

# Introduction to the Planning Commission Recommended Draft Local Coastal Plan

## Table of Contents

- Introduction .....2
- 1. Purpose and Background.....2
  - Background .....2
- 2. The California Coastal Act and Local Coastal Plans.....3
  - Local Coastal Plan Review and Updates .....3
  - Coastal Zone Boundary .....4
  - Coastal Act Land Use Priorities .....4
  - Administration .....5
  - Relationship to Other Planning Agencies and Initiatives .....5
  - Prior Coastal Plans .....6
    - 1980 Local Coastal Plan ..... 6
    - 1989 General Plan & Local Coastal Plan Amendments ..... 6
    - Local Coastal Plan Update & 2008 General Plan..... 6
- 3. Plan Organization.....6
  - Local Coastal Plan Sub-Areas .....6
  - Goals, Objectives, Policies, Programs, and Initiatives .....7
  - Plan Elements .....7
    - Land Use Element ..... 7
    - Agricultural Resources Element..... 7
    - Open Space and Resource Conservation Element..... 7
    - Public Access Element ..... 8
    - Water Resources Element..... 8
    - Public Safety Element ..... 8
    - Circulation and Transit Element ..... 8

Public Facilities and Services Element..... 8  
Cultural and Historic Resources Element..... 9  
Changes from Previous Local Coastal Plan Drafts .....9  
4. Public Participation .....10

# Introduction

## I. PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND

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The purpose of this Local Coastal Plan Update is to help guide land use planning and development decisions within Sonoma County’s Coastal Zone in a manner reflective of current community priorities, responsive to present-day conditions, and consistent with the latest California Coastal Commission policy and guidance. This update also reflects policies related to coastal development that were adopted by the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors in General Plan 2020, while generally retaining existing land use designations previously certified by the California Coastal Commission. In addition, this Local Coastal Plan Update adds new information and policy in the following areas: sea level rise (2100 planning horizon), biotic resources, cultural and historic resources, geologic hazards, water resources, and public access. The document has been re-organized to be more consistent with the General Plan 2020 format and includes previously certified Appendices, including the Right-to-Farm Ordinance, Historic Resources Inventory, Scenic Resources, Natural Resources, Shoreline Protection, and Categorical Exclusions.

This updated Local Coastal Plan considers growth on the Sonoma County Coast as projected by historic population growth trends and anticipated increases in visitor-serving uses, and build-out is projected based on the continuation of existing zoning land use, density, and minimum parcel size for the period 2015 to 2035.

## BACKGROUND

Native American settlement began on the coast of California about 6,000-10,000 years ago. These populations were primarily hunting and gathering tribes, though more recent populations were involved in complex trading systems. The Kashia band of the Pomo people lived on the Russian River and northern coast. The Coast Miwok lived south of the River; their region included portions of

present-day southern Sonoma County and Marin County. Both groups occupied a narrow territory extending from the coast several miles inland. The Pomo appear to have had more contact with Russians who settled at Fort Ross in the early 1800's and became somewhat acculturated to European ways. By the 1870's the Pomo survived in three villages. By 1915 a reservation was granted for their permanent residence. The Miwok were subjected to European influence by the San Francisco and Sonoma Missions.

Historic development and settlement patterns across the Sonoma County Coast were influenced by a variety of groups ranging from Spanish settlers, Mexican residents, Russian traders and various industry activities, such as fishing and logging.

The State of California, Sonoma County, and private organizations such as Sonoma County Land Trust and Wildlands Conservancy have preserved large portions of the coastline for parks, recreation, and protection of environmental resources. Examples include Sonoma Coast State Park (and beaches), Salt Point State Park, Fort Ross State Historic Park, Gualala Point Regional Park, Stillwater Cove Regional Park, and Jenner Headlands Preserve. These parks plus development of private visitor-serving facilities have attracted more tourists to the coast over the years. Several private residential developments including Timber Cove (1961), The Sea Ranch (1964) and Bodega Harbour (1971) have increased the resident population and options for vacationers. As these communities have grown, the Sonoma County coast has gradually evolved an economy based primarily on recreation and tourism, while traditional resource-based industries, such as logging and commercial fishing have been in decline for several decades.

## **2. THE CALIFORNIA COASTAL ACT AND LOCAL COASTAL PLANS**

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The California Coastal Act (Public Resources Code Section 30000 *et seq.*; Coastal Act) was passed by the State Legislature in 1976, became effective on January 1, 1977, and replaced the original Coastal Initiative, Proposition 20, passed in 1972. The California Coastal Act requires each local government with jurisdiction over land within the Coastal Zone to prepare a Local Coastal Program for that portion of the Coastal Zone within its jurisdiction. A Local Coastal Program is a basic planning tool used by local governments, in partnership with the Coastal Commission, to guide development in the Coastal Zone. A Local Coastal Program must include a Land Use Plan, which contains goals and policies for development, and an Implementation Plan that contains measures to implement the plan.

While each LCP reflects unique characteristics of individual local coastal communities, the Coastal Commission requires that regional and statewide interests and concerns must also be addressed in conformity with Coastal Act goals and policies. Following adoption by the Board of Supervisors, this Local Coastal Plan update will be submitted to the Coastal Commission for review and certification that the Local Coastal Plan is consistent with provisions of the California Coastal Act.

### **LOCAL COASTAL PLAN REVIEW AND UPDATES**

Coastal Act Section 30519.5: "Periodic review of certified local programs; recommendations; reports" states:

“(a) The commission shall, from time to time, but at least once every five years after certification, review every certified local coastal program to determine whether such program is being effectively implemented in conformity with the policies of this division. If the commission determines that a certified local coastal program is not being carried out in conformity with any policy of this division it shall submit to the affected local government recommendations of corrective actions that should be taken. Such recommendations may include recommended amendments to the affected local government's local coastal program.

(b) Recommendations submitted pursuant to this section shall be reviewed by the affected local government and, if the recommended action is not taken, the local government shall, within one year of such submission, forward to the commission a report setting forth its reasons for not taking the recommended action. The commission shall review such report and, where appropriate, report to the Legislature and recommend legislative action necessary to assure effective implementation of the relevant policy or policies of this division.”

Consistent with Coastal Act Section 30519.5, Sonoma County shall review the Local Coastal Program and amend as indicated by this review every five years after certification by the California Coastal Commission. (PC REVISED)

## **COASTAL ZONE BOUNDARY**

The Coastal Zone is defined in Coastal Act section 30103, and its boundaries were further established through maps adopted by the State Legislature in 1976, at the time of Coastal Act enactment. Per the Coastal Act, the Coastal Zone includes land and water of the State of California, from the Oregon border to the U.S.-Mexico border. The Coastal Zone extends seaward to the State's outer limit of jurisdiction, including all offshore islands, and inland generally 1,000 yards. However, in significant coastal estuarine, habitat, and recreational areas it extends inland to the first major ridgeline paralleling the sea or five miles from the mean high tide line of the sea, whichever is less, and in developed urban areas the zone generally extends inland less than 1,000 yards. Along Sonoma County's 55-mile coast, the Coastal Zone extends inland generally between 3,000 and 12,000 feet from the shoreline, except around Duncans Mills, Willow Creek, and Valley Ford, where it extends up to five miles inland along the Russian River corridor and the Estero Americano.

## **COASTAL ACT LAND USE PRIORITIES**

California Coastal Act Section 30001 states:

“The Legislature hereby finds and declares:

- (a) That the California coastal zone is a distinct and valuable natural resource of vital and enduring interest to all the people and exists as a delicately balanced ecosystem.
- (b) That the permanent protection of the state's natural and scenic resources is a paramount concern to present and future residents of the state and nation.
- (c) That to promote the public safety, health, and welfare, and to protect public and private property, wildlife, marine fisheries, and other ocean resources, and the natural environment,

it is necessary to protect the ecological balance of the coastal zone and prevent its deterioration and destruction.

(d) That existing developed uses, and future developments that are carefully planned and developed consistent with the policies of this division, are essential to the economic and social well-being of the people of this state and especially to working persons employed within the coastal zone.”

Thus, the Coastal Act recognizes the importance of both the natural environment and economic development that is dependent upon the resources of the coast.

The Coastal Act places the highest priority on maintaining and increasing public access to the shoreline and protecting environmental resources. Other high-priority uses include maintaining coastal views and community character, agriculture, coastal-dependent uses such as commercial fishing, and lower-cost visitor and recreational facilities designed to provide access to coastal recreational opportunities.

## **ADMINISTRATION**

After a Local Coastal Program has been certified by the Coastal Commission, permitting authority over most new development in the Coastal Zone is transferred to the local government, which reviews proposals for new development for conformance with the Local Coastal Program. The Coastal Commission retains permanent coastal permit jurisdiction over development proposed on tidelands, submerged lands, and public trust lands. The Commission also acts on appeals from certain local government coastal permit decisions.

In the Coastal Zone, the Local Coastal Program supersedes and takes precedence over other local plans, policies, and regulations with respect to development.

## **RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER PLANNING AGENCIES AND INITIATIVES**

Sonoma County has a particular interest in coordination of land use, infrastructure, and environmental protection with other local, state, federal, and tribal governmental jurisdictions within the County. The County also acknowledges both the presence of federally recognized tribal governments within Sonoma County, and the need for communication and coordination with federal and tribal governments, where development of tribal and non-tribal land is proposed and where tribes seek to acquire new trust land. The Local Coastal Program also considers the policies and concerns of adjacent counties and regional agencies, such as the San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission, the Bay Area Air Quality Management District, the Northern Sonoma County Air Pollution Control District, the San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board, the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board, the Sonoma County Water Agency, the California Coastal Commission, the Coastal Conservancy, and others. The text of the various Elements notes those situations where these agencies have particular responsibilities that affect the physical development of the Sonoma County Coast and approval of permits.

## **PRIOR COASTAL PLANS**

### **1980 Local Coastal Plan**

The process of preparing the Sonoma County Local Coastal Plan began in 1978, with the first adoption of the Local Coastal Plan by Sonoma County Board of Supervisors in May 1980. The Coastal Commission certified the plan in December 1980 and it became effective in January 1981. In 1982, the Coastal Commission certified The Sea Ranch portion of the Local Coastal Plan and the LCP implementation plan that included the Administrative Manual and the Coastal Zoning Ordinance.

### **1989 General Plan & Local Coastal Plan Amendments**

In 1989 the County adopted a new General Plan, which directed the County to update and revise the Local Coastal Plan to be consistent with the new General Plan. In 1993, 1995, 1999, and 2001 the Coastal Commission certified amendments to the LCP, which adopted technical changes to ensure consistency with the General Plan.

### **Local Coastal Plan Update & 2008 General Plan**

In 2001 the County started revising and updating the 1989 General Plan and simultaneously the Local Coastal Plan. The County adopted Sonoma County General Plan 2020 on September 23, 2008. Accordingly, the Local Coastal Plan Update incorporates applicable General Plan 2020 goals, objectives, and policies; and includes objectives and policies unique to the Coastal Zone and the larger Sonoma Coast/Gualala Basin Planning Area. As mentioned above, the Local Coastal Plan Update incorporates relevant General Plan 2020 goals, objectives, and policies; and includes objectives and policies unique to the Coastal Zone and the larger Sonoma Coast/Gualala Basin Planning Area.

## **3. PLAN ORGANIZATION**

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### **LOCAL COASTAL PLAN SUB-AREAS**

The Local Coastal Plan covers a significant portion of the Sonoma County General Plan Sonoma Coast/Gualala Basin Planning Area. The Coastal Zone runs the length of the Pacific Coast margin, from the Gualala River to the Estero Americano. To provide clear mapping of policies and resources within this area, the Sonoma County Local Coastal Plan divides the Coastal Zone into the following ten SubAreas for ease of mapping:

1. The Sea Ranch North
2. The Sea Ranch South
3. Stewarts Point/Horseshoe Cove
4. Salt Point
5. Timber Cove/Fort Ross
6. The High Cliffs/Muniz-Jenner
7. Duncans Mills
8. Pacific View/Willow Creek
9. State Beach/Bodega Bay
10. Valley Ford

## **GOALS, OBJECTIVES, POLICIES, PROGRAMS, AND INITIATIVES**

**Goals** are general guidelines that explain what the County seeks to achieve through Local Coastal Plan implementation.

**Objectives** set forth strategies or implementation measures to help attain the stated goals.

**Policies** bind the County's actions and establish the standards of review for determining whether land use and development decisions, zoning changes, or other County actions are consistent with the Local Coastal Plan.

**Programs** are necessary or potential steps for implementation of the Local Coastal Program; for example, further study and development of plans of ordinances.

**Initiatives** are non-binding and/or advisory statements of intent, encouragement, or pledges of support for specific endeavors, programs, or outcomes; and which may set guidelines and priorities for County actions.

## **PLAN ELEMENTS**

This Local Coastal Plan is divided into elements, each of which corresponds to a planning theme or resource topic. A summary of each plan element is provided below. The elements are presented in the order of appearance within the Local Coastal Plan.

### **Land Use Element**

The Land Use Element establishes allowed land uses and densities, and presents policies specific to the Coast or particular sub-areas. Policies address outer continental shelf development, new residential and commercial development, affordable housing, and visitor-serving commercial uses.

### **Agricultural Resources Element**

The Agricultural Resources Element presents guidelines and policies that apply to lands with an Agriculture land use designation. Policies address marketing of agricultural products, stabilization of agricultural use at the edge of urban areas, limitations on intrusion of residential uses, location of agricultural-serving and visitor-serving uses, provision of farmworker housing, streamlining of permit procedures for agricultural uses, and recognition of the aquaculture and horse industries as agricultural uses.

### **Open Space and Resource Conservation Element**

The Open Space and Resource Conservation Element addresses scenic resources/design, biotic resources, soils, timber resources, mineral resources, energy resources, air quality, and commercial fishing and support facilities. This element also contains a Scenic Resources / Design section, which identifies designated Scenic Landscape Units, Vista Points, and Scenic Corridors. Along with Coastal Design Guidelines, this section establishes siting and design guidelines to protect coastal views and to minimize other visual impacts of development.

This element also identifies designated Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Areas (ESHAs), which include Riparian Corridors, and Biotic Habitat Areas, which include Sensitive Natural Communities

and Special Status Animal and Plant Occurrences and Habitats. Policies address the protection and preservation of natural resources (including soils, timber resources, mineral resources, energy resources, and air quality) and the protection and improvement of facilities natural resources associated with the commercial fishing industry.

## **Public Access Element**

The California Constitution provides that the public has the right-of-way to navigable waters and the right to maximum access of the shoreline, and that development shall not interfere with that right. Recreation and visitor-serving uses have priority over all other uses except coastal-dependent industry and agriculture.

This element describes in general the public and private parks, trails, and other recreational facilities on the Sonoma County Coast and includes maps showing the locations of these facilities.

The element describes the types of facilities in the Coastal Zone, the methods and priorities for acquisition of facilities, the Public Access Plan, and the allowable uses of public access facilities. This element also contains policies relevant to recreational boating facilities.

## **Water Resources Element**

Water Resources is a new element developed in recognition of the importance of water to the environment, economic stability, agricultural protection, and overall quality of life of Sonoma County Coast residents. Policies address subjects such as surface water, groundwater, water conservation and re-use, public water systems, and water quality.

## **Public Safety Element**

The Public Safety Element establishes special limitations and procedures for review of development projects located in areas subject to natural hazards, including seismic and other geologic hazards, landslide and erosion on unstable slopes, beach erosion and cliff/bluff stability, flooding, sea level rise, tsunami, and wildland fire. Hazardous materials are also addressed.

## **Circulation and Transit Element**

This element presents plans for the Sonoma County Coast's future highway and transit systems are presented, with emphasis on State Route 1. This element emphasizes an increased role for public transit and other alternative transportation modes and the importance of measures which will allocate existing highway capacity more efficiently during peak travel periods.

## **Public Facilities and Services Element**

The various public facilities and services which may affect the future development of land on the Sonoma County Coast are described in this element, including water, wastewater treatment and disposal, parks and recreation, fire protection, law enforcement, and solid waste management. Policies address the lack of basic services on the Coast, which limits development potential in most areas. Policies also address limitations to emergency medical and other health care services for the Coast's small population spread over large distances. Policies related to youth, family, and senior services are also included.



## Cultural and Historic Resources Element

The Sonoma County coast is rich in cultural resources tied to the identity, history, and practices of tribal peoples, and their unique relationship to the landscape.

“Cultural resources” refers collectively to archaeological and paleontological resources, including Native American cultural and sacred sites, tribal cultural resources, artifacts, and remains. In addition “Tribal cultural resources” includes but is not limited to viewsapes, vistas, landscape features, living vegetation, and species used for cultural practices and subsistence.

“Historic resources” refers to structures, sites, and artifacts associated with colonization, settlement, and development of the Coastal Zone by non-Native American cultures. Historic resources are generally structures, sites, and artifacts associated with non-Native American cultures during and after the Russian and Spanish colonial periods, but these sites may also contain Native American cultural and sacred sites, tribal cultural resources, artifacts, and remains.

## CHANGES FROM PREVIOUS LOCAL COASTAL PLAN DRAFTS

The Planning Commission Recommended Draft of the Local Coastal Plan incorporates General Plan 2020 goals, objectives, and policies applicable to the Coastal Zone and incorporates as policies, many of the previous Local Coastal Plan’s recommendations. The Local Coastal Plan also includes new policies based on the requirements and recommendations of the California Coastal Commission, new data and information, and public input.

The following parenthetical notes have been added to aid in understanding revision history. Note that the terms; “GP2020”, “GP2020 Revised”, “Existing LCP Existing”, “LCP Revised”, and “New” have been carried over from the “June 2021 Public Review Draft of the Local Coastal Plan”. The Coastal Commission recommended reorganization of most of the elements, which renumbered many goals, objectives, policies, programs, and incentives.

<b>GP2020</b>	The policy is the same as in General Plan 2020
<b>GP2020 Revised</b>	The policy is a revision of a General Plan 2020 policy
<b>Existing LCP</b>	The policy is the same as the current Local Coastal Plan
<b>Existing LCP Revised</b>	The policy in the current Local Coastal Plan has been revised
<b>New</b>	Additional policies included in the June 2021 Public Review Draft Local Coastal Plan that were not part of the existing LCP or General Plan 2020.
<b>CCC Revised</b>	Revisions recommended by the Coastal Commission as part of their review of the June 2021 Public Review Draft Local Coastal Plan
<b>PC Revised</b>	Revisions to the June 2021 Public Review Draft Local Coastal Plan recommended by the Sonoma County Planning Commission during the 9 meetings that comprised Local Coastal Plan update hearing held between July 26, 2021 and June 29, 2022.

## 4. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

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Sonoma County citizens have played a pivotal role in the establishment of the California Coastal Commission, and have been historical leaders in coastal protection. Accordingly, the Local Coastal Planning process included strong citizen participation from the beginning.

Throughout the Local Coastal Plan Update process, there has been strong public participation. The County held three public workshops in the spring of 2013 as part of the initial plan update process. The Preliminary Draft Local Coastal Plan was published in June 2015, and five additional public workshops were held during the summer of 2015. After integrating community feedback, the Public Review Draft was published in September 2019, with six public workshops to introduce the plan beginning in fall 2019 and finishing in early 2020. Two workshop-style informational updates were presented before the Board of Supervisors and in 2021 four topic-specific workshops were held virtually to discuss some major topics of public comment. These workshops and review periods have generated over 400 comments from hundreds of individuals, interest groups, agencies, and research organizations. Below are some of the key agencies, advocacy groups, and coastal community partners who have been instrumental in the development of the Local Coastal Plan Update.

Key Organizations that have been actively involved in coastal protection in Sonoma County since 1968 include:

- Sonoma Land Trust
- Coastwalk California
- Bodega Land Trust
- LandPaths
- Save Penny Island
- Sierra Club
- Sonoma County Conservation Action
- Sonoma County Surfriders
- Stewards of the Coast and Redwoods
- Wildlands Trust
- Save the Redwoods League

Agencies providing ongoing participation in the update and implementation of the Local Coastal Program:

- California Coastal Commission
- CSAC / Cal Cities Sea Level Rise Working Group
- NOAA, Greater Farallones Coastal Resilience Working Group
- Caltrans
- Calfire
- California State Parks
- State Lands Commission
- Coastal Conservancy
- U.C. Davis Bodega Marine Lab
- Audubon Canyon Ranch
- Wildlands Institute
- Sonoma County Ag Commissioner
- Sonoma County Regional Parks
- Sonoma County Ag + Open Space District
- Sonoma County Transit
- SCTA/RCPA
- Sonoma County Transportation and Public Works
- Sonoma County General Services
- Sonoma Water
- Marin County Planning Department
- ABAG/MTC
- Bodega Bay Fire Protection District
- Monte Rio Fire Protection District
- Timber Cove Fire Protection District
- Valley Ford Fire Protection District
- North Coast Fire Protection District

Home Owners Associations that have been actively involved in the development of the Local Coastal Program:

- The Sea Ranch Association
- Bodega Harbour Homeowners Association
- Timber Cove Home Owners Association
- Sereno del Mar Home Owners Association

Advocacy and Community Groups that have been actively involved in the update process:

- Sonoma County Farm Bureau
- Coastwalk
- Surfrider
- Sonoma County Conservation Action
- Greenbelt Alliance
- Sonoma County Land Use and Transportation Coalition
- North Bay Association of Realtors
- Wildlands Institute
- Save Our Sonoma Coast
- LandPaths
- Sonoma County Land Trust
- Russian River Keeper
- Stewards of the Coast and Redwoods
- Concerned Citizens for Estero Americano

# Land Use Element: Table of Contents

Land Use Element .....	4
Introduction .....	4
Purpose.....	4
Relationship to Other Elements.....	4
Relationship to California Coastal Act.....	4
Section 30005 Local governmental powers; nuisances; attorney general’s powers .....	4
Section 30213 Lower cost visitor and recreational facilities; encouragement and provision; overnight room rentals .....	5
Section 30220 Protection of certain water-oriented activities.....	5
Section 30221 Oceanfront land; protection for recreational use and development.....	5
Section 30222 Private lands; priority of development purposes .....	5
Section 30223 Upland areas .....	5
Section 30234 Commercial fishing and recreational boating facilities.....	6
Section 30235 Construction altering natural shoreline .....	6
Section 30242 Lands suitable for agricultural use; conversion.....	6
Section 30243 Productivity of soils and timberlands; conversions .....	6
Section 30250 Location; existing developed area.....	6
Section 30252 Maintenance and enhancement of public access.....	7
Section 30253 Minimization of adverse impacts .....	7
Section 30255 Priority of coastal-dependent developments .....	7
Section 30603 Appeal of actions taken after certification of local program; types of developments; grounds; finality of actions; notification to Commission .....	7
Section 30610.6 Sea Ranch in Sonoma County .....	8
Section 30624.9 Minor development; waivers of permit application hearings; notice .....	12
Section 30604 Coastal development permit; issuance prior to certification of the local coastal program; finding that development in conformity with public access and public recreation policies; housing opportunities for low and moderate income persons.....	12
Priority of Land Uses.....	13

Principally Permitted Use.....	14
Definition: .....	14
Coastal Development Permit Required .....	15
Coastal Land Use Categories.....	15
Appeal Jurisdiction .....	16
1. General Land Use Policies .....	16
2. Land Use Designations .....	18
2.1 Agriculture.....	19
Land Extensive Agriculture .....	20
Diverse Agriculture .....	20
2.2 Recreation.....	21
Recreation .....	21
2.3 Resources.....	22
Resources and Rural Development .....	22
Timber.....	23
Dedicated Open Space Areas.....	24
2.4 Commercial Land Use .....	24
Commercial Fishing.....	24
Commercial Tourist .....	25
Commercial Services.....	26
2.5 Public Facilities Land Use.....	26
Public Facilities Areas.....	26
2.6 Residential Land Use.....	27
Rural Residential .....	27
Urban Residential.....	28
3. Offshore Energy Support Facilities .....	29
On-Shore and Off-Shore Oil, Gas, and Energy Facilities.....	29
Goal, Objectives, and Policies .....	30

4. Affordable Housing.....	31
Goal, Objectives, and Policies .....	32
Program.....	35
Initiatives.....	35
5. Visitor-Serving Commercial .....	36
Existing Visitor-Serving Commercial Facilities .....	36
Goal, Objective, and Policies .....	38
Program.....	40
Initiatives.....	40
6. Communities.....	40
Goal, Objectives, and Policies .....	41
Programs.....	43

# Land Use Element

## INTRODUCTION

The Land Use Element, along with the other Elements of the Local Coastal Plan, together comprise the Land Use Plan as defined in Section 30108.5 of the California Coastal Act of 1976. The Land Use Plan provides policies that, together with the Land Use, Open Space, Hazards and Public Access Maps provide the land use designations indicating the type, location, and extent of land uses permitted in the Coastal Zone. For each appropriate land use category, it includes standards for residential density and building intensity.

The Land Use Element provides the framework for land uses that serves to protect the Coastal Zone's abundant natural resources and provide for enhanced public access and recreation that serves the greater community while balancing the needs of local residents, farmers, and resource managers.

## PURPOSE

The Land Use Element, along with the other Elements of the Local Coastal Plan, together comprise the Land Use Plan as defined in Section 30108.5 of the California Coastal Act of 1976. The Land Use Plan provides policies that designate the type, location, and extent of land uses permitted in the Coastal Zone, as well as provide guidance for implementing land use regulation through the Coastal Zoning Code. For each appropriate land use category, the Land Use Plan includes standards for residential density and building intensity.

## RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER ELEMENTS

The Land Use Element goals, objectives, policies, programs, and incentives establish a land use plan for development that is within the framework of the other Local Coastal Plan Elements. The following measures are followed to maintain this internal consistency: (CCC REVISED)

1. All Local Coastal Plan Elements use the same population, housing, and employment projections.
2. The policies in the Land Use Element support policies in the Agricultural Resources, Public Facilities and Services, and Public Access Elements.
3. Policies in the Water Resources, Public Safety, Circulation and Transit, and Open Space and Resource Conservation Elements guide and inform Land Use Element policies.

## RELATIONSHIP TO CALIFORNIA COASTAL ACT

### **Section 30005 Local governmental powers; nuisances; attorney general's powers**

No provision of this division is a limitation on any of the following:

- (a) Except as otherwise limited by state law, on the power of a city or county or city and county to adopt and enforce additional regulations, not in conflict with this act, imposing further conditions, restrictions, or limitations with respect to any land or water use or other activity which might adversely affect the resources of the coastal zone.
- (b) On the power of any city or county or city and county to declare, prohibit, and abate nuisances.
- (c) On the power of the Attorney General to bring an action in the name of the people of the state to enjoin any waste or pollution of the resources of the coastal zone or any nuisance.
- (d) On the right of any person to maintain an appropriate action for relief against a private nuisance or for any other private relief.

### **Section 30213 Lower cost visitor and recreational facilities; encouragement and provision; overnight room rentals**

Lower cost visitor and recreational facilities shall be protected, encouraged, and, where feasible, provided. Developments providing public recreational opportunities are preferred.

The commission shall not: (1) require that overnight room rentals be fixed at an amount certain for any privately owned and operated hotel, motel, or other similar visitor-serving facility located on either public or private lands; or (2) establish or approve any method for the identification of low or moderate income persons for the purpose of determining eligibility for overnight room rentals in any such facilities.

### **Section 30220 Protection of certain water-oriented activities**

Coastal areas suited for water-oriented recreational activities that cannot readily be provided at inland water areas shall be protected for such uses.

### **Section 30221 Oceanfront land; protection for recreational use and development**

Oceanfront land suitable for recreational use shall be protected for recreational use and development unless present and foreseeable future demand for public or commercial recreational activities that could be accommodated on the property is already adequately provided for in the area.

### **Section 30222 Private lands; priority of development purposes**

The use of private lands suitable for visitor-serving commercial recreational facilities designed to enhance public opportunities for coastal recreation shall have priority over private residential, general industrial, or general commercial development, but not over agriculture or coastal-dependent industry.

### **Section 30223 Upland areas**

Upland areas necessary to support coastal recreational uses shall be reserved for such uses, where feasible.



### **Section 30234 Commercial fishing and recreational boating facilities**

Facilities serving the commercial fishing and recreational boating industries shall be protected and, where feasible, upgraded. Existing commercial fishing and recreational boating harbor space shall not be reduced unless the demand for those facilities no longer exists or adequate substitute space has been provided. Proposed recreational boating facilities shall, where feasible, be designed and located in such a fashion as not to interfere with the needs of the commercial fishing industry.

### **Section 30235 Construction altering natural shoreline**

Revetments, breakwaters, groins, harbor channels, seawalls, cliff retaining walls, and other such construction that alters natural shoreline processes shall be permitted when required to serve coastal-dependent uses or to protect existing structures or public beaches in danger from erosion, and when designed to eliminate or mitigate adverse impacts on local shoreline sand supply. Existing marine structures causing water stagnation contributing to pollution problems and fish kills should be phased out or upgraded where feasible.

### **Section 30242 Lands suitable for agricultural use; conversion**

All other lands suitable for agricultural use shall not be converted to nonagricultural uses unless (1) continued or renewed agricultural use is not feasible, or (2) such conversion would preserve prime agricultural land or concentrate development consistent with Section 30250. Any such permitted conversion shall be compatible with continued agricultural use on surrounding lands.

### **Section 30243 Productivity of soils and timberlands; conversions**

The long-term productivity of soils and timberlands shall be protected, and conversions of coastal commercial timberlands in units of commercial size to other uses or their division into units of noncommercial size shall be limited to providing for necessary timber processing and related facilities.

### **Section 30250 Location; existing developed area**

(a) New residential, commercial, or industrial development, except as otherwise provided in this division, shall be located within, contiguous with, or in close proximity to, existing developed areas able to accommodate it or, where such areas are not able to accommodate it, in other areas with adequate public services and where it will not have significant adverse effects, either individually or cumulatively, on coastal resources. In addition, land divisions, other than leases for agricultural uses, outside existing developed areas shall be permitted only where 50 percent of the usable parcels in the area have been developed and the created parcels would be no smaller than the average size of surrounding parcels.

(b) Where feasible, new hazardous industrial development shall be located away from existing developed areas.

(c) Visitor-serving facilities that cannot feasibly be located in existing developed areas shall be located in existing isolated developments or at selected points of attraction for visitors.

## **Section 30252 Maintenance and enhancement of public access**

The location and amount of new development should maintain and enhance public access to the coast by (1) facilitating the provision or extension of transit service, (2) providing commercial facilities within or adjoining residential development or in other areas that will minimize the use of coastal access roads, (3) providing non-automobile circulation within the development, (4) providing adequate parking facilities or providing substitute means of serving the development with public transportation, (5) assuring the potential for public transit for high intensity uses such as high-rise office buildings, and by (6) assuring that the recreational needs of new residents will not overload nearby coastal recreation areas by correlating the amount of development with local park acquisition and development plans with the provision of onsite recreational facilities to serve the new development.

## **Section 30253 Minimization of adverse impacts**

New development shall do all of the following:

- (a) Minimize risks to life and property in areas of high geologic, flood, and fire hazard.
- (b) Assure stability and structural integrity, and neither create nor contribute significantly to erosion, geologic instability, or destruction of the site or surrounding area or in any way require the construction of protective devices that would substantially alter natural landforms along bluffs and cliffs.
- (c) Be consistent with requirements imposed by an air pollution control district or the State Air Resources Board as to each particular development.
- (d) Minimize energy consumption and vehicle miles traveled.
- (e) Where appropriate, protect special communities and neighborhoods that, because of their unique characteristics, are popular visitor destination points for recreational uses.

## **Section 30255 Priority of coastal-dependent developments**

Coastal-dependent developments shall have priority over other developments on or near the shoreline. Except as provided elsewhere in this division, coastal-dependent developments shall not be sited in a wetland. When appropriate, coastal-related developments should be accommodated within reasonable proximity to the coastal-dependent uses they support.

## **Section 30603 Appeal of actions taken after certification of local program; types of developments; grounds; finality of actions; notification to Commission**

(a) After certification of its local coastal program, an action taken by a local government on a coastal development permit application may be appealed to the commission for only the following types of developments:

- (1) Developments approved by the local government between the sea and the first public road paralleling the sea or within 300 feet of the inland extent of any beach or of the mean high tideline of the sea where there is no beach, whichever is the greater distance.

- (2) Developments approved by the local government not included within paragraph (1) that are located on tidelands, submerged lands, public trust lands, within 100 feet of any wetland, estuary, or stream, or within 300 feet of the top of the seaward face of any coastal bluff.
  - (3) Developments approved by the local government not included within paragraph (1) or (2) that are located in a sensitive coastal resource area.
  - (4) Any development approved by a coastal county that is not designated as the principal permitted use under the zoning ordinance or zoning district map approved pursuant to Chapter 6 (commencing with Section 30500).
  - (5) Any development which constitutes a major public works project or a major energy facility.
- (b) (1) The grounds for an appeal pursuant to subdivision (a) shall be limited to an allegation that the development does not conform to the standards set forth in the certified local coastal program or the public access policies set forth in this division.
- (2) The grounds for an appeal of a denial of a permit pursuant to paragraph (5) of subdivision (a) shall be limited to an allegation that the development conforms to the standards set forth in the certified local coastal program and the public access policies set forth in this division.
- (c) Any action described in subdivision (a) shall become final at the close of business on the 10th working day from the date of receipt by the commission of the notice of the local government's final action, unless an appeal is submitted within that time. Regardless of whether an appeal is submitted, the local government's action shall become final if an appeal fee is imposed pursuant to subdivision (d) of Section 30620 and is not deposited with the commission within the time prescribed.
- (d) A local government taking an action on a coastal development permit shall send notification of its final action to the commission by certified mail within seven calendar days from the date of taking the action.

## **Section 30610.6 Sea Ranch in Sonoma County**

- (a) The Legislature hereby finds and declares that it is in the public interest to provide by statute for the resolution of the lengthy and bitter dispute involving development of existing legal lots within the unincorporated area of Sonoma County, commonly known as the Sea Ranch. The reasons for the need to finally resolve this dispute include the following:
- (1) Acknowledgment by the responsible regulatory agencies that development of existing lots at Sea Ranch can proceed consistent with the provisions of this division and other applicable laws provided certain conditions have been met. Development has been prevented at considerable costs to property owners because these conditions have not been met.
  - (2) That it has been, and continues to be, costly to Sea Ranch property owners and the public because of, among other reasons, extensive and protracted litigation, continuing administrative proceedings, and escalating construction costs.
  - (3) The need to provide additional public access to and along portions of the coast at the Sea Ranch in order to meet the requirements of this division. The continuation of this dispute prevents the public from enjoying the use of those access opportunities.

(4) The commission is unable to refund 118 "environmental deposits" to property owners because coastal development permit conditions have not been met.

(5) It appears likely that this lengthy dispute will continue unless the Legislature provides a solution, and the failure to resolve the dispute will be unfair to property owners and the public.

