the fact that relying on those violations reported to the Commission by the public (environmental groups, neighbors, etc.) may not even include some of the most important cases from the perspective of resource damages.

Figure 9. Summary of Enforcement Workload



The current number of open cases by district:

North Coast	301	South Coast	576
North Central	284	San Diego	212
Central Coast	481	Energy	21
South Central Coast	739	Headquarters	109

Total Cases – 2,723

The case backlog is particularly acute in two districts and in Headquarters. For example, the South Central District office (which includes areas of heavy development pressure such as Malibu and the Santa Monica Mountains) has 739 open cases for the one district officer to handle, and the South Coast District office (which also includes areas of high development pressure) has 576 open cases.

To handle this very large number of cases, the Enforcement Program has just six district officer positions (one of which is out on long term medical leave) and three and a half headquarters enforcement staff positions to investigate, prepare and staff all formal administrative actions brought by the Commission for the whole state. These same staff also oversee and ensure compliance with all of the restoration and other projects undertaken as a result of those Orders issued by the Commission. In addition, district enforcement staff oversee and ensure compliance with all restoration and projects undertaken as a result of negotiated resolutions, either in permits or informally, as well as investigating violations of permits issued not only by the Commission but often also of those issued by local governments.

The Enforcement Unit have faced a number of additional staffing challenges this year. The program received funding for a temporary second position in the South Central District, but this person was instead tapped to do COVID contract tracing, as was our administrative staff person, both of which increased the workload on existing staff. In addition, the Unit has had one of the district officers out on medical leave for over six months and we have been attempting to cover his work with existing staff. The Enforcement Unit also has had two other staff out for over 4 months each, for personal reasons, so Enforcement Unit staffing has been very much constrained over this period.

The same few enforcement staff are also responsible for the litigation support activities for all the judicial enforcement cases brought by the Attorney General, including such time consuming activities as responding to interrogatories, providing deposition and trial testimony, preparing for and attending mediations, reviewing and assisting in drafting and researching for pleadings and settlement discussions and many other activities. Litigation - and therefore workload - on our cases has been very active during this last year, including intense discovery in several cases, and litigation over the first two cases challenging our new 30821 authorities. Supporting litigation to uphold this authority is clearly a major priority for the program and Coastal Commission generally, since in the long run it greatly increases our efficiency. In addition, there has been a very sharp increase in the numbers and complexity of the requests for documents and information under the public records act, including related litigation and a very heavy correspondence workload.

Moreover, the enforcement program has been working increasingly to coordinate with permit staff on pending permit or other matters with an enforcement or violation component, to enable permit conditions to be crafted and negotiated to fully resolve Coastal Act violations, if enforcement staff can craft an appropriate resolution for a particular case, so that the Commission will have the full context of permit and other

matters coming before them and the violation can be resolved contemporaneously. This has caused a significant increase in district and management workload, but has provided valuable information to the Commission, and provided the opportunity to resolve more cases quickly and informally.

The Enforcement Unit has avoided litigation in most cases by settling the vast majority of our cases, but this process also is resource intensive, and takes a great amount of time in researching facts and law, negotiating and working with alleged violators and drafting documents, often taking years of effort to work out complicated settlements. Because of this complexity, an extensive amount of work remains after these orders are issued. Such work includes reviewing and commenting on detailed restoration and mitigation plans, easement and deed restriction documents, and public access and management plans, for a few examples, as well as ensuring that respondents comply with implementing these plans once they are approved. The same is largely true of district staff ensuring compliance with permits issued to resolve violations. While enforcement staff has been able to address the vast majority of the elevated cases that is taken to hearing via “consent orders”, those that we are unable to resolve in this fashion are taken to the Commission as unilateral actions, and in most of these cases, respondents then sue the Commission to challenge issuance of these orders. The Headquarters staff plays a large role in providing support to the Attorney General’s office for these matters as well.

The recent legislation that provided the Commission with the authority to impose civil liability administratively in cases involving violations of the Coastal Act’s public access provisions has greatly increased Enforcement staff’s ability to resolve these particular cases quickly, assessing penalties at a Commission hearing rather than through slow and expensive judicial channels. With just the potential for such penalties, the vast majority of these access violation cases are resolved at our District level, without having to elevate the case to the Headquarters Unit for formal action. This new authority not only provides violators with an incentive to resolve their violations quickly, it deters violations of the Coastal Act’s public access provisions from occurring in the first place. Unfortunately, while Enforcement staff has seen a decline in the time needed to resolve violation cases that involve public access, these cases only make up about 30% of the total cases. The remaining cases – involving impacts to such resources as wetlands, Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Areas, water quality, scenic views, and geologically unstable areas, accounting for most of the violation case backlog, could take year to address, further impacting coastal resources on a continuing basis.

The enforcement staff are also, increasingly, working to find additional ways to address Commission priorities in our enforcement work, including such critical issues as sea level rise, environmental justice and reduction of plastics. Each of these has added additional complications and time required to resolve our cases, but has allowed us to contribute to addressing critical Coastal Act issues in a creative and timely way.

Related Tasks

The enforcement staff routinely field innumerable calls, letters and comments from the public, including alleged violators, environmental activists, and community members, as well as from local governments and other state and federal agencies, all of whom report alleged unpermitted activity or alleged permit violations, or who seek information generally about the Coastal Act and its legal requirements. In order to deter and prevent violations, staff spends a significant amount of time on many outreach activities, including meeting with the public, providing information about the Coastal Act, the Coastal Commission and related issues, responding to local government, press and legislative inquiries, publishing public informational pamphlets and maintaining our [website page](#). Moreover, as settlements have become more creative, they have also required additional work by staff on a truly amazing variety of topics and projects, ranging from creating new and enhanced public access ways to the beach, developing unique projects to highlight Native American history in coastal California, and working to find effective settlement terms designed to bring disadvantaged communities to the coastline, address the effects of sea level rise, and to reduce marine debris.

Enforcement staff also works very hard with our counterparts in local government to assist in their efforts to enforce the mandates of the Coastal Act. Many local governments have formally requested our assistance in cases or lack the resources to bring enforcement actions, and staff has tried to provide assistance even with scarce staff resources to ensure the coast is protected.

In addition, in order to coordinate and cooperate with our partners, the enforcement staff also participates in regional enforcement taskforces that consist of local, state and federal enforcement entities, in order to maximize resources and focus on the most serious resource cases occurring within the coastal zone. Staff participates in regional taskforces in Del Norte County, Humboldt County, Mendocino County and the Santa Monica Mountains/Malibu region.

Impacts of COVID and Work at Home

As noted above, we had direct impacts on the unit in the loss of two staff to contract tracing, and others taking significant parts of the year off completely to care for family and for health reasons. As a result of the COVID related budget issues, enforcement staff also has the mandatory leave program resulting in the loss of an additional 10% of staff time from all staff. So for much of the year, in the aggregate, the Enforcement Unit was down over 35% of our available staff. There were, as other Units also had, many unavoidable issues in getting home offices set up, dealing with lack of office space, equipment, internet connections, and juggling work at home with parental and other responsibilities, and a myriad of other challenges.

In addition, enforcement staff often rely on site visits and observations to both investigate and document violations, and these investigations are critical to our ability to pursue violations. In the absence of our ability to visit sites and meet with members of the public, enforcement staff has had to implement a large number of creative work-arounds,

including relying on other means of gathering information, such as reaching out to local government partners and concerned citizens, researching historic documents and following news sources, timing any site visits to be socially distanced, and a variety of other means, which required a significant additional amount of staff time and were markedly less efficient than our usual techniques.

Adverse Impacts of Staffing Shortages

Delays in and lack of enforcement result in increased damages to resources; unequal treatment between those who follow the law and those who do not; and reinforce the impression that not following the Coastal Act and permits issued by the Commission may go undetected and unaddressed, which in turn leads to more violations and more resource damage. The cases awaiting enforcement actions often represent harm to public access to the coast and other coastal resources and as the number of these cases increase, so do the unaddressed harms to critical Coastal Act values such as protecting public access and rare coastal resources.

Human Resources Unit

The Human Resources Unit has continued work on improving the hiring and onboarding processes for new staff as well as provide support to current staff regarding benefits, hiring and promotions, and other resources for both the California Coastal Commission and the San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission.

When Shelter in Place first took place in March 2020, the Commission was about to conduct in person examination interviews to continue adding new candidates to our hiring lists. The Human Resources staff quickly mobilized to switch our process on-line to not only conduct the Coastal Program Analyst I and II examination interviews for April, but to conduct ongoing monthly examinations for these classifications where our Unit was previously only able to offer these examinations two or three times per year. This change in process has allowed the Commission to add potential hiring candidates to our eligible lists on a more continuous basis and has reduced the cost of travel for both the Commission and our candidates.

As the Commission's personnel files are primarily paper based, Human Resources staff continue to rotate into the office one person per day in order to support our staff. Human Resources staff processed hiring paperwork for 36 new hires in 2020 including 8 new hires for the San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission. Human Resources implemented virtual face to face meetings with new staff to go over paperwork and answer any questions on-line where we previously were only able to offer telephone meetings with new hires not located in the San Francisco office.

