

**CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION**

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# W6a

July 8, 2022

**TO:** California Coastal Commission and Interested Parties

**FROM:** John Ainsworth, Executive Director

**SUBJECT:** Executive Director's Report, July 2022

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## Non-Competitive LCP Local Assistance Grants

In October 2021, in conjunction with additional LCP Grant Program updates, the Commission approved a non-competitive grant application process by which grant proposals for up to \$100,000 could be approved by the Executive Director and announced at the following Coastal Commission meeting. The following non-competitive grant was approved over the past month:

**City of Point Arena, \$100,000:** The City of Point Arena seeks \$100,000 to develop a Sea Level Rise Vulnerability Assessment (SLRVA) for the Point Arena Cove area of the City, and to update the Community Health and Safety Element (CHSE) of its LCP. The SLRVA will analyze the impacts of storms and extreme events, changing shorelines, and trends in relative local sea level on vulnerable natural and built resources and facilities, including public access, commerce, recreation, coastal habitats, and navigability. The CHSE update will use information developed in the SLRVA to update these coastal hazard LCP policies.

## Prescribed Fire Treatments in Henry Cowell Redwoods State Park

On Friday, June 3<sup>rd</sup>, several staff including Dr. Lauren Garske-Garcia (Senior Ecologist), Dr. Mary Matella (Statewide Environmental Scientist), and Daniel Nathan (Wildfire Resilience Coordinator), joined colleagues from State Parks, the Resource Conservation District of Santa Cruz County, and others to visit a portion of Henry Cowell Redwoods State Park where prescribed fire has been used experimentally for more than 15 years to manage for fire resilience. Efforts there have been focused not on the eponymous redwoods but rather, on the adjacent and incredibly rare sandhills ecosystem, which is characterized by its unique geology, chaparral vegetation, and several species of protected endemic wildlife. Though fire naturally returns to chaparral ecosystems at intervals ranging from many decades to over a century, the County provides no report of fire in these sandhills over its entire recorded history, surrounding development is at particularly high risk to catastrophic fire, and research has indicated that the ecosystem itself

would benefit from vegetation treatments. The convening group toured areas where State Parks has carefully implemented treatments and progressively learned how to achieve dual goals of public safety and robust ecological restoration in this vulnerable system. They also shared lessons learned in the contexts of prescribed burning methods and knowledge transfer to chaparral habitat elsewhere and continued to mature a growing partnership critical to supporting wildfire resilience across the State.

## **Ribbon Cutting for New Bike/Pedestrian Bridge Over San Elijo Lagoon**

On June 4, 2022, San Diego staff attended the Ribbon Cutting ceremony for a new bike and pedestrian suspension bridge, which is an element of the North Coast Corridor Public Works Plan and Transportation and Resource Enhancement Program (NCC PWP/TREP) approved by the Commission in 2014. The new bridge is part of the dedicated North Coast Bike Trail, a new 27-mile trail that complements the Coastal Rail Trail and links to other regional bike corridors. This segment allows the public to cross San Elijo Lagoon under the I-5 freeway, as well as providing a critical link to the larger San Elijo Lagoon trail network.



## **Coastal Program Analyst Series Salary Increase**

CalHR and SEIU have signed off on our long-awaited request for salary increases for the Coastal Program Analyst I and II classifications. The effective date of July 1, the CPA I series will receive a 10.26% increase for Range A, 10.27% increase for Range B, 10.28% for Range C and the CPA II series will receive a 10.25% increase.

## **Public Education Program**

### **Coastal Cleanup Coordinator Workshops.**

At the end of June, PE staff held a series of workshops for the local partners and coordinators of California Coastal Cleanup Day. The workshops reviewed last year's event and discussed plans

for the upcoming cleanup in September. The general consensus was that the program will return fully to in-person events on Saturday, September 17<sup>th</sup>, with the hope and intention of Coastal Cleanup Day returning to its full capacity for the first time since 2019. Staff is encouraged by the broad enthusiasm for hosting the traditional one-day event, and will also continue to encourage self-guided cleanups throughout the month of September.

### **Aquatic Invasive Species Prevention Workshop.**

On June 29th, 2022, California State Parks, California Coastal Commission, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, US Fish and Wildlife Service, University of Southern California Sea Grant, and Paua Marine Research Group led a virtual workshop “Fresh and Saltwater Aquatic Invasive Species Prevention.” Forty-three people attended.

### **Dockwalker Trainings.**

The Boating Clean and Green Program completed the 2022 Dockwalker trainings. Dockwalker volunteers conduct face-to-face boater education and distribute the CA Boater Kits. From March through June 2022, staff conducted 13 virtual and one in-person Dockwalker training, for a total of 172 participants.

### **Dockside Podcast.**

The Boating Clean and Green Program in partnership with the San Francisco Estuary Partnership and the California State Parks Boating Safety Program continued to produce monthly episodes of the Dockside podcast, with three episodes released to date. Dockside was created to engage recreational boaters, boating facilities operators, and other water enthusiasts in topics that promote clean and safe boating practices.

### **Noyo Headlands Coastal Trail Video.**

The Coastal Commission funded a series of short videos about segments of the California Coastal Trail along California’s coast. The videos are produced by Rigler Creative with support of a Commission Whale Tail grant and grants from the Coastal Conservancy to the International Documentary Association. Since the Coastal Commission is meeting in Fort Bragg this month we are highlighting the Noyo Headlands Coastal Trail Video ([Noyo Headlands-Coastal Trail & Park](#)). This portion of the Coastal Trail opened a truly amazing and beautiful part of our coast that was the site of a former industrial lumber mill that closed off the coastline for 150 years. After the Mill was closed in 2001, the city purchased the land and began to develop the \$18 million Noyo Headlands Park, including a coastal trail and an interpretive center with a touch tank aquarium and other attractions.

### **Emergency Permits**

#### Central Coast District

G-3-22-0021 – City of Santa Cruz – Emergency repairs to thirty-five feet of safety railing on the Santa Cruz Municipal Warf.