(b) The Legislature further finds and declares that because of the unique circumstances of this situation, the provisions of this section constitute the most expeditious and equitable mechanism to ensure a timely solution that is in the best property owners and that is consistent with this division.

(c) If the Sea Ranch Association and Oceanic California, Inc. desire to take advantage of the terms of this section, they shall, not sooner than April 1, 1981, and not later than July 1, 1981, deposit into escrow deeds and other necessary documents that have been determined by the State Coastal Conservancy prior to their deposit in escrow to be legally sufficient to convey to the State Coastal Conservancy enforceable and nonexclusive public use easements free and clear of liens and encumbrances for the easements specifically described in this subdivision. Upon deposit of five hundred thousand dollars (\$500,000) into the same escrow account by the State Coastal Conservancy, but in no event later than 30 days after the deeds and other necessary documents have been deposited in the escrow account, the escrow agent shall transmit the five hundred thousand dollars (\$500,000), less the escrow, title, and administrative costs of the State Coastal Conservancy, in an amount not to exceed twenty thousand dollars (\$20,000), to the Sea Ranch Association and shall convey the deeds and other necessary documents to the State Coastal Conservancy. The conservancy shall subsequently convey the deeds and other necessary documents to an appropriate public agency that is authorized and agrees to accept the easements. The deeds specified in this subdivision shall be for the following easements:

(1) In Unit 34A, a 30-foot wide vehicle and pedestrian access easement from a point on State Highway 1, 50 feet north of a mile post marker 56.75, a day parking area for 10 vehicles, a 15-foot wide pedestrian accessway from the parking area continuing west to the bluff-top trail, and a 15-foot wide bluff-top pedestrian easement beginning at the southern boundary of Gualala Point County Park and continuing for approximately three miles in a southerly direction to the sandy beach at the northern end of Unit 28 just north of Walk-on Beach together with a 15-foot wide pedestrian easement to provide a connection to Walk-on Beach to the south.

(2) In Unit 24, a day parking area west of State Highway 1, just south of Whalebone Reach, for six vehicles, and a 15-foot wide pedestrian accessway over Sea Ranch Association common areas crossing Pacific Reach and continuing westerly to the southern portion of Shell Beach with a 15-foot wide pedestrian easement to connect with the northern portion of Shell Beach.

(3) In Unit 36, a 30-foot wide vehicle and pedestrian accessway from State Highway 1, mile post marker 53.96, a day parking area for 10 vehicles, and a 15-foot wide pedestrian accessway from the parking area to the beach at the intersection of Units 21 and 36.

(4) In Unit 17, adjacent to the intersection of Navigator's Reach and State Highway 1, 75 feet north of mile post marker 52.21, enough land to provide day parking for four vehicles and a 15-foot wide pedestrian accessway from the parking area to Pebble Beach.

(5) In Unit 8, a 30-foot wide vehicle and pedestrian accessway from State Highway 1, mile post marker 50.85, a day parking area for 10 vehicles and a 15-foot wide pedestrian accessway from the parking area to Black Point Beach.

(6) With respect to each of the beaches to which access will be provided by the easements specified in this subdivision, an easement for public use of the area between the line of mean high tide and either the toe of the adjacent bluff or the first line of vegetation, whichever is nearer to the water.

(7) Scenic view easements for those areas specified by the executive director, as provided in subdivision (d), and which easements allow for the removal of trees in order to restore and preserve scenic views from State Highway 1.

(d) The executive director of the commission shall, within 30 days after the effective date of this section, specifically identify the areas along State Highway 1 for which the scenic view easements provided for in paragraph (7) of subdivision (c) will be required. In identifying the areas for which easements for the restoration and preservation of public scenic views will be required, the executive director shall take into account the effect of tree removal so as to avoid causing erosion problems. It is the intent of the Legislature that only those areas be identified where scenic views to or along the coast are unique or particularly beautiful or spectacular and which thereby take on public importance. The restoration and preservation of the scenic view areas specified pursuant to this subdivision shall be at public expense.

(e) Within 30 days after the effective date of this section, the executive director of the commission shall specify design criteria for the height, site, and bulk of any development visible from the scenic view areas provided for in subdivision (d). This criteria shall be enforced by the County of Sonoma if the deeds and other necessary documents specified in subdivision (c) have been conveyed to the State Coastal Conservancy. This criteria shall be reasonable so as to enable affected property owners to build single-family residences of substantially similar overall size to those that property owners who are not affected by these criteria may build or have already built under the Sea Ranch Association's building design criteria. The purpose of the criteria is to ensure that development will not substantially detract from the specified scenic view areas.

(f) On and after the date on which the deeds and other necessary documents deposited in escrow pursuant to subdivision (c) have been conveyed to the State Coastal Conservancy, no additional public access requirements shall be imposed at the Sea Ranch pursuant to this division by any regional commission, the commission, any other state agency, or any local government. The Legislature hereby finds and declares that the provisions of the access facilities specified in this subdivision shall be deemed adequate to meet the requirements of this division.

(g) The realignment of internal roads within the Sea Ranch shall not be required by any state or local agency acting pursuant to this division. However, that appropriate easements may be required by the County of Sonoma to provide for the expansion of State Highway 1 for the development of turnout and left-turn lanes and for the location of a bicycle path, when the funds are made available for those purposes. The Legislature finds and declares that this subdivision is adequate to meet the requirements of this division to ensure that new development at the Sea Ranch will not overburden the capacity of State Highway 1 to the detriment of recreational users.

(h) No coastal development permit shall be required pursuant to this division for the development of supplemental water supply facilities determined by the State Water Resources Control Board to be necessary to meet the needs of legally permitted development within the Sea Ranch. The commission, through its executive director, shall participate in the proceedings before the State Water Resources Control Board relating to these facilities and may recommend terms and conditions that the commission deems necessary to protect against adverse impacts on coastal zone resources. The State Water Resources Control Board shall condition any permit or other authorization for the development of these facilities so as to carry out the commission's recommendation, unless the State Water Resources Control Board determines that the recommended terms or conditions are unreasonable. This subdivision shall become operative if the deeds and other necessary documents specified in subdivision (c) have been conveyed to the State Coastal Conservancy.

(i) Within 90 days after the effective date of this section, the commission, through its executive director, shall specify criteria for septic tank construction, operation, and monitoring within the Sea Ranch to ensure protection of coastal zone resources consistent with the policies of this division. The North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board shall review the criteria and adopt it, unless it finds the criteria or a portion thereof is unreasonable. The regional board shall be responsible for the enforcement of the adopted criteria if the deeds and other necessary documents specified in subdivision (c) have been conveyed to the State Coastal Conservancy.

(j) Within 60 days after the date on which the deeds and other necessary documents deposited in escrow pursuant to subdivision (c) have been conveyed to the State Coastal Conservancy, the commission shall refund every Sea Ranch "environmental deposit" together with any interest earned on the deposit to the person, or his or her designee, who paid the deposit.

(k) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, on and after the date on which the deeds and other necessary documents deposited in escrow pursuant to subdivision (c) have been conveyed to the State Coastal Conservancy, a coastal development permit shall not be required pursuant to this division for the construction of any single-family residence dwelling on any vacant, legal lot existing at the Sea Ranch on the effective date of this section. With respect to any other development for which a coastal development permit is required within legally existing lots at the Sea Ranch, no conditions may be imposed pursuant to this division that impose additional public access requirements or that relate to supplemental water supply facilities, septic tank systems, or internal road realignment.

(l) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, if on July 1, 1981, deeds and other necessary documents that are legally sufficient to convey the easements specified in subdivision (c) have not been deposited in an escrow account, the provisions of this section shall no longer be operative and shall have no force or effect and thereafter all the provisions of this division in effect prior to enactment of this section shall again be applicable to any development within the Sea Ranch.

(m) The Legislature hereby finds and declares that the provisions for the settlement of this dispute, especially with respect to public access, as set forth in this section provide an alternative to and are equivalent to the provisions set forth in Section 30610.3. The Legislature further finds that the provisions of this section are not in lieu of the permit and planning requirements of this division but rather provide for an alternative mechanism to Section 30610.3 for the resolution of outstanding issues at the Sea Ranch.

## **Section 30624.9 Minor development; waivers of permit application hearings; notice**

- (a) For purposes of this section, "minor development" means a development which a local government determines satisfies all of the following requirements:
- (1) Is consistent with the certified local coastal program, as defined in Section 30108.6.
  - (2) Requires no discretionary approvals other than a coastal development permit.
  - (3) Has no adverse effect either individually or cumulatively on coastal resources or public access to the shoreline or along the coast.
- (b) After certification of its local coastal program, a local government may waive the requirement for a public hearing on a coastal development permit application for a minor development only if both of the following occur:
- (1) Notice that a public hearing shall be held upon request by any person is provided to all persons who would otherwise be required to be notified of a public hearing as well as any other persons known to be interested in receiving notice.
  - (2) No request for public hearing is received by the local government within 15 working days from the date of sending the notice pursuant to paragraph (1).
- (c) The notice provided pursuant to subdivision (b) shall include a statement that failure by a person to request a public hearing may result in the loss of that person's ability to appeal to the commission any action taken by a local government on a coastal development permit application.

## **Section 30604 Coastal development permit; issuance prior to certification of the local coastal program; finding that development in conformity with public access and public recreation policies; housing opportunities for low and moderate income persons**

- (a) Prior to certification of the local coastal program, a coastal development permit shall be issued if the issuing agency, or the commission on appeal, finds that the proposed development is in conformity with Chapter 3 (commencing with Section 30200) and that the permitted development will not prejudice the ability of the local government to prepare a local coastal program that is in conformity with Chapter 3 (commencing with Section 30200). A denial of a coastal development permit on grounds it would prejudice the ability of the local government to prepare a local coastal program that is in conformity with Chapter 3 (commencing with Section 30200) shall be accompanied by a specific finding which sets forth the basis for that conclusion.
- (b) After certification of the local coastal program, a coastal development permit shall be issued if the issuing agency or the commission on appeal finds that the proposed development is in conformity with the certified local coastal program.
- (c) Every coastal development permit issued for any development between the nearest public road and the sea or the shoreline of any body of water located within the coastal zone shall include a specific finding that the development is in conformity with the public access and public recreation policies of Chapter 3 (commencing with Section 30200).

(d) No development or any portion thereof which is outside the coastal zone shall be subject to the coastal development permit requirements of this division, nor shall anything in this division authorize the denial of a coastal development permit by the commission on the grounds the proposed development within the coastal zone will have an adverse environmental effect outside the coastal zone.

(e) No coastal development permit may be denied under this division on the grounds that a public agency is planning or contemplating to acquire the property on, or property adjacent to the property on, which the proposed development is to be located, unless the public agency has been specifically authorized to acquire the property and there are funds available, or funds which could reasonably be expected to be made available within one year, for the acquisition. If a permit has been denied for that reason and the property has not been acquired by a public agency within a reasonable period of time, a permit may not be denied for the development on grounds that the property, or adjacent property, is to be acquired by a public agency when the application for such a development is resubmitted.

(f) The commission shall encourage housing opportunities for persons of low and moderate income. In reviewing residential development applications for low- and moderate-income housing, as defined in paragraph (3) of subdivision (h) of Section 65589.5 of the Government Code, the issuing agency or the commission, on appeal, may not require measures that reduce residential densities below the density sought by an applicant if the density sought is within the permitted density or range of density established by local zoning plus the additional density permitted under Section 65915 of the Government Code, unless the issuing agency or the commission on appeal makes a finding, based on substantial evidence in the record, that the density sought by the applicant cannot feasibly be accommodated on the site in a manner that is in conformity with Chapter 3 (commencing with Section 30200) or the certified local coastal program.

(g) The Legislature finds and declares that it is important for the commission to encourage the protection of existing and the provision of new affordable housing opportunities for persons of low and moderate income in the coastal zone.

(h) When acting on a coastal development permit, the issuing agency, or the commission on appeal, may consider environmental justice, or the equitable distribution of environmental benefits throughout the state.


## **PRIORITY OF LAND USES**

The Coastal Act established a framework for preserving coastal resources, protecting public access to the ocean, and guiding development to maximize protection of these resources. Consistent with the Coastal Act, the Local Coastal Plan establishes a prioritization of land uses, where lower priority development may not interfere with higher priority uses of land and resources.

“Undeveloped areas” are considered at a landscape scale and not intended to include individual vacant parcels within developed residential or commercial areas. This prioritization is shown below in **Table C-LU-1: (CCC REVISED)**



**Table C-LU-1: Priority of Coastal Land Uses**

	<b>Undeveloped areas</b>	<b>All Coastal Areas</b>	<b>Developed areas</b>
<b>Priority of Use</b>    <b>Low</b>	Agriculture (Prime coastal dependent), forestry (productive timberland), coastal dependent public recreation [30213, 30242, 30243, 30250(a), 30250(b)].	Coastal dependent <sup>1</sup> public recreation and public access areas [30213, 30220, 30221]	Coastal dependent industry and commerce, commercial fishing, coastal dependent public recreation and special communities [30213, 30234, 30250(a), 30250(b), 30253(e), 30255]
	Water dependent <sup>1</sup> public recreation [30220, 30221, 30223]		
	Local Priority: Affordable dwelling units for extremely low, very low, and low-income households. Accessory dwelling units. (CCC REVISED)		
	Non-coastal <sup>1</sup> or non-water dependent public recreation [30220, 30221]		
	Visitor-serving <sup>1</sup> commercial recreation, lower cost [30222, 30213, 30250 (c)]		
	Visitor-serving <sup>1</sup> commercial recreation, higher cost [30222, 30250 (c)]		
	Market rate housing general industrial, or commercial development <sup>2</sup> [30222, 30250, 30255]		
	Development that is not a		
Notes: <sup>1</sup> Recreational uses of the coast that do not require extensive alteration of the natural environment have priority in intertidal and waterfront areas over recreational uses that would result in substantial alteration of the natural environment [30233, 30235, 30255] <sup>2</sup> Concentration of development policies [30250(a)] limit development in rural areas, except public recreation and visitor-serving uses.			

## PRINCIPALLY PERMITTED USE

### Definition:

Within the context of the California Coastal Act, a principally permitted use is a single category of development identified for each land use category that clearly carries out the intent of that land use category and development associated with that use is consistent with the Coastal Act. An example of a principally permitted use would be a single family home within the Rural Residential land use. By designating development as principally permitted, such development will only be appealable to the

Coastal Commission if it is otherwise appealable based on its geographic location, which is discussed below.

The Coastal Commission does not allow multiple uses to be identified as principally permitted. Each land use category is limited to a single principally permitted use.

## Coastal Development Permit Required

A Coastal Development Permit is required for principally permitted development unless the development is statutorily excluded by the Coastal Act or categorically excluded by an Exclusion Order issued by the Coastal Commission. Consistent with Section 30603 of the Coastal Act, the decision to approve or deny a Coastal Development Permit issued for a Principally Permitted cannot be appealed to the Coastal Commission except in the following circumstances:

1. The development is between the sea and the first public road paralleling the sea or within 300 feet of the inland extent of any beach or of the mean high tideline of the sea where there is no beach, whichever is the greater distance.
2. The development is located on tidelands, submerged lands, public trust lands, within 100 feet of any wetland, estuary, or stream, or within 300 feet inland of the top of the seaward face of any coastal bluff.
3. The development is located within or may adversely impact an Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Area.
4. Any development of a major public works project or a major energy facility.

While Coastal Development Permits for Principally Permitted uses may not be appealable to the Coastal Commission, these permits are still subject to local appeal to the Board of Zoning Adjustments and the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors.

## COASTAL LAND USE CATEGORIES

There are two categories of potential uses in the Coastal Zone. Principally Permitted Uses generally have more streamlined approval processes, while Other Permitted Uses may require additional discretionary approvals. The two categories are defined below in Table C-LU-2

**Table C-LU-2: Priority of Coastal Land Uses**

<b><i>Principally Permitted Uses</i></b>	<b><i>Other Permitted Uses</i></b>
<p>Principal Uses as described in the Coastal Zoning Code and consistent with the primary purpose of the land use category. Coastal development permits issued for Principally Permitted Uses remain subject to local appeal, but are not appealable to the California Coastal Commission, pursuant to Section 30603(a)(4) of the Coastal Act.</p> <p>Uses shall not be considered principally permitted if located within an environmentally sensitive habitat area or major view shed designated in the Open Space and Resource Conservation Element.</p>	<p>Land uses permitted or conditionally permitted in the Coastal Zoning Code not described as Principally Permitted Uses are secondary and subordinate to the principal permitted uses and must be compatible with principally permitted land use. It should be noted that the term "permitted uses" as used in the descriptions of the land use categories identify permissible uses consistent with the purpose of the land use category, subject to zoning and permitting requirements of the County. All development within the Coastal Zone requires a discretionary Coastal Development Permit, unless exempt or otherwise categorically excluded by</p>

All principally permitted uses are subject to site development standards. Outside of commercial land use designations all commercial uses that require a coastal development permit are appealable to the Coastal Commission.	order of the Coastal Commission. Any development that is not designated as the Principally Permitted Use in a particular zone may be appealed to the Coastal Commission.
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## Appeal Jurisdiction

Approval of a coastal development permit for any project within the appeal jurisdiction area may be appealed to the Coastal Commission. This area includes, but is not limited to: areas west of Highway 1 or first public road that is not Highway 1, areas within 100 feet of a wetland, estuary or stream, public trust lands, tidelands and submerged lands, areas inland 300ft from bluff or sandy beach and development located in a sensitive coastal resource area, including areas shown in Figure C-OSRC-2 “Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Area” or areas meeting criteria found in the Open Space and Resource Conservation Section 9 “Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Areas”.

## I. GENERAL LAND USE POLICIES

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(CCC REVISED – PC REVISED)

The following policies apply to implementation of this Plan as well as development in all land use categories and uses associated with that development:

**Policy C-LU-1a:** The Coastal Zoning Code and the Coastal Administrative Manual shall be consistent with Goals, Objectives, Policies, Programs, and Incentives of the Local Coastal Plan.

**Policy C-LU-1b:** Require a coastal development permit for any project that meets the definition of development pursuant to Coastal Act Section 30106. Exempt certain categories of development from coastal development permit requirements pursuant to Title 14, Division 5.5, Chapter 6 of the California Code of Regulations. Establish a coastal development permit waiver process for other types of de minimis development including qualifying agricultural uses, smaller structures, or temporary uses. (CCC REVISED)

**Policy C-LU-1c:** With the exception of development excluded from the permit requirements of the Coastal Act under Title 14, Division 5.5, Chapter 6 of the California Code of Regulations, by a Coastal Commission Exclusion Order, and/or development excluded by Attachment B of the certified Coastal Administrative Manual, Coastal Development Permits shall be required for any project that meets the definition of development pursuant to Coastal Act Section 30106. A waiver may be considered for small-scale agricultural uses, smaller structures, and temporary uses where it can be demonstrated that the project will not adverse impact to coastal resources or coastal access.

**Policy C-LU-1d:** Noise generated by coastal development or any use associated with coastal development shall not exceed the following standards as measured at the property line or nearest noise-sensitive resource, whichever is more restrictive:

Average noise for 30 minutes in any hour:	45 decibels
Average noise for 15 minutes in any hour:	50 decibels
Average noise for 5 minutes in any hour:	55 decibels

Average noise for 72 seconds in any hour: 60 decibels

“Decibel” means the sound pressure relative to 20 micropascals as measured at the property line, adjusted to International Organization for Standardization ISO 226 equal loudness contours.

These standard are subject to the following adjustments:

Daytime noise emitted between 7:00 am and 10:00 pm may be increased by 5 decibels.

Where natural ambient sound is significantly below the standards, noise shall be limited to no more than 1.5 decibels above the ambient sound level.

Where natural ambient sound is significantly above the standards, maximum noise generation may be adjusted upward to match ambient levels to a maximum of 5 decibels. (PC REVISED)

**Policy C-LU-1e:** Projects shall evaluate potential for project noise to have an adverse impact on biological resources. If noise levels allowed by C-LU-1d have potential to have an adverse impact on biological resources, noise emissions shall be further limited to prevent creating any significant adverse impact on biological resources. (PC REVISED)

**Policy C-LU-1f:** Standards found in policies C-LU-1d and C-LU-1e may be exceeded for emergency operations, operation of existing roads, and agricultural operations as well as temporary noise generation from solid waste collection, school functions, and property maintenance. (PC REVISED)

**Policy C-LU-1g:** Special events may exceed standards found in policies C-LU-1d and C-LU-1e on a temporary basis if noise generated by the event is found to have no significant impact on biological resources, or be determined to create a nuisance. Events that expose people and wildlife to loud impulsive sounds in excess of 85 decibels, such as fireworks, are prohibited. (PC REVISED)

**Policy C-LU-1h:** Vibration generated by coastal development or any use associated with coastal development shall not exceed a Peak Particle Velocity (PPV) of 0.01 at the project boundaries in developed areas. In undeveloped and agricultural areas, PPV cannot exceed 1.00. In all cases, PPV cannot exceed values that will result in damage to coastal resources

This policy does not apply to the following activities:

1. Geotechnical borings necessary to determine site stability and suitability for development.
2. Emergency repairs for which a Coastal Emergency Permit has been issued.
3. Installation of road signs, guardrails, and safety-related road equipment such as call boxes or traffic signals. (PC REVISED)

**Policy C-LU-1i:** The following standards apply to all exterior lighting with the exception of temporary lighting associated with emergency response and emergency infrastructure repair:

1. Lighting shall be fully shielded to prevent nighttime light pollution.
2. Lighting shall be downward facing, located at the lowest possible point to the ground to prevent spill over onto adjacent properties, glare, nighttime light pollution and unnecessary glow in the rural night sky.
3. Light fixtures shall not be located at the periphery of the property and shall not reflect off structures. Security lighting shall be put on motion sensors.

4. Flood lights and uplights are not permitted except in agricultural operations and commercial fishing facilities.
5. Signs that emit light are prohibited and lights used to illuminate signs shall be shielded to prevent light spill beyond the sign and not exceed a total light output of 1000 lumens
6. Light fixtures emitting over 1000 lumens are prohibited except where needed for agriculture, commercial fishing, and first responders.
7. Total illuminance created by artificial lighting, shall not exceed 1.0 lux at the property line. Color temperature of exterior light sources shall be 3000 Kelvin or lower. (PC REVISED)

## 2. LAND USE DESIGNATIONS

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Descriptions of land use designations follow, along with a brief discussion of uses and the permitted residential density allowed by designation. The Coastal Zoning Code further describes the uses that are permitted within each category and provides additional standards for such development. Additional uses and structures accessory to and compatible with the primary use and consistent with the Local Coastal Plan may also be allowed subject to permitting requirements of the Coastal Zoning Code.

For all land use designations, all uses located in an environmentally sensitive habitat area, habitat buffer, riparian corridor, critical habitat area, major view, or cultural resource area shall not be considered principally permitted uses, intended to be the primary use of the land. Table C-LU-3, below shows the relationship between land use and zoning:

**Table C-LU-3: Land Use and Zoning Table**

<b>Land Use Designation</b>	<b>Corresponding Zoning District</b>
Land Extensive Agriculture (LEA)	Land Extensive Agriculture (LEA)
Diverse Agriculture (DA)	Diverse Agriculture (DA)
Recreation (R)	Planned Community (PC) Resources and Rural Development (RRD)
Resources and Rural Development (RRD)	Resources and Rural Development (RRD)
Timber (T)	Timber Preserve (TP) Resources and Rural Development (RRD)
Open Space (OS)	Planned Community (PC) Rural Residential (RR)
Commercial Fishing (CF)	Commercial Fishing (CF)
Commercial Tourist (CT)	Commercial Tourist (CT) (formerly Visitor-Serving Commercial)
Commercial Services (CS)	Commercial Services (CS) (formerly Rural Services) Community Commercial (C2)
Public Facilities (PF)	Public Facilities (PF)
Rural Residential (RR)	Rural Residential (RR) Agriculture and Residential (AR) Planned Community (PC)

**Table C-LU-3: Land Use and Zoning Table**

Land Use Designation	Corresponding Zoning District
Urban Residential (UR)	Low Density Residential (R1) Medium Density Residential (R2) Planned Community (PC)

## 2.1 AGRICULTURE

Agricultural uses are among the highest priority uses within the Coastal Zone. The purpose of this land use category is to preserve and protect appropriate coastal agriculture. The land use plan includes two agricultural land use designations, Land Extensive Agriculture and Diverse Agriculture. The two designations vary in the type of agricultural uses and support uses allowed, and by allowable residential density.

Agriculture is the principally permitted use on lands with agricultural land use designations, with the exception of cannabis cultivation. Certain types of residential units may also be allowed up to four units per parcel when supporting agricultural uses onsite.

## Land Extensive Agriculture

<b>Purpose</b>	To enhance and protect land best suited for non-intensive agriculture of relatively low production on relatively large parcels, by establishing densities and parcel sizes that are conducive to continued agricultural production.
<b>Corresponding Zoning District(s)</b>	Land Extensive Agriculture (LEA)
<b>Principally Permitted Use</b>	Agriculture, defined as the production of food, fiber, plant materials, and the raising and maintaining of horses, donkeys, mules, and similar livestock and farm animals, and closely related essential support uses including incidental preparation of agricultural production, and limited farm-related residential development supporting farm families and agricultural workers. (CCC REVISED)
<b>Minimum Parcel Size</b>	Land divisions shall be permitted only for the purpose of increasing or enhancing agricultural production and must result in a minimum parcel size of 640 acres.
<b>Allowable residential density</b>	One single-family residence per 160 acres or one per parcel, if a parcel is less than 160 acres, when supporting agricultural uses onsite. All dwelling units shall be clustered in relation to physical land features and property management conditions. All dwelling units shall be subordinate to and consistent with agricultural production and shall comply with Agricultural Resources Element policies.
<b>Other Residential Uses</b>	Agricultural employee units and farm family housing that do not count toward density, and are associated with the principally permitted use.  In no case shall the total number of residential units exceed four units per parcel. (CCC REVISED)
<b>Designation Criteria</b>	A Land Use Map Amendment to apply the Land Extensive Agriculture land use designation requires a Local Coastal Plan Amendment, subject to certification by the California Coastal Commission, and must meet the standards in Chapter 3 of the California Coastal Act, be consistent with other policies of the Local Coastal Plan, and meet one or more of the following criteria: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Soil and water are adequate for livestock grazing or other crop production.</li> <li>2. Most parcel sizes in the area are greater than 60 acres.</li> <li>3. Existing or historic use for livestock grazing, dairy ranching, hay or similar forage crop.</li> </ol>

## Diverse Agriculture

<b>Purpose</b>	To enhance and protect land best suited for diverse types of agriculture on relatively small parcels in which farming may be part-time and may not be the principal occupation of the farmer, protect a variety of agricultural uses of scale and intensity to be compatible with coastal resources, and limit the conversion of agricultural parcels to non-agricultural use.
<b>Corresponding Zoning District(s)</b>	Diverse Agriculture (DA)
<b>Principally Permitted Use</b>	Agriculture, defined as the production of food, fiber, plant materials, and the raising and maintaining of horses, donkeys, mules, and similar livestock and farm animals, and closely related essential support uses including incidental preparation of agricultural production, and limited farm-related residential development supporting farm families and agricultural workers. (CCC REVISED)
<b>Minimum Parcel Size</b>	160 acres.
<b>Allowable Residential Density</b>	One single-family residence per 40 acres or one per parcel, if a parcel is less than 160 acres when supporting agricultural uses onsite. All dwelling units shall be clustered in relation to physical land features and property management conditions. All dwelling

	units shall be subordinate to and consistent with agricultural production and shall comply with Agricultural Resources Element policies.
<b>Other Residential Uses</b>	Agricultural employee units and farm family housing that do not count toward density, and are associated with the principally permitted use.  In no case shall the total number of residential units exceed four units per parcel. (CCC REVISED)
<b>Designation Criteria</b>	A Land Use Map Amendment to apply the Diverse Agriculture land use designation requires a Local Coastal Plan Amendment subject to certification by the California Coastal Commission and must meet the standards in Chapter 3 of the California Coastal Act. A Local Coastal Plan Amendment to apply the Diverse Agriculture land use designation must also be consistent with other policies of the Local Coastal Plan and meet one or more of the following criteria: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Soil suitable for food crop production and adequate water for irrigation.</li> <li>2. Most parcel sizes in the area are greater than 10 acres.</li> <li>3. Existing or historic use as orchard, vineyard, other food crop production, hay or other forage crop production, livestock grazing, dairy ranching, or other type of farming.</li> <li>4. Qualifies for Prime or Non-Prime Agricultural Land Conservation Act Contract.</li> <li>5. Areas which may not meet the above criteria but which are surrounded by lands in farming.</li> </ol>

## 2.2 RECREATION

Recreation land use is applied to areas that meet criteria for Resources and Rural Development land use, but have severe development constraints such as geologic, flood, or fire hazards, marginal or unproven water availability, or limited septic capability, or is vulnerable to environmental impact, that limit development to passive recreational use, or low impact coastal-dependent recreation facilities, such as boat launching or fishing areas. This land use may also be applied to areas with a legally established pre-Coastal Act recreational facilities, such as campgrounds.

Land within undeveloped common areas that are part of a Planned Community precise development plan may also be designated as Recreational land use, subject to a Local Coastal Program amendment.  
(PC REVISED)

### Recreation

<b>Purpose</b>	To accommodate private or public recreational facilities.
<b>Corresponding Zoning District(s)</b>	Planned Community (PC)  Resources and Rural Development (RRD)
<b>Principally Permitted Use</b>	Planned Community zoning: Recreation as intended for use in the community's Precise Development Plan.  Resources and Rural Development zoning: Resource- and coastal-dependent recreation activities.
<b>Minimum Parcel Size</b>	640 acres.  Land divisions shall be permitted only for the purpose of increasing or enhancing natural resources.



<b>Permitted Residential Densities</b>	One single-family residence per 160 acres or one per parcel, if a parcel is less than 160 acres.
<b>Other Residential Uses</b>	Other resource-related dwelling units that do not count toward density, such as agricultural employee units and farm family dwellings, may be allowed.  The total number of residential units shall not exceed four units per parcel.
<b>Designation Criteria</b>	A Land Use Map Amendment to apply the Recreation land use designation requires a Local Coastal Plan Amendment subject to certification by the California Coastal Commission and must meet the standards in Chapter 3 of the California Coastal Act. A Local Coastal Plan Amendment to apply the Recreation land use designation must demonstrate adequate road access for the allowed uses and that allowed uses will not adversely affect agriculture or resource production uses and meet one or more of the following criteria: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Has severe development constraints such as geologic, flood, or fire hazards, marginal or unproven water availability, or limited septic capability, or is vulnerable to environmental impact, but suitable for low intensities of recreational use, passive recreation, or coastal dependent recreation.</li> <li>2. Land is recognized as a legally established recreational use.</li> <li>3. Land is a designated common area without development which is committed to recreation in a planned community.</li> </ol>

## 2.3 RESOURCES

### Resources and Rural Development

Examples of uses allowed in the Resources and Rural Development land use designation may include land management for the purposes of resource conservation as described in the Coastal Zoning Code for Resources and Rural Development, including passive recreation. Passive recreation is defined as recreational use or activities that require no special or formal facilities or are natural areas and include, but are not limited to, bicycle riding, walking, hiking, bird watching, etc. Lands designated as Resources and Rural Development are intended primarily for a variety of land management and coastal-dependent recreation activities, but may also be used for limited agricultural uses and very low-density residential development not in conflict with the primary resource use of the site as a non-principally permitted use. (PC REVISED)

<b>Purpose</b>	To protect lands needed for use and production of natural resources (e.g., water, timber, geothermal steam, or aggregate production), water resources, scenic resources, and biotic resources, and to protect lands constrained by geologic, flood, or fire or other hazards, from intensive development.
<b>Corresponding Zoning District(s)</b>	Resources and Rural Development (RRD)
<b>Principally Permitted Use</b>	Resource conservation. (CCC REVISED)
<b>Minimum Parcel Size</b>	640 acres.
<b>Allowable Residential Density</b>	One single-family residence per 160 acres or one per parcel if a parcel is less than 160 acres.
<b>Other Residential Uses</b>	Other resource-related dwelling units that do not count toward density, such as agricultural employee units and farm family dwellings, may be allowed.

	The total number of residential units shall not exceed four units per parcel.
<b>Designation Criteria</b>	<p>A Land Use Map Amendment to apply the Resources and Rural Development land use designation requires a Local Coastal Plan Amendment subject to certification by the California Coastal Commission and must meet the standards in Chapter 3 of the California Coastal Act. A Local Coastal Plan Amendment to apply the Resources and Rural Development land use designation must also be consistent with other policies of the Local Coastal Plan and meet one or more of the following criteria:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Land has severe constraints such as geologic, flood, or fire hazards; marginal or unproven water availability; or limited septic capability.</li> <li>2. Land contains natural resources such as water, timber, geothermal steam, aggregate, or soil.</li> <li>3. Land contains biotic or scenic resources.</li> <li>4. Land is vulnerable to environmental impact.</li> </ol>

## Timber

Timber lands may also be used for limited accessory uses and very low-density residential development not in conflict with the primary resource use of the site. Lands zoned Resource and Rural Development (RRD) with an underlying land use designation of Timber may also be used for agricultural operations and very low-density residential development not in conflict with the resource use of the site.

These uses are not principally permitted uses, and will require a CDP, appealable to the Coastal Commission.