Along with COVID-19 came a number of additional tracking responsibilities to various control agencies for absences due to COVID-19 related issues including, but not limited to contraction and school closures. Human Resources took on a number of these additional reporting duties which include daily, weekly and monthly reports. Human Resources also

coordinates incident reporting and instructions regarding positive test results for our staff members.

During the state's Open Enrollment period for 2021 benefits, Human Resources was able to offer several virtual information sessions for staff to discuss the changes to benefits and/or options for employees. Even with the conversion to using virtual signatures, the Human Resources Unit was required to fax or mail most of these forms to CalPERS or the Department of California Human Resources.

The Commission was required to reassign 8 employees towards the state's Contact Tracing Program. The Commission was able to offer 8 volunteers to this program in June 2020, all of whom have been assigned to local counties, primarily to Los Angeles County. The Chief of Human Resources along with the former Chief Deputy Director have maintained regular contact with these assigned employees to give them as much support as possible and to check in with them.

Accounting Unit

As the Accounting Unit has previously reported to the Commission, the State is in a complicated multi-year process to convert all fiscal, budgeting, procurement and accounting systems to the FI\$CAL system. Using the FI\$CAL system continues to be an extremely challenging process for the Coastal Commission and many other State agencies. The FI\$CAL system is extremely complex, labor intensive and there are still many glitches in the system. Before FI\$CAL, the Accounting Unit was able to close out the books shortly after the end of a fiscal year usually by August (Due date is July 31 for General Fund and mid-August for other funds). Below is the chart **(Figure10)**, of our year-end close completion timeline since the Accounting Unit started using the FI\$CAL system beginning FY 2017-18.

Figure 10. Year End Budget Closure Timeline

FY	Year-end Close Completed	Length of Time needed to complete
2017/18	August 2019	1 year
2018/19	February 2020	7 months
2019/20	October 2020	3 months

The Accounting Unit has four full time staff working under the direction of the Chief Accounting Officer. Monthly Reconciliation between the FI\$Cal and State Controller Office's records are a critical part of the year-end close process. Only one full time staff (in addition to performing other accounting tasks) is responsible for the monthly reconciliation for a total of 55 Appropriations, Reimbursements and Revenue Items of 9 Funds for 3 Fiscal Years (Current Year and Prior 2 Fiscal Years). The Chief Accounting Officer assisted in completing the monthly reconciliation as well as the year-end close and preparing the manual year-end reports for these funds for FY 2019-20. This is the reason for the decrease in length of time needed to complete year-end close for FY 2019-20.

Although the Accounting Unit has made significant progress in our year-end close completion process, staff will still have challenges to complete year-end close on time because of lack of resources (specifically staff) and continued introduction of new processes as initiated by FI\$Cal and the State Controller's Office. Adapting to these new systems has required a significant amount of time to learn new processes and make internal agency adjustments.

The workload for the Accounting staff has increased to an extreme level and the flow of work has slowed down dramatically by the FI\$CAL system. Using the FI\$Cal system takes triple the amount of time for all accounting functions and staff continues to work with FI\$CAL and the State Controller's Office to resolve ongoing issues. Because of this, the Accounting Unit has not been able to complete the numerous accounting tasks in a timely manner due to the number of staff we currently have to carry out its workload. Due to the current COVID crisis, teleworking has compounded these challenges.

The Governor's Proposed Budget for FY 2021-22 includes 3 years of funding for an additional staff person in Accounting (and one additional staff in the Fiscal and Business Services Unit). The Accounting Unit is hoping that as the system issues are resolved, the Unit will receive an additional full-time staff member and the workflow will run smoother in the next fiscal year.

Fiscal & Business Services Unit

The Fiscal & Business Services (FBS) Unit provides fiscal and business support to the agency. FBS is responsible for preparing and projecting the agency's budget; purchasing goods and services; asset management; facility management; fleet management; grant execution; and travel coordination. The State's transition to FI\$CAL still creates daily challenges for the Unit to meet the needs of the Commission in a timely manner. The Unit has four full time staff working under the direction of the Chief of Fiscal & Business Services. Notwithstanding the challenges of 2020 due to the COVID pandemic, the FBS succeeded under very difficult circumstances in completing two office relocations. Workload highlights for 2020 include:

- Completed the San Francisco Headquarters relocation project including site selection, design, cubicle design and purchase, furniture purchase, and monitoring construction.

- Completed the Long Beach South Coast District Office relocation project including site selection, design, cubicle design and purchase, furniture purchase, and monitoring construction.
- Continued to mitigate ongoing issues created by the FI\$CAL transition, attend training classes, and adapt business processes.
- Procured goods and services to enable the Commission to telework during the pandemic.
- Modified business processes to adapt to the telework environment.
- Executed all grants for the Whale Tail License Plate Grant Program and the LCP Grant Program.
- Upgraded many broken or aging pieces of office equipment throughout the agency.
- Reported the Commission's greenhouse gas emissions related to our leased office power and natural gas usage and our fleet gasoline usage.

Mapping and Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Unit

The Mapping / GIS Unit supports the graphic, cartographic, and analytical geospatial needs of the agency through development and refinement of data, tools and GIS services and applications. The Unit faces challenges from the increasing workload relating to Post LCP Certification Permit and Appeal Jurisdiction (Post Cert.) mapping and corresponding map certification, increasing requests for jurisdictional determinations, and ongoing technical professional development in response to the rapidly evolving GIS profession. The Unit has four full time staff and revolving interns working under the direction of the Mapping Program Manager. Significant workload includes:

- Development and build out of the California Coastal Armoring Database with links to structure location and permit history. In 2020, Del Norte, Humboldt, Mendocino, Sonoma, Marin, Monterey, and San Luis Obispo Counties were completed. Work is underway in Santa Barbara, Ventura, Los Angeles and San Diego Counties. The database currently includes approximately 3,630 shore-parallel armoring structures. In an effort led by the Commission's NOAA Coastal Management Fellow, a database Needs Assessment has been completed. The team consulted with District Office, Enforcement, Statewide Planning and Administrative staff. The primary purpose of the Needs Assessment was to assess information needs related to coastal armoring to support the core planning and regulatory work of the agency. Planning for implementation of the Needs Assessment recommendations are underway and ongoing.
- Ongoing support of agency staff and the public with regards to resolving questions of Commission jurisdiction. Mapping staff responds to approximately 250 boundary determinations and jurisdictional inquiries per year, each requiring varying levels of research, staff coordination, and follow up with the requesting entity.

- Ongoing support of agency staff with regards to graphic production and cartographic requests. Mapping staff responds to dozens of requests for assistance per year, each requiring varying levels of research, staff coordination, preparation and data analysis, and follow up with the requesting staff.
- Ongoing development of data that informs local jurisdiction's Post Cert. mapping. Post Cert. map adoptions for the Cities of Pacific Grove and San Buenaventura were completed in 2020). Significant work associated with the development of jurisdictional datasets for the City of Los Angeles, as well as data development associated with Post Cert. map adoptions for the County of San Diego LCP segment and the City of Long Beach (anticipated in 2021). Jurisdictional data development is underway for Mendocino County and the City of San Diego with data development ongoing statewide.
- Ongoing GIS analysis and cartographic support of agency staff including but not limited to support of planning staff and the Energy and Ocean Resources, Enforcement, and Ecology Units.
- Design, development, and staff training on the use of GIS and online mapping applications to empower staff to create and share web maps and applications that facilitate collaboration in coastal management and communicate complex information to the public. These include the [Environmental Justice Policy Story Map](#), [California King Tides Project Story Map](#), [Coastal Cleanup Day story map](#), [Sea Level Rise Story Map: Planning for the Future](#), the California Coastal Trail Viewer (anticipated release in Spring 2021) with planning for mapping applications that address public trust resources, climate adaptation and sea level rise. These platforms increase collaboration among teams as well as our partners, enhanced data sharing and management, and has enabled the Agency to better inform the public.
- Interagency coordination and participation in several statewide technical GIS user groups including but not limited to the State GIS User Group, the San Francisco Estuary Geospatial Working, and the California Natural Resources Agency UAS Working Group.
- GIS backend support of the Commission's Coastal Data Management System (CDMS).

The Information Systems Unit

The Information Systems Unit (ISU) supports the computer desktop and software environments, network and server infrastructures and web development for the agency. The ever-changing technological landscape with changes in the computing, networking and cloud-based services creates challenges for the ISU to maintain adequate professional development to meet the needs of Commission staff. The ISU has seven full time staff working under the direction of the Information Systems Unit Manager.

Workload highlights for 2020:

- In response to the Covid-19 pandemic, ISU developed and deployed multiple new services and systems to support Agency-wide telework and remote operations, and coordinated with the California Natural Resources Agency Data Center to provide new critical services including:
- Roll-out VPN services to all commission staff to permit access to network resources and the Commission's Coastal Data Management System (CDMS) during telework.
- Subscribed all Commission staff to DocuSign for digital signatures on all documents during telework.
- The Headquarters Office in San Francisco relocated to a new office location which required a complete disconnect of all computing, server, network and telephone operations and re-installed in the new office.
- In conjunction with the Headquarters Office move, ISU managed the migration to the new Commission Wide Area Network (WAN) configuration and infrastructure to support agency operations including the configuration, setup and deployment of a new high-availability firewall to increase security posture at network perimeter, and an Agency-wide network switch upgrade to permit the agency to potentially use new network technologies in all Commission offices in the future.
- Ongoing Help Desk troubleshooting of all hardware and software issues reported by Commission staff.
- Configuration, setup and deployment of 160+ staff laptops to transition the agency to a mobile computing platform to enable more efficient telework capabilities.
- Ongoing deployments to upgrade productivity suites to Microsoft Office O365 Pro Plus and Adobe Acrobat DC Pro to all commission staff. The cloud- based subscriptions will permit the Unit to better maintain the productivity platforms for the agency.
- In coordination with the Commission's Video Contractor (AGP), designed, tested and deployed a new Zoom Virtual Meeting system to support monthly Commission meetings. Included the development of new web-based systems to support public

participation, and new internal data and document sharing systems and training for staff to support and manage Commission meetings in the new virtual environment.

- Completion of state-mandated biennial Independent Security Assessment (ISA) by the Cyber Network Defense of the California Military Department.
- Ongoing efforts with the ADA remediation of all PDF documents hosted on the www.coastal.ca.gov website.
- Continue to design and develop, in coordination with the Statewide Planning Program, the LCP Library to be hosted on the Commission's internal website (Insite).
- Front-end and back-end support for the Commission's CDMS.

Water Quality Unit

The Commission's Water Quality Unit (WQU) is composed of two Water Quality Analysts, both environmental scientists (one doctorate-level). In addition, one Coastal Program Analyst with technical expertise in GIS mapping assisted the WQU part-time to help develop the Critical Coastal Areas online map viewer. The majority of WQU staff time is allocated to the Commission's core functions in regulatory and planning activities. The two Water Quality Analysts provide technical support to staff in all six districts, as well as the Energy, Ocean Resources and Federal Consistency, Enforcement, and Statewide Planning programs.

As the WQU program is funded by a Clean Water Act Section 319(h) grant from the U.S. EPA, WQU staff must also fulfill grant requirements by providing research, policy, and planning activities and deliverables in support of California's Nonpoint Source (NPS) Program. One of the major focuses of this grant work is developing and coordinating the state's Critical Coastal Areas (CCA) program. The CCA Program fosters collaboration among multiple government agencies and local stakeholders to protect high resource-value coastal waters from polluted runoff from the adjacent coastal watershed. WQU staff maintains a public webpage for the CCA program.

In 2020, WQU staff also co-hosted (with the State Water Resources Control Board) two webinar meetings of the Marinas Interagency Coordination Committee, which provides an informative forum for agencies (state, federal, and local), marinas, and other organizations to address NPS pollution related to marinas and recreational boating statewide. WQU staff maintains a public webpage on marinas and recreational boating for this Committee.

WQU staff workloads are focused in five main categories:

- Technical review of the water quality protection elements in proposed regulatory items (i.e., CDPs, appeals, emergency permits, and federal consistency evaluations) and enforcement items, as well as condition compliance evaluations;

- Technical review of the water quality protection elements in proposed new or updated planning documents (i.e., LCPs, University Long Range Development Plans, Public Works Plans, and Port Master Plans);
- Developing and coordinating California's Critical Coastal Areas (CCA) Program. In 2020, this included developing a CCA online map viewer tool. This interactive map includes layers providing information on CCAs, coastal watersheds, impaired waters, Marine Protected Areas, Areas of Special Biological Significance, Local Coastal Programs, and jurisdictional boundaries (cities, counties, tribal lands, and federal lands). WQU staff also conducted interagency coordination activities for the CCA program, including giving a presentation to staff from the State Water Resources Control Board, the nine Regional Water Quality Control Boards, and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency;
- Developing factsheets and informational presentations for staff and the public on a variety of water quality topics. In 2020, WQU staff produced a factsheet on the use of preservative-treated wood and alternative materials in overwater and waterfront structures, and gave a presentation on this topic to the Marinas Interagency Coordination Committee. WQU staff also produced a how-to guide for using the CCA Online Map Viewer;
- Participation in the Commission staff's various statewide efforts and special grant-funded projects. In 2020, WQU staff assisted with writing and editing the Water Infrastructure chapter (covering stormwater and wastewater) of the Coastal Commission's draft guidance on the impacts of sea level rise on critical infrastructure.

Environmental Justice Unit

The Environmental Justice (EJ) Unit had some unexpected pandemic-related challenges this year, which included not only the reduction in staff time but also losing a new EJ Unit hire to contact tracing. This left only one full-time EJ Unit manager and a part time EJ chief, who splits her time between EJ and equity work and manages communications across the agency. Despite this, the EJ Unit worked hard to make progress on environmental justice and racial equity front.

Highlights for 2020 include:

- Worked on projects both large and small with EJ elements including Cal Am and Oceano Dunes. The Unit supported staff in conducting EJ analysis, outreach, and/or writing findings for 17 CDP/Appeals, three LCPAs, two LCPs, and one PMP Update.
- Provided support as needed for other Units and agency initiatives including demographic/socioeconomic data for Enforcement, reviewing new curriculum and climate video challenge for Public Education, a critical infrastructure review for the Sea Level Rise Unit, etc.

- Held two daylong all staff trainings that included an overview of EJ history and concepts, the role of EJ groups and how to engage with them, how to implement the Commission's EJ Policy and more. Members of EJ groups and CalEPA experts were invited as featured speakers. Staff is working to package the training for newer staff members.
- Launched monthly calls with planning staff to review projects with EJ elements, discuss EJ issues, provide guidance and encourage greater fluency in discussions about underserved communities.
- Presented findings from a 2020 internal staff survey to gain a baseline understanding of where the agency is on internal racial equity issues and to better understand what steps are necessary for progress.
- Compiled internal resource list of books, articles, documentaries and other material for staff seeking to deepen their understanding of race, equity and systematic discrimination. Management authorized staff to use these materials for personal development during work as appropriate.
- Launched guided discussions on race, social justice, diversity and inclusion to provide a safe, structured space for all staff to explore their personal experiences on these topics and how that connect to the Commission and the role of government.
- Held phone meetings with EJ groups on high-profile agenda items and incorporated many suggestions to improve Zoom meetings and stakeholders' ability to participate during the pandemic.
- To make the process more accessible, added an option in the Spanish and English agenda for members of the public to reach out to Spanish speakers by phone or email for questions, including inquiries on translation services.
- Began working on a series of short instructional videos for members of the public to learn how to participate in the process.
- Launched, shared and posted annual EJ Highlights and EJ Year in Review documenting all EJ and equity accomplishments to maintain accountability with the public.
- Started FAQ summaries for projects with significant EJ elements explaining what a project is, the Commission's position and how to participate in the process.

Public Access Program

The Public Access Program is staffed by one Program Manager. The Coastal Act requirement to maximize public access to and along the shoreline is a broad mandate that is implemented in a number of ways.

Hollister Ranch Coastal Access Program planning has been underway for over a year. Commission staff, along with our agency partners the State Coastal Conservancy, State Lands Commission and State Parks Department is steadily working to implement AB 1680 which requires the preparation of a contemporary Access Program to provide land based public access to and along the coast of Hollister Ranch in Santa Barbara County. As required by the Legislation passed in 2019, numerous public outreach (virtual) meetings have been held throughout the year in order to engage the general public and solicit their concerns, ideas and vision for increasing public access to this 8 mile stretch of coastline west of Gaviota State Park. Commission staff also briefed the Coastal Commission during two Coastal Commission hearings, in order to inform both the Commission and the general public as to the status of the planning process. In addition, the Commission staff maintains a robust Hollister Ranch Coastal Access Planning page on the Commission's website, that serves as the portal for all documents and information produced by the 4-agency State Team, to be shared with the general public. In 2021 the Draft Coastal Access Program will be presented to the Coastal Commission for Commissioner and general public review and comment.

California Coastal Trail mapping project has been underway for three years and will be completed in early 2021. This mapping project identifies the status of the existing segments of the Coastal Trail system. State law requires that the State Coastal Conservancy, in collaboration with the Coastal Commission, Caltrans and the State Parks Department, complete the Coastal Trail. The Commission and the Conservancy have been working together to document the existing segments of the Trail and to prepare a GIS based information system that will be released to the public in 2021. The information that is contained in this mapping project will significantly assist in bridging the gaps in the Trail, though such means as permit conditions, LCP policies, advanced mitigation and other available steps.

Completion of this mapping project is a major milestone in implementing a goal identified by the Integrated Planning Team - Caltrans and Coastal Commission to advance our collaboration to complete the Coastal Trail.