<b>Purpose</b>	To protect timberland needed for commercial timber production under the California Timberland Productivity Act.
<b>Corresponding Zoning District(s)</b>	<p>Timberland Production (TP)</p> <p>Resources and Rural Development (RRD)</p>
<b>Principally Permitted Use</b>	The principally permitted use on lands designated and zoned for Timber is land management for the continued operation and protection of Timber Preserves.
<b>Minimum Parcel Size</b>	<p>640 acres.</p> <p>Land divisions shall be permitted only for the purpose of increasing or enhancing timber production.</p>
<b>Allowable residential density</b>	<p>One single-family residence per 160 acres or one per parcel, if a parcel is less than 160 acres. Other resource-related dwelling units that do not count toward density, such as agricultural employee units and farm family dwellings, may be allowed.</p> <p>The total number of residential units shall not exceed four units per parcel.</p>
<b>Other Residential Uses</b>	None.
<b>Designation Criteria</b>	<p>A Land Use Map Amendment to apply the Timber land use designation requires a Local Coastal Plan Amendment subject to certification by the California Coastal Commission and must meet the standards in Chapter 3 of the California Coastal Act. A Local Coastal Plan Amendment to apply the Timber land use designation must also be consistent with other policies of the Local Coastal Plan and meet one or more of the following criteria:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I. Land is predominantly in Timber Site Class I, II, III, IV, or V.</li> </ol>

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. Land has existing or historic use for timber production.</li> <li>3. Timber production is considered the highest and best use of the land.</li> <li>4. Timberland needed for commercial timber production under the California Timberland Productivity Act.</li> <li>5. Land for which harvesting of timber is not prohibited by restrictions placed on property.</li> <li>6. A parcel or contiguous ownership of at least 40 acres in Timber Site Class I or II if it is not contiguous to and under the same ownership as the surrounding land in timber production.</li> <li>7. A parcel or contiguous ownership of at least 80 acres in Timber Site Class III, IV, or V if it is not contiguous to and under the same ownership as the surrounding land in timber production.</li> <li>8. Areas which may not meet the above criteria but which are surrounded by lands in timber production.</li> </ol>
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## Dedicated Open Space Areas

<b>Purpose</b>	To designate common areas which are committed to perpetual open space in planned developments.
<b>Corresponding Zoning District(s)</b>	Planned Community (PC) zone for The Sea Ranch planned development.  Rural Residential (RR) zone for the Bodega Harbor and other planned developments.
<b>Principally Permitted Use</b>	Lands designated as Dedicated Open Space are intended to remain as common areas without structures in planned communities and planned developments. Uses allowed on Dedicated Open Space areas are limited to resource protection and passive recreation. (CCC REVISED)
<b>Designation Criteria</b>	A Land Use Map Amendment to apply the Dedicated Open Space land use designation requires a Local Coastal Plan Amendment subject to certification by the California Coastal Commission and must meet the standards in Chapter 3 of the California Coastal Act. A Local Coastal Plan Amendment to apply the Dedicated Open Space land use designation must also be consistent with other policies of the Local Coastal Plan and meet all of the following criteria: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Land is a designated common area without development which is committed to open space in a planned community.</li> <li>2. Lands without existing residential, commercial, or industrial development.</li> </ol>

## 2.4 COMMERCIAL LAND USE

### Commercial Fishing

Commercial fishing uses include fish buying and selling facilities; warehouses for storage of fishing gear, boats, and trailers; and related accessory structures and uses including fishing supply stores and bait and tackle shops.

<b>Purpose</b>	To accommodate a variety of commercial, light to medium industrial, and service uses which support the commercial fishing and other coastal-dependent industries.
<b>Corresponding Zoning District(s)</b>	Commercial Fishing (CF)
<b>Principally Permitted Use</b>	Support facilities for commercial fishing, including docks and mooring facilities, fish buying and selling facilities; warehouses for storage of fishing gear, boats, and trailers; and related accessory structures and uses including fishing supply stores and bait and tackle shops. (CCC REVISED)

<b>Minimum Parcel Size</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1.5 acres if served by individual wells and septic systems.</li> <li>• 1 acre if served by public water and septic systems.</li> <li>• 10,000 square feet if served by public sewer systems.</li> </ul>
<b>Designation Criteria</b>	<p>A Land Use Map Amendment to apply the Commercial Fishing land use designation requires a Local Coastal Plan Amendment subject to certification by the California Coastal Commission and must meet the standards in Chapter 3 of the California Coastal Act. A Local Coastal Plan Amendment to apply the Commercial Fishing land use designation must also be consistent with other policies of the Local Coastal Plan and meet all of the following criteria:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Lands are not converted from an Agricultural land use category which shall have priority over other commercial or industrial land uses.</li> <li>2. Lands shall be located within an Urban Service Area.</li> <li>3. Lands shall have convenient access to a county or state maintained road, preferably a designated arterial or collector.</li> <li>4. Lands shall be in close proximity and no more than one-half mile to a harbor, marina, bay, or the ocean.</li> <li>5. The intended commercial or industrial uses shall be directly related to: a) support of fishermen and the fishing industry, b) support of boat builders/repairers and the boat building/repair industry; or, c) support of other industries which depend on the marine environment and resources.</li> <li>6. Lands shall not be located in a Scenic Landscape Unit or Scenic View Corridor.</li> </ol>

## Commercial Tourist

Commercial tourist uses include hotels, motels, inns, resorts, campgrounds, bed and breakfast inns; limited retail shops, bars, restaurants, guest ranches; art galleries, and visitor information centers. (PC REVISED)

<b>Purpose</b>	To accommodate visitor-serving commercial uses, including lodging, campgrounds, restaurants, retail shops principally serving tourists, and recreation facilities
<b>Corresponding Zoning District(s)</b>	Commercial Tourist (CT)
<b>Principally Permitted Use</b>	Visitor-serving commercial uses including campgrounds, hotels, motels, inns, resorts, bed and breakfast inns; limited retail shops, bars, restaurants, guest ranches; art galleries, and visitor information centers.
<b>Minimum Parcel Size</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1.5 acres if served by individual wells and septic systems.</li> <li>• 1 acre if served by public water and septic systems.</li> <li>• 10,000 square feet if served by public sewer systems.</li> </ul>
<b>Designation Criteria</b>	<p>A Land Use Map Amendment to apply the Commercial Tourist land use designation requires a Local Coastal Plan Amendment subject to certification by the California Coastal Commission and must meet the standards in Chapter 3 of the California Coastal Act. A Local Coastal Plan Amendment to apply the Commercial Tourist land use designation must also be consistent with other policies of the Local Coastal Plan and meet all of the following criteria: (CCC REVISED)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Lands shall not be converted from an Agricultural or Commercial Fishing Land Use categories which have priority over visitor-serving commercial uses.</li> <li>2. Lands shall have convenient access to a county or state maintained road, preferably a designated arterial or collector.</li> <li>3. Visitor-serving commercial uses would be compatible with nearby agricultural operations and uses in the surrounding area.</li> <li>4. The site is within or adjacent to a designated Urban Service Area.</li> <li>5. Lands shall not be located in a Scenic Landscape Unit or disrupt a Major View.</li> </ol>

## Commercial Services

<b>Purpose</b>	To accommodate the day-to-day retail business, service, recreational, and professional service needs of local residents.
<b>Corresponding Zoning District(s)</b>	Commercial Services (CS) Community Commercial (C2)
<b>Principally Permitted Use</b>	Local-serving commercial uses such as retail, business, and professional services that serve the local community. (CCC REVISED)
<b>Minimum Parcel Size</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1.5 acres if served by individual wells and septic systems.</li> <li>• 1 acre if served by public water and septic systems.</li> <li>• 10,000 square feet if served by public sewer systems.</li> </ul>
<b>Designation Criteria</b>	<p>A Land Use Map Amendment to apply the Commercial Services land use designation requires a Local Coastal Plan Amendment subject to certification by the California Coastal Commission and must meet the standards in Chapter 3 of the California Coastal Act. A Local Coastal Plan Amendment to apply the Commercial Services land use designation must also be consistent with other policies of the Local Coastal Plan and meet all of the following criteria:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Lands are not converted from an Agricultural, Commercial Fishing, or Commercial Tourist land use category, which shall have priority over other commercial land uses.</li> <li>2. The designation does not reduce opportunities for affordable or workforce housing.</li> <li>3. Lands shall have convenient access to a county or state maintained road, preferably a designated arterial or collector.</li> <li>4. The amount of land designated for local-serving commercial uses shall be consistent with the population projected for the local market area.</li> <li>5. In rural areas, lands may be limited to a single parcel and be restricted to that level which can be served by an individual well and septic system.</li> <li>6. Lands shall not be located within a Scenic Landscape Unit or Major View shed.</li> </ol>

## 2.5 PUBLIC FACILITIES LAND USE

Lands designated Public Facilities are owned and operated by a city, county, special district, federal agency, or state for the primary purpose of providing an essential public service, including public safety, administrative services and the production, generation, transmission, collection, and storage of water, waste, or energy. Public uses are also allowed in other land use categories; the Public Facilities and Services Element establishes policies for the location of public uses in other land use categories.

### Public Facilities Areas

<b>Purpose</b>	To accommodate institutional or public uses which serve the community or public need and are owned or operated by government agencies, non-profit entities, or public utilities.
<b>Corresponding Zoning District(s)</b>	Public Facilities (PF)
<b>Principally Permitted Use</b>	Utility and public service facilities.
<b>Minimum Parcel Size</b>	6,000 square feet.
<b>Designation Criteria</b>	A Land Use Map Amendment to apply the Public Facilities land use designation requires a Local Coastal Plan Amendment subject to certification by the California Coastal

	<p>Commission and must meet the standards in Chapter 3 of the California Coastal Act. A Local Coastal Plan Amendment to apply the Public Facility land use designation must also be consistent with other policies of the Local Coastal Plan and meet all of the following criteria:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ownership or long-term lease by a government agency, other non-profit entity, or public utility.</li> <li>2. Adequate road access.</li> <li>3. Lands are not suitable for and will not adversely affect agriculture or resource production activities.</li> </ol>
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## 2.6 RESIDENTIAL LAND USE

The Land Use Plan has two residential land use categories: Rural Residential and Urban Residential. While other land use designations may permit limited or incidental residential use, only these two categories will be considered residential land use designations.

On lands designated Rural Residential and zoned Rural Residential or Agricultural and Residential, limited crop and farm animal husbandry is allowed. (PC REVISED)

Planned Community zoning is applied with the approval of a Precise Development Plan in either Rural Residential or Urban Residential land use. The Precise Development Plan prescribes specific development and land uses. Both the Precise Development Plan and Planned Community zoning approval requires a Local Coastal Program amendment.

Additional standards applicable to development on residential lands may be included in the Coastal Zoning Ordinance and local area design guidelines.

Residential densities are based on availability of public services and infrastructure, land use compatibility, environmental suitability, projected population and development, and neighborhood character. Environmental suitability includes but is not limited to protection of habitat area, riparian corridors, major views, minimizing the risk of hazards and vulnerability to sea level rise, and coastal bluff erosion.

### Rural Residential

<b>Purpose</b>	To provide for very low-density residential development on lands which have few if any public services but which have access to county maintained roads.
<b>Corresponding Zoning District(s)</b>	Rural Residential (RR) Agricultural and Residential (AR) Planned Community (PC)
<b>Principally Permitted Use</b>	Single-family residential uses and accessory dwelling unit. (CCC REVISED)
<b>Minimum Parcel Size</b>	1.5 acres if served by an individual well and septic system. 1 acre if served by a public water system.
<b>Allowable Residential Density</b>	1 to 20 acres per dwelling unit.  Maximum residential density is applied based on similar density of existing lots in the surrounding area, suitable soils for septic disposal, available water, environmental suitability, access to arterial or collector roads, proximity of commercial services and

	public services and facilities, and no significant impacts on agriculture and resource production.
<b>Other Residential Uses</b>	Accessory structures such as guest houses, storage buildings, pool houses, and garages. (CCC REVISED)
<b>Designation Criteria</b>	<p>A Land Use Map Amendment to apply the Rural Residential land use designation requires a Local Coastal Plan Amendment subject to certification by the California Coastal Commission and must meet the standards in Chapter 3 of the California Coastal Act. A Local Coastal Plan Amendment to apply the Rural Residential land use designation must also be consistent with other policies of the Local Coastal Plan and meet all of the following criteria:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Lands are not converted from an Agricultural, Commercial Fishing or Commercial Tourist land use category, which shall have priority over residential land uses.</li> <li>2. The area does not have soils suitable for agricultural production.</li> <li>3. The area does not include substantial agricultural or resource uses.</li> <li>4. Lands have access to a County maintained road.</li> <li>5. Lands have enough groundwater for individual wells.</li> <li>6. 6. Lands have sufficient permeability for individual septic systems.</li> </ol>

## Urban Residential

<b>Purpose</b>	To accommodate a variety of types of low- and medium-density housing types in areas with public services.
<b>Corresponding Zoning District(s)</b>	<p>Low Density Residential (R1)</p> <p>Medium Density Residential (R2)</p> <p>Planned Community (PC)</p>
<b>Principally Permitted Use</b>	Single-family and multifamily residential uses.
<b>Minimum Lot Size</b>	6,000 square feet.
<b>Allowable Residential Density</b>	<p>1 to 6 units per acre in low-density residential zones and 6 to 12 units per acre in medium-density residential zones.</p> <p>Residential density may be increased if the project qualifies under the state density bonus program outlined in California Government Code Section 65915; or, the County supplemental density bonus program or housing opportunity area program; and in the Coastal Zoning Ordinance under affordable housing program requirements and incentives. Approval of any increase in residential density is subject to specific findings regarding the adequacy of public services, consistency with the Local Coastal Program, and mitigation of impacts to coastal resources. Application of higher residential density under the density bonus or housing opportunity programs may require a Local Coastal Plan Amendment.</p>
<b>Other Residential Uses</b>	Low Density Residential (R1) allows for the development of single family residences and associated accessory structures and uses on small lots developed in accordance to density. Medium Density Residential (R2) allows for the development of multifamily residential development in accordance with permitted density, including those developed as transitional and density bonus projects.
<b>Designation Criteria</b>	A Land Use Map Amendment to apply the Urban Residential land use designation requires a Local Coastal Plan Amendment subject to certification by the California Coastal Commission and must meet the standards in Chapter 3 of the California Coastal Act. A Local Coastal Plan Amendment to apply the Urban Residential land use designation must also be consistent with other policies of the Local Coastal Plan and meet all of the following criteria:

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Lands are not converted from an Agricultural, Commercial Fishing, or Commercial Tourist land use category, which shall have priority over residential land uses.</li><li>2. Lands are within a designated Urban Service Area.</li><li>3. Adequate water, sewer, public safety, park, school services, and other necessary infrastructure are available or planned to be available.</li><li>4. Lands have convenient access to designated arterial or collector roads.</li><li>5. Lands are not subject to unacceptable levels of risk such as flooding, geologic hazards, excessive noise, or other hazards.</li><li>6. Lands have convenient access to commercial uses and community services.</li></ol>
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### **3. OFFSHORE ENERGY SUPPORT FACILITIES**

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The Sonoma County Local Coastal Plan does not support general industrial and commercial energy development on the Sonoma County coast. Long-range protection of coastal resources, agriculture, forestry, commercial and recreational fishing, and enhancement of tourism and recreation are the priorities of the Coastal Program. These priorities are considered to be incompatible with energy development, in particular off-shore drilling.

#### **On-Shore and Off-Shore Oil, Gas, and Energy Facilities**

In 1981, the U.S. Department of the Interior proposed Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) oil lease sales off the central and northern California Coast, including the Bodega Basin. Due to its existing harbor facilities, the Bodega Bay area was considered a possible onshore support base for the future offshore oil production platform. The availability of land, housing, harbor facilities, and public and commercial services influence the location for a potential future onshore support base.

The size of an onshore support base varies with the estimate of the amount of oil found during exploration. The lease sale proposed in 1981 would have required a temporary support base of five to ten acres for platform construction during the exploration phase. During the development phase a permanent facility would have been constructed at the same location, and additional land may have been necessary based on the amount of oil found during exploration. Ultimately a support base of 10 to 20 acres with wharf and loading facilities, a heliport, and a channel depth of 15-20 feet may have been necessary. Ultimately the Bodega Basin was removed from the list of areas proposed for lease sale.

Concerns in the 1980s about development of the Outer Continental Shelf led to the 1986 approval of Ordinance 3592R, known as the On-Shore Oil and Gas Facilities ordinance of Sonoma County. The ordinance is the result of a countywide ballot initiative that requires voter approval of any proposed Local Coastal Plan Amendment to allow onshore facilities that would support oil and gas development of the outer continental shelf.

The County then initiated a more detailed study (entitled "Offshore Oil Development: Onshore Support Facilities Feasibility Study") of the potential impacts of onshore support facilities on the Sonoma County coast. One of the primary findings of the study is that no suitable sites exist on the Sonoma County coast for industrial on-shore oil support facilities, due to a number of physical, environmental, and policy constraints.

The report noted that Bodega Bay could be considered as a site for a very limited and restricted crew or supply base on land designated Commercial Fishing. However, sea level rise may further reduce



the feasibility of major facilities along the shoreline. A complete environmental analysis, including the potential effects of sea-level rise, and a voter-approved Local Coastal Plan Amendment, would be required.

## **Goal, Objectives, and Policies**

### **GOAL C-LU-3: Protect the Sonoma County coast from Outer Continental Shelf oil and gas exploration and development.**

**Objective C-LU-3.1:** Discourage offshore oil and gas exploration and development off the Sonoma County coast.

**Objective C-LU-3.2:** Prohibit construction of onshore support facilities for offshore oil and gas development to protect the sensitive coastal habitats along the National Marine Sanctuaries.

**Policy C-LU-3a:** A Local Coastal Plan Amendment shall be required for any proposed onshore facility to support offshore oil and gas exploration or development. Any such amendment shall not be effective until a majority of the voters in Sonoma County, in a general or special election, approve the proposed amendment, unless such amendment is approved by the California Coastal Commission pursuant to Section 30515 of the California Coastal Act:

#### **“Section 30515 A amendment for public works project or energy facility development**

Any person authorized to undertake a public works project or proposing an energy facility development may request any local government to amend its certified local coastal program, if the purpose of the proposed amendment is to meet public needs of an area greater than that included within such certified local coastal program that had not been anticipated by the person making the request at the time the local coastal program was before the commission for certification. If, after review, the local government determines that the amendment requested would be in conformity with the policies of this division, it may amend its certified local coastal program as provided in Section 30514.

If the local government does not amend its local coastal program, such person may file with the commission a request for amendment which shall set forth the reasons why the proposed amendment is necessary and how such amendment is in conformity with the policies of this division. The local government shall be provided an opportunity to set forth the reasons for its action. The commission may, after public hearing, approve and certify the proposed amendment if it finds, after a careful balancing of social, economic, and environmental effects, that to do otherwise would adversely affect the public welfare, that a public need of an area greater than that included within the certified local coastal program would be met, that there is no

feasible, less environmentally damaging alternative way to meet such need, and that the proposed amendment is in conformity with the policies of this division.”

(CCC REVISED - EXISTING LCP REVISED)

**Policy C-LU-3b:** Prohibit facilities that support offshore oil, gas, or energy production within the Commercial Fishing land use category. (PC REVISED - EXISTING LCP REVISED)

## 4. AFFORDABLE HOUSING

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The major goal of this Affordable Housing section is to protect and promote low- and moderate-cost housing in the Coastal Zone to carry out the provisions of California Coastal Act Policy Section 30604 (f)-(g): (CCC REVISED)

“(f) The commission shall encourage housing opportunities for persons of low and moderate income. In reviewing residential development applications for low- and moderate-income housing, as defined in paragraph (3) of subdivision (h) of Section 65589.5 of the Government Code, the issuing agency or the commission, on appeal, may not require measures that reduce residential densities below the density sought by an applicant if the density sought is within the permitted density or range of density established by local zoning plus the additional density permitted under Section 65915 of the Government Code, unless the issuing agency or the commission on appeal makes a finding, based on substantial evidence in the record, that the density sought by the applicant cannot feasibly be accommodated on the site in a manner that is in conformity with Chapter 3 (commencing with Section 30200) or the certified local coastal program.

(g) The Legislature finds and declares that it is important for the commission to encourage the protection of existing and the provision of new affordable housing opportunities for persons of low and moderate income in the coastal zone.

(h) When acting on a coastal development permit, the issuing agency, or the commission on appeal, may consider environmental justice, or the equitable distribution of environmental benefits throughout the state.”

Visitor-serving commercial development, agricultural production, and coastal-dependent uses, to varying degrees, all depend on the availability of seasonal and year-round housing opportunities for persons operating or employed in these industries. However, there are unique considerations for affordable and workforce housing development in the Coastal Zone, including high property values and the remote nature of the Coastal Zone. Transit service to the Coastal Zone is limited. The nearest incorporated city, Sebastopol, is more than 10 miles from the edge of the coastal zone and more than 15 miles to Bodega Bay, the most populous area of the Sonoma Coast.

All deed-restricted affordable housing units in the Coastal Zone are in The Sea Ranch and in Bodega Bay. There are 45 affordable rental units that were required as part of a 300-unit expansion of The Sea Ranch development. Harbor View Subdivision in Bodega Bay was also required to provide 14 affordable rental units on one parcel out of the 70-parcel subdivision.

## Goal, Objectives, and Policies

### **GOAL C-LU-4: Preserve and enhance affordable housing opportunities on the Sonoma County coast.**

**Objective C-LU-4.1:** Protect existing affordable housing units and encourage development of additional affordable housing in urban areas.

**Objective C-LU-4.1:** Promote the development of affordable housing to meet a range of for-sale and rental housing needs including agricultural employee housing, accessory dwellings, senior housing and accessible units.

**Policy C-LU-4a:** Continue all existing County and Community Development Commission sponsored funding programs, including but not limited to Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), HOME, Low/Moderate Income Housing Asset Funds (LMIHAF), and County Fund for Housing (CFH) funding programs. Continue to require that at least 30 percent of the units assisted with County funds be affordable to extremely-low income households as defined by HCD. Evaluate these existing programs in view of changing housing needs and policies, and seek opportunities for program expansion and more efficient use of limited resources. (NEW: HCD CERTIFIED GENERAL PLAN 2014 HOUSING ELEMENT POLICY HE-1A)

**Policy C-LU-4b:** Continue the County's existing density bonus programs, including the state density bonus program and the County's programs. Continue to evaluate these programs in view of changing housing needs and policies, and expand or modify as needed to increase opportunities for housing. (NEW: HCD CERTIFIED GENERAL PLAN 2014 HOUSING ELEMENT POLICY HE-1B)

**Policy C-LU-4c:** Ensure that design review, development standards, and conditions of approval for affordable housing projects do not result in a reduction of allowable project density or in the number of affordable units, unless the project as proposed would result in adverse impacts, and there is no other feasible method to mitigate the adverse impacts. State density bonus and accessory dwelling unit laws do not supersede the resource protections required by the Coastal Act. (CCC REVISED - NEW: HCD CERTIFIED GENERAL PLAN 2014 HOUSING ELEMENT POLICY HE-1C)

**Policy C-LU-4d:** Encourage retention and further construction of small rental units such as Accessory and Junior Dwelling Units and single room occupancy units, as well as large rental units with more than 3 bedrooms. (NEW: HCD CERTIFIED GENERAL PLAN 2014 HOUSING ELEMENT POLICY HE-1F)

**Policy C-LU-4e:** Continue to administer the County's Mobile Home Rent Stabilization Ordinance. (NEW: HCD CERTIFIED GENERAL PLAN 2014 HOUSING ELEMENT POLICY HE-1G)

**Policy C-LU-4f:** Continue to apply state law to Mobile Home Park Conversions to Resident Ownership, including implementation of SB 510 (Jackson 2013), in order to ensure that residents are afforded full consideration and all protections under the law. (NEW: HCD CERTIFIED GENERAL PLAN 2014 HOUSING ELEMENT POLICY HE-1H)

**Policy C-LU-4g:** Accessory Dwelling Units, Junior Accessory Dwelling Units, and structures containing a Junior Accessory Dwelling Unit, or structures with an attached Accessory Dwelling Unit shall not be used as a vacation rental or any other use that is subject to transient occupancy tax. (PC REVISED - CCC REVISED - NEW: HCD CERTIFIED GENERAL PLAN 2014 HOUSING ELEMENT POLICY HE-1L)

**Policy C-LU-4h:** Provide for two types of Housing Opportunity Areas in addition to, and not in lieu of, provisions of state and federal law as follows, and consistent with all other policies of the LCP:

- (1) The Type “A” Rental Housing Opportunity Program allows a density between 12 and 24 units/acre as long as affordability levels are met - at least 40% of total units as affordable to Low or Very Low Income households. Type "A" Rental Housing Opportunity Areas are established on sites which have a Local Coastal Plan medium density residential designation (Urban Residential 6-12 dwelling units/acre) and are zoned R2 (Medium Density Residential). The residential density for a Type “A” project may be increased to 100 percent above the mapped designation to a maximum density of 24 dwelling units/acre. Development standards used for Type “A” housing projects allow increased height, reduced parking requirements, and less stringent setbacks so long as privacy is maintained.
- (2) The Type “C” Ownership Housing Opportunity Program allows a density of 11 units per acre for ownership housing projects as long as affordability levels are met - 20% affordable to Low Income households and 80% affordable to Moderate Income households. Type "C" Housing Opportunity Areas are established on sites which have a Local Coastal Plan low density residential designation (Urban Residential 1-6 dwelling units/acre). The residential density for a Type “C” project may be increased to almost 100 percent above the mapped designation to a maximum density of 11 dwelling units/acre.
- (3) Rental Housing Opportunity Type “A” and Ownership Housing Opportunity Type “C” projects shall comply with all applicable provisions, including development standards and long-term affordability requirements, of Chapter 26C (Coastal Zoning Ordinance) of the Sonoma County Code.
- (4) Housing Opportunity Type “A” and Type “C” programs shall apply to housing development consisting of five or more dwelling units. (EXISTING LCP REVISED PER HCD CERTIFIED GENERAL PLAN 2014 HOUSING ELEMENT)

**Policy C-LU-4i:** Encourage a mix of low and moderate income housing units, and rental and sale units. Encourage diverse unit design including visitability and universal design. (EXISTING LCP REVISED PER HCD CERTIFIED GENERAL PLAN 2014 HOUSING ELEMENT)

**Policy C-LU-4j:** Continue to encourage affordable “infill” projects on underutilized sites within Urban Service Areas by allowing flexibility in development standards pursuant to state density bonus law [California Government Code Section 65915, including subsection (m)]. (NEW: HCD CERTIFIED GENERAL PLAN 2014 HOUSING ELEMENT POLICY HE-3J)

**Policy C-LU-4k:** Require long-term Affordable Housing Agreement for affordable housing units. (EXISTING LCP REVISED)

**Policy C-LU-4l:** For parcels located within an area designated Urban Residential 1-6 dwelling units/acre which are large enough in area to permit more than one dwelling but cannot meet subdivision criteria due to shape or other similar constraint, permit clustering of dwelling units consisting of detached single-family dwelling units subject to the density limitations of the Local Coastal Plan Land Use Maps and issuance of a Use Permit. (EXISTING LCP REVISED PER HCD CERTIFIED GENERAL PLAN 2014 HOUSING ELEMENT)

**Policy C-LU-4m:** Concentrate housing production efforts in areas where public sewer and water service are available. (EXISTING LCP)

**C-LU-4u:** Encourage service providers to retain adequate sewer and water service capacities for housing units affordable to Moderate and Low Income households. (CCC REVISED)

**Policy C-LU-4n:** Continue to permit transitional and permanent supportive housing in all residential land use categories. The construction of new dwelling units for such purposes shall conform to the Local Coastal Plan densities and to all other applicable provisions of the Coastal Zoning Ordinance. No standards shall be applied to transitional or supportive housing that do not also apply to other dwelling units within the same zone. (NEW: HCD CERTIFIED GENERAL PLAN 2014 HOUSING ELEMENT POLICY HE-5G)

**Policy C-LU-4o:** Prohibit the demolition of housing for persons of low and moderate income, unless such demolition would be coupled with subsequent reconstruction of replacement housing of comparable rental value. Demolition may be permitted in advance of the replacement housing if the Director determines that the removal of the unit(s) is necessary to protect public health and safety. (EXISTING LCP REVISED)

**Policy C-LU-4p:** Prohibit conversion of rental units currently providing low and moderate income housing opportunities to market rate housing, transient occupancy use, or market rate housing unless the conversion provides a greater affordable housing opportunity. (EXISTING LCP)

**Policy C-LU-4q:** Consistent with state law, the following criteria shall be considered when evaluating an application for condominium conversion:

- (1) The surplus of vacant multifamily residential units offered for rent or lease must be in excess of 5 percent of the available multifamily rental stock in the community in which the proposed project is located.

- (2) At least 30 percent of the units included in the proposed condominium conversion must be reserved for sale to Low and Very Low Income households by means of an Affordable Housing Agreement to ensure that such units remain affordable to Very Low and Low Income households for the maximum period allowed by law.
- (3) Tenants must be granted the right of first refusal concerning the purchase of the units. Tenants who are 60 years or older should be offered lifetime leases. Tenants not qualifying for lifetime leases must be offered a 10-year lease. The subdivider must provide a plan to assist in relocating tenants displaced by the conversion to comparable rental housing. (EXISTING LCP REVISED PER HCD CERTIFIED GENERAL PLAN 2014 HOUSING ELEMENT)

**Policy C-LU-4r:** Allow Accessory Dwelling Units consistent with the standards in Government Code Section 65852.2 consistent with coastal resource protections of Chapter 3 of the Coastal Act as implemented in the Sonoma County Local Coastal Plan. Implement an administrative review process that includes sufficient safeguards for coastal resources. (CCC REVISED - EXISTING LCP)

**Policy C-LU-4s:** Changes in use or closure of a mobile home park shall comply with state law and require a Use Permit. (NEW: HCD CERTIFIED GENERAL PLAN 2014 HOUSING ELEMENT POLICY HE-1M)

**Policy C-LU-4t** Require service providers to retain adequate sewer and water service capacities for Local Priority Uses including affordable dwelling units for extremely low, very low, low-income households, and accessory dwelling units. (PC REVISED - NEW: HCD CERTIFIED 2014 HOUSING ELEMENT POLICY HE-2H)

## Program

**Program C-LU-4-P1:** Draft an ordinance to allow workforce/employee housing in the coastal zone. The ordinance is intended to support coastal priority land uses including commercial fishing, resource dependent uses, recreation, and visitor serving commercial uses. Ensure that workforce/employee housing supports priority uses, is scaled and located appropriately for the size of the supported use and surrounding neighborhood, protects coastal resources and scenic views, has adequate water and waste management, supports reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, and is not vulnerable to climate change related impacts including coastal bluff erosion and sea level rise for the life of the project and is consistent with all the policies of this chapter. (CCC REVISED - NEW)

## Initiatives

**Initiative C-LU-4-I1:** Encourage development of employer provided or subsidized affordable housing for employees. (EXISTING LCP)

**Initiative C-LU-4-I2:** Consider increasing funding priority for the acquisition of affordable units and rehabilitation and maintenance of existing affordable units. (NEW: HCD CERTIFIED GENERAL PLAN 2014 HOUSING ELEMENT POLICY HE-1E)

**Initiative C-LU-4-I3:** Conserve the existing affordable housing stock by providing funding through the Community Development Commission to nonprofit organizations to subsidize the acquisition of at-risk properties where those units will be restricted to long-term occupancy by low, very-low and extremely-low income households. (NEW: HCD CERTIFIED GENERAL PLAN 2014 HOUSING ELEMENT POLICY HE-1D)

## 5. VISITOR-SERVING COMMERCIAL

Recreational uses require support facilities such as motels, restaurants, grocery stores, auto service stations, and public restrooms. This section contains an inventory of existing visitor-serving and local-serving facilities, identifies areas suitable for their development, and recommends the type of and location for these facilities.

The California Coastal Act of 1976 encourages providing support facilities for visitors to the coast, especially those available to the public at a moderate cost.

### Existing Visitor-Serving Commercial Facilities

Below are the definitions of visitor-serving versus local-serving commercial facilities:

- (1) Visitor-serving commercial facilities or uses include development that provides basic support services for visitors such as motels, restaurants, grocery stores, auto service stations, and public restrooms. Most of these facilities on the Sonoma County coast are both visitor-serving and local-serving.
- (2) Local-serving commercial facilities or uses include all other private commercial development that provides for the needs of the local population such as professional offices, utilities, banks, and fishing industry support services.

Visitor-serving and local-serving commercial facilities accessible to the Sonoma County coast are concentrated primarily in The Sea Ranch, Bodega Bay, and Gualala in Mendocino County. These areas are the most suitable for expanding visitor-serving commercial facilities due to the availability of public services and existing development. Other small service centers are scattered along the Sonoma County coast and just inland. Jenner and Duncans Mills on the North Coast and Valley Ford on the South Coast are secondary locations along the coast with isolated services (i.e., spot commercial services such as single grocery stores).

Three visitor centers serve the North Coast: Redwood Coasts Chamber of Commerce in Gualala; Russian River Chamber of Commerce and Visitor Center in Guerneville; and Jenner Visitors' Center in Jenner. The South Coast is served by the Sonoma Coast Visitor Center in Bodega Bay. As of summer of 2022 an estimated 600 vacation rentals are operating in the Coastal Zone with the majority located in the Sea Ranch and Bodega Harbour subdivision. **Tables C-LU-1 and C-LU-1** provide summaries of visitor serving overnight accommodations, other than vacation rentals, in the Coastal Zone.

**Table C-LU-4 North Coast Overnight Accommodations**

<b>Facility</b>	<b>Hotel/Motel Rooms</b>	<b>Campground Spaces</b>
Gualala Point Regional Park		8
Salt Point State Park		160 <sup>2</sup>

**Table C-LU-4 North Coast Overnight Accommodations**

<b>Facility</b>	<b>Hotel/Motel Rooms</b>	<b>Campground Spaces</b>
Ocean Cove - private campground		175
Sea Ranch Lodge	19	
Ocean Cove Lodge Bar & Grill	16	
Stillwater Cover Regional Park		23
Timber Cove - private campground		25
Timber Cove Lodge	42	
Fort Ross State Historic Park Unit		21
Fort Ross Reef Campground		21
Fort Ross Lodge	22	
Duncans Mills Campground		125
Inn at Duncans Mills	5	
River's End	5	
Jenner Inn & Cottages	21	
Seacliff Motel <sup>1</sup>	16	
Surf Motel <sup>1</sup>	20	
Breakers Inn <sup>1</sup>	28	
Gualala Country Inn <sup>1</sup>	19	
Gualala River Redwood Park <sup>1</sup>		111
<b>Total in North Coast</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>527</b>

Notes:

<sup>1</sup> Located in Mendocino County's Coastal Zone, within 1.5 miles of the Sonoma-Mendocino county line.

<sup>2</sup> Includes 20 overflow campground spaces.

**Table C-LU-5. South Coast Overnight Accommodations**

<b>Facility</b>	<b>Hotel/Motel Rooms</b>	<b>Campground Spaces</b>
Bay Hill Mansion	5	
Bodega Bay Inn	5	
Bodega Bay Lodge	83	
Bodega Bay Coast Inn & Suites	44	
The Inn at the Tides	85	
Bodega Harbor Inn	16	
Casini Family Ranch- Private campground		225
Sonoma Coast State Park Unit – Willow Creek Campground		11
Sonoma Coast State Park Unit – Wrights Beach Campground		27
Sonoma Coast State Park Unit – Pomo Canyon Campground		20
Sonoma Coast State Park Unit – Bodega Dunes Campground		98
Westside Regional Park		47
Doran Beach Regional Park		139
Valley Ford Hotel	6	
<b>Total in South Coast</b>	<b>244</b>	<b>556</b>



## Goal, Objective, and Policies

**GOAL C-LU-5: Encourage Public Access and visitor-serving uses in the Coastal Zone and establish adequate commercial services for visitors on the Sonoma County coast where such development can be accommodated with minimal impacts on views and natural resources.**

**Objective C-LU-5.1:** Identify and develop new or expand existing commercial services for visitors in urban service areas and rural communities.

### *Planning and Reviewing Visitor-Serving Development*

**Policy C-LU-5a:** Encourage the development and expansion of visitor- and local-serving commercial uses within urban service areas and rural community boundaries where water supply and wastewater disposal requirements can be met. (EXISTING LCP REVISED)

**Policy C-LU-5b:** Limit new visitor-serving commercial development to areas within designated urban service areas and rural community boundaries except for the lowest intensity development (i.e., guest ranches, and bed and breakfast inns, vacation rentals, and agricultural farmstays). (EXISTING LCP REVISED)

**Policy C-LU-5c:** Provide public restrooms and drinking water facilities where needed and appropriate as part of visitor- and local-serving commercial development. (EXISTING LCP REVISED)

### *Encouraging Visitor-Serving Development*

**Policy C-LU-5d:** Allow limited expansion of existing visitor- and local-serving commercial uses outside of urban service areas and rural community boundaries where water supply and wastewater disposal requirements can be met and where expansion is found to have no impact on coastal environmental resources. (CCC REVISED - EXISTING LCP REVISED)

**Policy C-LU-5e:** Encourage the provision of modest scale overnight accommodations which have minimal impacts on the coastal environment, including bed and breakfast accommodations in existing homes, guest ranches, inns, and motels. Guest ranches in agricultural areas shall be compatible with continued ranch operations and be limited to the allowable residential density. (EXISTING LCP REVISED)

**Policy C-LU-5f:** Allow expansion of overnight accommodations and other visitor-serving commercial uses; and local-serving commercial uses on Annapolis Road. (CCC REVISED - EXISTING LCP REVISED)

**Policy C-LU-5g:** Allow development of limited visitor- and local-serving commercial uses at Stewarts Point designed to complement the historic character of the community. (CCC REVISED - EXISTING LCP REVISED)

**Policy C-LU-5h:** Allow limited expansion of existing commercial uses east of State Highway 1 associated with the Ocean Cove Store including overnight accommodations and a public horse stable. (CCC REVISED - EXISTING LCP REVISED)

**Policy C-LU-5i:** Limit development west of State Highway 1 at the Ocean Cove Resort to a day use area and campground. Any development proposals should include provisions for pedestrian safety on State Highway 1 as well as erosion control measures and restoration of the degraded bluffs at the cove that take into account projected sea level rise. If needed to improve coastal access, additional parking may be provided parking consistent with Policy LU-5h. (CCC REVISED - EXISTING LCP REVISED)

**Policy C-LU-5j:** Encourage adaptive reuse of the historic barn west of State Highway 1 at the Ocean Cove Resort. (EXISTING LCP REVISED)

**Policy C-LU-5k:** Allow limited expansion of existing inn facilities and development of a public horse stable at the Stillwater Cove Ranch. (EXISTING LCP REVISED)

**Policy C-LU-5l:** Limit expansion at the Timber Cove Inn to improved parking and public access facilities. (EXISTING LCP REVISED)

**Policy C-LU-5m:** Encourage provision of screening and other design improvements at the Timber Cove Boat Landing. (EXISTING LCP REVISED)

**Policy C-LU-5n:** Allow limited new or expansion of existing visitor- and local-serving commercial uses, in the vicinity of the Fort Ross Store, subject to design controls review to preserve the area's scenic character. (EXISTING LCP REVISED)

**Policy C-LU-5o:** Allow a modest infill of visitor- and local-serving commercial development in Jenner if water supply and wastewater treatment and disposal requirements can be met. (EXISTING LCP REVISED)

**Policy C-LU-5p:** Allow provision of overnight accommodations of modest scale and cost and expansion of other visitor- and local-serving commercial services uses at Duncans Mills if water supply and wastewater treatment and disposal requirements can be met. (CCC REVISED - EXISTING LCP REVISED)

**Policy C-LU-5q:** Allow expansion of public access to the Bridgehaven Resort by adding boat rentals and launching and day use facilities subject to design review. Require public access as a condition of for approval of any Coastal Development Permit for expansion of uses at the resort. (CCC REVISED - EXISTING LCP REVISED)

**Policy C-LU-5r:** Allow for new and for the expansion of existing commercial uses in Bodega Bay.

**Policy C-LU-5s:** Allow for new and for the expansion of existing visitor-serving uses at Chanslor Ranch consistent with continued agricultural use if water supply and wastewater treatment and disposal requirements can be met. (CCC – REVISED EXISTING LCP REVISED)

**Policy C-LU-5t:** Allow modest expansion of commercial uses in Valley Ford if water supply and wastewater treatment and disposal requirements can be met. (EXISTING LCP REVISED)

## Program

**Program C-LU-5-1P:** Establish performance standards for the use of existing residences for vacation rentals and hosted rentals. In developing standards consider: requirements for designated property managers, safety, parking, noise, and number of guests allowed for day time and nighttime occupancy. In addition to performance standards, identify areas where high concentration of vacation rental would impact environmentally sensitive habitat areas, water quality, or coastal access and develop land use policy to avoid these impacts. (NEW)

## Initiatives

**Initiative C-LU-5-I1:** Encourage development of employer provided or subsidized affordable housing for employees. (EXISTING LCP)

**Initiative C-LU-5-I2:** Increase funding priority for the acquisition of affordable units and rehabilitation and maintenance of existing affordable units. (NEW: HCD CERTIFIED GENERAL PLAN 2014 HOUSING ELEMENT POLICY HE-1E)

**Initiative C-LU-5-I3:** Conserve the existing affordable housing stock by providing funding through the Community Development Commission to nonprofit organizations to subsidize the acquisition of at-risk properties where those units will be restricted to long-term occupancy by low-, very-low and extremely-low income households. (NEW: HCD CERTIFIED GENERAL PLAN 2014 HOUSING ELEMENT POLICY HE-1D)

## 6. COMMUNITIES

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Adequate housing and commercial development are needed to serve the resident population and visitors but must be consistent with continued resource uses for agricultural production, commercial fishing, and timber, as well as, the protection of sensitive coastal resources and available services.

Most new residential development is planned in Bodega Bay, where a full range of public services can be efficiently provided. The present alignment of State Highway 1 through this area is a major development constraint due to traffic congestion.

Increased tourism on the Sonoma County coast may result in an imbalance between local and tourist oriented commercial development. Visitor-serving uses, particularly lodging, are often located near scenic resources and overconcentration will likely degrade visual quality of the area.

Land use policy and regulation within The Sea Ranch is subject to the provisions of Public Resources Code Section 30610.6 (e) (“Bane Bill”), Exclusion Orders E-82-2 and E-82-2-A, and the Sea Ranch

Amended Precise Development Plan Policy Statement, which establish building locations, bulk standards, view management, public access, and limits to the total number of lots within each unit of The Sea Ranch subdivision.

This policy framework delegates review authority for most development to The Sea Ranch Association and their committees, which must review and approve development applications before permits can be issued by Sonoma County. Development that has been approved by The Sea Ranch Association is excluded from needing a Coastal Development Permit.

## Goal, Objectives, and Policies

**GOAL C-LU-6: Protect the natural and scenic resources and the unique character and qualities of the Sonoma County coast by focusing new residential and commercial development in Bodega Bay, The Sea Ranch, and Rural Communities.** (CCC - REVISED)

**Objective C-LU-6.1:** Concentrate new housing within the Bodega Bay Urban Service Area. Provide additional residential development in rural areas at very low densities to maintain local resources.

**Objective C-LU-6.2:** Balance residential and commercial development in Bodega Bay where adequate public services allow for residential and commercial expansion. Encourage a mix of price and rent levels.

**Objective C-LU-6.3:** Designate Bodega Bay as the major retail and service center for the coast. Permit limited opportunities for new commercial activities in the communities of The Sea Ranch, Duncans Mills, Jenner, and Stewarts Point, in keeping with their size and character.

**Objective C-LU-6.4:** Limit the scale of any new visitor- and tourist-oriented uses and confine them to existing communities and locations that are designated for such uses. Assure that they are compatible with and protect the area's natural, undeveloped scenic character.

**Objective C-LU-6.5:** Limit new industrial development to resource related uses, primarily to the fishing and other marine industries in Bodega Bay and to the timber industry near Stewart's Point.

**Objective C-LU-6.6:** Maintain very low residential densities on resource lands outside existing communities due to the lack of public services and importance of resource protection.

**Objective C-LU-6.7:** Regulate land use and approve development at The Sea Ranch consistent with Public Resources Code Section 30610.6 (e) (Bane Bill), adopted Exclusion Orders, and the Sea Ranch Precise Development Plan Policy Statement. (EXISTING LCP REVISED)

**Policy C-LU-6a:** The Urban Residential land use category shall be applied only within the Urban Service Boundary of Bodega Bay. Densities of one unit per acre or lower shall be maintained in other communities. (GP2020)

**Policy C-LU-6b:** Encourage construction of new housing for low- and moderate-income households under the Density Bonus or Housing Opportunity Area Programs outlined in the Coastal Zoning Ordinance. Increased density shall be allowed where the increase in density does not have impacts on coastal environmental resources beyond impacts that would result from development at base residential density. (PC REVISED - CCC REVISED - GP2020)

**Policy C-LU-6c:** The Commercial Services land use category shall be used for existing and any needed new local commercial uses in Bodega Bay and The Sea Ranch. Outside these communities, the Commercial Services designation shall be applied only to existing uses and limit their expansion. (GP2020)

**Policy C-LU-6d:** Development projects in any commercial land use categories shall be designed in harmony with the natural and scenic qualities of the local area. Natural landscapes shall be given precedence over manmade features. (GP2020)

**Policy C-LU-6e:** In the Bodega Bay area, the Commercial Fishing land use category shall be used to support the commercial fishing industry, including storage and processing facilities. (NEW)

**Policy C-LU-6f:** Fishing related industrial uses that require public services shall be located near Bodega Bay. Other fishing related commercial and industrial uses shall be considered coastal dependent uses. (GP2020)

**Policy C-LU-6g:** Notwithstanding the provisions of the Public Facilities and Services Element, connection of sewer service to the Bodega Bay Public Utilities District shall be allowed for uses that directly relate to and support the fishing industry in Bodega Bay and that cannot be located within the Urban Service Area. An out-of-service area agreement shall be used in such cases. (GP2020)

**Policy C-LU-6h:** Barns and similar agricultural support structures within the 200-foot State Scenic Highway 116 corridor shall be subject to design review. (GP2020)

**Policy C-LU-6i:** Identify Urban Service Area Boundaries on the Land Use Maps for The Sea Ranch North (**Figure C-LU-1a**), The Sea Ranch South (**Figure C-LU-1b**), and Bodega Bay (**Figure C-LU-1j**). (EXISTING LCP REVISED)

**Policy C-LU-6j:** Designate the following areas as Rural Communities (listed from north to south): (EXISTING LCP REVISED)

- Stewarts Point
- Timber Cove and Timber Cove Resort, including developed areas adjacent to the subdivision south to and including the Fort Ross Store
- Jenner

- Duncans Mills
- Rancho del Paradiso
- West Beach
- Sereno del Mar
- Carmet
- Salmon Creek
- Valley Ford

**Policy C-LU-6k:** Water and sewer service extensions to public parklands outside of Urban Service Areas may be allowed only where consistent with the Public Facilities and Services and Public Access Elements. An out-of-service area agreement shall be used in such cases. (EXISTING LCP REVISED)

**Policy C-LU-6l:** Restrict commercial development to designated Urban Service Areas and Rural Community boundaries, except where development proposed for areas beyond these boundaries would be consistent with the Public Facilities and Services and Public Access Elements. (EXISTING LCP REVISED)

**Policy C-LU-6m:** Processing of permits for development or land use with The Sea Ranch shall be consistent with and follow the provisions of Public Resources Code Section 30610.6 (e) (Bane Bill), adopted Exclusion Orders, and the Sea Ranch Precise Development Plan Policy Statement. (EXISTING LCP REVISED)

**Policy C-LU-6n:** Applications for development permits, including, but not limited to residential construction, subdivision, lot merger, or lot line adjustment that are subject to design review by The Sea Ranch Design Committee shall not be accepted without final approval from The Sea Ranch Design Committee. (EXISTING LCP REVISED)

**Policy C-LU-6o:** Rehabilitation and adequate maintenance of Sea Ranch Apartments shall be supported to the maximum extent feasible, including identification of sustainable funding to maintain these affordable dwelling units. (EXISTING LCP REVISED)

## Programs

**Program C-LU-6-P1:** Develop a parking management program for Bodega Bay commercial areas. (CCC REVISED - NEW)

**Program C-LU-6-P2:** Develop a comprehensive manual outlining policies and procedures for processing permit applications within The Sea Ranch. The manual will outline the roles, responsibilities, and authorities of The Sea Ranch Association, Sonoma County, North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board, and California Coastal Commission, and provide

clear direction for both landowners and agencies when processing applications within The Sea Ranch.

# Agricultural Resources Element: Table of Contents

Agricultural Resources Element .....	2
Introduction .....	2
Purpose.....	2
Relationship to Other Elements.....	2
Relationship to California Coastal Act.....	2
Section 30222.5 Oceanfront lands; aquaculture facilities; priority .....	2
Section 30241 Prime agricultural land; maintenance in agricultural production.....	3
Section 30241.5 Agricultural land; determination of viability of uses; economic feasibility evaluation.....	3
Section 30242 Lands suitable for agricultural use; conversion.....	4
Section 30250 Location; existing developed area.....	4
1. Protection of Agricultural Lands .....	4
Farmland in the Coastal Zone .....	5
Impacts of Climate Change.....	6
1.1 Goal, Objectives, and Policies .....	7
1.2 Program.....	10
1.3 Initiatives.....	10
2. Agricultural Support Uses.....	11
Agricultural Processing and Agricultural Services .....	11
Agricultural Visitor-Serving Uses (Agricultural Tourism) .....	11
2.1 Goal, Objectives, and Policies .....	12
3. Farmworker Housing .....	14
3.1 Goal, Objectives, and Policies .....	14
4. Aquaculture and Fishing .....	15
4.1 Goal, Objectives, and Policies .....	16



# Agricultural Resources Element

## INTRODUCTION

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### PURPOSE

The purpose of the Agricultural Resources Element is to establish policies to ensure the protection and maintenance of agriculture for its economic, environmental, and social values. The Element is intended to provide clear guidelines for decisions in the two agricultural zones within the Coastal Zone—Diverse Agriculture (DA) and Land Extensive Agriculture (LEA)—as well as areas where agricultural land uses exist in the Resources and Rural Development (RRD) and Agricultural Residential (AR) zones.

The California Coastal Act protects productive resource lands, including agricultural lands, and establishes agriculture as a priority use while emphasizing the retention of agricultural land in production.

In this Local Coastal Plan, agriculture is defined as the production and processing of food, fiber, and plant materials; and includes the raising and maintaining of farm animals including horses, donkeys, mules, and similar livestock.

### RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER ELEMENTS

General policy direction for land use decisions in agricultural areas is expressed in the Land Use Element under the Land Extensive Agriculture and Diverse Agriculture land use categories. Other policies related to resource values for Biotic Resources and Scenic Resources are found in the Open Space and Resource Conservation Element. The Public Facilities Element includes policy that protects commercial fishing facilities. The Water Resources Element includes policies related to water quality and quantity, and the impact that sea level rise and climate change will have on groundwater resources.

### RELATIONSHIP TO CALIFORNIA COASTAL ACT

The following California Coastal Act policies inform and guide goals, objectives, policies, programs, and initiatives of the Sonoma County Local Coastal Plan Agricultural Resources Element:

#### **Section 30222.5 Oceanfront lands; aquaculture facilities; priority**

Oceanfront land that is suitable for coastal dependent aquaculture shall be protected for that use, and proposals for aquaculture facilities located on those sites shall be given priority, except over other coastal dependent developments or uses.

## **Section 3024I Prime agricultural land; maintenance in agricultural production**

The maximum amount of prime agricultural land shall be maintained in agricultural production to assure the protection of the areas' agricultural economy, and conflicts shall be minimized between agricultural and urban land uses through all of the following:

- (a) By establishing stable boundaries separating urban and rural areas, including, where necessary, clearly defined buffer areas to minimize conflicts between agricultural and urban land uses.
- (b) By limiting conversions of agricultural lands around the periphery of urban areas to the lands where the viability of existing agricultural use is already severely limited by conflicts with urban uses or where the conversion of the lands would complete a logical and viable neighborhood and contribute to the establishment of a stable limit to urban development.
- (c) By permitting the conversion of agricultural land surrounded by urban uses where the conversion of the land would be consistent with Section 30250.
- (d) By developing available lands not suited for agriculture prior to the conversion of agricultural lands.
- (e) By assuring that public service and facility expansions and nonagricultural development do not impair agricultural viability, either through increased assessment costs or degraded air and water quality.
- (f) By assuring that all divisions of prime agricultural lands, except those conversions approved pursuant to subdivision (b), and all development adjacent to prime agricultural lands shall not diminish the productivity of such prime agricultural lands.

## **Section 3024I.5 Agricultural land; determination of viability of uses; economic feasibility evaluation**

(a) If the viability of existing agricultural uses is an issue pursuant to subdivision (b) of Section 3024I as to any local coastal program or amendment to any certified local coastal program submitted for review and approval under this division, the determination of "viability" shall include, but not be limited to, consideration of an economic feasibility evaluation containing at least both of the following elements:

- (1) An analysis of the gross revenue from the agricultural products grown in the area for the five years immediately preceding the date of the filing of a proposed local coastal program or an amendment to any local coastal program.
- (2) An analysis of the operational expenses, excluding the cost of land, associated with the production of the agricultural products grown in the area for the five years immediately preceding the date of the filing of a proposed local coastal program or an amendment to any local coastal program.

For purposes of this subdivision, "area" means a geographic area of sufficient size to provide an accurate evaluation of the economic feasibility of agricultural uses for those lands included

in the local coastal program or in the proposed amendment to a certified local coastal program.

(b) The economic feasibility evaluation required by subdivision (a) shall be submitted to the commission, by the local government, as part of its submittal of a local coastal program or an amendment to any local coastal program. If the local government determines that it does not have the staff with the necessary expertise to conduct the economic feasibility evaluation, the evaluation may be conducted under agreement with the local government by a consultant selected jointly by local government and the executive director of the commission.

### **Section 30242 Lands suitable for agricultural use; conversion**

All other lands suitable for agricultural use shall not be converted to nonagricultural uses unless (1) continued or renewed agricultural use is not feasible, or (2) such conversion would preserve prime agricultural land or concentrate development consistent with Section 30250. Any such permitted conversion shall be compatible with continued agricultural use on surrounding lands.

### **Section 30250 Location; existing developed area**

(a) New residential, commercial, or industrial development, except as otherwise provided in this division, shall be located within, contiguous with, or in close proximity to, existing developed areas able to accommodate it or, where such areas are not able to accommodate it, in other areas with adequate public services and where it will not have significant adverse effects, either individually or cumulatively, on coastal resources. In addition, land divisions, other than leases for agricultural uses, outside existing developed areas shall be permitted only where 50 percent of the usable parcels in the area have been developed and the created parcels would be no smaller than the average size of surrounding parcels.

(b) Where feasible, new hazardous industrial development shall be located away from existing developed areas.

(c) Visitor-serving facilities that cannot feasibly be located in existing developed areas shall be located in existing isolated developments or at selected points of attraction for visitors.

## **I. PROTECTION OF AGRICULTURAL LANDS**

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As with farmland around the State of California, agricultural lands in the Coastal Zone are subject to pressure to conversion to other uses.

While public access is the highest priority use in the Coastal Zone, agriculture is also a high-priority use (refer to the Land Use Element for a discussion of the priority of land uses in the Coastal Zone). Open space acquisitions by the California Coastal Conservancy, the Sonoma Land Trust, the Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District, Sonoma County Regional Parks, and the California Department of Parks and Recreation have taken some agricultural lands out of production, but in many cases, land managers have demonstrated that working farms and ranches are compatible with recreational use and retaining the agricultural use on site can be a significant benefit for environmental resource management and cultural interpretation.

Economic pressure can also result in farmlands being taken out of production and converted to residential development or other urban uses. Reducing intrusion of urban uses into agricultural areas and providing economic incentives for farmers to keep land in agricultural protection is critical to preserving and protecting agricultural land.

Complaints about noise, odors, flies, spraying of pesticides, and similar nuisances related to agricultural practices may discourage and sometimes prevent farmers from managing their operations in an efficient and economic manner. Large lot sizes can reduce conflicts between agricultural and non-agricultural land uses by allowing for buffers between the two. Appendix C, the Right to Farm Ordinance (referenced below in **Policy C-AR-1h**), also reduces the potential for such conflicts by requiring property owners to acknowledge the agricultural use of land in the area.

Together with the Land Use Element, the Agricultural Resources Element establishes policies that maintain large parcel sizes in agricultural areas, and support the needs and practices of agriculture as the highest priority in areas designated for agricultural use.

### ***Farmland in the Coastal Zone***

There are about 28,000 acres of land with agricultural land use designations (Land Extensive Agriculture and Diverse Agriculture) in the Coastal Zone. The Land Use Element contains a detailed explanation of the agricultural land use designations.

The California Department of Conservation Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program<sup>1</sup> establishes ratings for agricultural land based on soil quality and irrigation status. In the Coastal Zone, there is none of the highest-rated land, but there are lands designated as Grazing Land and Farmland of Local Importance<sup>2</sup>. Farmland of Local Importance is land that is not Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, or Unique Farmland but is important to the local agricultural economy due to its productivity or value. Authority to adopt or to recommend changes to the category of Farmland of Local Importance rests with the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors.

Grazing Land makes up nearly half of all the land in the Coastal Zone (see **Table C-AR-1a**, below). Grazing Land means “land on which the existing vegetation, whether grown naturally or through management, is suitable for grazing or browsing of livestock” (Gov. Code Section 65560) and includes land used for sheep and cattle grazing and dairies. The cool, moist climate of western Sonoma County generally produces better rangeland than inland, reducing the need for supplemental feed and irrigated pasture. Grazing Land occurs in all subareas except The Sea Ranch North. The largest acreage and highest percentage of Grazing Land are in the Bodega Bay and Valley Ford Subareas, respectively. Grazing lands are mostly in the northern coast, while dairies are prevalent in the Valley Ford subarea.

Farmland of Local Importance makes up only about four percent of all land in the Coastal Zone, and is located in nine of the ten subareas. The largest acreage and highest percentage of Farmland of Local Importance are in the Salt Point and The Sea Ranch North subareas, respectively.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.conservation.ca.gov/dlrp/fmmp>

<sup>2</sup> As defined in Government Code Section 65560.

**Table C-AR-1a: Acreage of Important Farmlands by subarea on the Sonoma County Coast**

<i>Subarea</i>	<i>Grazing Land (acres)</i>	<i>Farmland of Local Importance (acres)</i>	<i>Total Land (acres)</i>
1 – The Sea Ranch North	0	381	2,962
2 – The Sea Ranch South	40	323	2,792
3 – Stewarts Point/Horse-shoe Cove	775	83	3,158
4 – Salt Point	88	492	5,859
5 – Timber Cove/Fort Ross	2,595	159	7,659
6 – High Cliffs/ Muniz-Jenner	2,081	143	3,401
7 – Duncans Mills	780	32	1,290
8 – Pacific View/Willow Creek	7,164	99	11,875
9 – Bodega Bay	7,519	0	10,156
10 – Valley Ford	4,871	485	5,465
Total	25,913	2,196	54,617
<b>Percent of Total</b>	47%	4%	100%

Figures C-AR-1a through C-AR-1k show the Agricultural Resources in the ten subareas of the Sonoma County coast.

***Impacts of Climate Change***

Climate change will impact agriculture on the Sonoma County coast. Agriculture is highly dependent on specific climate conditions, and understanding the overall effect of climate change on agriculture can be difficult. Changes in the frequency and severity of droughts and floods could pose challenges for farmers and ranchers. Changes in temperature, amount of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere, and the frequency and intensity of extreme weather could have significant impacts on crop yields.

Agriculture in the coastal zone is dependent on rainfall and local groundwater supplies. The location of water-bearing bedrock is difficult to predict, so water availability is uncertain as rainwater often runs off into creeks and streams and then to the ocean for lack of storage space in most of the underlying rock. Additionally, groundwater will become increasingly brackish as sea level rise forces salt water into coastal aquifers. Policies addressing groundwater impacts due to sea level rise and climate change are found in the Water Resources Element.

Climate change could affect animals both directly and indirectly. Extreme heat events, which are projected to increase under climate change, could directly threaten livestock. Drought may threaten pasture and feed supplies and reduce water availability for livestock. Climate change may increase the prevalence of parasites and diseases that affect livestock. Increases in atmospheric carbon dioxide may increase the productivity of pastures, but may also decrease their quality.

Overall, climate change and the impact of sea level rise are likely to make it more difficult to grow crops and raise animals in the same ways and same places as in the past. The effects of climate change, especially impacts to groundwater supplies as a consequence of sea level rise and changes in rainfall must be considered along with other evolving factors that affect agricultural production, such as changes in farming practices and technology.

## I.1 Goal, Objectives, and Policies

**GOAL C-AR-1:** Preserve agriculture as a long term economically viable land use by protecting agricultural production from intrusion of urban development on agricultural land, and allowing farmers to manage their operations without conflict from non-agricultural land uses, consistent with protection of coastal resources. Maintain the maximum amount of agricultural land in parcel sizes that are large enough to sustain a viable commercial agricultural operation.

**Objective C-AR-1.1:** Avoid the conversion of agricultural lands to residential or non-agricultural commercial uses.

**Objective C-AR-1.2:** In the Land Extensive Agriculture and Diverse Agriculture land use categories, maintain the largest land area for agricultural use. Limit the number of cluster lots in any one area to avoid the potential conflicts associated with residential intrusion.

**Objective C-AR-1.3:** Limit intrusion of urban development in agricultural areas.

**Objective C-AR-1.4:** Maintain the Bodega Bay Urban Service Area Boundary and Rural Community Boundaries to protect agricultural land for continued agricultural production.

**Objective C-AR-1.5:** Limit extension of sewer and other urban services beyond the Bodega Bay Urban Service Area Boundary and Rural Community Boundaries.

**Objective C-AR-1.6:** Apply the Land Extensive Agriculture and Diverse Agriculture land use categories only to areas or parcels capable of the commercial production of food, fiber, and plant material; or the raising and maintaining of farm animals. Establish agricultural production as the highest priority use in these areas or parcels.

**Objective C-AR-1.7:** Continue participation in the Land Conservation Act and Farmland Security Zone programs under the Williamson Act.

**Objective C-AR-1.8:** Formulate programs and evaluate alternative funding sources which offer financial incentives to the farm owner to reduce reliance on subdivision and sale of land to raise operating capital.

**Policy C-AR-1a:** The following criteria shall be used for approval of subdivisions on land within the Land Extensive Agriculture or Diverse Agriculture land use:

- (1) Shall be consistent with California Coastal Act which requires that:
  - (a) The maximum amount of agricultural land shall be maintained in agricultural production,
  - (b) Agricultural conversions shall be limited and evaluated on a case-by-case basis, and
- (2) It does not diminish the productivity of the agricultural land.

(3) The resulting parcels for agricultural use shall each be of a size that can support a viable agricultural operation per California Coastal Act Section 30241.5.

(4) Local Coastal Plan land use designation shall not be changed to facilitate subdivision of agricultural lands. (CCC REVISED - NEW)

**Policy C-AR-1b:** Subdivisions on designated resource and agricultural lands shall be permitted only for development related to the pursuit of either agriculture or forestry, as appropriate; and only with mechanisms such as open space or agricultural easements to ensure the long-term protection of agriculture and resource production. (EXISTING LCP REVISED)

**Policy C-AR-1c:** Agricultural compatibility and productivity shall be the primary considerations in parcel design and siting of development for subdivisions on lands designated Land Extensive Agriculture or Diverse Agriculture. (EXISTING LCP REVISED)

**Policy C-AR-1d:** Amendments of the Land Use Map from an agricultural to a non-agricultural use category for the purpose of allowing increased residential density which may conflict with agricultural production are prohibited. (CCC REVISED - GP2020)

**Policy C-AR-1e:** Implement minimum parcel sizes and other zoning standards to promote the productive and wise use of resources in Land Extensive Agriculture and Diverse Agriculture Zones, as shown in **Table C-AR-1b. Minimum Parcel Size and Maximum Residential Density by Agricultural Land Use Category.** (CCC REVISED - EXISTING LCP REVISED)

**Table C-AR-1b: Minimum Parcel Size and Maximum Residential Density by Agricultural Land Use Category**

<b>Zone</b>	<b>Applicable Land Use Category</b>	<b>Minimum Parcel Size</b>	<b>Maximum No. of Dwelling Units per Parcel<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Maximum Permitted Residential Density (ac/unit)<sup>2</sup></b>
LEA	Land Extensive Agriculture	640 acres	4	160
DA	Diverse Agriculture	160 acres	4	40

**Notes:**

<sup>1</sup> Applies to all types of dwelling units including single-family dwellings consistent with the residential density, farm family dwellings, full-time agricultural employee units, seasonal and year-round farmworker housing, and accessory dwelling units.

<sup>2</sup> Density does not apply to farm family dwellings, (LEA only), full-time agricultural employee units, seasonal and year-round farmworker housing, and accessory dwelling units

**Policy C-AR-1f:** Agricultural production shall be defined as the production of food, fiber, and plant materials including, but not limited to, growing, harvesting, crop storage, milking, etc.; and the raising and maintaining of horses, donkeys, mules, and similar livestock or farm animals for the purpose of farm operations. Commercial agricultural support uses, commercial equestrian uses, and commercial cannabis cultivation are not considered agricultural production uses in this context. (NEW)

**Policy C-AR-1g:** The Land Extensive Agriculture and Diverse Agriculture land use categories shall be applied based on the capability of the land to produce agricultural products. (GP2020)

**Policy C-AR-1h:** The primary use of any parcel designated Land Extensive Agriculture or Diverse Agriculture shall be agricultural production. Residential uses in these zoning districts shall record a “Declaration Acknowledging Right to Farm” consistent with the Sonoma County Right to Farm Ordinance found in Appendix C acknowledging that properly conducted agricultural operation on agricultural land will not be considered a nuisance for purposes of the Sonoma County Code or County regulations, and that residents or users of nearby property should be prepared to accept such inconvenience or discomfort as a normal and necessary aspect of living in a county with a strong rural character and an active agricultural sector. (CCC REVISED - EXISTING LCP REVISED – APPENDIX E, AR-4A)

**Policy C-AR-1i:** Protect agricultural operations by establishing a buffer between an agricultural use on land in the Land Extensive Agriculture or Diverse Agriculture land use categories and residential development, except for caretaker, agricultural employee, and farm related units. The buffer shall occur on the parcel to be occupied by the residential development and may include one or more of the following: a physical separation of 100 to 200 feet, landscaped berm, topographic feature, substantial tree stand, water course, or similar feature. The type, design, and location of the buffer shall be based on the type, size, and characteristics of the adjacent agricultural operations so as to protect the maximum feasible amount of agricultural land. (EXISTING LCP REVISED)

**Land Conservation Contracts**

Many landowners on the Sonoma County coast have demonstrated a commitment to agriculture by entering into Land Conservation contracts. The California Land Conservation Act of 1965 (also known as the Williamson Act) allows counties to establish agricultural preserves and thereby give tax reductions to landowners engaged in commercial agricultural operations. About 78 parcels totaling over 18,400 acres in the Coastal Zone are under Land Conservation contracts, primarily in the Bodega Bay and Valley Ford subareas. The Sonoma County Uniform Rules for Agricultural Preserves and Farmland Security Zones establish limits for non-agricultural use on contracted lands.

**Policy C-AR-1j:** Development on properties that are under a Land Conservation (“Williamson Act”) contract is limited to those listed as compatible uses under the most recent “Uniform Rules for Agricultural Preserves and Farmland Security Zones”. (CCC – REVISED)

**Policy C-AR-1k:** Subdivision of any Land Conservation Act contracted lands shall not result in creation of a parcel or designated remainder that is inconsistent with the most recent revision of the “Sonoma County Uniform Rules for Agricultural Preserves and Farmland Security Zones”. Recording individual contracts for new parcels and, if applicable, the designated remainder shall be required as a condition of approval to be met prior to recording the map. (CCC-REVISED EXISTING LCP REVISED – APPENDIX E, AR-8C)

**Policy C-AR-1l:** Encourage and support owners of farms, ranches, and public lands with agricultural operations that are seeking to implement programs that increase the sustainability of resources, improve climate change resiliency, reduce carbon emissions,



protect water and soil, increase the viability of diverse family farms, and improve housing opportunities for farmworkers. (PC – REVISED CCC-REVISED GP2020)

## **I.2 Program**

**Program C-AR-1-1P:** Update the agricultural zoning districts to be consistent with the policies of the Agricultural Resources Element.

## **I.3 Initiatives**

**Initiative C-AR-1-I1:** Encourage the Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District and other agencies to sponsor a variety of ongoing educational programs that assist the farmer in financial planning and to provide technical assistance where appropriate. (GP2020)

**Initiative C-AR-1-I2:** Work with public agencies and non-profit organizations to acquire development rights, easements, fee title or other interests in land in order to protect agricultural lands. (NEW)

**Initiative C-AR-1-I3:** Work with the California Department of Parks and Recreation to take the following actions regarding managing agricultural land in State Park Units:

- (1) Prepare a long-term plan for managing grazing lands and use the plan as a basis for grazing leases;
- (2) Retain in agricultural production land not needed for public use that is compatible with and protective of the resource values and recreation uses;
- (3) Grant long-term grazing leases which are protective of sensitive habitats and include incentives to improve range quality; and
- (4) Monitor grazing and improve range management practices in cooperation with ranchers and the Natural Resource Conservation Service. (EXISTING LCP REVISED)

**Initiative C-AR-1-I4:** Work with California State Parks and Sonoma County Regional Parks, Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District, and other government and non-profit partners to avoid conversion of agricultural land to incompatible uses, and to address impacts to and protection of agricultural lands. (NEW)

**Initiative C-AR-1-I5:** Work with local Resource Conservation Districts and agricultural associations to encourage and promote sustainable agricultural and land management practices that conserve energy and protect water and soil, reduce pesticide use, and supports locally grown and processed agricultural products, to help ensure the long-term use and conservation of coastal resources. (EXISTING LCP REVISED)

## 2. AGRICULTURAL SUPPORT USES

Agricultural support uses include agricultural processing and agricultural services, and agricultural visitor-serving uses (or agricultural tourism). This Agricultural Resources Element includes policies that promote the County's coastal agricultural industry by allowing limited visitor-serving uses that are directly related to agricultural production in the Coastal Zone.

### *Agricultural Processing and Agricultural Services*

Agricultural processing is the act of changing an agricultural product from its natural state to a different form, including bottling, canning, packaging, and storing agricultural products (e.g., grapes to wine, apples to juice or sauce, etc.). Agricultural services include the maintenance and repair of farm machinery and equipment, veterinary clinics, custom farming services, agricultural waste handling and disposal, and other similar related services.