COVID-19 shut downs started in late March 2020. This included a number of public recreational closures along the coast to protect public health and safety. Commission staff worked quickly to prepare guidance and a streamlined process for local governments to temporarily close these facilities (e.g. beaches, parking lots, restrooms, etc.) in order to comply with State Health guidelines. By the fall of 2020, almost all of the over-100 sites have been re-opened in a manner that both protect public health and also provides much needed outdoor recreational opportunities.

Legislative Unit

The Legislative Unit has one full time staff that represents the Coastal Commission in Sacramento, and one Transportation Program analyst that assists with the tracking of transportation-related bills. Legislative responsibilities include tracking, analyzing, drafting language and testifying on bills that affect the Commission, presenting monthly updates to

the Commission, preparing and presenting more detailed reports on specific legislative issues of interest, tracking and participating in the annual budget process, meeting with Legislators and staff regarding coastal issues, responding to information and constituent requests from the Administration, Members and staff, and fielding inquiries from the general public.

In 2020, the Legislative Unit initially was initially tracking 55 coastal-related bills, but the numbers were significantly lower after the Pandemic shut the Capitol down in March, and other legislative priorities took precedence. Nevertheless, nine bills which affected the coastal program in some way were signed by the Governor, although none amended the Coastal Act directly. In 2020, the Legislative Unit and the Legal Division also worked with the Department of Housing and Community Development to prepare a comprehensive report to the Commission on how the new housing laws from the previous (2019) session affect the Commission's review and actions on Accessory Dwelling Units and other types of residential permitting issues in the coastal zone.

Conducting the regular work of the Legislative Program remotely with no physical access to the Capitol, staff, Members or other interested parties has proven to be challenging and time-consuming, and much less efficient or effective than person-to-person interactions, requiring far more time despite the reduced bill load. In 2021, Members will not be required to reduce the number of bills they introduce, despite the continued access restrictions required by the pandemic.

Federal Programs Unit

The Federal Programs Manager/Unit supports the Chief Deputy and Executive Director in implementation of the California Coastal Management Program under the Federal Programs. The primary purpose of the program is complete the essential tasks of managing the federal funds California receives under the Coastal Zone Management Act annual state grant awards. The Federal Programs Manager works closely with the State Coastal Conservancy and the San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission and within the Coastal Commission, with the Executive Management Team and Statewide Planning Unit, to submit annual grant applications for federal fund awards, conduct required reporting and monitoring of federal funds, and implement the annual grant year work program and ensure grant deliverables are met and outcomes achieved.

The Federal Programs Manager also works closely with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) to implement the grant awards and other aspects of the federal program, including coordination on federal consistency matters and to leverage other relevant federal resources such as other grant funding opportunities, training and other forms of technical assistance like data, information and decision-support tools. Finally, the Federal Programs Manager tracks on national policy issues of significance to coastal management and federal legislative matters that could have an impact on the Commission's program or ability to carry-out the Coastal Act.

For 2020, the Federal Programs Manager/Unit completed the routine federal programs functions and grant management duties, including setting up the FY 2020 California Coastal Zone Management grant award and securing extensions of federal funds for expiring awards where challenges posed by the COVID-19 and the shelter in place and telework conditions prevented completion or timely progress. This routine work also included contributing to and providing project oversight in support of a number of Section 309 projects, including for completing the Section 309 FY 2017 Project of Special Merit.

In addition, the Federal Programs Manager helped to manage the public review and completion of the Coastal Commission's 2021 – 2025 Strategic Plan. The Federal Programs Unit was also responsible for completing the required Section 309 Assessment and Strategy for the period 2021 to 2025. This document will be used to guide future federally funded activities for carrying out improvements to the program and making progress on implementing the Commission's Strategic Plan. Finally, the Federal Program Unit selected the Commission's 2021 Sea Grant Fellow. The Commission's new Sea Grant Fellow will start in March 2021 with a focus on supporting the Commission's climate change and sea level efforts.

Challenges for 2021 include timely completion of federal grant awards given competing workload factors and challenges posed by circumstances around COVID-19 and shelter in place.

Public Education Unit

The Public Education (PE) Unit continued to carry out the Coastal Commission's core education, public awareness, and outreach functions. The Unit offers education and involvement opportunities for people of all ages and physical abilities, with an emphasis on reaching communities who lack access to the coast and to marine education programs, including low-income populations, communities of color, inland communities, rural populations, and English language learners. In addition, the Unit serves a critical state role by providing coordination, tools, training, and resources for a wide array of organizations and individuals, including non-profits, government entities, educational institutions, citizen groups, recreational associations, and visitor-serving facilities. Programming touches on a range of topics and issues including climate change, ocean pollution, habitat restoration, environmental justice, public access, and community action.

PE programs have been greatly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. With large gatherings canceled, staff work shifted to providing structure and encouragement for self-directed stewardship activities while emphasizing safety and physical distancing. School programs were adapted to on-line platforms and virtual learning, in-person trainings morphed into webinars, and staff developed new on-line educational resources and programs.

A core function of the PE Unit is planning, developing, executing, and evaluating statewide public education and stewardship programs and events. The work requires close coordination with project partners, such as local, state, and federal agencies, and

nonprofit organizations. PE staff serves as the central coordinator and information hub for these efforts, which include California Coastal Cleanup Day, California King Tides Project, and Boating Clean and Green Program (BCGP).

PE staff reinvented the annual California [Coastal Cleanup Day](#) as California Coastal Cleanup month, encouraging self-directed neighborhood cleanups throughout the month of September. Staff held training webinars for county and regional Cleanup Coordinators and carried out a statewide publicity campaign to recruit participants. More than 3,000 cleanups were recorded, and more than 14,000 volunteers participated. As an outgrowth of this effort, the Commission created a “Neighborhood Cleanups” webpage and is encouraging DIY cleanups year-round.

For the California King Tides Project, staff solicits, evaluates, and maps hundreds of public photos, which become part of a vast photo archive that is used to visualize the impacts of future sea level rise in a community, document current flood risks, ground-truth and validate climate change models, and serve as a living record of change for future generations. In January and February 2020, organizations up and down the coast held 53 in-person events, and individuals uploaded 759 photos that staff [mapped](#) for ease of viewing by planners, scientists, media, students, and other members of the public. Another round of King Tides took place in November and December 2020, with more than 1,400 photos submitted. To support students in learning about sea level rise, staff developed a King Tides educator resources [webpage](#).

Boating Clean and Green Program staff offered a wide range of virtual programming, including webinars and virtual trainings. Topics included oil spill response communication, aquatic invasive species prevention, and prevention of boat pollution. Staff also trained volunteer educators or “Dockwalkers” and handled the design, procurement, and assembly of Boater Kits, the educational tool used in that program.

BCGP staff provided technical assistance to boating facilities in identifying the need for and installing pollution prevention services for boaters. One element of this work is overseeing the State’s fishing line-recycling program, which installed ten new stations in 2020. Staff assesses the need for and provides recycling containers and signage for boat launch ramps, marinas, and piers, and is working with NOAA to expand the program.

Another core PE Unit function is providing educational opportunities for K-12 students and resources for educators. Staff expanded its online offerings this year. In the spring when schools closed due to the pandemic, staff produced a guide to [Home Learning Resources](#) for K-12 teachers and families, which includes selected existing Coastal Commission activities and programs that are easy to do at home, and newly designed activities. Staff also created a portal for [Environmental Justice Resources for Educators](#) that includes a guided investigation of the Cal EnviroScreen pollution-burden mapping tool and a new five-lesson high school unit aligned to California’s History/Social Science, Common Core, and Next Generation Science Standards.

Contests invite the public to participate in a creative process connected to the California coast and ocean. Staff solicits entries, arranges judging and prizes, and coordinates

traveling exhibits at locations such as galleries, libraries, visitor's centers, and other public spaces. In 2020, the Commission's [Coastal Art & Poetry Contest](#) received 1,684 entries from K-12 students throughout the state. Ten [winning entries](#) and 30 [honorable mentions](#) were displayed on the Commission's website and as part of a traveling exhibit. The pandemic canceled most of the exhibit venues, but the Ford House Museum in Mendocino was able to open with the exhibit in July and August. The recognized poetry was published in the May 2020 issue of Chapman University's [TAB—The Journal of Poetry and Poetics](#). In 2020, staff awarded the [first winner](#) in the [Climate Video Challenge](#), answering the question, "How do we come together for the climate?"

PE staff administers the Whale Tail® License Plate Grants Program, managing several dozen grants at a time. The program supports experiential education and stewardship of the California coast and its watersheds. Due to the pandemic, this year many grantees were not able to complete their work plans. Staff worked with grantees to reconfigure plans as needed and processed many grant amendments.

Communication and publicity are a key part of the Unit's work. PE staff manages the Commission's social media channels, which became even more pivotal this year as a public education and engagement tool, given that many people were spending more of their lives on-line, and with in-person fairs and events canceled. PE staff does marketing for the Whale Tail® License Plate and Protect Our Coast and Ocean tax check off fund, often overseeing outside contractors.