The determination of which support uses belong on agricultural lands in the Coastal Zone involves their connection to agriculture; potential for conflicts; the size, scale, and adaptability of the use; and the amount of land lost to farming. Policies are needed to permit agricultural support uses without adversely affecting production of agricultural products in the area and impacting community character. Policies for agricultural support uses should also balance the need for such uses with the continued preservation of the rural character of the Coast, and should support agricultural products produced on the Sonoma County coast over those produced elsewhere.

### *Agricultural Visitor-Serving Uses (Agricultural Tourism)*

Agricultural visitor-serving uses, or agricultural tourism, are any visitor-serving uses on agricultural land that supports and enhances agricultural activity. Examples of these uses are farmstays, farmstands, and retail sales of products grown onsite. Wineries and tasting rooms are not considered visitor-serving uses and are instead considered agricultural processing or commercial activity, respectively. Special events are also limited to commercial areas of the Coastal Zone.

Tourism is a major economic driver in the Coastal Zone and agricultural tourism could support the Coastal agricultural industry economically, provided that agricultural tourism directly promotes the sale of agricultural products grown onsite. Agriculture is a higher-priority land use than visitor-serving uses of any kind; therefore, agricultural visitor-serving uses must supplement agricultural production, and not displace it, and the economic benefits of agricultural tourism must be balanced

### **Vineyards and Wineries in the Coastal Zone**

Vineyards dominate the agricultural landscape of the inland areas of the County, but grape production and processing in the Coastal Zone is limited due to the Coastal Zone's thin soils, steep slopes, and lack of year-round water supply. Vineyards require a Coastal Development permit, and are therefore more restricted than in the inland area. There are less than 5 acres of vineyards currently planted in the Coastal Zone.

A winery is considered to be an agricultural processing facility only if the facility is not open to the public, including by appointment, and does not include any visitor serving uses such as tasting rooms and events.

As of 2022, there are no wineries located in the Coastal Zone, although two are located within a mile of the inland Coastal Zone boundary.

against existing constraints such as limited public services, water supply, sensitive resource areas, and the potential impacts of increased traffic on public safety.

In the Land Extensive Agricultural areas, some conflicts between visitors and agricultural practices would be less severe due to the larger lot sizes that serve to separate the activities. In these areas, small scale visitor-serving uses that are directly related to the agricultural operation, such as farmstays, hosted rentals, farm stands, farm retail sales, and some outdoor recreational uses, may be compatible with the agricultural operation. These small-scale uses may promote the agricultural activity and provide a secondary income source for the farmer or rancher without hindering the primary agricultural use of the land.

## 2.1 Goal, Objectives, and Policies

**GOAL C-AR-2: Facilitate agricultural production by allowing related agricultural support uses (agricultural processing and agricultural services), to be conveniently and accessibly located in agricultural production areas when related to the primary agricultural production in the area.**

**Objective C-AR-2.1:** Facilitate local agricultural production by allowing, subject to a use permit, agricultural processing on agricultural lands where subordinate to and compatible with an existing agriculture use.

**Objective C-AR-2.2:** Facilitate local agricultural production by allowing with a use permit on agricultural lands limited agricultural support uses which support local agricultural activities and are not detrimental to the long-term agricultural uses in the area.

**Objective C-AR-2.3:** Ensure that agricultural support uses allowed on agricultural lands are only allowed when demonstrated to be necessary for, and proportional to, agricultural production on-site.

**Policy C-AR-2a:** Agricultural Resources Element **Table C-AR-2** establishes the agricultural uses allowed and planning permits required on agricultural lands in the Coastal Zone. (CCC REVISED - NEW)

**Table C-AR-2: Agricultural Uses and Support Uses Allowed and Permit Thresholds** (CCC REVISED)

<i>Use</i>	<i>Planning Permits Required</i>	<i>Permit Type</i>
<b>Allowed</b>		
Grazing, Row Crops	Principally Permitted <sup>3</sup> "By-Right"	none required
Vineyard, Orchard	Principally Permitted <sup>3</sup> Coastal Permit <sup>1</sup>	Discretionary
Commercial cannabis cultivation (e.g. cultivation exceeding personal cultivation limits of Sonoma County Code Section 26-88-258)	Prohibited: Commercial cannabis cultivation not allowed in agricultural land use (PC REVISED)	N/A
Aquaculture	Use Permit Coastal Permit	Discretionary <sup>2</sup>

<b>Use</b>	<b>Planning Permits Required</b>	<b>Permit Type</b>
Agricultural Processing (e.g., creamery, winery [no tasting or events])	Use Permit Coastal Permit See Policy C-AR-2c below	Discretionary <sup>2</sup>
Agricultural Services (e.g., farm equipment, veterinarian)	Use Permit Coastal Permit	Discretionary <sup>2</sup>
Small-Scale Farm Retail Sales	Coastal Permit	Discretionary
Farm Stand	Principally Permitted <sup>3</sup> “By-Right”	none required
<b>Non Agricultural Uses</b>		
Tasting Rooms	Discretionary, Only allowed in commercial zones	
Other Visitor-Serving Use (e.g., agricultural promotional event, restaurant)	Discretionary, Only allowed in commercial zones	
Notes:		
<sup>1</sup> VESCO permit also required from Sonoma County Agricultural Commissioner		
<sup>2</sup> May be appealable to California Coastal Commission if within their jurisdiction or appealable area per map on file at Permit Sonoma		
<sup>3</sup> See Land Use Element for definition and description of Principally Permitted Use.		

**Policy C-AR-2b:** Storage facilities shall be permitted for agricultural products grown, prepared, or processed on-site. Facilities shall be sized to accommodate but not exceed the agricultural operation, and shall be designed to be compatible with and not adversely impact surrounding land uses. (EXISTING LCP REVISED – APPENDIX E, AR-5F)

**Policy C-AR-2c:** Only allow agricultural support uses, including agricultural processing and agricultural services uses that clearly support local agricultural production consistent with the specific requirements of each of the two agricultural land use categories. Ensure that such uses are clearly subordinate to on-site agricultural production and do not adversely affect agricultural production in the area. The following criteria shall be used for approval of agricultural processing or service uses:

- (1) The use is subordinate to on-site agricultural production based on the following considerations:
  - a. The area of the parcel devoted to the agricultural support use is not more than 10% of the parcel area in agricultural production. (CCC – REVISED)
  - b. The size and number of structures needed for the agricultural support use in relation to agricultural production.
  - c. The relative number of employees devoted to the agricultural support use in comparison to that needed for agricultural production.
  - d. The types of agricultural production on the site in the past and present.

- e. The potential for the agricultural support use to be converted to non-agricultural uses due to its location and access.
- (2) The use will not require the extension of sewer or water.
- (3) The use would not convert agricultural lands inconsistent with Coastal Act Sections 30241 and 30242.
- (4) The use does not substantially detract from agricultural production on-site.
- (5) The use does not create a concentration of commercial uses in the immediate area.
- (6) The use is compatible with and does not adversely impact surrounding residential neighborhoods. (EXISTING LCP REVISED – APPENDIX E, AR-5D)

**Policy C-AR-2d:** Local concentrations of agricultural services or agricultural processing (e.g., cheese, wineries), that are detrimental to the primary use of the land for the agricultural production, rural character, traffic, or water resources shall be avoided, even if related to surrounding agricultural activities. (CCC REVISED - EXISTING LCP REVISED)

### **3. FARMWORKER HOUSING**

Successful agricultural production requires adequate numbers of seasonal and full-time farmworkers. A limited supply of expensive housing creates a serious barrier to attracting and retaining these essential workers. Providing adequate housing for seasonal employees, permanent employees, and the families of permanent employees is critical to the success of agriculture in the Coastal Zone. While housing is generally a low-priority use in the Coastal Zone, farmworker housing is integral to agriculture and shares the same high priority as agriculture.

#### **3.1 Goal, Objectives, and Policies**

**GOAL C-AR-3: Support efficient management of local agricultural production activities by the development of adequate amounts of housing for farmworkers and farm family members engaged in the farming operation in agricultural areas.**

**Objective C-AR-3.1:** Encourage farm operators to provide suitable on-site housing for seasonal and agricultural farmworkers and family members engaged in farming operations to maintain agricultural production activities, in accordance with allowable residential density.

**Policy C-AR-3a:** Agricultural worker housing shall be commensurate with the demonstrated need by an agricultural operation, or related nearby agricultural operations. Housing for agricultural workers and their households shall not be included in the calculation of residential density in the Land Extensive Agriculture and Diverse Agriculture zoning districts. Approval of agricultural worker housing shall require recording a restrictive covenant running with the land for the benefit of the County ensuring that the agricultural worker housing will continuously be maintained as such as long as an agricultural use

requiring agricultural workers exists on the parcel. In the event that the agricultural use is terminated, the agricultural worker housing shall become a legal nonconforming residential use subject to the nonconforming use provisions of the Coastal Zoning Code. (PC REVISED CCC REVISED)

**Policy C-AR-3b:** Housing for seasonal workers as needed to serve the agricultural industries of the area shall be permitted if it does not necessitate the extension of sewer or water service inconsistent with the Public Facilities and Services Element. This housing may be constructed to the minimum standards acceptable under State law and as allowed under the Public Facilities and Services Element. (GP2020)

**Policy C-AR-3c:** Allow up to four residential units per agricultural parcel, consistent with the maximum residential density, for the purpose of housing farm family members. All housing units should be grouped together on the parcel to maximize environmental protections and promote efficient agricultural operations. (EXISTING LCP REVISED)

## 4. AQUACULTURE AND FISHING

Aquaculture includes on-shore cultivation and subsequent harvesting of marine aquatic plants and animals, as well as off-shore cultivation of marine organisms for food and other products in the open ocean, or an enclosed section of the ocean. Examples of aquaculture include farming of marine fish, shellfish such as oysters, or seaweed in saltwater ponds. Production of non-food products such as fish meal, nutrient agar, jewelries (e.g. cultured pearls), and cosmetics is not considered aquaculture for the purpose of Local Coastal Plan policy.

Well-managed and operated aquaculture can serve as a resource-efficient food source, but aquaculture also has potential for adverse impacts to the marine environment, such as discharge of concentrated waste, escape of non-native species, transmission of disease outbreaks in aquaculture environments to wild fish stocks, genetic disruption of marine environments, and algae blooms. Because of the need for careful evaluation of aquaculture development, it is not considered a principally permitted use in agricultural land use categories, and requires a use permit and coastal development permit for approval.

Commercial fishing is the activity of catching fish and other seafood for commercial profit from wild fisheries. Commercial fishing is a coastal-dependent activity, requiring on-shore facilities such as processing, storage, and land transportation of fish, as well as marina facilities, storage of fishing gear, and boatyard services. While commercial fishing is a coastal-dependent use producing food, it is different from other forms of agriculture in that commercial fishing consists of harvesting and processing, but not cultivating food. (CCC REVISED)

## 4.1 Goal, Objectives, and Policies

**Goal C-AR-4:** Support development of sustainable aquaculture practices and provide adequate support facilities for marine-based food production, including commercial fishing. (CCC REVISED)

**Objective C-AR-4.1:** Allow aquaculture and related on-shore facilities and activities in agricultural areas, subject to a Use Permit and Coastal Development Permit. (CCC REVISED)

**Objective C-AR-4.2:** Provide opportunities for development of support facilities for the fishing industry in Bodega Bay. (CCC REVISED)

**Objective C-AR-4.3:** Promote products of the fishing industry and aquaculture in the same manner as agricultural products.

**Policy C-AR-4a:** Outdoor aquaculture shall be permitted in agricultural zoning subject to a Use Permit and Coastal Development Permit. (PC REVISED CCC REVISED - GP2020)

**Policy C-AR-4b:** Support facilities for the fishing industry, including but not limited to equipment storage, processing facilities, and canneries may be allowed on lands designated for agricultural land use adjacent to the Urban Service Boundary of Bodega Bay. If the facility or use requires urban services, extension of such services on lands adjacent to the Urban Service Boundary may only be permitted for that purpose.

**Policy C-AR-4c:** The following criteria shall be used for approval of aquaculture processing or service uses to ensure that such uses are clearly subordinate to on-site aquaculture production and do not adversely affect agricultural production in the area: (PC REVISED CCC REVISED)

- (1) The use is subordinate to on-site aquaculture and agriculture production based on the following considerations:
  - a. The portion of the site devoted to the support use in relation to production.
  - b. The size and number of structures needed for the support use in relation to production.
  - c. The relative number of employees devoted to the support use in comparison to that needed for production.
  - d. The uses on the site in the past and present.
  - e. The potential for the support use to be converted to non-agricultural uses due to its location and access.
- (2) The use would not convert agricultural lands inconsistent with Coastal Act Sections 30241.5 and 30242.

- (3) The use does not substantially detract from agricultural production on-site.
- (4) The use does not create a concentration of commercial uses in the immediate area.
- (5) The use is compatible with and does not adversely impact surrounding residential neighborhoods.



# Open Space and Resource Conservation Element: Table of Contents

Open Space and Resource Conservation Element.....	4
Introduction.....	4
Purpose.....	4
Relationship to Other Elements.....	4
Relationship to the California Coastal Act.....	5
Section 30001.2 Legislative findings and declarations; economic development.....	5
Section 30107.5 Environmentally sensitive area .....	5
Section 30108 Feasible .....	5
Section 30230 Marine resources; maintenance.....	5
Section 30231 Biological productivity; water quality .....	5
Section 30233 Diking, filling or dredging; continued movement of sediment and nutrients .....	5
Section 30234 Commercial fishing and recreational boating facilities.....	7
Section 30234.5 Economic, commercial, and recreational importance of fishing .....	7
Section 30240 Environmentally sensitive habitat areas; adjacent developments .....	7
Section 30243 Productivity of soils and timberlands; conversions .....	7
Section 30251 Scenic and visual qualities.....	7
Section 30703 Protection of commercial fishing harbor space .....	7
1. Scenic Resources .....	8
Scenic Landscape Units and Vista Points .....	8
Scenic Corridors .....	8
Goal, Objectives, and Policies .....	9
Programs.....	11
2. Outdoor Lighting.....	11
Goal, Objectives, and Policies .....	11
3. Community Character and Design .....	12

Urban Service Areas .....	13
Rural Communities.....	13
Landforms .....	14
Vegetation management.....	15
Goal, Objectives, and Policies .....	15
<b>4. Streams and Riparian Corridors .....</b>	<b>16</b>
Goal, Objective, and Policies .....	17
Programs.....	19
Initiative .....	20
<b>5. Wetlands .....</b>	<b>21</b>
Goal, Objective, and Policies .....	22
<b>6. Marine Habitats.....</b>	<b>24</b>
Goal, Objectives, and Policies .....	25
Program.....	27
Initiatives.....	27
<b>7. Terrestrial Habitats.....</b>	<b>28</b>
Goals, Objectives, and Policies.....	28
Initiatives.....	33
<b>8. Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Areas.....</b>	<b>33</b>
Goal, Objective, and Policies .....	34
Program.....	38
Initiatives.....	38
<b>9. Commercial Fishing, Support Facilities, and Harbor .....</b>	<b>38</b>
Section 30234 Commercial fishing and recreational boating facilities.....	38
Section 30234.5 Economic, commercial, and recreational importance of fishing.....	38
Climate Change.....	38
Offshore Marine Protected Areas .....	39
Greater Farallones National Marine Sanctuary.....	39
Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuary. ....	39

California Coastal National Monument .....	39
Oil Exploration and Development .....	40
Bodega Bay and Harbor .....	40
Bodega Harbor Maintenance Dredging .....	41
Marine Debris .....	41
Goal, Objectives, and Policies .....	42
Program .....	45
<b>10. Soil Resources.....</b>	<b>46</b>
Goal, Objectives, and Policies .....	46
Initiative .....	47
<b>11. Timber Resources .....</b>	<b>47</b>
Timberland Resources .....	47
Timberland Regulations .....	48
Timberland Production (Preserve) Zones.....	48
Timberland Environmental Impacts .....	49
Goal, Objectives and Policies .....	50
Programs.....	51
Initiative .....	51
<b>12. Mineral Resources .....</b>	<b>51</b>
Goal, Objectives and Policies .....	52
<b>13. Energy Resources Policy .....</b>	<b>52</b>
Climate Change.....	53
Water Availability and Energy.....	53
Temperature, Energy Demand, and Energy Supply. ....	53
Sea Level Rise, Storm Surge, and Extreme Events.....	54
Goal, Objectives, and Policies .....	54
Program.....	55
<b>14. Air Resources Policy .....</b>	<b>56</b>
Goal, Objectives and Policies .....	57
<b>Open Space and Resource Conservation Element References.....</b>	<b>57</b>

# Open Space and Resource Conservation Element

## **INTRODUCTION**

The Open Space and Resource Conservation Element is a policy framework for the preservation of open space and conservation of natural resources, mapping of these resources, and policies that will protect, preserve, and improved these resources.

The OSRC Element establishes goals, objectives, and policies to protect and sustainably manage Sonoma County's natural and cultural coastal resources. Programs needed to implement proposed policies are also identified. In addition, the Element identifies ongoing or potential future County initiatives, referred to as Initiatives, which support sound resource management and planning, and promote inter-agency and community collaboration.

## **PURPOSE**

State law recognizes that open space land is a limited and valuable resource which must be conserved wherever possible. The Open Space and Resource Conservation (OSRC) Element of the Local Coastal Plan must address open space for the preservation of natural resources; for the managed production of resources; for outdoor recreation; for public health and safety; and for the preservation of archaeological, historical, and cultural resources.

The purpose of the Open Space and Resource Conservation Element is to preserve the natural and scenic resources which contribute to the general welfare and quality of life for the residents of the Sonoma County coast and to the maintenance of its tourism industry. This Element provides the guidelines for making necessary consistency findings and includes an implementation program, as required by law.

## **RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER ELEMENTS**

The Open Space and Resource Conservation Element is coordinated with the Public Safety, Public Facilities and Services, Agricultural Resources, Water Resources, Land Use, and Public Access Elements. Policies in this element protecting natural resources and regulating development guide policies in all other elements.

## **RELATIONSHIP TO THE CALIFORNIA COASTAL ACT**

### **Section 30001.2 Legislative findings and declarations; economic development**

The Legislature further finds and declares that, notwithstanding the fact electrical generating facilities, refineries, and coastal-dependent developments, including ports and commercial fishing facilities, offshore petroleum and gas development, and liquefied natural gas facilities, may have significant adverse effects on coastal resources or coastal access, it may be necessary to locate such developments in the coastal zone in order to ensure that inland as well as coastal resources are preserved and that orderly economic development proceeds within the state.

### **Section 30107.5 Environmentally sensitive area**

"Environmentally sensitive area" means any area in which plant or animal life or their habitats are either rare or especially valuable because of their special nature or role in an ecosystem and which could be easily disturbed or degraded by human activities and developments.

### **Section 30108 Feasible**

"Feasible" means capable of being accomplished in a successful manner within a reasonable period of time, taking into account economic, environmental, social, and technological factors.

### **Section 30230 Marine resources; maintenance**

Marine resources shall be maintained, enhanced, and where feasible, restored. Special protection shall be given to areas and species of special biological or economic significance. Uses of the marine environment shall be carried out in a manner that will sustain the biological productivity of coastal waters and that will maintain healthy populations of all species of marine organisms adequate for long-term commercial, recreational, scientific, and educational purposes.

### **Section 30231 Biological productivity; water quality**

The biological productivity and the quality of coastal waters, streams, wetlands, estuaries, and lakes appropriate to maintain optimum populations of marine organisms and for the protection of human health shall be maintained and, where feasible, restored through, among other means, minimizing adverse effects of waste water discharges and entrainment, controlling runoff, preventing depletion of ground water supplies and substantial interference with surface waterflow, encouraging waste water reclamation, maintaining natural vegetation buffer areas that protect riparian habitats, and minimizing alteration of natural streams.

### **Section 30233 Diking, filling or dredging; continued movement of sediment and nutrients**

(a) The diking, filling, or dredging of open coastal waters, wetlands, estuaries, and lakes shall be permitted in accordance with other applicable provisions of this division, where there is no feasible less environmentally damaging alternative, and where feasible mitigation measures have been provided to minimize adverse environmental effects, and shall be limited to the following:

- (1) New or expanded port, energy, and coastal-dependent industrial facilities, including commercial fishing facilities.
- (2) Maintaining existing, or restoring previously dredged, depths in existing navigational channels, turning basins, vessel berthing and mooring areas, and boat launching ramps.
- (3) In open coastal waters, other than wetlands, including streams, estuaries, and lakes, new or expanded boating facilities and the placement of structural pilings for public recreational piers that provide public access and recreational opportunities.
- (4) Incidental public service purposes, including but not limited to, burying cables and pipes or inspection of piers and maintenance of existing intake and outfall lines.
- (5) Mineral extraction, including sand for restoring beaches, except in environmentally sensitive areas.
- (6) Restoration purposes.
- (7) Nature study, aquaculture, or similar resource dependent activities.

(b) Dredging and spoils disposal shall be planned and carried out to avoid significant disruption to marine and wildlife habitats and water circulation. Dredge spoils suitable for beach replenishment should be transported for these purposes to appropriate beaches or into suitable longshore current systems.

(c) In addition to the other provisions of this section, diking, filling, or dredging in existing estuaries and wetlands shall maintain or enhance the functional capacity of the wetland or estuary. Any alteration of coastal wetlands identified by the Department of Fish and Game, including, but not limited to, the 19 coastal wetlands identified in its report entitled, "Acquisition Priorities for the Coastal Wetlands of California", shall be limited to very minor incidental public facilities, restorative measures, nature study, commercial fishing facilities in Bodega Bay, and development in already developed parts of south San Diego Bay, if otherwise in accordance with this division.

For the purposes of this section, "commercial fishing facilities in Bodega Bay" means that not less than 80 percent of all boating facilities proposed to be developed or improved, where the improvement would create additional berths in Bodega Bay, shall be designed and used for commercial fishing activities.

(d) Erosion control and flood control facilities constructed on watercourses can impede the movement of sediment and nutrients that would otherwise be carried by storm runoff into coastal waters. To facilitate the continued delivery of these sediments to the littoral zone, whenever feasible, the material removed from these facilities may be placed at appropriate points on the shoreline in accordance with other applicable provisions of this division, where feasible mitigation measures have been provided to minimize adverse environmental effects. Aspects that shall be considered before issuing a coastal development permit for these purposes are the method of placement, time of year of placement, and sensitivity of the placement area.

## **Section 30234 Commercial fishing and recreational boating facilities**

Facilities serving the commercial fishing and recreational boating industries shall be protected and, where feasible, upgraded. Existing commercial fishing and recreational boating harbor space shall not be reduced unless the demand for those facilities no longer exists or adequate substitute space has been provided. Proposed recreational boating facilities shall, where feasible, be designed and located in such a fashion as not to interfere with the needs of the commercial fishing industry.

## **Section 30234.5 Economic, commercial, and recreational importance of fishing**

The economic, commercial, and recreational importance of fishing activities shall be recognized and protected.

## **Section 30240 Environmentally sensitive habitat areas; adjacent developments**

(a) Environmentally sensitive habitat areas shall be protected against any significant disruption of habitat values, and only uses dependent on those resources shall be allowed within those areas.

(b) Development in areas adjacent to environmentally sensitive habitat areas and parks and recreation areas shall be sited and designed to prevent impacts which would significantly degrade those areas, and shall be compatible with the continuance of those habitat and recreation areas.

## **Section 30243 Productivity of soils and timberlands; conversions**

The long-term productivity of soils and timberlands shall be protected, and conversions of coastal commercial timberlands in units of commercial size to other uses or their division into units of noncommercial size shall be limited to providing for necessary timber processing and related facilities.

## **Section 3025 I Scenic and visual qualities**

The scenic and visual qualities of coastal areas shall be considered and protected as a resource of public importance. Permitted development shall be sited and designed to protect views to and along the ocean and scenic coastal areas, to minimize the alteration of natural land forms, to be visually compatible with the character of surrounding areas, and, where feasible, to restore and enhance visual quality in visually degraded areas. New development in highly scenic areas such as those designated in the California Coastline Preservation and Recreation Plan prepared by the Department of Parks and Recreation and by local government shall be subordinate to the character of its setting.

## **Section 30703 Protection of commercial fishing harbor space**

The California commercial fishing industry is important to the State of California; therefore, ports shall not eliminate or reduce existing commercial fishing harbor space, unless the demand for commercial fishing facilities no longer exists or adequate alternative space has been provided. Proposed recreational boating facilities within port areas shall, to the extent it is feasible to do so, be

designed and located in such a fashion as not to interfere with the needs of the commercial fishing industry.

## **I. SCENIC RESOURCES**

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### **Scenic Landscape Units and Vista Points**

A Scenic Landscape Unit is a landscape of special scenic importance in Sonoma County which provides important visual relief from urban densities. The Coastal Zone is an exceptionally attractive landscape that has benefited from almost 50 years of protection and controlled development. The entire Coastal Zone outside of developed communities is designated as a Scenic Landscape Unit. Major Views are long views of unique visual interest, focus, or variety. Major Views are located throughout the Coastal Zone and include islands, rock headlands, coves, lagoons, estuaries, rivers, expansive beaches, white water, coastal hills, and historic settings. Refer to Figures C-OSRC-1a-k for locations of major views.

Vista Points differ from Major Views as they include roadside areas suitable for parking. Because a Vista Point provides an opportunity for the public to stop and enjoy the view for longer periods of time, a Vista Point is more visually sensitive than a Major View that lacks parking or trail access. Designated Vista Points shall be developed with safe ingress and egress, parking areas, interpretive signs, and restrooms where these facilities do not have an adverse impact on Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Areas, or on any other coastal resource. Vista Points are located three SubAreas of the Coast (# of Vista Points per SubArea) - High Cliffs/Muniz/Jenner (2), Pacific View/Willow Creek (2), and State Beach/Bodega Bay (1) (**Figures C-OSRC-1f, C-OSRC-1h, and C-OSRC-1i**, respectively).

### **Scenic Corridors**

The primary impression of any area on the Coast comes from what is seen while driving, cycling, or hiking along a roadway. One of the most effective methods of protecting visual resources is to protect scenic corridors along a system of scenic roads. Designated Scenic Corridors on the Sonoma Coast are State Highway 1, Stewarts Point-Skaggs Springs Road, State Highway 116, Coleman Valley Road, Petaluma-Valley Ford Road, Bodega Highway, Fort Ross Road, Meyers Grade/Seaview Road, Bay Hill Road, and a paved portion of Willow Creek Road. Along Scenic Corridors, all development shall be set back 30 percent of the depth of the lot to a maximum of 200 feet.

Scenic View Easements exist along Highway 1 at The Sea Ranch and are different from the designated Scenic Corridors. A Scenic View Easement is an easement at a specific location west of the highway established for the purpose of allowing ongoing management and removal of trees in order to restore and preserve scenic views from State Highway 1 (**Appendix D-1**).



## Goal, Objectives, and Policies

**GOAL C-OSRC-1: Retain the largely open, scenic character of Scenic Landscape Units and views from Vista Points and preserve visual quality of roadside landscapes.** (CCC REVISED)

**Objective C-OSRC-1.1:** Retain a rural, scenic character in Scenic Landscape Units with very low intensities of development.

**Objective C-OSRC-1.2:** Protect the ridges and crests of hills in Scenic Landscape Units and views from Vista Points from the silhouetting of structures against the skyline.

**Objective C-OSRC-1.3:** Protect hills and ridges in Scenic Landscape Units and views from Vista Points from visible cuts, fills, and vegetation removal.

**Objective C-OSRC-1.4:** Provide visual links to major recreation areas, give access to historic areas, or serve as scenic entranceways to communities.

**Objective C-OSRC-1.5:** Ensure future land uses, development, and roadway construction are compatible with preserving scenic values along designated Scenic Corridors.

**The following policies, in addition to those of the Land Use Element, shall be used to achieve these objectives:**

**Policy C-OSRC-1a:** Apply the Scenic Resources Combining Zoning District to the entire Coastal Zone. (GP2020 REVISED)

**Policy C-OSRC-1b:** Development which will significantly degrade the scenic qualities of Scenic Landscape Units and views and from Vista Points shall be prohibited. Allow an exception for transportation or public safety facilities where no feasible alternatives to the project can be identified, project impact is reduced to the maximum extent feasible, and an opportunity is identified to restore or improve an existing view that will fully mitigate the project impact. (EXISTING LCP REVISED)

**Policy C-OSRC-1c:** Permitted development shall be sited and designed to protect views to and along the ocean and scenic coastal areas, to minimize the alteration of natural land forms, to be visually compatible with the character of surrounding areas, and, where feasible, to restore and enhance visual quality in visually degraded areas. New development shall be visually subordinate to the character of its setting. (CCC REVISED)

**Policy C-OSRC-1c:** Development (including buildings, structures, fences, paved areas, signs, and landscaping) shall be prohibited from obstructing views of the coastline from coastal roads, bikeways, Vista Points, recreation areas, and beaches. Allow an exception for transportation or public safety facilities where no feasible alternatives to the project can be identified, project impact is reduced to the maximum extent feasible, and an opportunity is

identified to restore or improve an existing view that will fully mitigate the project impact.  
(EXISTING LCP REVISED)

**Policy C-OSRC-1d:** Residential density in Scenic Landscape Units shall be one unit per 10 acres or greater. (GP2020 REVISED)

**Policy C-OSRC-1e:** Commercial or industrial uses in Scenic Landscape Units, other than those which are permitted by the agricultural or resource land use categories, is prohibited.  
(GP2020 REVISED)

**Policy C-OSRC-1f:** Development within Scenic Landscape Units, Major Views, and views from Vista Points shall be required to meet the Appendix D-2 Scenic View Guidelines in addition to all other applicable design guidelines. In the case of conflict, the most restrictive design standards shall apply. (CCC REVISED GP2020 / EXISTING LCP REVISED)

**Policy C-OSRC-1g:** The following standards shall be used in addition to those of **Policy C-OSRC-1f** for new subdivisions within Scenic Landscape Units, other Major Views, and views from Vista Points:

- (1) All maps must designate building envelopes to be located in the least visually sensitive areas, and with height limitations as a note on the map if necessary to adequately mitigate visual impacts.
- (2) Lots shall be clustered to reduce visual impacts where consistent with the Land Use Element.
- (3) Building sites and roads are to be constructed to preserve tree stands with average diameter at breast height 6 inches or greater. (CCC REVISED)
- (4) Driveways and access roads shall be hidden from view from public roads and other public use areas where practical. (GP2020 / EXISTING LCP REVISED)

**Policy C-OSRC-1h:** Continue to apply the Scenic Resources Combining Zoning District to those portions of properties within Scenic Corridor setbacks. (GP2020 REVISED)

**Policy C-OSRC-1i:** Continue to protect the unique scenic qualities of Highway 116 as outlined in the September 1988 *116 Scenic Highway Corridor Study*. (GP2020)

**Policy C-OSRC-1j:** Outside of rural communities and urban service areas, the minimum setback of a new structure from a Scenic Corridor shall be 30 percent of the depth of the lot to a maximum of 200 feet from the centerline of the road. (EXISTING LCP REVISED)

**Policy C-OSRC-1k:** For development on parcels located both within a Scenic Landscape Unit and adjacent to a Scenic Corridor, the more restrictive siting and setback policies shall be applied to preserve visual quality. (GP2020)

**Policy C-OSRC-11:** Prohibit billboards and offsite signs along Scenic Corridors. (GP2020 REVISED)

**Policy C-OSRC-1m:** Public works projects shall be designed to minimize damage and removal of trees along Scenic Corridors except where necessary to maintain Scenic View Easements in The Sea Ranch. Where trees must be removed along highways, replanting programs shall be designed so as to accommodate ultimate planned highway improvements. Replanting and revegetation shall be required following grading and road cuts. (GP2020)

## Programs

**Program C-OSRC-1-P1:** Request official State Scenic Highway designation for State Highway 1 throughout the Sonoma Coast.

## 2. OUTDOOR LIGHTING

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Night time views of both the landscape and sky can be significantly degraded by excessive and unnecessary levels of light which increase sky glow around urban areas, make the man-made environment prominent, and result in visual clutter at night. Appropriate light levels for varying uses should be balanced with a desire to maintain Sonoma County's rural character and preserve views of the night time skies for residents and visitors.

### Goal, Objectives, and Policies

**GOAL C-OSRC-2:** Preserve and maintain views of the night time skies and visual character of urban, rural, and natural areas, while allowing for night time lighting levels appropriate to the use and location.

**Objective C-OSRC-2.1:** Maintain night time lighting levels at the minimum necessary to provide for security and safety of the use and users to preserve night time skies and the night time character of urban, rural, and natural areas.

**Objective C-OSRC-2.2:** Ensure that night time lighting for new development is designed to avoid light spillage offsite or upward into the sky.

The following policies shall be used to achieve these objectives:

**Policy C-OSRC-2a:** In addition to standards of Policy C-LU-1i, artificial night lighting shall use light sources that are no more than the

#### Impacts of artificial night lighting

Artificial night lighting impacts biological resources. Natural patterns of darkness and light are essential to the functioning of ecosystems.

Artificial night lighting affects the natural behavior of many flora and fauna species. It can disturb development; feeding, mating, resting, migration, and other activity patterns; and hormone-regulated processes, such as internal clock mechanism.

Illuminance, the amount of light incident per unit area, is the most commonly used measurement of ecological light pollution. It is expressed in lux, the intensity of light per unit area of the source. How bright these sources appear to organisms depends on ambient conditions; in dark conditions a dim light appears very bright, whereas it could be practically invisible in daylight.

minimum height and power necessary to adequately light the proposed use. Illumination of signs shall only be approved where illumination is maintained at the minimum level necessary for sign visibility. Internally illuminated signs are prohibited, including signs using LED or similar light sources that directly face the viewer. (GP2020 REVISED)

**Policy C-OSRC-2b:** Continuous all night exterior lighting in rural areas, unless it is demonstrated to the decision-making body that such lighting is necessary for security or operational purposes, or that it is necessary for agricultural production or processing on a seasonal basis is prohibited. Where lighting is necessary for the above purposes, glare onto adjacent properties and into the night sky shall be reduced to the maximum amount feasible. (CCC REVISED - GP2020)

**Policy C-OSRC-2c:** Artificial night lighting that increases existing ambient light levels in Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Areas is prohibited. (WAS PART OF OSRC-2D)

**Policy C-OSRC-2d:** In evaluating proposed development, the potential impact of any proposed artificial night lighting on the coastal ecosystem should be considered using the best available science. Any Proposed artificial night lighting that is determined by the best available science to have a negative impact on coastal ecosystems shall be prohibited (CCC REVISED NEW)

### **3. COMMUNITY CHARACTER AND DESIGN**

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Land use policies of the Local Coastal Plan direct development towards Urban Service Areas, which are geographical areas where public sewer and water are available, most parcels are developed, and a variety of commercial and visitor service uses exist. Urban Service areas perform a function similar to urban growth boundaries for unincorporated communities. The Coastal Zone contains two Urban Service Areas: Bodega Bay and The Sea Ranch. Designation of Urban Service Areas also serves to carry out provisions of the Coastal Act that require new development to be focused into existing communities with adequate public facilities and services. This pattern of compact development and community-centered growth preserves open space, agriculture, and coastal resources.

Design guidelines and standards specific to the communities of The Sea Ranch, Timber Cove, Bodega Harbour, Taylor Tract, and Sereno del Mar have been adopted. Compliance with these guidelines are reviewed as part of processing permits for development in these communities. Changes to the local design standards must first be approved by the Sonoma County Design Review Committee prior to amending the Local Coastal Program. These community-specific policies in this section are intended to be used in addition to the Coastal Design Guidelines. In the case of conflict, the most restrictive standards shall apply.

The character of Coastal Zone communities is diverse, and design policies must recognize this diversity and preserve local character. The major community design issues on the Coast are preservation of coastal views and the visual quality and compatibility of new development with the natural landscape and existing development.

### *Urban Service Areas*

**The Sea Ranch.** The Sea Ranch is a low-density residential community developed with shared values known as The Sea Ranch Concept that embodies the principle of living lightly on the land and developing in harmony with the natural environment. The Sea Ranch has municipal wastewater treatment available in the northern and central areas, with the southern area being served by septic systems which are managed by The Sea Ranch Association Onsite Wastewater Management Zone. The Sea Ranch Urban Service Area encompasses all residential land use within The Sea Ranch and is shown in figures C-LU-1a and C-LU-1b.

**Bodega Bay.** Bodega Bay consists of a core area of visitor serving commercial uses and small homes on the east side of Bodega Bay. Across the bay is Spud Point marina, which supports a commercial fishing fleet and support services for the fishing industry. The Bodega Harbour subdivision is located south of Doran Beach and consists of newer homes and a golf course. Water and wastewater service is provided by the Bodega Bay Public Utility District. The Bodega Bay Urban Service Area encompasses these areas and is shown in Figure C-LU-1i.

### *Rural Communities*

**Stewarts Point.** Stewarts Point was founded in 1857 at Fisherman's Bay by A.L. Fisk, who established a store and hotel. The community contains simple early Greek Revival buildings, including a store, hotel, one room school, and series of barns and out-buildings, which together illustrate a strong sense of a 19th century coastal town. Stewarts Point does not have community specific design guidelines.

**Timber Cove.** Timber Cove is a low density subdivision established in the early and middle 1960s with many lots still undeveloped. Water is supplied by the Timber Cove County Water District and all homes rely on septic systems for wastewater disposal. Most of the subdivision is heavily forested and the majority of the lots are east of Highway 1 and not visible from the highway. A smaller number of lots are west of Highway 1 and have a higher visual sensitivity. The Timber Cove Architectural Guidelines, are in the CC&Rs for the subdivision and applied by the Timber Cove Homes Association.

**Jenner.** Jenner was originally a second home development platted in 1914. The town has grown slowly over the last century, but development is constrained by restrictions on water system connections and the limited area for septic systems on the small lots. Jenner does not have community specific design guidelines, but is highly visible from Highway 1 and consideration should be given to the scale, design, and landscaping of new development.

**Rancho del Paradiso.** Located along the south side of the Russian River, Rancho del Paradiso is a development on small lots platted in the 1930s. New development is constrained by restrictions on water system connections and the limited area for septic systems on the small lots adjacent to the Russian River estuary. The community is not highly visible from State Highway 116. Rancho del Paradiso does not have community specific design guidelines.

**Bridgehaven Resort.** Bridgehaven Resort is located on the south bank of the Russian River near the junction of State Highways 1 and 116, and is visible from Vista Points on Highways 1 and 116 as well as from the Russian River estuary. The resort included summer cabins, a store and café, and a trailer park with permanent residents. The campground is no longer in use, and the trailer park is not screened from view. Additional development is constrained by inadequate water supply, and close

proximity to the Russian River, which limits septic system development. Future modifications to existing development should include design and landscaping improvements.

**Duncans Mills.** Duncans Mills, a County Historic District, was a railroad depot and commercial center established in the 1880s. The western false front commercial buildings have been preserved, and several new buildings of similar design have been constructed to serve the community and visitors. Water is supplied by private wells and a small public system and existing development relies on septic systems for wastewater disposal. Commercial uses have been developed by private interests that continue to build in the old west theme. Duncans Mills does not have community specific design guidelines.

**Sereno Del Mar.** Sereno Del Mar, platted between 1970 and 1972, is a residential subdivision north of Bodega Bay. More than one-half of the 173 lots have been developed. Water is supplied by the Sereno Del Mar Water Company, and all homes rely on septic systems for wastewater disposal. Homes are large on large lots and are generally one to one and one-half stories high due to a 16 foot height limitation. The Sereno del Mar design guidelines are included in the CC&Rs for the subdivision and are applied by the Sereno del Mar Design Review Committee.

**Carmet.** Carmet is a residential subdivision of 60 lots developed in the late 1940s located south of and adjacent to Sereno Del Mar. Water is supplied by the Sereno Del Mar Water Company, and all homes rely on septic systems for wastewater disposal. Homes are generally one-story with flat gravel roofs and painted wood exteriors. Landscaping is suburban with lawns, flowers, and a few trees. New development should be compatible with existing homes as there is a distinct design unity to the subdivision. Carmet does not have community specific design guidelines.

**Salmon Creek.** Salmon Creek is a compact subdivision developed in the 1920s and 1930s. New development is constrained by restrictions on water system connections and the limited area for septic systems on the small lots located on coastal dunes. Vacation home use still predominates, but many dwellings are occupied by full time residents. Homes generally have painted wood exteriors and gable roofs. Homes near the Salmon Creek lagoon are highly visible, and the design and scale of new development should be compatible with the existing character of the community as well as to the area's very sensitive natural features. Salmon Creek does not have community specific design guidelines.

**Valley Ford.** Valley Ford received its name from the old Indian and Spanish ford across the Estero Americano. This small, historic community has evolved over the years and has no distinct architectural theme. Styles include Greek Revival, Queen Anne, Western Falsefront, Italianate, and bungalow. Many of the existing buildings date to the 1870s and 1880s. Water is supplied by the Valley Ford Water Association and all development relies on septic systems for wastewater disposal. Valley Ford does not have community specific design guidelines.

### ***Landforms***

The landforms of the Coastal Zone are classified into the following eight types: Beaches, Dunes, Bluffs, Terraces, Hillside, Ridgelines, Wetlands, and Inland Valleys. Each landform has readily recognizable characteristics upon which recommendations for future development can be established. Beaches, Dunes, and Wetlands are addressed in more detail in Section 3, Biotic Resources.

**Terraces.** Coastal terraces are the broad, level areas between coastal hills and bluffs. They are generally covered with grasses and sometimes dotted with trees or divided by tree windbreaks, comprised predominantly of cypress trees. Lines are horizontal except where trees create a vertical influence and break up the open landscape. Terraces are particularly visually sensitive.

**Hillsides.** Coastal hillsides are the interfaces between the coastal terraces and the ridgelines. Many of Sonoma County's hillsides begin east of State Highway 1, have few trees and shrubs, and are highly visible. Other coastal hillsides are forested, particularly on the North Coast. These forested hillsides are not as visually sensitive as are terraces and non-forested hillsides. Hillsides are especially sensitive to grading activities that do not conform to natural land contours.

**Ridgelines.** Ridgelines are the most visually sensitive of the landforms on the Sonoma County coast. Ridgelines are often seen from great distances. The contrast between the land and the sky makes structural intrusions very obvious. The high locations of ridgelines cause any alterations to be seen from a wide area and may affect many viewsheds. A primary example of the sensitivity of ridgelines is the Muniz Ranch subdivision east of Russian Gulch. While driving up State Highway 1 from Russian Gulch to the high bluffs, it is apparent that the spectacular views to the east have been significantly degraded by the ridgetop development.

**Inland Valleys.** The two inland valleys on the Sonoma County coast are at Duncans Mills and Valley Ford. They are characterized by historic villages surrounded by agricultural land.

### *Vegetation management*

Prairie grassland is the characteristic landscape along State Highway 1, with forested areas in the eastern hills north of the Russian River. Planting of trees over the last century for windbreaks adds visual complexity to the view, but planting of non-native species can detract from the natural coastline landscape, and the planting of certain tree varieties west of State Highway 1 may block views to the coastline

A large scale vegetation management program has been implemented by The Sea Ranch Association promote and enhance native plants while controlling and removing invasive non-native plants at The Sea Ranch.

## **Goal, Objectives, and Policies**

**GOAL C-OSRC-3: Preserve, retain, and enhance the unique character of each of the communities on the Sonoma County coast, while accommodating projected growth and housing needs.**

**Objective C-OSRC-3.1:** Establish community character as a primary criterion for review of projects in coastal communities.

**Objective C-OSRC-3.2:** Protect and preserve community character by Coastal Design Guidelines which call for development that preserves existing site features, contributes to community character, sites buildings and development features so they blend in with the surrounding landscape, provides connections to surrounding development, provides opportunities for community interaction and pedestrian activity, provides attractive public

views, provides safe and comfortable infrastructure and streetscape improvements for bikes and pedestrians, and maintains or increases public safety.

**Policy C-OSRC-3a:** Design review shall be required for all new development outside of Urban Service Areas and Rural Community Boundaries. The Director of Permit Sonoma may waive this requirement on parcels not visible from and east of State Highway 1. (EXISTING LCP REVISED)

**Policy C-OSRC-3b:** The Coastal Design Guidelines (**Appendix A-1**) shall be used for new development throughout the coast except where more restrictive community design guidelines have been adopted. (EXISTING LCP REVISED: RECOMMENDATIONS 4-25 ON PAGES 173-180)

**Policy C-OSRC-3c:** Existing tree windbreaks which are oriented predominantly east-west and do not block or interrupt views to the coast shall be retained; and development of new tree windbreaks which would block or interrupt views to the coast shall be discouraged. (EXISTING LCP REVISED)

**Policy C-OSRC-3d:** New development located within Bodega Bay outside of the Bodega Bay Core Area shall be consistent with the following Bodega Bay Non-Core Design Guidelines (**Appendix A-2**) in addition to the Coastal Design Guidelines (**Appendix A-1**). In the case of conflict, these community specific guidelines shall supersede the Coast Community Design Guidelines:

- (1) The exterior of structures shall be designed to reflect the nautical character of the harbor with wooden exteriors, stained or painted white or subdued earth colors.
- (2) For heavy commercial structures, textured metal in subdued colors with proper architectural detailing and landscaping shall be encouraged to add visual interest and soften building lines. (EXISTING LCP REVISED)

**Policy C-OSRC-3e:** New development located within the Bodega Bay Core Area shall be consistent with the Bodega Bay Core Design Guidelines in addition to the Coastal Design Guidelines (**Appendix A-2**). (EXISTING LCP REVISED) In the case of conflict, the Bodega Bay Core Area Design Guidelines shall supersede the Coast Community Design Guidelines.

**Policy C-OSRC-3f:** Development shall follow applicable community-specific design guidelines for The Sea Ranch, Timber Cove, Bodega Harbour, and Sereno del Mar in addition to the Coastal Design Guidelines (**Appendix A**). In the case of conflict, community specific design guidelines shall supersede the Coastal Design Guidelines. (NEW)

## **4. STREAMS AND RIPARIAN CORRIDORS**

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Many rivers and creeks drain into the Pacific Ocean along the Sonoma Coast. Most of these rivers and creeks support riparian vegetation and provide important habitat and movement corridors for fish and wildlife species. Riparian areas are typically dominated by trees such as alders and willows and



shrubs such as California blackberry, but contain a wide diversity of plants. Riparian areas and creeks have been altered and managed by humans including development of roads, bridges, and other structures adjacent to and through riparian areas. This development has reduced water quality and habitat connectivity, narrowed riparian corridors, and altered stream flows. Current and past management and alteration of stream and riparian areas provides a challenge and opportunity to restore and enhance these systems to provide improved habitat for fish and wildlife. Rivers and creeks and their associated riparian corridors are generally considered to be sensitive habitats (see **Figures C-OSRC-2a through 2k**).

Major waterways along the coast include Salmon Creek, Russian River, and Gualala River. These rivers and their tributaries, along with other cold-water creeks provide habitat to Coho salmon, Chinook salmon, and Steelhead trout. Most of the coastal rivers and creeks in Sonoma County that provide potential habitat for salmonids have been identified by the federal government as critical habitat, or habitat that is essential for the health of these species. Other native fish also depend on rivers and creeks in Sonoma County, including the tidewater goby. The tidewater goby lives in freshwater to brackish lagoons created by coastal streams; the federal government has identified portions of Salmon Creek and Estero Americano as critical habitat.

Coastal rivers and streams in Sonoma County provide habitat for several wildlife species. The California giant salamander lives in many different coastal creeks and streams, while the California freshwater shrimp is known to occur only within Salmon Creek within the coastal region of Sonoma County. Two other special-status species, the California red-legged frog and foothill yellow-legged frog, also live in coastal creeks and rivers. The California red-legged frog occurs in several streams within southern Sonoma County, including Salmon Creek. Foothill yellow-legged frog is found in rocky streams and occurs within several Sonoma County coastal creeks from Gualala River in the north to Russian Gulch in the south. Riparian corridors also provide excellent foraging and roosting habitat for bird and bat species and habitat for mammals such as bobcat, gray and red fox, and dusky-footed woodrat.

## **Goal, Objective, and Policies**

**GOAL C-OSRC-4: Enhance and protect coastal waterways, riparian vegetation, and biotic resources associated with these areas.** (CCC REVISED)

**Objective C-OSRC-4.1:** Identifying riparian corridors, lagoons, and estuaries and establish criteria to protect these resources. (CCC REVISED)

**Policy C-OSRC-4a** Designate all streams shown on maps created by USGS in the National Hydrography dataset as Riparian Corridors, and establish streamside conservation areas along these designated corridors.

**Policy C-OSRC-4b:** Along both sides of riparian corridors, as defined in this Local Coastal Plan, establish streamside conservation areas measured on each side of the channel as: a) within riparian habitat as determined by the Permit Sonoma or a qualified resource specialist, b) 100 feet from the landward edge of riparian vegetation as defined by Permit Sonoma or a qualified resource specialist, or c) 100 feet (200 feet for the Russian River) out

from the top of the bank on each side of the stream, whichever is farthest from the channel centerline. Where there is more than one bank on a side of the stream and the top-of-bank measurement approach is used, the measurement shall be from the top of the higher bank on that side. (GP2020 REVISED) (EXISTING LCP REVISED: RECOMMENDATION 9 ON PAGE 28)

**Policy C-OSRC-4c:** Allowable uses and development within any streamside conservation area or Riparian Corridor shall be evaluated consistent with the Habitat Development Guidelines criteria. Construction, operation, and maintenance, or development shall not result in any significant, long-term adverse impacts on the functions and values of the riparian habitat. (EXISTING LCP REVISED: RECOMMENDATIONS 9-13 ON PAGES 28-29)

**Policy C-OSRC-4d:** Fencing or walls shall be prohibited within riparian habitat and on bluffs, except where necessary for public safety, wildfire risk abatement, habitat protection, or restoration. Fencing or walls that do not permit the free passage of wildlife shall be prohibited. Wildlife-passable fencing should generally be no more than 40 inches tall (up to 6 feet to contain horses) and no lower than 16 inches from the ground (as low as 10 inches where sheep, goats, or predation is a concern). Wooden rail, mesh, or chain link is preferred over wire fence tops, which are less visible to and more likely to result in wildlife collisions and entanglements. Where wire cannot be avoided, the top two wires should be at least 12 inches apart, and the top and bottom wires should not be barbed. (NEW)

**Policy C-OSRC-4e:** Channelizations, dams, or other substantial alterations of rivers and streams shall be prohibited except for: (1) necessary water supply projects, (2) flood control projects where no other method for protecting existing structures in the flood plain is feasible and where such protection is necessary for public safety or to protect existing development, or (3) developments where the primary function is the improvement of fish and wildlife habitat. Any channelization or stream alteration permitted for one of these three purposes shall minimize impacts to coastal resources, including the depletion of groundwater, and shall include measures sufficient to appropriately mitigate unavoidable impacts. Alternatives that incorporate a biotechnical component to river or stream bank stabilization (e.g., pocket planting and joint planting, vegetated crib walls, vegetated slope gratings, etc.) shall be encouraged over alternatives that employ strictly hard solutions (e.g., concrete wall or riprap banks) so long as the alternatives are consistent with all other applicable provisions of this LCP. Where there is conflict the more specific permissible use provisions of this policy shall control over the more general use provisions for other types of ESHA identified by policies found in Subsection 8. "Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Areas". (NEW)

**Policy C-OSRC-4f:** To protect fishery resources and minimize impacts on water supply, projects which would limit in-stream flows shall comply with State Water Resources Control Board's Policy for Maintaining Instream Flows in Northern California Coastal Streams, adopted under Resolution 2013-0035, effective February 4, 2014 (23 CCR Section 2921). (NEW)

**Policy C-OSRC-4g:** In Anadromous Fish Streams (Chinook and Coho Salmon Habitat), the following uses and activities shall be prohibited:

- (1) Dredging.
- (2) Dams and other structures which would prevent upstream migration of anadromous fish unless other measures are used to allow fish to bypass these structures. (EXISTING LCP REVISED)

**Policy C-OSRC-4h** Carry out the following activities to preserve Chinook and Coho Salmon Habitat (Anadromous Fish Streams): (CCC REVISED)

- (1) In an Anadromous Fish Stream, maintain flow levels 1.5 times the minimum necessary for use of the stream as an anadromous fish spawning area.
- (2) All stream diversions shall be stopped when the stream flow in an Anadromous Fish Stream falls below the minimum flow standard and until the stream flow returns to levels above the minimum flow standard.
- (3) Allow and encourage maintenance of summer base flow in an Anadromous Fish Stream to ensure survival of fish in all life cycle phases

**Policy C-OSRC-4i:** Maintain and restore the biological productivity and the quality of coastal waters, streams, wetlands, ponds, and estuaries in order to maintain optimum populations of marine organisms and to protect human health. (NEW)

**Policy C-OSRC-4j:** Where riparian corridor impacts are permitted in conformity with the Coastal Act and any applicable Local Coastal Plan policies, adverse impacts on riparian vegetation shall be mitigated at a ratio of at least 3:1 to compensate for the temporal and functional loss of affected habitats. (NEW)

**Policy C-OSRC-4k:** As part of the environmental review process, refer permit applications near streams and riparian corridors to California Department of Fish and Wildlife and other agencies responsible for natural resource protection. (CCC REVISED - GP 2020)

## **Programs**

**Program C-OSRC-4-P1:** Continue to actively participate in the FishNet4C program and work cooperatively with participating agencies to implement recommendations to improve and restore aquatic habitat for listed anadromous fish species and other fishery resources. (CCC REVISED - GP2020)

**Program C-OSRC-4-P2:** In coordination with resource agencies, landowners, and the affected public, regularly review Riparian Corridor designations; ephemeral drainage; the requests, approvals, and required mitigation for setback reductions; any cumulative effect of the approved reductions; and other protection issues and, if warranted, develop

recommendations for County policies that may be needed to ensure appropriate protection of Riparian Corridors. (CCC REVISED - GP2020)

**Program C-OSRC-4-P3:** In coordination with resource agencies, landowners, and the affected public, conduct a comprehensive study of Riparian Corridors in grazing areas and, if warranted, develop recommendations for County policies that may be needed to ensure appropriate protection of such corridors. The study should consider the need for policies directing development of livestock watering areas away from Riparian Corridors and use of special range management practices, including fencing, which protect Riparian Corridors. (CCC REVISED - GP2020 REVISED - EXISTING LCP REVISED)

**Program C-OSRC-4-P4:** Support mapping by the Sonoma County Water Agency and other entities of all stream channels with “bed-and-banks”. As this information becomes available, initiate rezoning to the BR Combining District for these streams, including corresponding General Plan Amendments necessary to designate them as Riparian Corridors (CCC REVISED - GP2020).

**Program C-OSRC-4-P5:** Develop a comprehensive program for preservation and restoration of the freshwater, brackish, and tidal marshes in the Coastal Zone. Include mechanisms for preservation and enhancement such as land acquisition; zoning restrictions; public and private conservation easements; regulating filling, grading, or construction; floodwater retention; and wetland restoration. (GP2020 REVISED)

## Initiative

**Initiative C-OSRC-4-I1:** Support non-regulatory programs for protection of streams and riparian functions, including education, technical assistance, tax incentives, and voluntary efforts to protect riparian resources. (GP2020)

## 5. WETLANDS

Wetlands provide wildlife habitat and protection from flooding along the Sonoma Coast. Coastal brackish marsh, coastal and valley freshwater marsh, and ponds are all sensitive wetland communities found along the Sonoma Coast. Wetlands are usually dominated by herbaceous species and generally do not contain trees. Much of the wetland habitat found along the coast occurs near Bodega Bay. The Coastal Commission's definition of wetlands is a single-parameter delineation that requires evidence of only one of three wetland indicators (hydrophytic vegetation, hydric soils, or saturated substrate), while the US Army Corps of Engineers requires all three. This LCP adheres to the Coastal Act, and thus follows the single-parameter definition of wetlands. See California Code of Regulations, title 14, section 13577(b). Salt and brackish marsh occurs in only a few areas along the coast. These include coastal brackish lagoons and estuaries including around

Penny Island and the shore at the mouth of Russian River, the mouth of Salmon Creek (just north of Bodega Bay), within Bodega Harbor, and along Estero Americano (see **Figures C-OSRC-2h** through **2k**). These brackish marshes contain herbaceous plants, such as pickleweed, alkali bulrush, gumweed, and other dominant salt and brackish marsh species. At the mouth of the Gualala River, a small brackish marsh occurs that contains salt grass and salt rush (see **Figure C-OSRC-2a**). Brackish marshes provide food, cover, nesting, and roosting habitat for a variety of birds and mammals. Salt and brackish marshes have been greatly reduced from their historical extent and are important habitat to protect and restore, where feasible. Invasive plant species, existing surrounding development, and projected sea level rise provide challenges in managing and restoring salt and brackish marshes.

Freshwater marshes generally occur more inland or upriver of brackish marshes. Freshwater marshes contain mostly emergent plants such as rushes, cattails, and sedges. Freshwater marshes can provide habitat for California red-legged frog and western pond turtle as well as for many species of birds. Small seeps and ponds also occur intermittently throughout the coast and many of these form seasonally or permanently wet conditions. Some ponds or reservoirs have been man-made or have been significantly altered by humans, but still provide important habitat and water resource for wildlife. Management challenges include invasive wildlife such as the American bull frog, invasive plants species, and altered hydrologic regimes.

**California Code of Regulations §13577(b):**  
*“Wetland shall be defined as land where the water table is at, near, or above the land surface long enough to promote the formation of hydric soils or to support the growth of hydrophytes, and shall also include those types of wetlands where vegetation is lacking and soil is poorly developed or absent as a result of frequent and drastic fluctuations of surface water levels, wave action, water flow, turbidity or high concentrations of salts or other substances in the substrate. Such wetlands can be recognized by the presence of surface water or saturated substrate at some time during each year and their location within, or adjacent to, vegetated wetlands or deep-water habitats.”*

## Goal, Objective, and Policies

### **GOAL C-OSRC-5: Protect and preserve coastal wetlands and biotic resources associated with these areas.** (CCC REVISED)

**Objective C-OSRC-5.1:** Establish criteria for identifying and evaluating coastal wetlands and provide a policy framework for protecting coastal wetlands. (CCC REVISED)

**Policy C-OSRC-5a:** Wetlands shall be defined and delineated consistent with the definitions of the Coastal Act, the Coastal Commission Regulations, and this Local Coastal Plan, as applicable. Wetlands include any area where the water table is at, near, or above the land surface long enough to promote the formation of hydric soils or to support the growth of plants which normally are found to grow in water or wet ground. Wetlands are here defined to include marshes, ponds, seeps, and reservoirs. The upland limit (encompassing the greatest extent) of a wetland is designated as 1) the boundary between land with predominantly hydrophytic cover and land with predominantly mesophytic or xerophytic cover; 2) the boundary between soil that is predominantly hydric and soil that is predominantly non-hydric; 3) in the case of wetlands without vegetation or soil, the boundary between land that is flooded or saturated at some time each year and land that is not. Typical wetland vegetation includes, but is not limited to: pickleweed, cordgrass, Jaumea, salt grass, rushes, bulrushes, sedges, cattails, tule, marsh rosemary, marsh grindelia. A comprehensive list of wetland can be found in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers “*National Wetland Plant List*”. Any unmapped areas that meet these criteria are wetlands and shall be accorded all of the protections provided for wetlands in the Local Coastal Plan. A delineation report prepared for wetlands within the Coastal Zone shall reference and describe for the property in question any wetlands information documented in the National Wetlands Inventory. (EXISTING LCP REVISED)

**Policy C-OSRC-5b:** Wetland extents shall be determined in conformance with the direction provided in **Appendix E-4**. The Coastal Act definition of wetland (Section 30121) does not distinguish between wetlands according to their quality. Thus, poorly functioning or degraded areas that meet the definition of wetlands are subject to the wetland protection policies of this Local Coastal Plan. (NEW)

**Policy C-OSRC-5c:** Where the required initial site inventory indicates the presence or potential for wetland species or indicators, the County shall require the submittal of a detailed biological study of the site, consistent with the requirements of Policy C-OSRC-7e, including a delineation of all wetland areas on the project site. Wetland extents shall be determined in conformance with the direction provided in **Appendix E-4**. (CCC REVISED)

**Policy C-OSRC-5d:** Establish and maintain buffer areas, a minimum of 100 feet in width, in a natural, undeveloped, condition along the periphery of all wetlands. Wetland buffers shall be developed in accordance with **Appendix E-3**. Development within the buffer area is

prohibited unless a study prepared by a qualified professional and reviewed by the Permit Sonoma Natural Resources Section determines that the proposed development will have no potential for an adverse impact on the wetland. (CCC REVISED - EXISTING LCP REVISED)

**Policy C-OSRC-5e:** Diking, filling, draining, and dredging of coastal waters, wetlands, and estuaries shall be permitted only in accordance with other applicable provisions of this Local Coastal Program and only when consistent with Coastal Act, Section 30233., where there is no feasible less environmentally damaging alternative, and where feasible mitigation measures have been provided to minimize adverse environmental effects, and shall be limited to uses and methods described in Habitat Protection Guidelines, **Appendix E-5**. The more specific permissible use provisions of this policy shall control over the more general use provisions for other types of ESHA identified in Subsection 8. “Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Areas”. (NEW)

**Policy C-OSRC-5f:** In coastal wetlands and the Bodega Harbor tideflats, the following uses and activities shall be prohibited: (CCC REVISED)

- (1) Motor vehicles.
- (2) Dredging and filling, except within Bodega Harbor tideflats in accordance with policies found in Subsection 9 “Commercial Fishing, Support Facilities, and Harbor”.
- (3) Discharge of stormwater or wastewater unless it maintains or enhances wetland function and receiving water quality.
- (4) Agricultural activities, including grazing.
- (5) Removal of vegetation except where necessary to maintain plant, fish and wildlife habitat.
- (6) Construction of agricultural, commercial, industrial, and residential structures within the buffer area unless an environmental assessment or qualified biologist that has been reviewed by the Permit Sonoma Natural Resources Section determines that the proposed development will have no potential for an adverse impact on the wetland.
- (7) New water diversions from streams which feed wetlands.
- (8) Discharge of effluent, including those of land- and boat-based origins.
- (9) Domestic animals off leash.

**Policy C-OSRC-5g:** In cooperation with resource agencies, require landowners to erect wildlife-passable fencing around springs, seeps, and ponds located on grazing land as a condition of permit approval and to develop watering areas outside of wetlands and riparian corridors. (EXISTING LCP REVISED)

**Policy C-OSRC-5h** No net losses shall occur in wetland acreage, functions, or values. This includes both direct impacts on wetlands and essential buffers, and consideration of potential indirect effects of development due to changes in available surface water and nonpoint source water quality degradation. Detailed review of the adequacy of a proposed mitigation plan shall be performed as part of any environmental and permit review of the proposed development project to allow for a thorough evaluation of the anticipated loss, as well as the replacement acreage, functions, and values. (CCC REVISED)

**Policy C-OSRC-5i:** Where wetlands fill or development impacts are permitted in conformity with the Coastal Act and any applicable Local Coastal Plan policies, require mitigation measures to compensate for the temporal and functional loss of affected wetlands and associated habitat. Mitigation must meet the criteria in the Habitat Protection Guidelines, found in Appendix E Section 5.3 In order of preference, compensatory mitigation may include on-site restoration of degraded wetlands, off-site restoration of degraded wetlands, acquisition of offsite areas of equal or greater biological productivity, or creation of tidal wetlands. Adverse impacts shall be mitigated at a ratio of at least 4:1 for all types of wetlands. If no appropriate restoration site is available, wetland mitigation credit may be purchased, prior to disturbing wetlands, at a resource agency-approved mitigation bank whose service area includes Sonoma County's coastal zone.<sup>1</sup> (NEW)

## **6. MARINE HABITATS**

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The Sonoma County coast contains a wide variety of marine habitats including offshore rocks, kelp forests, eelgrass beds, tidal flats, rocky intertidal shoreline, and sandy beaches.

Offshore of the Sonoma coast, coastal waters provide habitat to a large number of fish species, resident and migratory marine mammal species, and seabirds. While offshore waters provide foraging habitat for seabirds, offshore rocks provide roosting and nesting areas for seabird species such as Brandt's cormorant, pelagic cormorant, brown pelican, and pigeon guillemot. Kelp forests are commonly found in nearshore coastal waters north of the Russian River (see **Figures C-OSRC-2a** through **2f**). Kelp forests provide refuge from ocean predators, relief from currents, and a source of food and essential habitat for invertebrates, fish, and marine animals. Management challenges to marine habitats include overfishing, water quality, human disturbance, and climate change.

Eelgrass beds are found within the protected subtidal waters of Bodega Harbor and Estero Americano in southern Sonoma County (see **Figures C-OSRC-2i** through **2k**). These productive ecosystems not only provide food, shelter, and nursery habitat for commercially and recreationally fished species, but also reduce erosion. Bodega Harbor and Estero Americano also contain exposed tidal mudflats at low tide which provide an important invertebrate food source for shorebirds.

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<sup>1</sup> The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers maintains an index of approved wetland mitigation banks. The index is available via the agency's San Francisco District website at: <http://www.spn.usace.army.mil/Missions/Regulatory/Mitigation-Banks/Approved-Banks-for-the-San-Francisco-Regulatory-Di/>



Rocky intertidal habitat and sandy beaches occur in narrow bands over much of the Sonoma Coast and provide great foraging grounds for shorebirds and gulls. Rocky intertidal shores are exposed during low tide and covered by seawater during high tide. The plants (likely limited to eelgrass), invertebrates, and algae that live in the rocky intertidal zone create a biologically diverse and productive community.

Stellar sea lions and other pinnipeds haul out on offshore intertidal areas that become exposed at low tides. Seals and sea lions use intertidal areas and sandy beaches, spits, and bars to haul out and rest. Harbor seals specifically use sandy beaches including the beaches at Sonoma Coast Sea Ranch, Jenner, and Bodega Bay to rest, molt, give birth, and nurse their pups. California sea lions and northern elephant seals are occasionally observed at these harbor seal haul out locations.

## **Goal, Objectives, and Policies**

**GOAL C-OSRC-6: Protect, preserve, and enhance coastal marine habitats by preventing development and human activity from having an adverse impact on coastal marine resources and habitat as well as impacts to offshore resources.** (CCC REVISED)

**Objective C-OSRC-6.1:** Identify areas where marine environmental resources are at risk from development, sea level rise, and climate change. Establish criteria protecting resources from these risks. (CCC REVISED)

**Objective C-OSRC-6.2:** Protect marine mammal haul out areas and seal nurseries from disturbance associated with development or other human activity. (CCC REVISED)

**Policy C-OSRC-6a:** Marine resources shall be maintained, enhanced, and where feasible, restored. Special protection shall be given to areas and species of special biological or economic significance. Uses of the marine environment shall be carried out in a manner that will sustain the biological productivity of coastal waters and that will maintain healthy populations of all species of marine organisms for long-term commercial, recreational, scientific, and educational purposes. Mitigation for impacts to marine habitats shall be provided at a minimum ratio of 4:1. The more specific mitigation requirements shall control over the more general mitigation requirements of this Local Coastal Plan and shall consider the cumulative impact of sea level rise and climate change as well as immediate impact of the proposed development. (NEW)

**Policy C-OSRC-6b:** At rocky intertidal coastline, the following uses and activities shall be prohibited:

- (1) Motor vehicles.
- (2) Development of groins, breakwaters, piers, sea walls, pipelines, or other structures that alter natural shoreline processes. Existing structures causing water pollution or fish mortality shall be phased-out or upgraded where feasible. (EXISTING LCP REVISED)

**Policy C-OSRC-6c:** Public access to Offshore Rocks and onshore nesting/rookery areas used by seabirds to breed or nest or which provide habitat for seals and sea lions shall be prohibited. (EXISTING LCP REVISED: RECOMMENDATION 39 ON PAGE 31)

**Policy C-OSRC-6d:** On sand beaches, spits, or bars, the following uses and activities shall be prohibited:

- (1) Motor vehicles, except for those required for management or emergency use.
- (2) Removal of sand.
- (3) Opening of sand bars, except where necessary for maintenance of tidal flow to ensure the continued biological productivity of streams and associated wetlands and to prevent flooding. Applications for allowable opening shall include a plan, prepared in consultation with and reviewed by applicable resource agencies (e.g., National Marine Fisheries Service and California Department of Fish and Wildlife) that describes measures that will be implemented to avoid and/or minimize impacts on special status species affected by the proposed action. Sand bars shall not be breached until there is sufficient in-stream flow to preserve anadromous fish runs. (EXISTING LCP REVISED)

**Policy C-OSRC-6e:** Disturbance of marine mammal haul-out grounds shall be prohibited and recreational activities near these areas shall be limited to passive recreation. Public access to may be temporarily prohibited in nursery areas during seal pupping season. Disturbance or development of areas used by harbor seals and sea lions shall be prohibited. (CCC REVISED - EXISTING LCP REVISED)

**Policy C-OSRC-6f:** Encourage the California Department of Fish and Wildlife to monitor Marine Mammal Haul-Out Grounds on an annual basis to determine their condition and level of use by marine mammals; and to incorporate this information into its management plan for marine mammals. (EXISTING LCP REVISED)

**Policy C-OSRC-6g:** Encourage the pertinent state and federal agencies to carry-out the following activities to preserve kelp beds:

- (1) Monitor the size and viability of the kelp beds for all ecological functions including fish habitat;
- (2) Regulate and monitor activities such as sewage disposal, dredging, and renewable energy development, and other projects which could degrade nearshore marine water quality and hence have an adverse impact on kelp habitat;
- (3) Prohibit petroleum and other forms of energy development which may have a significant impact on kelp beds as a result of normal operations or accidents (e.g., oil spills and well blow-outs); and

- (4) Require applicants for commercial or industrial kelp harvesting to conduct studies, in consultation with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, of the specific sites or areas proposed for kelp harvesting. The studies shall identify measures that could be implemented following harvest to restore these sites to their pre-harvest condition, including identification of reference sites and performance standards for determining restoration success. Require any authorized harvesting to be conducted consistent with the recommendation of the studies, including site restoration measures. (EXISTING LCP REVISED)

## Program

**Program C-OSRC-6-P1:** Request that the State Department of Parks and Recreation carry-out the following activities to preserve rocky intertidal coastline:

- (1) Designate important rocky intertidal areas as a Marine Reserve or Ecological Reserve, and encourage public agencies or private groups to maintain these areas.
- (2) Designate the mouth and banks of the Estero Americano and its offshore area as an Ecological Reserve, representative of the coastalestuarine environment of Northern California; and
- (3) Encourage use of the public shoreline at Salt Point State Park, Kruse Ranch, and the non-historic areas of Fort Ross State Park to reduce pressure on the marine resources at Stillwater Cove Regional Park. (EXISTING LCP REVISED)

## Initiatives

**Initiative C-OSRC-6-I1:** Recommend that the California Department of Fish and Wildlife carry-out the following activities to preserve Bodega Harbor Tidel flats:

- (1) Establish a system in which sections of the tidel flats on the west side of Bodega Harbor are open to shellfish harvesting on a rotating basis of every three to five years; and
- (2) Establish more restrictive bag and possession limits and gear restrictions for ghost shrimp (*Callinassa californiensis*), mud shrimp (*Upogebia pugettensis*), and blood worms (*Urechis caupo*). (EXISTING LCP REVISED)

**Initiative C-OSRC-6-I2:** Support the Marine Debris Programs of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and California Coastal Commission, including California Coastal Cleanup Day and Adopt-A-Beach Program. Use NOAA's Marine Debris Clearinghouse to identify best practices for preventing and reducing marine debris. Consider implementation of these best practices on the Sonoma County coast. (NEW)

## 7. TERRESTRIAL HABITATS

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A wide range of terrestrial habitats occur throughout the coastal areas of Sonoma County. Terrestrial habitats include coastal dunes, coastal prairie, coastal scrub, woodlands and forests, and urban and residential areas which contain habitats.