A major challenge facing the PE Unit has to do with its funding support. The Unit is almost entirely funded by special funds, with 2/3 of the budget from revenue from the Whale Tail® License Plate. Due to declining plate sales, the budget for the Unit has decreased over the past seven years. The revenue reduction has impacted core programs. The Unit has not been able to fill all staff positions since 2019, which has resulted in some programming reductions and an increased workload for remaining staff. In addition, the Whale Tail® grantmaking budget has declined in recent years and the Commission opted to not have a 2020-21 competitive grants round due in part to lack of funds. Demand for these grants is high; the program typically can award only about 15% of requested grant funding, so this funding reduction has ramifications beyond Coastal Commission programs.

One factor for the revenue decline is competition from other license plates. The timing of the sales decline since 2014-15 correlates with the introduction of the popular black and gold Legacy Plate the same year, which far outpaces other special interest plate sales. In addition, the COVID-19 pandemic impacted sales in 2020, which were down 29% for the year due to pandemic-related production limitations, which caused the DMV to suspend on-line personalized plate orders for half the year. Although the suspension is temporary, there are long-term repercussions. Lower sales mean fewer plates to be renewed in the future, further reducing the revenue stream over the long-term. The continued viability of the Whale Tail® Grant Program and other Commission public education efforts depends on finding ways to restore or replace lost revenue levels.

Transportation Program

The Commission's Transportation Program serves as the agency's dedicated staff for coordinating and reviewing transportation proposals in the coastal zone, including roads, bridges, bicycle paths, pedestrian trails, and other public transportation infrastructure in relation to the Coastal Act. The two primary functions of the Transportation Program are to coordinate with state, regional, and local partners in the planning, design, and implementation of a multi-modal transportation network within the coastal zone; and, relatedly, to facilitate the regulatory review of proposed transportation projects within the Commission's original and appeal's jurisdictions for compliance with Coastal Act and Local Coastal Program policies. Over the last twenty years, the Department of Transportation (Caltrans) and the Commission have engaged in several Interagency Agreements to support a broad range of activities aimed at facilitating effective collaborations to mutually support the public missions of both agencies—advancing both positive transportation and coastal resource protection outcomes. A key aspect of these agreements has been to boost Commission staff's early and ongoing participation in Caltrans' processes to achieve consistency not only with California's coastal program mandates, but also the federal Coastal Zone Management Act. This work has helped to promote more predictable and streamlined reviews of transportation plans and projects when they are consistent with these laws—and has resulted in numerous legacy projects up and down the coast. A renewed Interagency Agreement with Caltrans was approved by the Commission in May 2020 and will cover the 2020-2025 time period for continuing these efforts.

Integrated Planning Team

As part of these ongoing improvement efforts, the two agencies previously established the Integrated Planning Team (IPT), an interagency working group that collaborates to address important issues of mutual benefit and value to both agencies. Through a Partnership Agreement between Caltrans and the Commission, the IPT works to develop collaborative solutions to the most complex challenges of transportation planning and permitting in the coastal zone. In addition, the two agencies have agreed to collaborate on two key focus areas: addressing sea level rise (SLR) and completing the California Coastal Trail along with several efforts that mutually support the two agencies Strategic Plans. This work continued throughout 2020, including virtual semi-annual coordination meetings between each District office to coordinate upcoming projects, plans, and other programmatic initiatives.

AB 1282 [the State Transportation and Environmental Partnership for Permitting Efficiency (STEPPE)]

Over the past year, Commission staff also continued participating in the AB 1282 Transportation Permitting Task Force, consisting of the State Transportation Agency, Natural Resources Agency, CalEPA, California Transportation Commission, Caltrans, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, the State Resources Control Board, Regional Water Quality Control Board and the Commission. Under the AB 1282 legislation, the

Task Force's mission was to explore ways to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of permitting for transportation projects while protecting our state's natural, historic, and cultural resources. The Taskforce's Final Report was delivered to the Legislature in October 2020 and makes roughly 40 specific recommendations across six categories for delivering needed infrastructure projects while furthering the missions of both transportation and environmental protection agencies. Throughout 2020, Transportation Program staff continued collaboration with ongoing working group meetings to pursue four initial recommendations, including ones aimed at incorporating resource considerations into Caltrans cost/benefit analyses, expanding Caltrans' Corridor Management Plan guidelines to address environmental factors such as sea level rise, and improving how Caltrans responds to emergency repairs.

Going into 2021, AB 1282 implementation, recently reinvented as the "State Transportation and Environmental Partnership for Permitting Efficiency" (STEPPE), will be supported by a new organizational structure. This includes a re-vamped Task Force, a Steering Committee (comprised of Caltrans and the Resource agency partners), an Implementation Management Group and interagency working groups. One new key focus area for 2021 is a working group to develop a structured process for early engagement of resource agencies with Caltrans during their project development process. Expected to be a major undertaking, Transportation Program staff will be juggling their workload demands to provide adequate coverage of the working group needs for this effort.

The Commission processed 22 regulatory approvals of Caltrans' transportation-related actions in 2020 (**Figure 11**). Two significant projects were the Gleason Beach Hwy 1 Realignment in Sonoma County and the Caltrans/SANDAG proposed San Dieguito mitigation project in San Diego County that includes enhancement of 154 acres of coastal wetland and upland habitat and construction of a mile of public trail. As with most complex projects, these approvals required extensive special permit conditions involving the submission and review of technical and other supporting documents, which also adds substantially to the Transportation Program's overall workload. For example, the Gleason Beach CDP incorporated 19 special permit conditions, including the requirements to submit subsequent detailed multi-phase public access improvements plans, a final debris hazard and visual impact mitigation program, a construction and pollution prevention plan, an updated habitat impact report, habitat mitigation and monitoring plans, a final coastal terrace prairie habitat management plan, and documentation of a natural resource endowment, all of which will require significant staff time to review in 2021 and beyond.

Figure 11. Regulatory Approvals Processed in 2020

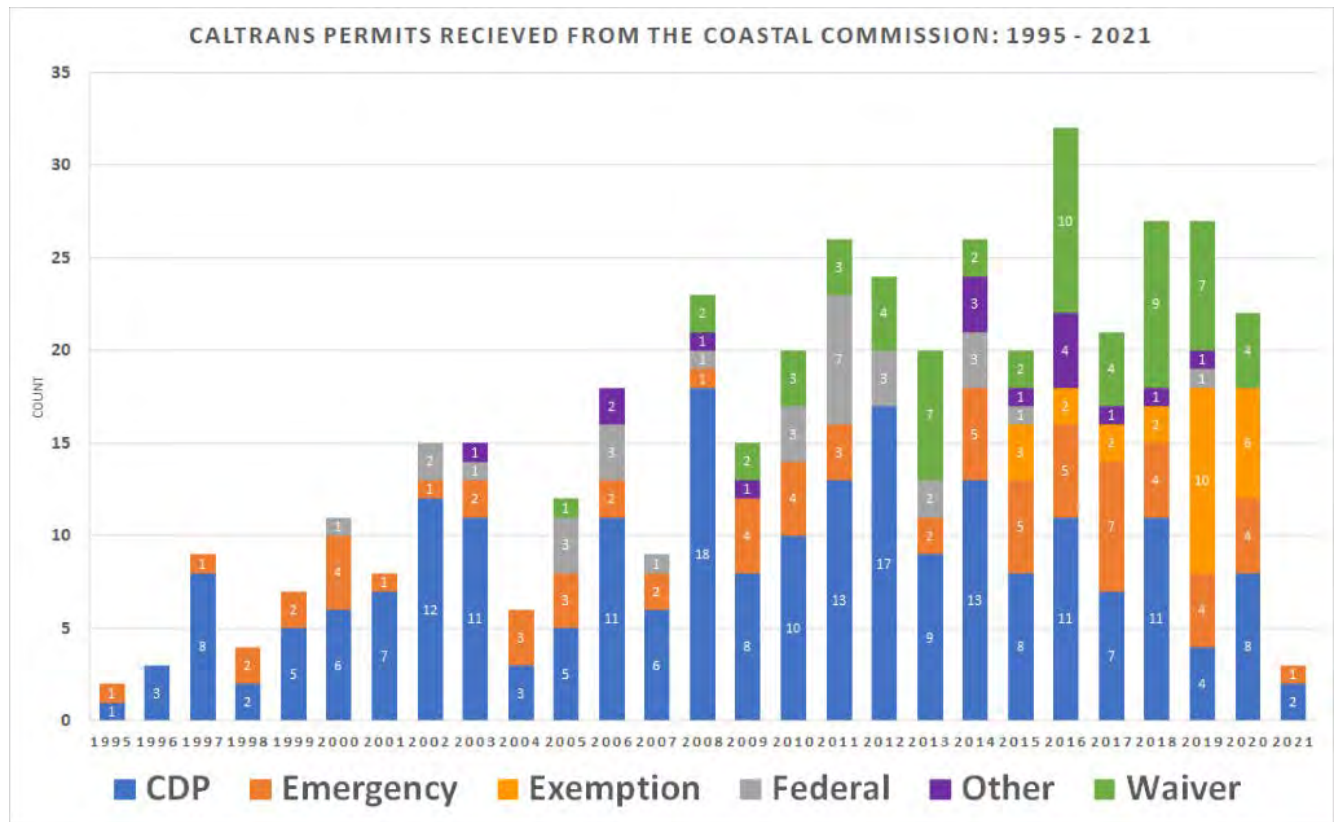


Figure Description: As of January 29, 2021, this chart reflects records from Coastal Commission Hearings, the Coastal Commission's CDMS database, desktop research, and input from Caltrans District and Coastal Commission staff; and does not include permits received from Local Coastal Program agencies. Permit types included in the "Other" category include Cease & Desist Orders, No Effect Determinations, Notice of Impending Development, Public Work Plans, and Public Works Plan Amendments.