Coastal dunes frame many beaches along the coast and support a hardy ground cover of native shrubs, grasses and wildflowers. Many coastal dune areas have been invaded by non-native plants such as European beach grass and iceplant, which outcompete and threaten the survival of many native dune plant species. These non-native plants change the ecosystem of the coastal dunes and also threaten the nesting habitat of the western snowy plover. Coastal dunes are most commonly found in State and regional parks along the coast as these areas are protected from development.

Coastal prairie and grassland support a rich assemblage of native plants on coastal terraces and bluffs in Sonoma County. More than 90 percent of coastal prairie habitat has been lost, but it is still found sporadically along the Pacific coast of California, including Sonoma County (see **Figures C-OSRC-2e** and **2h**). Due to the drastic habitat loss and great diversity of these grasslands, coastal prairies are considered sensitive habitats. Following conversion from native bunch-grass and herb dominated communities to vegetation dominated by non-native grasses and herbs, much of Sonoma County's historic coastal grasslands are now considered non-native annual grasslands after undergoing substantial conversion. Many of these grasslands are managed by grazing, which reduces the leaf litter caused by the larger and more aggressive non-native vegetation. Coastal prairies that are not grazed, or have been undisturbed from fire for long periods of time, often develop into coastal scrub habitat dominated by native shrubs such as bush lupine and coyote bush. Coastal prairie and scrub habitat occurs mostly on protected lands including Wright Hill Ranch, Salt Point State Park, Jenner Headlands Preserve, and Sonoma Coast State Park.

Disruption of habitat values is defined as the physical removal, destruction, damage, disturbance, fragmentation, or contamination of air, land, water, soil, and vegetation of an area which cause the plant and animal habitats in the area to be removed, replaced by other habitats, or degraded to the point where the habitats are functionally unable to support the plant and animal species originally present.

### Goals, Objectives, and Policies

**GOAL C-OSRC-7: Protect and enhance the native habitats and diverse ecological communities on the Sonoma County Coast.**

**Objective C-OSRC-7.1:** Identify and protect native vegetation and wildlife, particularly occurrences of special status species, wetlands, sensitive native communities, and areas of essential habitat connectivity.

**Objective C-OSRC-7.2:** Establish standards, programs, and development guidelines to protect, restore, and enhance biotic resources, including designated Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Areas, and assure that their quality is protected and maintained.

**Objective C-OSRC-7.3:** Establish standards and programs to protect native trees and plant communities. (CCC REVISED)

**Objective C-OSRC-7.4:** Support use of native plant species and removal of invasive exotic plant species. (CCC REVISED)

**Objective C-OSRC-7.5:** Encourage voluntary efforts to restore and enhance biotic habitat. (CCC REVISED)

**Objective C-OSRC-7.6:** Preserve and restore major wetlands (including marshes). (CCC REVISED)

**Objective C-OSRC-7.7:** Promote production of native marine and shoreline plant and animal habitats. (CCC REVISED)

**Objective C-OSRC-7.8:** Support regulatory efforts by other agencies to protect biotic habitats.

**Objective C-OSRC-7.9:** Maintain and enhance connectivity between natural habitat areas.

**Objective C-OSRC-7.10:** Balance the need for agricultural production, development, timber and mining operations, and other land uses with the preservation of biotic resources.

**Policy C-OSRC-7a:** Permit applications for development which could have an impact on biological resources shall be accompanied by a biological resources assessment, as required in Subsection 8. “Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Areas”. Biological resources include, but are not limited to, special status plant or animal species and their habitats, coastal dunes, beaches, tidepools, wetlands, estuaries, lagoons, streams and creeks, riparian habitat, oak and other native tree woodlands, and native grasslands. (NEW)

**Policy C-OSRC-7b:** Require buffers around sensitive biological resources to protect them from impacts of development encroachment consistent with the specific buffer provisions of this Local Coastal Program. (NEW)

**Policy C-OSRC-7c:** Except as permitted pursuant to this provision or **Policy C-OSRC-7e**, development that involves the use of pesticides, including insecticides, herbicides, rodenticides or any other similar toxic chemical substances, shall be prohibited in cases where the application of such substances would have the potential to significantly degrade Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Areas or coastal water quality or harm wildlife. Herbicides may be used for the eradication of invasive plant species or habitat restoration, but only if the use of non-chemical methods for prevention and management such as physical, mechanical, cultural, and biological controls are infeasible. Herbicides shall be restricted to the least toxic product and method, and to the maximum extent feasible, shall be biodegradable, derived from natural sources, and used for a limited time. When permitted, application of such herbicides shall not take place during the winter season, when rain is predicted within a week of application, or when wind is predicted above 5 mph. The

County will identify non-toxic and earth-friendly management techniques for controlling pests and will conduct public outreach to promote the use of such techniques on property with the County. (PC REVISED)

**Policy C-OSRC-7d:** The use of insecticides, herbicides, or other toxic substances by County employees and contractors in construction and maintenance of County facilities, including public roads, shall be minimized. (PC REVISED)

**Policy C-OSRC-7e:** Mosquito abatement within or adjacent to ESHA shall be limited to the implementation of the minimum measures necessary to protect human health, and shall minimize adverse impacts to Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Areas. (PC REVISED)

**Policy C-OSRC-7f:** Proposals for exterior nighttime lighting shall minimize impacts on biotic resources through adherence to Local Coastal Plan **Policies C-OSRC-2a** through **C-OSRC-2e**. (PC REVISED - NEW)

**Policy C-OSRC-7g:** The use of native plant species in landscaping shall be encouraged. The use of native or compatible non-native, non-invasive species for landscaping where consistent with fire safety shall be required. The use of invasive exotic plant species shall be prohibited. (GP2020 REVISED)

**Policy C-OSRC-7h:** Project applicants shall provide evidence of permits and clearances required by state and federal agencies before Permit Sonoma issues coastal development permits, or building or grading permits. (GP2020 REVISED/NEW)

**Policy C-OSRC-7i:** A Restoration and Monitoring Plan shall be required for any project requiring habitat mitigation or restoration. The Restoration and Monitoring Plan shall consist of a stand-alone document that specifies performance standards, success criteria, adaptive management, and monitoring requirements as described in **Appendix E-1**. (GP2020 REVISED/NEW)

**Policy C-OSRC-7j:** On dunes/coastal strand, the following uses and activities shall be prohibited:

- (1) Uses other than resource-dependent, scientific, educational, and passive recreational uses including support facilities.
- (2) Public access during the breeding and nesting seasons of special status animals.
- (3) Motorized vehicles, except those required for management or emergency use.
- (4) Disturbance, damage, or removal of dune vegetation except as required for park construction or maintenance projects for which revegetation or removal of non-natives is a condition of project approval.

- (5) Removal of sand except where required for construction of parks and support facilities. (EXISTING LCP REVISED)

**Policy C-OSRC-7k:** On dunes/coastal strand, carry-out the following activities to preserve native vegetation:

- (1) Limit public access in areas of plant communities.
- (2) Post signs which explain the importance of limiting public access to protect plant communities.
- (3) Where public access is allowed, develop and use well-defined footpaths or raised boardwalks. (EXISTING LCP REVISED)

**Policy C-OSRC-7l:** The following guidelines shall be used for developing public access on Coastal Bluffs:

- (1) Steps, trails, and paths shall be sited and designed so as to minimize erosion and disruption to native vegetation.
- (2) In areas of heavy recreational use, surfaced steps, trails, and paths shall be constructed.
- (3) In areas of moderate recreational use, to the extent available and consistent with the resource protection policies of this Local Coastal Plan, local materials (obtained from the site) shall be used to construct steps, trails, and paths. (EXISTING LCP REVISED: RECOMMENDATIONS 45-46 ON PAGE 31)

**Policy C-OSRC-7m:** At coastal bluffs, the following uses and activities shall be prohibited:

- (1) Removal of sand or rock except that necessary for road maintenance.
- (2) Public access off established steps, trails, or paths; and motor vehicles. Equestrian use shall be restricted to areas where ground compaction and erosion from use of horses would not have an adverse impact on bluff stability. (EXISTING LCP REVISED: RECOMMENDATIONS 40-44 ON PAGE 31)

**Policy C-OSRC-7n:** Carry-out the following activities to preserve coastal terrace prairie:

- (1) At Bodega Head and Stump Beach, sites shall be developed for the public to observe cormorants and other seabirds; and
- (2) At Stillwater Cove County Park, use of the upland area for habitat education activities shall be encouraged. (EXISTING LCP REVISED)

**Policy C-OSRC-7o:** The identification through site assessment, preservation, and protection of native trees and woodlands shall be required. To the maximum extent practicable, the

removal of native trees and fragmentation of woodlands shall be minimized; any trees removed shall be replaced, preferably on the site at a greater than 1:1 ratio (and at a greater than 3:1 ratio for riparian trees); and permanent protection of other existing woodlands shall be provided where replacement planting does not provide adequate mitigation. (GP2020 REVISED)

**Policy C-OSRC-7p:** Identify important oak woodlands; assess current protection of oak woodlands; identify options to provide greater protection of oak woodlands, including identification and removal of trees infected with *Phytophthora ramorum*, and their role in connectivity, water quality, and scenic resources; and develop recommendations for regulatory protection and voluntary programs to protect and enhance oak woodlands through education, technical assistance, easements, and incentives. (GP2020)

**Policy C-OSRC-7q:** In the Mendocino Cypress Pygmy Forest, the following uses and activities shall be prohibited:

- (1) Motor vehicles, except for those required for management or emergency use.
- (2) Construction of permanent structures, except where necessary for scientific and educational uses. (EXISTING LCP REVISED)

**Policy C-OSRC-7r:** At, around, and near osprey nest sites, the following shall be prohibited:

- (1) Removal of osprey nests.
- (2) Removal of snags and dead tops of live trees.
- (3) Development of new structures and roads.

Recreational activities shall be limited to low-intensity passive recreation, these areas are particularly vulnerable during the period of egg incubation in May to July and activities should be further limited.

Osprey nest sites located adjacent to Willow Creek, Freezeout Creek, and Russian River shall be protected from disturbance by timber harvesting activities. (EXISTING LCP REVISED)

**Policy C-OSCR-7s:** For development in locations known, or determined by environmental review, to potentially have breeding or nesting sensitive bird species, two weeks prior to any scheduled development, a qualified biological monitor shall conduct a preconstruction survey of the site and within 500 feet of the project site. For purposes of this provision, sensitive bird species are those species designated threatened or endangered by state or federal agencies, California Species of Special Concern, California Fully Protected Species, raptors, and large wading birds. In addition, surveys must be conducted every two weeks for sensitive nesting birds during the breeding season. If nesting sensitive birds are detected at any time during the breeding season, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife shall be



notified and an appropriate disturbance set-back will be determined and imposed until the young-of-the-year are no longer reliant upon the nest. In no cases shall the buffer be less than 100 feet. (NEW)

**Policy C-OSRC-7t:** At offshore rocky and intertidal egret or heron rookeries, the following uses and activities shall be prohibited:

- (1) Public access.
- (2) Construction of structures or roads within 600 feet.
- (3) On Penny Island, uses other than low intensity scientific and educational uses, managed so as not to interfere with nesting activity (February to mid-July). (EXISTING LCP REVISED)

**Policy C-OSRC-7u:** On coastal bluffs, public access in areas used by birds for nesting or resting, and removal of native plant species shall be minimized. (EXISTING LCP REVISED)

## Initiatives

**Initiative C-OSRC-7-I1:** In coordination with resource agencies, landowners, and the affected public, conduct a comprehensive study of the cumulative impacts of habitat fragmentation and connectivity loss and the effects of exclusionary fencing on wildlife movement. If warranted, identify essential habitat connectivity corridors and develop recommendations or policies to protect essential habitat corridors and linkages and to restore and improve opportunities for native plant and animal dispersal. (GP2020)

**Initiative C-OSRC-7-I2:** Support voluntary programs for habitat restoration and enhancement, hazardous fuel management, removal and control of invasive exotics, native plant revegetation, treatment of woodlands affected by sudden oak death, use of fencerows and hedgerows, and management of biotic habitat. (GP2020)

**Initiative C-OSRC-7-I3:** Promote and enhance the use of native plants and reduce non-native invasive plants in common areas and on private lots. Support property owners in their efforts to identify and eradicate non-native invasive plants and planting native plants. (NEW)

## 8. ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE HABITAT AREAS

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Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Area (ESHA) are areas in which plant or animal life or their habitats are either rare or especially valuable because of their specific nature or role in an ecosystem, and which could be easily disturbed or degraded by human activities and developments. Potential ESHAs are presented on **Figures C-OSRC-2a** through **2k**. These figures are not intended to be an exhaustive compilation of the habitat areas that may meet the ESHA definition. Any area not identified as a potential ESHA on **Figures C-OSRC-2a** through **2k** but that meets the ESHA criteria is ESHA, and shall be accorded all the protection provided for ESHAs in the Local Coastal Program.

While ESHA maps can serve as an illustrative tool to help identify the presence of potential resources, it is the actual presence of ESHA on the site as determined by a site specific analysis that dictates whether ESHA policies apply to a site. The Local Coastal Plan's ESHA policies will generally not apply to marine habitats which are protected separately. Under the Coastal Act, ESHAs are governed by Section 30240, while marine resources are governed by Section 30230 and 30231.

(CCC REVISED)

## Goal, Objective, and Policies

### **GOAL C-OSRC-8: Protect and enhance the native habitats and diverse ecological communities on the Sonoma County Coast.**

**Objective C-OSRC-8.1:** Designate Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Areas and update designations every five years, or sooner if significant new information is available, using credible data sources, improvements in identifying ESHA, scientific discovery, and regulatory changes including decisions and guidance from the California Coastal Commission. (CCC REVISED)

**Policy C-OSRC-8a:** Mapping shown in **Figures C-OSRC-2a** through **2k** is not a comprehensive inventory of all ESHA due to changing habitats, future improvements in identifying ESHA, regulatory changes, and scientific discovery. In addition to mapped areas, the following areas shall be considered ESHA, unless there is compelling site-specific evidence to the contrary.

(CCC REVISED)

- (1) Any habitat area that is rare or especially valuable from a local, regional, or statewide perspective.
- (2) Areas that contribute to the viability of plant or animal species designated as rare, threatened, or endangered under State or Federal law.
- (3) Areas that contribute to the viability of species designated as Fully Protected or Species of Special Concern under State law or regulations.
- (4) Areas that contribute to the viability of plant and animal species for which there is compelling evidence of rarity, or a species or habitat that is considered to have a special role in the ecosystem. (CCC REVISED NEW)
- (5) Old growth Redwood and Douglas fir trees and associated forest habitat. Because of their rarity and biological importance, isolated old growth Redwood and Douglas fir trees shall be protected as well as intact old growth forest habitat. (GP2020 REVISED)

**Policy C-OSRC-8b:** The following criteria shall be considered when determining whether an area should be designated ESHA:

- (1) The potential ESHAs presented on **Figures C-OSRC-2a** through **2k**
- (2) Federally-listed Rare, Threatened, & Endangered Species

- (3) State-listed Rare, Threatened & Endangered Species
- (4) Federal and State Proposed/Candidate Species
- (5) California Native Plant Society “1B” and “2” Listed Species
- (6) California Department of Fish and Wildlife Global and State 1 - 3 Ranked Vegetation Communities (i.e. G1, G2, G3, S1, S2, S3)
- (7) California Department of Fish and Wildlife Global and State 1 - 3 Ranked Plant and Animal Species
- (8) California Species of Special Concern
- (9) California Fully Protected Species
- (10) Habitats that Support Listed Species (i.e., those in 2 & 3)
- (11) Tree stands that support raptor nesting or monarch populations
- (12) Genetically special populations (NEW)

**Policy C-OSRC-8c:** A biological resource assessment performed by a qualified biologist shall be required for any project which could impact biological resources and shall meet the following criteria:

1. To identify and analyze the potential biological impacts of the proposed development and distinguish between time (permanent vs. temporary impacts) and/or or space (e.g., maintenance of large habitat areas vs. habitat fragmentation. The duration of temporary impacts must be specified. Possible cumulative biological impacts must also be discussed.
2. A discussion of all field methods actually employed, including the methods for formal protocol surveys. The detailed survey protocols for particular sensitive habitats or species may be placed in an appendix, but should not just be referenced to in a separate document.
3. The determination of when to visit a site shall be specified by Permit Sonoma Natural Resources Section staff in consultation with the applicant’s biologist.
4. The impact that sea level rise and climate change may have on the resource, and impacts to resources that may result from the development projects need to adapt to sea level rise and climate change. (CCC REVISED)
4. All report content specified in Appendix E-2 “Biological Resource Assessment Requirements”. (CCC REVISED NEW)

**Policy C-OSRC-8d:** ESHAs shall be protected against any significant disruption of habitat values, which is the importance of various habitat types and conditions in sustaining socially or ecologically significant wildlife populations and biological diversity. Uses allowed within ESHAs shall be limited to those that are dependent on and compatible with maintaining the habitat values within ESHA and those that are otherwise specifically provided for in Subsection 8. “Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Areas”. and **Appendix E-3**. Proposed development in areas adjacent to ESHAs and parks and recreation areas shall be sited and designed to prevent impacts which would significantly degrade such areas, and must be compatible with the continuance of such habitat areas. (NEW)

**Policy C-OSRC-8e:** Establish buffers around ESHA to protect it from development impacts. ESHA buffers shall be developed in accordance with **Appendix E-3**. All buffers around ESHA shall be a minimum of 100 feet in width; a lesser width may be approved by the County as addressed in Subsection 8. “Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Areas” and **Appendix E-3**. Generally, a 600-foot buffer is required for heron rookeries; a 500-foot buffer for occupied raptor nests; a 300-foot buffer for any occupied burrow of a burrowing owl. However, these buffers may be reduced, to a minimum of 100ft, in consultation with resource agencies and with the recommended mitigation and monitoring for impacts. Only developments consistent with Subsection 8. “Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Areas” shall be allowed in ESHA buffers. Buffers shall take into account reasonably foreseeable effects of sea level rise and climate change. (CCC REVISED - NEW)

**Policy C-OSRC-8f:** Public access-ways and trails are considered resource dependent uses. New access-ways and trails located within or adjacent to ESHA shall be sited to minimize impacts to ESHA to the maximum extent feasible. Measures, including but not limited to signage, placement of boardwalks, and limited fencing shall be implemented as necessary to protect ESHA. (NEW)

**Policy C-OSRC-8g:** In some cases, smaller buffers around ESHA and other biotic resources may be appropriate, when conditions of the site as demonstrated in a site-specific biological assessment, the nature of the proposed development, and appropriate mitigation, show that a smaller buffer would provide adequate protection. In such cases, the County must find that a reduced buffer is appropriate and that the development could not be feasibly constructed without a reduced buffer. In no case shall the buffer be less than 50 feet.

**Policy C-OSRC-8h:** If proposed development is a permissible use and there is no feasible alternative, including the no project alternative, that can avoid significant impacts to ESHA, then the alternative that would result in the fewest or least significant impacts shall be selected. Residual adverse impacts to ESHA shall be fully mitigated, with priority given to on-site habitat mitigation. Off-site habitat mitigation measures shall only be approved when it is not feasible to fully mitigate impacts on-site or where off-site habitat mitigation is more protective, as documented in a biological resource assessment prepared by a qualified

biologist and approved by Permit Sonoma staff. Any determination that it is infeasible to mitigate impacts onsite should be supported by written findings. Mitigation may not be used as a substitute for implementation of the feasible project alternative that would avoid impacts to ESHA. Mitigation for impacts to ESHAs other than marine habitats shall be provided at a minimum ratio of 2:1. The more specific mitigation requirements as required by regulatory agencies or the County shall control over the more general mitigation requirements of this Local Coastal Plan. (NEW)

**Policy C-OSRC-8i:** Adjacent to ESHA, the use of compatible native, non-invasive plant species for landscaping shall be required as a condition of coastal development permit approval. The use of invasive exotic plant species shall be prohibited. No landscaping shall extend into ESHA. (GP2020 REVISED)

**Policy C-OSRC-8j:** If the application of the policies and standards contained in this Local Coastal Plan regarding use of property designated as ESHA or ESHA buffer, including the restriction of ESHA to only resource-dependent use, would likely constitute a taking of private property without just compensation, then a use that is not consistent with the ESHA provisions of the Local Coastal Plan may be allowed on the property, provided such use is consistent with all other applicable policies of the Local Coastal Plan, the approved project is the alternative that would result in the fewest or least significant impacts, and it is the minimum amount of development necessary to avoid a taking of private property without just compensation. In such a case, mitigation for impacts on ESHA shall be required in accordance with applicable Local Coastal Plan policies. (CCC REVISED - NEW)

**Policy C-OSRC-8k:** Land divisions, including subdivisions, lot splits, and lot line adjustments involving lots containing or within proximity to wetlands, watercourses, or other ESHA for which protective buffers are required, may be approved only if findings are made to support that the resulting parcels contain adequate land area to place all improvements (e.g., buildings, sewage disposal where applicable, and appurtenant structures and features such as detention/retention ponds and biofiltration swales) outside of areas required for wetlands, watercourses ESHA buffer protection. (CCC REVISED - NEW)

**Policy C-OSRC-8l:** Encourage preservation of remaining old growth Redwood and Douglas Fir trees and associated forest habitat in private ownership. Old growth forests are ecosystems distinguished by old trees (at least 150 years old) and related structural attributes that may include tree size, accumulations of large dead woody material, number of canopy layers, species composition, and ecosystem function. Because of their rarity and biological importance, these forests should be made priorities for protection through conservation easements, fee title purchase, or other mechanisms. (CCC REVISED - GP2020 REVISED)

## Program

**Program C-OSRC-8-P1:** Reviewing and updating **Figures C-OSRC-2a** through **2k** every five years to reflect documented occurrences or changes in such habitats. Review and update more frequently if there are significant changes in data or new scientific understanding of Coastal Resources (CCC REVISED - GP2020 REVISED)

## Initiatives

**Initiative C-OSRC-8-I1:** Support acquisition of conservation easements or fee title by the Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District of designated Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Areas. (GP2020)

**Initiative C-OSRC-8-I2:** Encourage landowners to voluntarily participate in a program that protects officially designated individual trees or groves that either have historical interest or significance or have outstanding size, age, rarity, shape or location. (GP 2020)

## **9. COMMERCIAL FISHING, SUPPORT FACILITIES, AND HARBOR**

Sonoma County contains marine and inland fisheries and a growing aquaculture industry. Bodega Harbor is the home of a major commercial fishing fleet with berths, boat launching ramps, fish receiving piers, a navigation channel, and a marina. Commercial and sport fishing net salmon, crab, herring, halibut, shark, and bottom fish. This section carries out the following sections of the California Coastal Act:

### ***Section 30234 Commercial fishing and recreational boating facilities***

Facilities serving the commercial fishing and recreational boating industries shall be protected and, where feasible, upgraded. Existing commercial fishing and recreational boating harbor space shall not be reduced unless the demand for those facilities no longer exists or adequate substitute space has been provided. Proposed recreational boating facilities shall, where feasible, be designed and located in such a fashion as not to interfere with the needs of the commercial fishing industry.

### ***Section 30234.5 Economic, commercial, and recreational importance of fishing***

The economic, commercial, and recreational importance of fishing activities shall be recognized and protected.

### ***Climate Change***

Climate change will impact fisheries on and off the Sonoma County coast, as fisheries are highly dependent on specific climate conditions. Warmer water temperatures will shift habitat ranges of many fish and shellfish species, which will in turn have a disruptive effect on marine ecosystems. Many marine species have certain temperature ranges at which they can survive. Many aquatic species can find colder areas of streams and lakes or move northward along the coast or in the ocean. However, moving into new areas may put these species into competition with other species over food

and other resources. Some diseases that affect aquatic life may become more prevalent in warm water. Changes in temperature and seasons could affect the timing of reproduction and migration.

In addition to warming, the world's oceans are gradually becoming more acidic due to increases in atmospheric carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>). Increasing acidity could harm shellfish by weakening their shells, which are created from calcium and are vulnerable to increasing acidity. Acidification may also threaten the structures of sensitive ecosystems upon which some fish and shellfish rely.

Overall, climate change could make it more difficult to catch fish in the same ways and same places as we have done in the past. Many fisheries already face multiple stresses, including overfishing and water pollution. Climate change may worsen these stresses. In particular, changes in water temperature could lead to significant impacts on fisheries. It is not possible to predict with any accuracy the impacts of climate change on fisheries along the Sonoma County coast in the next 20 years.

### ***Offshore Marine Protected Areas***

While offshore areas are beyond the County's Local Coastal Program jurisdiction, there are a number of notable and important natural areas offshore of the Sonoma County coast. In particular, there are two National Marine Sanctuaries managed by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Greater Farallones National Marine Sanctuary and Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuary, and one national monument, the California Coastal National Monument, which is managed along the entire California coastline by the United States Bureau of Land Management (BLM). Together, these three areas represent major coastal national resources for the County and the State. Various Federal and State restrictions on fishing and other commercial and recreational activities apply within these areas.

***Greater Farallones National Marine Sanctuary.*** The Greater Farallones National Marine Sanctuary is a 3,295 square mile conservation area covering the entire Sonoma coast and extending from south of Bolinas Lagoon in Marin County to the Point Arena Lighthouse in Mendocino County. NOAA has identified the area as containing exceptional natural resources worthy of special recognition, protection, and designation as a National Marine Sanctuary. The latest management plan for this sanctuary and the Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuary was published in March of 2015 as part of the expansion of these sanctuaries to their current size.

***Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuary.*** The Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuary covers 1,286 square miles of the Pacific Ocean, west of the Greater Farallones National Marine Sanctuary. This sanctuary contains unique oceanic conditions and topography, as it features substantial variations water depth along its western boundary, ranging from 115 below the sea surface at Cordell Bank to 6,000 feet below the sea at the bottom of Bodega Canyon. These steep and sudden pinnacles and ridges in the sea make for complex sediment distribution and biodiversity.

***California Coastal National Monument.*** The California Coastal Monument is a major, statewide national monument that spans the entire coastline of the state of California, extending 12 miles offshore, and contains 20,000 rocks and islands (but not major islands, such as the Channel Islands, Farallon Islands, or islands within the San Francisco Bay) and 1,100 miles of total coastline. Portions of the Coastal National Monument overlap with the Greater Farallones and Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuaries.

***Oil Exploration and Development***

Oil exploration and development on the Sonoma County coast may adversely affect sensitive areas identified in the Local Coastal Plan. See the Outer Continental Shelf Development Policy section of the Land Use Element for information and policy on oil exploration and development on the Sonoma County coast.

***Bodega Bay and Harbor***

Bodega Bay is the largest harbor in Sonoma County and is about 58 miles north of the entrance to San Francisco Bay. Bodega Bay is well protected from the open ocean and prevailing winds by Bodega Bay and Doran Beach and provides shelter for a large fleet of commercial and pleasure boats. Bodega Harbor is located in the northeastern portion of Bodega Bay and serves as the largest fishing port between San Francisco and Fort Bragg. Existing fishing industry facilities at the harbor include two berth installations, three boat launch ramps, commercial fish receiving piers, and a federal navigation channel maintained by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Table C-OSRC-1).

**Table C-OSRC-1. Existing Dock and Berth Facilities for the Commercial Fishing Industry in Bodega Harbor**

<i>Facility</i>	<i>Number</i>
Berths	210
Tie-ups	45-50
Moorings (dock or marina)	30-35 (year round)
Boats anchored in outer bay during salmon season	10-50
Boat size range	18-65 feet
Unloading docks	5
Fuel docks	3
Ice and blower stations	4
Haul-out areas	1 (under 40 feet)
Dry docks	1
Repair areas	3 (small)
Launch ramps	1 private (small), 2 public

Public dock and berth facilities are provided at Doran County Park, Westside County Park, and Bodega Bay Dunes State Beach. Other facilities at Bodega Bay include The Tides Wharf and Lucas Wharf, multifaceted facilities with a hotel, restaurant, and fish market where hundreds of vessels offload their catch each year; a U.S. Coast Guard Search and Rescue Base on the navigation channel; and the University of California Bodega Marine Life Reserve on the west side of the harbor.

The Rivers and Harbors Act of 1938 authorized the federal project improvements in Bodega Harbor. Completed in 1943, these federal improvements provided a bulkhead to retain the sand spit; an entrance channel 100 feet wide and 12 feet deep protected by two jetties; a navigation channel of the same dimensions about 16,020 feet long to the town of Bodega Bay that continues southeast about 4,200 feet along the shore; and three turning basins. Additional federal projects authorized in 1965 and completed in 1975 provided a concrete pile breakwater at Spud Point and an access channel from the existing federal navigation channel to a proposed local marina. The Sonoma County Regional Parks Department (County Regional Parks) completed Spud Point Marina in 1985 that created the existing berthing facilities, laundromat, restrooms, and showers.



County Regional Parks) operates three County facilities at Bodega Bay: Spud Point Marina, Mason's Marina, and the Sport Fishing Center. The commercial fishing industry has been in decline for over a decade, and the loss of berthing revenue and other fees has resulted in deferred maintenance at these facilities.

### ***Bodega Harbor Maintenance Dredging***

Continued use and expansion of the existing facilities in Bodega Harbor depend on future maintenance dredging of the federal navigation and local channels and marinas. Under the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1938, the United States Army Corps of Engineers (Corps of Engineers) is authorized to continue operations and maintenance dredging of the federal navigation channel in Bodega Harbor. The Operations and Maintenance Dredging Program of the Corps of Engineers is responsible for maintaining safe federal navigation channels and harbors, thus is responsible for maintaining the federal projects described above.

**Dredge Spoils Disposal Sites.** A variety of sites have been used or evaluated for disposal of dredge spoils from Bodega Harbor, including the Old Airport Disposal Site, Westside Park, Doran Spit, outer Bodega Bay, and just north of Bodega Harbor.

In 2017 the Corps selected the San Francisco Deep Ocean Disposal Site located about 65 nautical miles offshore from Bodega Harbor. The current capacity of the SF-DODS far exceeds Bodega Bay Harbor's current and estimated future disposal needs for the next 25 years.

### ***Marine Debris***

Marine debris is trash found in the oceans or along its shores. The source of marine debris can be classified as either ocean-based or land-based depending on where it enters the water. Ocean-based marine debris is waste that is disposed of in the ocean by ships, recreational boats, and petroleum rigs and platforms. Land-based debris is debris that blows, washes, or is discharged into the water from land. Studies estimate that about two thirds of marine debris enters the water from land. Contributors include recreational beach users, people who drop litter on sidewalks and streets, plastics manufacturers and transporters, inadequate sewage treatment operations, and illegal dumping.

Debris in the marine environment means hazards for humans and wildlife. It endangers the safety of beach visitors and scuba divers and endangers the safety and livelihood of fishermen and recreational boaters. Beach visitors have required stitches from stepping on broken pieces of glass and metal buried in the sand, and scuba divers have become entangled in lost fishing gear. Nets and monofilament fishing line can obstruct boat propellers and plastic sheeting and bags can block boat engine cooling intakes. Such damage is hazardous and costly in terms of repair and lost fishing time.

**State and Federal Programs.** The California Coastal Commission and NOAA have Marine Debris Programs. The NOAA Marine Debris Program supports national and international efforts to research, prevent, and reduce the impacts of marine debris. It serves as a centralized capability within NOAA, coordinating and supporting activities within NOAA and with other federal agencies, as well as using partnerships to support projects carried out by state and local agencies, tribes, non-governmental organizations, academia, and industry. The NOAA Marine Debris Program has launched the Marine Debris Clearinghouse, a new online tool for tracking and researching marine debris projects and resources. Currently this database allows users to browse or search records of past, current, and future

projects which are funded by the Marine Debris Program and focus on marine debris removal, research, and outreach. NOAA plans to expand this database to include information from federal partners and the broader marine debris community. The site will grow to include a library of best practices, regional action plans, technical documents, and papers that reflect the state of knowledge of a given topic area within the study of marine debris.

The California Coastal Commission Marine Debris Program consists of California Coastal Cleanup Day, the Adopt-A-Beach program, public education about marine debris, and collaboration with state and regional agencies on developing new programs and policies to help prevent and reduce marine debris. Every year on the third Saturday in September, people join together at sites all over California to take part in the State's largest volunteer event, California Coastal Cleanup Day, organized by the California Coastal Commission and Coastwalk. Families, friends, coworkers, scout troops, school groups, service clubs, and individuals come together to celebrate and share their appreciation of California's beautiful coast and waterways. California Coastal Cleanup Day is part of the larger International Coastal Cleanup, the largest volunteer event on the planet.