Planning Document Coordination and Review in 2020

In the past year, in addition to regulatory tasks, the Commission's Transportation Team also reviewed over 25 Caltrans plans and about 35 Local Coastal Program plans/policies related to transportation infrastructure **(Figure 12)**. These reviews covered a gambit of planning efforts ranging from transportation demand studies to climate change plans to active transportation plans.

Figure 12. 2020 Caltrans Plans reviewed by Commission

Special Initiatives: Additional Support Tools and Programmatic Approaches

In 2020, to further support interagency collaboration through use of geospatial software and data visualization technologies, Transportation Program staff worked with Caltrans to develop a set of beta Dashboards for both Permits and Plans. These Dashboards, expected to be completed for use in 2021, will provide key information relevant to the expected workloads for upcoming projects and plans.

In addition, the Transportation Team also initiated development of guidance documents that will help to inform Caltrans' Project Delivery processes, including a Bridge Rail and Barrier Guidance Update, CDP Exemptions Worksheet & Guidance, Culvert Design best practices memo, Highway 1 Storm Damage Repair Guidelines for Mendocino County, a Mitigation definitions memo, a coordinated Tribal Consultation memo, and a Wave Up-Rush analysis requirements memo. The completion of all of these will be part of the Transportation Program's workload for 2021.

Special Initiatives: California Coastal Trail

A significant achievement over the last two years was collaboration between Coastal Commission and Coastal Conservancy staff—with Caltrans' support—to depict the CCT statewide and create a comprehensive series of trail alignment status maps. These maps identify the current "walkable" CCT sections (those that are at a minimum accessible to walkers and hikers) and identify any gaps or potential overlap with upcoming projects and plans to determine locations where priority CCT work is needed. To prepare these maps, the agencies staffs reviewed trail data sets provided by local, state and federal agencies and incorporated other available credible trail information.

Initially drafted in 2019 and finalized in early 2021, these maps are expected to be an important information source for Commission and other agency staff - including critical local partners including regional transportation plans and local governments – as well as the public, in moving forward in transportation planning and projects. In addition, the CCT GIS data layers also identify thousands of existing public access points that can inform pending and future projects regarding public access connections.

Special initiatives: Advanced mitigation

As new members of the Statewide Advanced Mitigation Initiative, Commission staff reviewed and provided comments in 2020 on the first three Regional Advanced Mitigation Needs Assessments (RAMNAs) in development by the Caltrans Advance Mitigation Program. Most recently, Caltrans Advance Mitigation Program staff have been collaborating particularly closely with Transportation Program staff in the development of the District 5 RAMNA, given that it is the first to be prepared for a coastal region. Special attention has been paid to ensuring that coastal RAMNAs will reflect the Commission's mitigation standards and practices as fully as possible. This collaboration on coastal RAMNAs will continue into 2021.

The continued development of the Mendocino Advanced Mitigation Program, a pilot effort to inform the statewide program, will be an increasing workload for Transportation Program staff in 2021. This pilot is an umbrella proposal to cover both early mitigation for upcoming bridge projects in Mendocino County as well as advanced mitigation needs forecast for Caltrans' projects being considered within the County over the next 10 years. Commission staff will need to coordinate on both the permitting of the restoration sites themselves as well as the potential use of the mitigation bank credits for projects that will require CDPs to proceed.

Looking ahead to 2021 - Anticipated Spike in Regulatory Reviews in 2021 and Beyond

The need for close coordination with Caltrans will be magnified in 2021 and beyond. Mounting operation and maintenance needs of the state's highway system, along with new transportation demands and the infusion of additional funding from the state's gas tax, are steadily increasing resource agency workloads (**Figure 13**). The necessary planning and regulatory reviews of the resulting project proposals will require an increasing proportion of staff time to ensure that adequate coordination occurs so that permit applications might be processed in a timely manner. To help adapt to this sizeable workload increase, Transportation Program staff are proactively working with staff in Caltrans Headquarters and the six coastal Caltrans districts to further enhance coordination on key issues such as adapting transportation infrastructure for sea level rise, advancing the California Coastal Trail as a multimodal transportation asset, promoting advance mitigation, and developing programmatic approaches to design and process various types of projects.

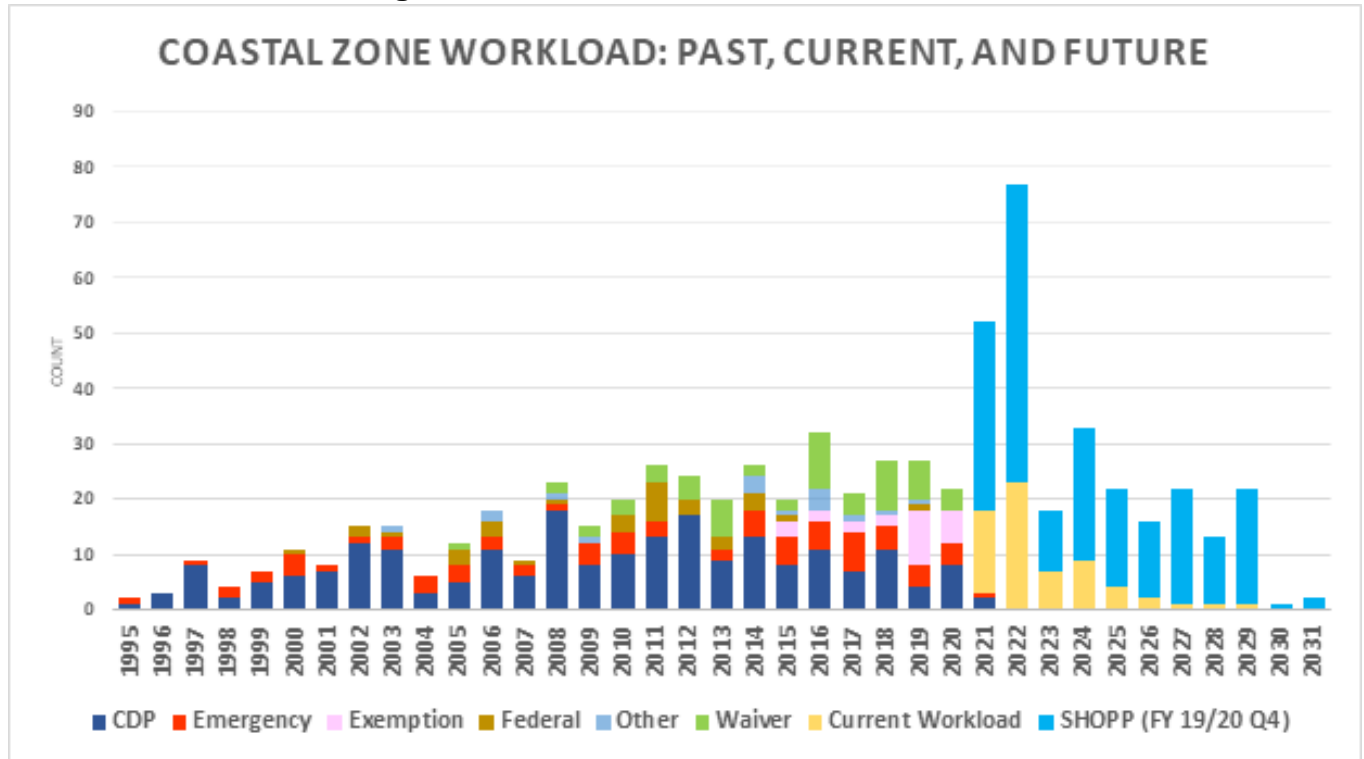
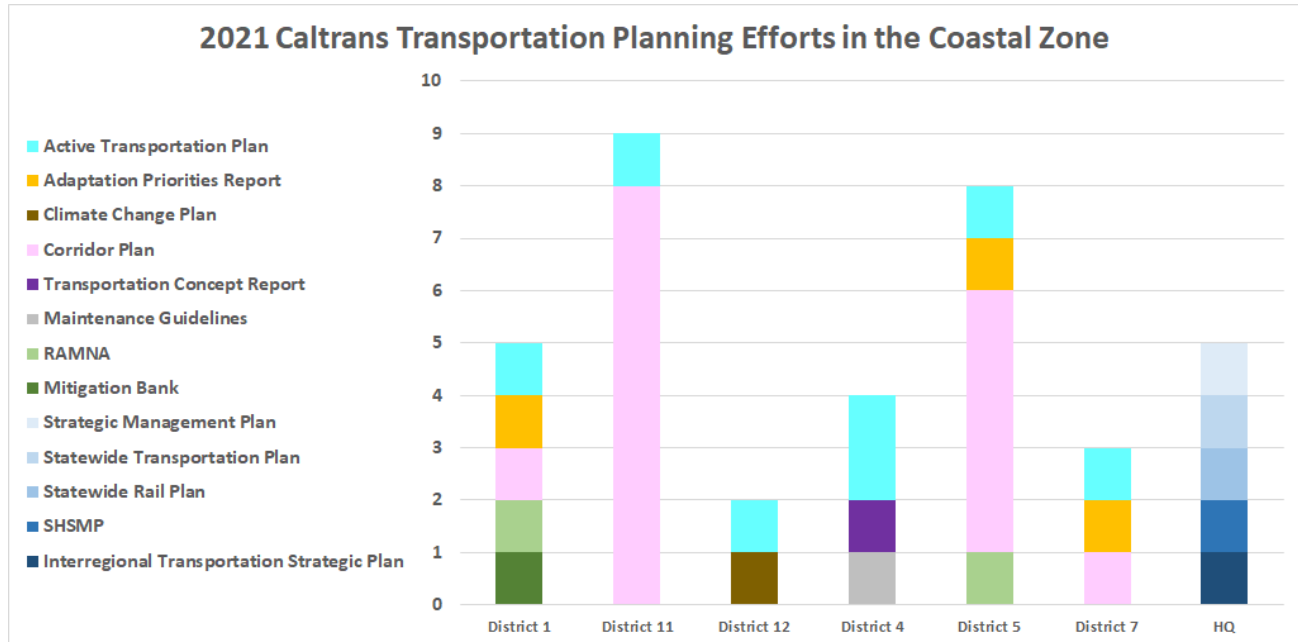
Figure 13. Past and Future Workload

Figure Description: For Past Workload, this chart reflects records from Coastal Commission Hearings, the Coastal Commission's CDMS database, desktop research, and input from Caltrans District and Coastal Commission staff; and does not include permits received from Local Coastal Program agencies.

Among other items in 2021, the Transportation Program team will continue coordinating with Caltrans Division of Rail and Mass Transit on the update to the State Rail Plan, on the updates to Caltrans State Highway System Management Plan and Interregional Transportation Strategic Plan (**Figure 14**). In total to date, there are about 36 Caltrans planning efforts moving forward into 2021 that are expected to benefit from early coordination and engagement between the Coastal Commission and Caltrans. These include advance mitigation documents, corridor management plans, active transportation plans and adaptation priorities reports. In addition to commenting on Caltrans plans, Transportation team staff are also expected to coordinate with Commission Statewide Planning and district staff on approximately 34 Local Coastal Program update efforts going forward into 2021 that need facilitated engagement between the Coastal Commission and Caltrans.

Figure 14. Anticipated Planning Reviews in 2021

Special initiatives: Sea Level Rise

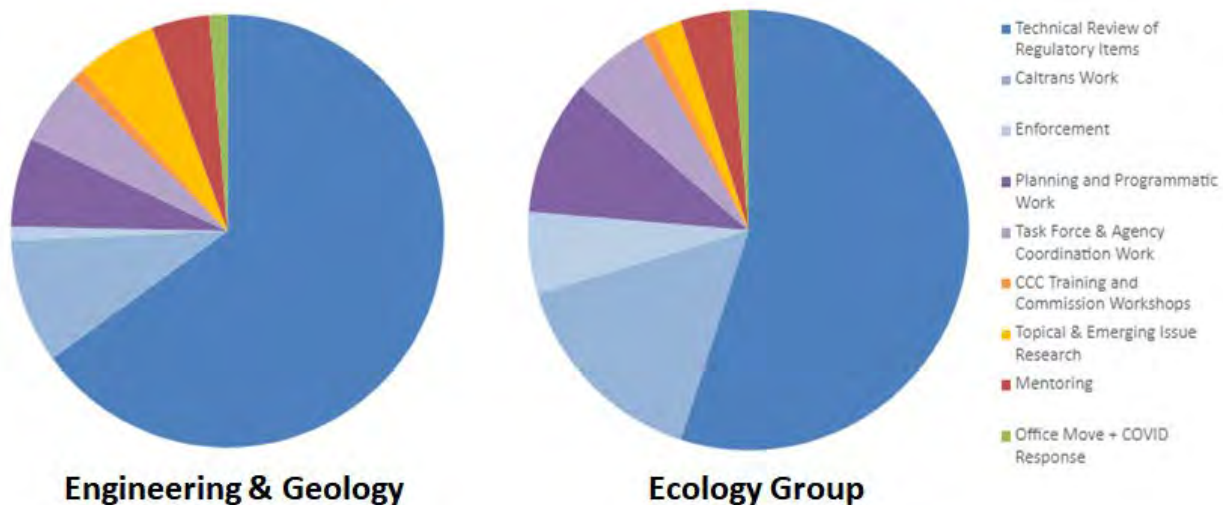
Various Planning Efforts, Information Exchanges, and a focus on the Coastal Commission's Sea Level Rise Adaptation Planning Guidance for Critical Infrastructure at Risk for Highways and Rail.

As a priority focus area, Commission staff will continue coordination with Caltrans on a variety of SLR fronts throughout 2021. Transportation Program staff is committed to working with Caltrans Headquarters to assist in developing guidance for incorporating SLR considerations into a variety of planning and project document guidelines. In addition, Statewide Planning and Transportation Program staff will be coordinating with Caltrans on their update to Project Initiation Document SLR analysis guidance, along with a number of other project development guidance documents as well as the preparation of a new Caltrans Climate Action Plan.

Extensive collaboration with Caltrans is expected throughout 2021 on the Commission's SLR Adaptation Planning Guidance for Critical Infrastructure at Risk regarding highways and rail. The goal of this guidance is to promote resilient coastal infrastructure and protection of coastal resources by providing local governments, asset managers, and other stakeholders with policy and planning information to help inform sea level rise adaptation decisions that are consistent with the Coastal Act and other statewide directives. Caltrans staff provided initial feedback in 2020 and has been given an opportunity to review and provide comments on the Administrative Draft document prior to the release of the public review draft. CT's Division of Environmental Analysis and Coastal Program are coordinating a review of this draft by Headquarters and District staff to be completed by March 1, 2021. Commission staff will work closely with Caltrans

Headquarters and District staff as the draft document is finalized to go through public review for completion.

Technical Services Unit



The Commission's Technical Services Unit (TSU) is composed of the agency's six technical specialists – two coastal engineers, a geologist, and three ecologists – who provide direct support to staff across the six districts, Energy, Ocean Resources and Federal Consistency, Enforcement, and Statewide Planning units and also work with the Legal Division, Water Quality, Mapping & GIS teams, and the Executive Management Team. TSU workloads are described as nine broad categories and generally follow two distributions, one reflecting that of the Ecology Group and the other of Engineering and Geology. In both cases, the great majority of TSU staff energy is allocated to the Commission's core functions in regulatory and planning activities.

2020 brought new time constraints for TSU, with statewide staff cuts for Covid-19 tracing and reduced work hours following mandatory PLP, and for staff in the SF office, the office move. This year's workload reflects the allocation of TSU attention under these constrained conditions. 2020 simultaneously brought more work for TSU with additional staff hired in the Enforcement Division and as Caltrans Liaisons, enabling these departments to bring both backlogged and new projects throughout the Coastal Zone forward at an increased pace, which has often required TSU review and analysis.

Technical review of regulatory items largely consists of support for processing permits including standard and emergency permits, amendments, and appeals. Additionally, technical staff are regularly involved in federal consistency evaluations, enforcement cases, pre-submittal and local action reviews, and permit condition compliance. Emergency permits represent a substantial workload challenge for Engineering and Geology, as these tend to be seasonally-focused and necessarily receive priority attention over other tasks. For the Ecology Group, condition compliance items such as review of

restoration, monitoring, and mitigation plans, and associated adaptive management actions, represents a large component of our work.

Technical support in **Enforcement** cases and **Caltrans** projects can be especially intensive, requires broad expertise, extensive coordination with district and Caltrans staff, and has been a growing component of TSU workload in recent years and especially in 2020 with new staff on these teams. To illustrate this, we have included Caltrans and Enforcement work as separate slices in the above pie charts. Recent large enforcement cases and transportation projects that have taken TSU time include the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power pole replacement and Southern California Edison violations, the Gleason Beach and the Eureka-Arcata Corridor sea level rise adaptation projects, and the W19 lagoon and Scott Creek restoration projects.

Planning and programmatic work includes review of LCPs, LCP amendments and similar planning documents, hazard and sea level rise vulnerability assessments, regional habitat management plans, contributions to various statewide efforts such as development of staff guidelines for nature-based adaptation strategies and guidelines for implementing the CalFire Vegetation Treatment Program within the coastal zone, and special grant-funded projects such as those to develop guidance documents for the public.

Task force and agency coordination work also constitutes a significant portion of TSU workloads, as there are many long-term or ongoing interagency efforts convening on complex issues and/or regional programs operating at a highly technical level. Consistent TSU involvement facilitates the advancement of agency goals, fosters collaborative relationships, and ‘streamlines’ reviews when projects come to the Commission for formal consideration. Examples of such bodies include the Coastal Sediment Management Work Group, Southern California Wetlands Managers Group, and the four coastal-region Fish Passage Advisory Councils. Coordination with specific agency partners on topical issues also falls into this category; for example, Engineering and Geology continues to collaborate with the California Geology Survey and other agencies to develop new tools and policy guidance to address tsunami hazards along the California coast.

A fourth category, **CCC Training and Commission Workshops**, captures TSU time spent on developing and delivering tools and training materials for analytical staff as well as the public as provided at Commission meetings. In 2020, this was a relatively smaller fraction than last year, in large part due to necessary changes to the Commission meeting format because of Covid-19 and associated logistical constraints.

Topical and emerging issue research is an ongoing and growing demand for TSU attention, as staff recommendations need to incorporate the best available science in fields that are constantly advancing. Sea level rise and coastal erosion issues are ubiquitous challenges along our shores, as is the need to understand impacts, opportunities, and the multitude of adaptation strategies that might be considered. For example, nature-based strategies are increasingly promoted as preferred approaches for sea level rise adaptation, and technical understanding of these systems and their

performance under various conditions is needed to ensure that they are sited and designed with appropriate considerations. Other aspects of climate change are also becoming increasingly important to the agency's work, including understanding the drivers, interactions, impacts, and mitigation opportunities associated with ocean acidification, habitat restoration, extreme heat exposure, carbon sequestration, and a shifting hydrologic cycle. Similarly, fire management, recovery, and prevention has quickly risen as a State's priority and is demanding considerable staff attention, particularly in the context of protecting ESHA over the long-term through landscape management approaches but is also relevant to issues like soil health, water quality, and sediment budgets.

Finally, all TSU staff invest time in on-boarding and **mentoring** new staff on technical issues specific to Commission work, such as ESHA policies, mitigation policy, and setback determinations. Additionally, they are often involved in supporting junior staff, NOAA and Sea Grant fellows, and graduate student interns on work that ultimately benefits the agency by way of extending TSU attention into special projects where bandwidth is otherwise limited. For example, in 2020, the Ecology Group advanced work with three graduate students on a special project reviewing past mitigation requirements and performance, which will help inform our recommendations going forward. In some cases, these investments have directly translated to subsequent employment of individuals as Commission staff; in fact, two of six TSU staff originally came to the agency as Sea Grant fellows, and several past interns have gone on to join the agency as Coastal Program Analysts at the district-level. In 2020, the Engineering and Geology Team welcomed a new coastal engineer and hosted a Sea Grant fellow with engineering background; these staffing changes temporarily increased the mentoring and training workload, but have also increased the group's capacity.

Inter-Agency Task Forces

Commission staff have been focusing on enhancing inter-agency coordination to improve the efficiency of government and achieve better outcomes in our difficult work protecting California's coast and ocean. Although inter-agency coordination takes additional time and effort it actually saves time in the end and achieves better outcomes. The Commission staff serve on a wide variety of task forces and working groups (89 total) that involve a significant amount of time and effort. Below are a list of task forces and working groups Commission staff currently serve on:

Climate Change and Sea Level Rise

- California Coastal Sediment Management Working (CSMW) Group
- CalTrans Integrated Planning Team (IPT) Sea Level Rise Working Group
- Climate Change Action Coordination Team
- Coastal and Ocean Working Group of the Climate Action Team (CO-CAT)
- Humboldt Bay Natural Shoreline Infrastructure TAG
- Public Trust Coordination Group

- Safeguarding California Climate Action Team (SafeCAT)
- State Agency Sea Level Rise Leadership Team
- West Coast Governors Alliance Action Coordination Team

Coastal Hazards and Sediment Management

- California Geological Survey Tsunami Policy Working Group
- California Geological Survey Tsunami Technical Advisory Panel
- North-Central California Coastal Sediment Coordination Committee
- Sand TAC for San Francisco BCDC
- Southern California Dredged Material Management Team
- Southern Monterey Bay Opportunistic Beach Nourishment Program TAC

COASTAL ZONE MANAGEMENT, STATE AND FEDERAL

- Coastal States Organization Ex-Officio Representatives
- Tijuana River National Estuarine Research Reserve (NERR) Advisory Committee
- USC Sea Grant Advisory Board
- West Coast Regional Coastal Zone Programs and National Estuarine Research Reserve Managers Work Group
- Federal-State GIS Informational Meetings
- SF Estuary Geospatial Working Group

ECOLOGICAL RESOURCES

- Beach Ecology Coalition
- Board of Forestry Cal VTP Implementation Working Group
- California Natural Resources Agency Sea Grant Advisory Panel
- California Natural Resources Agency Statewide Monitoring Coordination Group
- California Wetlands Monitoring Group
- CalTrans Advanced Mitigation Program Interagency Team
- Contaminated Sediments Task Force
- Fish Passage Advisory Councils (FishPACs) for Northern California, Bay Area, Central Coast, and Southern Steelhead
- Goleta Slough Management Committee
- Integrated Watershed Restoration Program TAC for San Mateo, Santa Cruz and Monterey Counties
- Interagency Review Teams for wetland mitigation banking
- Loma Alta Slough Wetlands Enhancement TAC
- Los Cerritos Wetlands TAC
- NOAA Ocean Acidification Resilience Project Advisory board
- Ocean Protection Council Estuary Marine Protected Area Mgmt Advisory Council
- Ormond Beach Restoration Committee
- Interagency Pesticide Working Group

- Santa Cruz County Regional Conservation Investment Strategy TAC
- Seabird Protection Network
- Southern California Wetlands Recovery Group
- Topanga Lagoon TAC
- U.S.F.W.S. Oregon Silverspot Butterfly Working Group
- Wetlands Recovery Project Wetlands Managers Group

JOINT ENFORCEMENT

- Santa Monica Mountains Enforcement Task Force
- Mendocino County Environmental Crimes Task Force
- Del Norte Environmental Crimes Task Force
- Humboldt County Environmental Crimes Task Force
- Humboldt County Code Compliance Working Group

ENERGY AND OCEAN RESOURCES

- California's Critical Coastal Areas Program (Joint Lead Agency)
- CDFW Aquaculture Development Committee
- California Intergovernmental Renewable Energy Task Force
- Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Group
- Coastal and Marine Spatial Planning Regional Working Group
- Diablo Canyon Independent Peer Review Panel
- Greater Farallones National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council
- Interagency Oil & Gas Platform Decommissioning Working Group
- Joint Strategic Advisory Committee for Ca Coastal Ocean Observing System
- Monterey Bay NMS Advisory Council
- OSPR Technical Advisory Committee
- Ports of San Diego, Long Beach, LA, Hueneme, SF and Humboldt Harbor Safety Committees
- Southern California Coastal Ocean Observing System
- Statewide Advisory Committee on Cooling Water Intake Structures
- Statewide Marine Protected Area Leadership Team

PROJECT-SPECIFIC WORKING GROUPS

- Arana Gulch Adaptive Management Working Group TAC
- Broad Beach Restoration Project TAC
- LOSSAN San Diego Regional Rail Corridor Working Group
- ODSVRA Technical Review Team
- ODSVRA TRT Scientific Subcommittee
- Russian River Estuary Management Advisory Management Panel
- Scott Creek Lagoon Restoration TAC
- Senior Technical Advisory Committee for BCDC
- Surfers Beach Technical Advisory Group

PUBLIC ACCESS AND RECREATION

- Hollister Ranch Public Access Interagency Working Group
- Gleason Beach Coastal Access Task Force
- AB 1282 Transportation Permitting Taskforce
- Barriers to Coastal Access Working Group
- Big Sur Multi-Agency Advisory Council
- California Coastal Trail Working Group
- Caltrans IPT Public Access Working Group
- Lower-Cost Visitor-Serving Working Group

PUBLIC EDUCATION

- California Environmental Education Interagency Network
- Pacific Oil Spill Prevention Education Team

WATER QUALITY

- California Nonpoint Pollution Control Program (Joint Lead Agency)
- California's Critical Coastal Areas Program Interagency Working Group
- Marinas and Recreational Boating Interagency Coordination Committee
- Ocean Protection Council Plastic Pollution Steering Committee
- West Coast Marine Debris Alliance
- US EPA's Regional Response Team Region 9 Applied Response Technology Workgroup

Conclusion

While nobody could have predicted the ways in which our work would be transformed by the pandemic, state economic crisis, work furloughs, and redirection of staff to contact tracing, neither could the agency have predicted the ways in which the Coastal Commission and its staff would rise to meet those challenges in ways that have strengthened and enhanced California's coastal program. Our plan in 2021 is to continue to have virtual Commission meetings through 2021. And staff will continue to telework with only minimal staffing in our offices to take care of critical business which cannot be done remotely while continuing to carry out implementation of the Coastal Act.