## **Goal, Objectives, and Policies**

**GOAL C-OSRC-9: Support the commercial fishing industry in Bodega Bay. Protect and conserve the quality of ocean, marine, and estuarine environments for their scenic, economic, and environmental values.**

**Objective C-OSRC-9.1:** Provide adequate facilities and services to serve the commercial fishing industry in Bodega Bay.

**Objective C-OSRC-9.2:** Conduct dredging in a manner that minimizes impacts on the ocean, marine, and estuarine environments.

**Objective C-OSRC-9.3:** Conduct the disposal of dredged material in a manner that minimizes impacts on the ocean, marine, estuarine, and terrestrial environments; and minimizes impacts to groundwater and water supply.

**Objective C-OSRC-9.4:** Support the Marine Debris Programs of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and California Coastal Commission.

**Policy C-OSRC-9a:** Encourage the development of support facilities and the provision of support services for the commercial fishing industry, including fish processing, in areas designated Marine Industrial on the Land Use Plan Map. (EXISTING LCP REVISED)

**Policy C-OSRC-9b:** Marina development in Bodega Bay will be reviewed based on the following: 1) a review of the Bodega Harbor operations, with special emphasis on whether activities that do not depend on a harbor location can be relocated to preclude or minimize the need for additional dredging and filling; and 2) an assessment of the adequacy of the fisheries resources to support such expansion; and 3) that the resources would not be harmed by increasing the availability of berths for the commercial fishing industry. (EXISTING LCP REVISED)

**Policy C-OSRC-9c:** Encourage the development of additional support facilities and the provision of additional support services at Spud Point Marina necessary to adequately serve the commercial fishing industry. (EXISTING LCP REVISED)

**Policy C-OSRC-9d:** Dredging shall be required to occur only in the winter, when most marine and estuarine animals are not migrating or spawning and are least sensitive to turbidity. (EXISTING LCP REVISED: RECOMMENDATION 77 ON PAGE 34 AND RECOMMENDATION 13 ON PAGE 123)

**Policy C-OSRC-9e:** The deposition of fill or dredge spoils in Bodega Harbor shall be prohibited, except according to Section 30233 of the California Coastal Act:

**Section 30233 Diking, filling or dredging; continued movement of sediment and nutrients**

(a) The diking, filling, or dredging of open coastal waters, wetlands, estuaries, and lakes shall be permitted in accordance with other applicable provisions of this division, where there is no feasible less environmentally damaging alternative, and where feasible mitigation measures have been provided to minimize adverse environmental effects, and shall be limited to the following:

- (1) New or expanded port, energy, and coastal-dependent industrial facilities, including commercial fishing facilities.
- (2) Maintaining existing, or restoring previously dredged, depths in existing navigational channels, turning basins, vessel berthing and mooring areas, and boat launching ramps.
- (3) In open coastal waters, other than wetlands, including streams, estuaries, and lakes, new or expanded boating facilities and the placement of structural pilings for public recreational piers that provide public access and recreational opportunities.
- (4) Incidental public service purposes, including but not limited to, burying cables and pipes or inspection of piers and maintenance of existing intake and outfall lines.
- (5) Mineral extraction, including sand for restoring beaches, except in environmentally sensitive areas.
- (6) Restoration purposes.
- (7) Nature study, aquaculture, or similar resource dependent activities.

(b) Dredging and spoils disposal shall be planned and carried out to avoid significant disruption to marine and wildlife habitats and water circulation. Dredge spoils suitable for beach replenishment should be transported for these purposes to appropriate beaches or into suitable longshore current systems.

(c) In addition to the other provisions of this section, diking, filling, or dredging in existing estuaries and wetlands shall maintain or enhance the functional capacity of the wetland or estuary. Any alteration of coastal wetlands identified by the Department of Fish and Game, including, but not limited to, the 19 coastal wetlands identified in its report entitled, "Acquisition Priorities for the Coastal Wetlands of California", shall be limited to very minor incidental public facilities, restorative measures, nature study, commercial fishing facilities in Bodega Bay, and development in already developed parts of south San Diego Bay, if otherwise in accordance with this division.

For the purposes of this section, "commercial fishing facilities in Bodega Bay" means that not less than 80 percent of all boating facilities proposed to be developed or improved, where the improvement would create additional berths in Bodega Bay, shall be designed and used for commercial fishing activities.

(d) Erosion control and flood control facilities constructed on watercourses can impede the movement of sediment and nutrients that would otherwise be carried by storm runoff into coastal waters. To facilitate the continued delivery of these sediments to the littoral zone, whenever feasible, the material removed from these facilities may be placed at appropriate points on the shoreline in accordance with other applicable provisions of this division, where feasible mitigation measures have been provided to minimize adverse environmental effects. Aspects that shall be considered before issuing a coastal development permit for these purposes are the method of placement, time of year of placement, and sensitivity of the placement area." (CCC REVISED - EXISTING LCP REVISED)

**Policy C-OSRC-9f:** The deposition of dredge spoils shall be prohibited outside Bodega Harbor in Bodega Bay east of the line extending from the tip of Tomales Point, to the tip of Bodega Head. (EXISTING LCP REVISED)

**Policy C-OSRC-9g:** Approval of a detailed reclamation plan shall be required for a dredge spoils disposal site prior to commencing any dredging that would generate dredge spoils to be disposed of at that site. (EXISTING LCP REVISED)

**Policy C-OSRC-9h:** Consider sea level rise adaptation strategies when evaluating dredge disposal options and evaluate the feasibility of using dredge material for beach sand augmentation and dune restoration. (NEW)

**Policy C-OSRC-9i:** Any onshore dredge spoils disposal project shall be designed and implemented to protect groundwater resources and existing and potential domestic water supplies, and to be consistent with all policies of this Local Coastal Plan for protection of wetlands and other Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Areas (ESHA). (EXISTING LCP REVISED)

**Policy C-OSRC-9j:** Route the dredge spoils conveyance pipeline to upland disposal sites from Bodega Harbor along the right-of-way of existing roads, where possible. (EXISTING LCP REVISED)

**Policy C-OSRC-9k:** Riparian corridors at dredge disposal sites shall be protected. Diked ponds for disposal of dredge spoils shall be sited and designed to avoid the riparian area, such that no dredge spoils would be deposited in the drainage and no runoff would enter the drainage or the freshwater wetland; and to be consistent with all policies of this Local Coastal Plan for protection of wetland and other Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Areas (ESHAs). (EXISTING LCP REVISED)

**Policy C-OSRC-9l:** At upland disposal sites, the operation of construction equipment across drainages between dredge spoils disposal ponds shall be limited to one haul road. Following the disposal of dredge spoils and consistent with all policies of this Local Coastal Plan for protection of wetland and other Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Areas (ESHAs), the road shall be removed, the area shall be regraded to natural drainage contours, and vegetation shall be re-established. (EXISTING LCP REVISED)

**Policy C-OSRC-9m:** A reclamation plan shall be implemented for any upland disposal site which assures rapid re-establishment of vegetation, minimize visual impacts, and improve wildlife habitat, consistent with all policies of this Local Coastal Plan for protection of wetland and other Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Areas (ESHAs). (EXISTING LCP REVISED)

**Policy C-OSRC-9n:** Prior to approval of a plan for a large, one-time dredge spoils disposal at the Old Airport Disposal Site, a full evaluation shall be required of the potential visual, water quality, and reclamation issues associated with raising the dikes to accommodate the dredge spoils. (EXISTING LCP REVISED)

**Policy C-OSRC-9o:** The rare plants in the marsh south of the Old Airport Disposal Site shall be protected during the course of any construction on the site. (EXISTING LCP REVISED)

**Policy C-OSRC-9p:** The Old Airport Disposal Site shall be reclaimed and restored to the maximum extent feasible following each maintenance dredging. (EXISTING LCP REVISED)

## **Program**

**Program C-OSRC-9-P1:** Develop a mooring plan for Bodega Harbor. (EXISTING LCP)

## 10. SOIL RESOURCES

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Soil resources policy is to maintain soil productivity and prevent lands with productive soils from converting to non-resource uses, and to promote soil management and conservation practices that will maintain productivity of those lands.

Important farmland soils on the Sonoma County coast include grassland suitable for sheep and cattle grazing along the coastal terrace and lower slopes on the North Coast and throughout the County coast south of Jenner. Soil, climate, topography, and water combine to make these lands highly productive agricultural areas. Important timberland soils on the County coast are located primarily north of Russian Gulch and in the Willow Creek watershed.

Although some types of soils are more susceptible to erosion, all soils benefit from conservation practices. Erosion results in the loss of topsoil which may reduce crop yields and cause sedimentation problems downstream. Sediment can fill reservoirs and stream channels, reduce water quality and storage capacity, and damage fish and wildlife habitats. Susceptibility to soil erosion is highest in areas with a combination of high rainfall, lack of cover, erodible soils, and steep slopes. Activities which may increase erosion include urban development, road and general construction activities, logging, mining, agriculture, and recreational activities.

Hillside cultivation and overgrazing are a particular concern in agricultural areas. Measures are needed to reduce erosion. However, erosion protection measures may not always be cost effective for the landowner.

### Goal, Objectives, and Policies

**GOAL C-OSRC-10: Encourage the conservation of soil resources to protect their long-term productivity and economic value through soil conservation and management practices that maintain the productivity of soil resources.**

**Objective C-OSRC-10.1:** Preserve lands containing prime agricultural and productive woodland soils and avoid their conversion to incompatible residential, commercial, or industrial uses.

**Objective C-OSRC-10.1:** Ensure that permitted uses are compatible with reducing potential damage due to soil erosion.

**Objective C-OSRC-10.2:** Establish ways to prevent soil erosion and restore areas damaged by erosion.

**Policy C-OSRC-10a:** Apply the Agriculture land use category to areas with productive agricultural soils. (GP2020)

**Policy C-OSRC-10b:** Apply the Timber land use category to all lands with timberland production zoning. (GP2020)

**Policy C-OSRC-10c:** Coastal Development Permits shall be subject to the following requirements for reducing erosion and erosion control:

- (1) Projects shall be designed so that structures and roads are not located on steep slopes with an incline greater than 30%. (CCC REVISED)
- (2) Erosion control measures shall be incorporated as part of projects involving construction or grading near waterways or on lands with slopes over 10 percent.
- (3) A soil conservation program shall be incorporated as part of projects which could increase erosion of waterways or hillsides.
- (4) New roads and driveways for residential, ranch, and timber harvest uses shall be designed and constructed to retain natural vegetation and topography to the extent feasible.
- (5) Improvements near waterways or in areas with a high risk of erosion as determined by a site specific analysis shall be designed and constructed to retain natural vegetation and topography to the extent feasible. (CCC REVISED - GP2020) (EXISTING LCP REVISED)

**Policy C-OSRC-10d:** Continue to enforce the County Building Code to reduce soil erosion and slope instability problems. (GP2020)

## Initiative

**Initiative C-OSRC-10-I1:** Encourage agricultural land owners to work closely with the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) and local Resource Conservation Districts to reduce soil erosion and encourage soil restoration. (GP2020) (EXISTING LCP REVISED)

## II. TIMBER RESOURCES

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The following section of the 1976 California Coastal Act applies to timberlands:

*Section 30243. The long-term productivity of soils and timberlands shall be protected, and conversions of coastal commercial timberlands in units of commercial size to other uses or their division into units of non-commercial size shall be limited to providing for necessary timber processing and related facilities.*

### ***Timberland Resources***

Forests and woodlands provide a number of aesthetic and ecological benefits such as wildlife habitat, watershed protection, scenic views, and recreation. These forest values are important to the quality of the environment and life in the County and are addressed in the Water Resources Element and other sections of this Open Space and Resource Conservation Element.

Forests also provide commercial timber as a renewable resource. Sonoma County is unique among counties in California in having a majority (94 percent) of the timberlands as privately owned. In Sonoma County timberlands are predominantly in the northwest part of the County. There are about 232,000 acres of timberland in the County. About 20,500 acres of the 232,000 acres of timberland in the

County are on the County coast. These timberlands are comprised of about 14,000 acres of Site Class IV soils and about 6,500 acres of Site Class I, II, and III soils combined. Site Class is a reference to the productivity of timberland, determined by the interaction of soil fertility and climate; the lower the site class, the greater the timberland productivity.

The County coast exhibits the diversity of tree species found throughout the County. Soil, climate, topography, and human activity are the important factors which determine the growth and distribution of tree species. Redwood predominates in the coastal fog belt, with Douglas fir and grand fir the other principal forest trees. Commercial forest on the Coast is found primarily north of Russian Gulch and in the Willow Creek watershed. Forests occur generally east of State Highway 1 and in coastal gulches. Commercial hardwood harvesting of tan oaks is becoming more important for Masonite chips, firewood, and the crafts industry. Other native, generally non-commercial trees on the Coast are Bishop pine, oak, madrone, bay, and the southern extent of the pygmy forest in California. Rows of eucalyptus and cypress trees have been planted as a buffer against the wind, and fast growing Monterey pine screen many homes from the view of State Highway 1. Dense forests of these trees have been planted by the developers of The Sea Ranch and Timber Cove subdivisions.

Both the economic and natural values of coastal woodlands and forests are recognized in the policies and regulatory mechanisms included in the Local Coastal Plan. For purposes of the regulations discussed below, timberlands are generally considered to be those lands which are capable of and available for growing a commercial species of timber such as redwood and Douglas fir.

### ***Timberland Regulations***

**1973 Forest Practices Act.** In 1973 the Z'berg-Nejedly Forest Practices Act was established, setting up the rules for the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CalFire) to follow with respect to timber harvesting. Timber Harvest Plans (THPs) must be filed with CalFire in most instances when trees are logged. CalFire is the lead agency responsible for approving and ensuring compliance of THPs with the Forest Practices Rules and other applicable regulations. A conversion permit must be obtained from CalFire to convert timberland to a non-timber use; approval of conversion permits for the Coastal Zone is very unlikely.

CalFire regulates the silvicultural activities related to THPs. Forest Practice Rules are established for different geographical areas of the State. The Coast Forest District Rules apply to most of Sonoma County. The California Coastal Commission's Special Treatment Area Rules apply to Special Treatment Areas designated within the Coastal Zone. The State Board of Forestry has the authority to amend either the Forest Practice Rules or the geographical districts to which they are applied.

Most THPs filed for the Coastal Zone are for timber harvests of less than 100 acres. CalFire indicates that 52 THPs have been filed for the Sonoma County coast since 1983. Although the number of THPs filed for the Sonoma Coast is not as great as in adjacent Mendocino County, the coastal timber resource is significant locally.

***Timberland Production (Preserve) Zones.*** In 1976 the California Legislature adopted the Forest Taxation Reform Act. That Act required counties to provide for the zoning of parcels used for the growing and harvesting of timber as Timberland Preserve Zones (TPZs). A TPZ restricted the use of the land to the growing and harvesting of timber and compatible uses approved by the County in



return for tax assessment benefits. Subsequently in the late 1970s the County designated many parcels TPZ.

In 1982 the California Legislature adopted the California Timberland Productivity Act. That Act required counties to designate and zone lands for the primary use of timber production in order to protect properly conducted timber operations from being prohibited or restricted due to conflict or apparent conflict with surrounding land uses. The County applied local Timberland Production (TP) zoning to all parcels previously placed in the TPZs under the 1976 Forest Taxation Reform Act. There are about 20,500 acres of timberland in the Coastal Zone, of which approximately 11,000 acres are zoned TP, with the remainder zoned RRD (Resources and Rural Development).

Rezoning timberland parcels to TP establishes ten-year use restrictions and the requirement for a forest management plan which should provide for timber harvesting within a reasonable period of time and set timber restocking standards. Sonoma County's implementing TP Ordinance allows parcels of 40 acres or more of Site Class I and II soils, and 80 acres or more of Site Class III and IV soils to be zoned TP. The annual tax paid on acreage of timberland zoned TP is based on the value of the land without the standing timber and is substantially less than if zoned at fair market value. Taxes on the value of the cut timber are paid at the time of harvest.

Sonoma County's TP Ordinance sets a minimum residential density of one dwelling per 160 acres (with a maximum of four dwellings per parcel where allowed by the 160-acre density). This number is set by the State law on TP zones. Parcels this size are intended to encourage timber management or sale to an owner wishing to manage the land for timber production. Creation and sale of smaller parcels, such as 40 or 80 acres, after the seller has cut as much timber as possible prior to the sale, may make the parcels undesirable for sustained timber management. Smaller parcels are less viable for timber management and encourage greater residential conflicts. The larger the parcel, the better the chance for long-term timber production.

### ***Timberland Environmental Impacts***

Pressures on timberland include rural development, agricultural conversions, and increased public scrutiny regarding the potential impacts associated with logging operations, particularly near streams. These issues can affect both the economic feasibility of the timber industry and/or the long term availability of timber resources.

Logging activities, if improperly managed, can be detrimental to the forest environment, including loss of riparian habitat and soil erosion, and a resulting diminishing of all forest values. Sustainable logging practices and forest management should result in a forest resource which regenerates itself and allows for perpetuating related forest values. Keeping forest lands in production and preventing a further incursion of incompatible adjacent lands uses will benefit the public and the timber industry.

State law gives primary regulatory responsibility for timber operations to CalFire, limiting the Local Coastal Plan land use authority. However, the Local Coastal plan does have authority to establish policies that maintain a sustainable supply of timber resources in the future by reducing the potential for converting timberland to incompatible uses.

## Goal, Objectives and Policies

### **GOAL C-OSRC-11: Preserve, sustain, and restore forestry resources for their economic, conservation, recreation, and open space values.**

**Objective C-OSRC-11.1:** Identify and preserve areas with timber soils and commercial timber stands for timber production. Reduce incompatible uses and the conversion of timberlands to agriculture and other uses which effectively prevent future timber production in these areas.

**Objective C-OSRC-11.2:** Minimize the potential adverse impacts of timber harvesting on economic, conservation, recreation, and open space values; and restore harvested areas to production for a future yield.

**The following policies, in addition to those in the Land Use Element, shall be used to achieve these objectives:**

**Policy C-OSRC-11a:** A Coastal Permit shall not be required for timber harvesting in accordance with a timber harvest plan submitted pursuant to the provisions of the Z'berg-Nejedly Forest Practices Act of 1973 and regulated by the Forest Practices Act and the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection. (EXISTING LCP REVISED)

**Policy C-OSRC-11b:** Apply the Timber land use category to designate all lands in a Timberland Production Zone and adjacent parcels with timber soils or commercial timber stands. (GP2020)

**Policy C-OSRC-11c:** Review all timber harvest plans for compatibility with Local Coastal Plan policies and economic viability of the industry. (GP2020)

**Policy C-OSRC-11d:** Where applicable, comment on timber harvest plans in support of increased protection of Class III streams. (GP2020)

**Policy C-OSRC-11e:** Review timber harvest plans adjacent to designated Riparian Corridors and request that clear cutting not occur within streamside conservation areas. Where clear cutting along designated Riparian Corridors is approved by the applicable state or federal agency, ensure that at least 50 percent of the overstory canopy and at least 50 percent of the understory vegetation be retained. (GP2020)

**Policy C-OSRC-11f:** The primary use within the Timber Preserve land use shall be increasing or enhancing timber production. Very low density residential development may be allowed if development does not conflict with the primary use of timber production. A land use amendment shall be required for conversion of timberlands to other uses. (NEW)

## Programs

**Program C-OSRC-11-P1:** In cooperation with the Coastal Commission, State Parks, and Cal Fire Board of Forestry, develop forestry guidelines including best practices to improve habitat health and reduce the risk of wildland fire without restricting public access to the coast. Establish a coastal permit exemption, other exemption process, or master plan for forestry maintenance activities consistent with such guidelines. (NEW)

**Program C-OSRC-11-P2:** Revise the zoning districts of the Coastal Zoning Ordinance to reduce the potential for conversion of coastal commercial timberlands in units of commercial size to non-timber uses or their division into units of non-commercial size and implement the Timber land use category to be consistent with California Coastal Act Section 30243 :

“The long-term productivity of soils and timberlands shall be protected, and conversions of coastal commercial timberlands in units of commercial size to other uses or their division into units of noncommercial size shall be limited to providing for necessary timber processing and related facilities.”

(CCC REVISED - GP2020)

## Initiative

**Initiative C-OSRC-11-I1:** Request that the State Board of Forestry develop and enforce Special Treatment Area stocking and clear cutting standards on all forest lands in the Coastal Zone. (EXISTING LCP REVISED)

## 12. MINERAL RESOURCES

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Within the Coastal Zone, Bodega Bay Quarry, formerly Cheney Gulch Quarry, was the only mining operation within the coastal zone. This site is located on a sandstone deposit identified by the most recent State Mining and Geology Board Designation Report as regionally significant resource for construction grade aggregate and is classified by the State Mining and Geology Board as a local priority site for aggregate production. This designation requires Sonoma County to manage the conservation and regulate development of identified mineral deposits such as construction grade aggregate.

The existing mine had operated for approximately 60 years, but has been inactive and reclamation was completed in 2021.

The potential impacts of mining activities include, but are not limited to, noise, dust, air emissions, truck traffic, erosion, siltation, and loss of agricultural land. These impacts create potential conflicts with nearby residential, agricultural, and recreational uses and may damage or degrade terrestrial and marine ecosystems in the coastal zone. Reopening the quarry at Cheney Gulch would require these impacts to be fully mitigated as part of the permitting process.

## Goal, Objectives and Policies

**GOAL C-OSRC-12:** Provide for production of aggregates to meet local needs and contribute the County's share of demand in the North Bay production-consumption region. Manage aggregate resources to avoid needless resource depletion and ensure that extraction results in the fewest environmental impacts.

**Objective C-OSRC-12.1:** Use the Sonoma County Aggregate Resources Management Plan to establish priority areas for aggregate production and to establish detailed policies, procedures, and standards for mineral extraction.

**Objective C-OSRC-12.2:** Minimize and mitigate the adverse environmental effects of mineral extraction and reclaim mined lands.

**Policy C-OSRC-12a:** Consider areas designated by the State Mining and Geology Board as regionally significant for construction grade aggregate as priority sites for aggregate production and mineral extraction. Within the Coastal Zone, this is limited to sandstone deposits located in Cheney Gulch, approximately 2.5 miles east of Bodega Bay in western Sonoma County.<sup>2</sup> Review requests for designation of additional areas for consistency with the Coastal Act, Surface Mining and Reclamation Act, Sonoma County Local Coastal Plan, and the Sonoma County Aggregate Resources Management (ARM) Plan. (GP2020 REVISED)

**Policy C-OSRC-12b:** Review aggregate production projects for impacts coastal resource, including, but not limited to preservation of visual resources, and impacts to natural resources such as topsoil salvage loss, vegetation removal, impacts to terrestrial and marine ecosystems, noise, water quality, maintenance and safety of Highway 1, energy consumption, and air quality. Additionally, the project must demonstrate that an economic need exists for aggregate materials produced at the site and that full reclamation of the site is feasible and that reclamation will fully restore ecological function of the site to that which existed prior to any mining operation. (GP2020 REVISED)

**Policy C-OSRC-12c:** Review projects that are on or near sites designated Mineral Resources in the Aggregate Resources Management Plan for compatibility with future mineral extraction. (GP2020)

## 13. ENERGY RESOURCES POLICY

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Residents, visitors, and businesses to the Sonoma Coast consume energy in many forms and for many uses, but primarily oil and gas for transportation due to the reliance on automobiles, lack of public transit, and long distances to destinations.

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<sup>2</sup> This area is identified as Sector Q in the 1987 Department of Conservation, Division of Mines and Geology report, entitled *Mineral Land Classification: Aggregate Materials in the San Francisco - Monterey Bay Area: Special Report 146, Part 3: Classification of Aggregate Resource Areas: North San Francisco Bay Production-Consumption Region*.

Energy production in Sonoma County is dominated by the electricity generated from geothermal resources at The Geysers. This source generates about 5,000,000 megawatt-hours per year. Additional sources include hydroelectric power, methane gas, and solar photovoltaics. Additional opportunities exist for individual and small scale production from other renewable energy sources such as solar, wind, and biomass, but these sources must be developed in a way that coastal resources are not impacted. Small scale solar energy production has the lowest potential for impacts, as wind energy will impact visual resources and create hazards for bird. Small scale biomass energy generation may offer future potential, but cost and limited local availability of biomass fuels in the Coastal Zone make it uncertain if this energy source is viable in the Coastal Zone.

### ***Climate Change***

Changes in temperature, precipitation, sea level, and the frequency and severity of extreme storm events will likely affect how much energy is produced, delivered, and consumed in the United States.

Energy plays an important role in many aspects of our lives. For example, we use electricity for lighting and cooling. We use fuel for transportation, heating, and cooking. Our energy production and use is interconnected with many other aspects of modern life, such as water consumption, use of goods and services, transportation, economic growth, land use, and population growth. Our production and use of energy (most of which comes from fossil fuels) also contributes to climate change, accounting for more than 80 percent of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions.

Temperature, Energy Demand, and Energy Supply. Increases in temperature will likely change how much energy we consume, as well as our ability to produce electricity and deliver it reliably. In a warmer climate, Americans would use more electricity for air conditioning and less natural gas, oil, and wood for heating. Heating demand would decrease the most in the northern United States, and cooling demand would increase.

***Water Availability and Energy.*** Energy is needed to pump, transport, and treat drinking water and wastewater. Rising temperatures, increased evaporation, and drought may increase the need for energy-intensive methods of providing drinking and irrigation water such as desalinization. This process makes ocean water potable by removing salt, but the process consumes significant amounts of energy and disposal of waste salt may disrupt marine ecosystems.

***Temperature, Energy Demand, and Energy Supply.*** Increases in temperature will likely increase energy demand, as well as our ability to produce electricity and deliver it reliably. As the climate warms and California moves towards lower carbon energy sources, electrical demand for heating, cooling, and transportation will increase. Changes in energy demand will likely affect greenhouse gas emissions, but the net effect depends on which energy sources are used for electricity and heating.

Warming is likely to increase summer peak electricity demand in most regions of California, including the Sonoma Coast. While California is moving rapidly towards renewable energy sources, a significant amount of energy in the state is still supplied by fossil fuel and nuclear power plants that rely on large-scale supplies of water for cooling. The colder the water, the more efficient the generator.

Hydroelectricity (electricity produced by running water) is an important source of energy in California. Changes in precipitation, increased risk of drought, reduced snowpack, and changes in the timing of snowmelt in spring will reduce hydroelectric energy production.

Rising temperatures, increased evaporation, and drought will increase the need for energy-intensive methods of providing drinking and irrigation water. For example, desalinization plants can convert salt water into freshwater, but require large amounts of electrical energy.

***Sea Level Rise, Storm Surge, and Extreme Events.*** A large portion of U.S. energy infrastructure is located in coastal areas and therefore sensitive to sea level rise and storm surge. For example, fuel ports and the generation and transmission lines that bring electricity to major urban coastal centers are at risk. Changes in the frequency and severity of storms and other extreme events may also damage energy infrastructure. Disruptions to energy supply due to compromised infrastructure can affect many activities, depending on the destination and final use of the fuel. Disruptions in the supply of oil would affect the production of transportation fuels. Disruptions in natural gas supply could affect electricity generation, residential and commercial heating, and industrial processes. Additional information on the coastal risks to climate and sea level rise related hazards can be found on the Public Safety Element of this Local Coastal Program.

**Transportation Impacts.** Damage to the road network in the Coastal Zone will increase as sea level rises and storm events become increasingly severe. Wildfire events are increasing in size and frequency. Significant portions of Highway 1 are at risk from sea level rise, wildfire, and landslides. Past efforts to armor and reinforce Highway 1 against the impacts of climate change have proven ineffective, and a program of managed retreat is necessary to protect this critical transportation link.

**Wind Speed, Cloud Cover, and Renewable Energy.** Climate change could impact wind and solar power, but there is little research in this area. Impacts will depend on how wind and cloud cover patterns change, which are very difficult to project using current climate models.

### **Energy Conservation and Demand Reduction**

Reducing energy demand can be achieved in many ways. Land use strategies include compact development form and promoting mixed uses. Energy used for transportation can be reduced through increased use of pedestrian and bicycle travel, public transit, and renewable energy sources. Other strategies include improved construction standards and agricultural practices, solid waste management, and education. (CCC REVISED)

## **Goal, Objectives, and Policies**

**GOAL C-OSRC-13: Promote energy conservation and increase energy supply by increased reliance on renewable energy sources that will greenhouse gas emissions.**

**Objective C-OSRC-13.1:** Increase energy conservation and improve energy efficiency in government operations, especially facilities that provide coastal access. (CCC REVISED)

**Objective C-OSRC-13.2:** Encourage residents and businesses to increase energy conservation and improve energy efficiency.

**Objective C-OSRC-13.3:** Increase the development of renewable energy and distributed energy generation systems and facilities for state and local government operations including, but not limited to state and regional parks, fire stations, and Caltrans maintenance facilities. (REVISED)

**Objective C-OSRC-13.4:** Promote the use of renewable energy and distributed energy generation systems and facilities in new development.

**Objective C-OSRC-13.5:** Establish guidelines and standards for development of energy generation systems and facilities.

**Objective C-OSRC-13.6:** Encourage exploration of the extent and potential use of hot water geothermal resources.

**Policy C-OSRC-13a:** The latest green building certification standards, such as the CalGreen Tier 1 standards, shall be used for new development, including redevelopment. (GP2020)

**Policy C-OSRC-13b:** Require the water and wastewater service providers to reduce energy demand from their operations. (GP2020 REVISED)

**Policy C-OSRC-13c:** Support project applicants in incorporating cost effective energy efficiency design that exceeds State standards. (GP2020 REVISED)

**Policy C-OSRC-13d:** Manage timberlands for their value both in timber production and offsetting greenhouse gas emissions. (GP2020)

**Policy C-OSRC-13e:** The use of low temperature geothermal resources shall be allowed in all land use designations if it can be demonstrated that it will be compatible with surrounding land uses, not degrade coastal views, and not have an adverse impact on Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Areas. (GP2020 REVISED)

**Policy C-OSRC-13f:** Require development of renewable energy and distributed energy generation systems and facilities for state and local government facilities and operations. (GP2020 REVISED)

**Policy C-OSRC-13g:** Encourage and promote the use of renewable energy and distributed energy generation systems and facilities that are integral to and contained within existing and new development (e.g., solar thermal installations to provide space and water heating or solar electric installations for small commercial buildings or residences in rural areas, small wind energy systems to provide electricity to agricultural accessory structures, etc.) that do not impact ESHA, public access, or coastal views. (GP2020 REVISED)

## **Program**

**Program C-OSRC-13-P1:** Develop a Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction Program to include the following as a high priority:

- (1) A methodology to measure baseline and future Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) and greenhouse gas emissions;

- (2) Targets for various sectors including existing development and potential future development of commercial, industrial, residential, transportation, and utility sources;
- (3) Collaboration with local, regional, and State agencies and other community groups to identify effective greenhouse gas reduction policies and programs in compliance with new state and federal standards;
- (4) Adoption of development policies or standards that substantially reduce emissions for new development;
- (5) Creation of a task force of key department and agency staff to develop action plans, including identified capital improvements and other programs to reduce greenhouse gases and a funding mechanism for implementation; and
- (6) Monitoring and annual reporting of progress in meeting emission reduction targets.  
(GP2020)

## **14. AIR RESOURCES POLICY**

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Air pollutants include both gases and particulates. The automobile is the most common source of smog. Particulates come from residential, industrial, and agricultural sources, mainly during grading and construction activities. Wildfires contribute large amounts of air pollutants, but this emission can only be controlled indirectly by fire fuel management and improved fire suppression.

Sources of air pollution are both stationary and mobile. Mobile sources, such as motor vehicles, produce most of the air pollutants in the County. Air pollution from mobile sources is regulated by the State through exhaust emissions standards, but can be reduced by proper management of the transportation system. The Geysers power plants are the largest stationary pollutant source. Other stationary sources include mining operations, industrial and agricultural activities, and lumber mills. Residential wood stoves are a contributor to particulate levels in urban areas in Northern Sonoma County.

Improved air quality and decisions on air quality standards and mitigation measures are balanced with competing interests for production efficiency, energy costs, and ease of transportation while meeting all the requirements of the state and federal Clean Air Acts.

The southern section of the Coastal Zone is within the jurisdiction of the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (Bay Area Air District) and the northern portion of the Coastal Zone is within the Northern Sonoma County Air Pollution Control District (Northern Air District).

The Bay Area Air District is currently designated as a nonattainment area for state and federal ozone standards, the state particulate matter (PM) 10 standard, and the state and federal PM 2.5 standard. The Bay Area Air District has adopted an Ozone Attainment Plan and a Clean Air Plan in compliance with Federal and State Clean Air Acts. These plans include measures to achieve compliance with both ozone standards. The plans deal primarily with emissions of ozone precursors (nitrogen oxides (NO<sub>x</sub>) and volatile organic compounds, also referred to as Reactive Organic Gases (ROG)).



The Northern Air District does not have an adopted air quality plan because it is in attainment for all federal and state criteria pollutants, although the District occasionally exceeds state standards for PM10.

## Goal, Objectives and Policies

**GOAL C-OSRC-14:** Preserve and maintain good air quality and provide for an air quality standard that will protect human health and preclude crop, plant, and property damage in accordance with the requirements of the state and federal Clean Air Acts.

**Objective C-OSRC-14.1:** Minimize air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions.

**Objective C-OSRC-14.2:** Encourage reduced motor vehicle use as a means of reducing resultant air pollution.

The following policies, in addition to those of the Circulation and Transit Element, shall be used to achieve these objectives:

**Policy C-OSRC-14a:** Development projects shall be designed to minimize air pollutant emissions. Direct emissions shall be reduced by using construction techniques that decrease the need for space heating and cooling. (GP2020)

**Policy C-OSRC-14b:** Proposed changes in land use shall be denied unless they are consistent with projected air quality levels. (GP2020)

**Policy C-OSRC-14c:** Any proposed new source of toxic air contaminants or odors shall provide adequate buffers to protect sensitive receptors and comply with applicable health standards. Buffering techniques such as landscaping, setbacks, and screening in areas where such land uses abut one another shall be used to promote land use compatibility. (GP2020)

**Policy C-OSRC-14d:** Residential units may only install fireplaces, woodstoves, or any other residential wood-burning devices that meet the grams-per-hour Environmental Protection Agency or Oregon Department of Environmental Quality wood heater emissions limits (exempt devices are not allowed). (GP2020)

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# Public Access Element: Table of Contents

Public Access Element.....	3
Introduction.....	3
Purpose.....	4
Relationship to Other Elements.....	4
Relationship to California Constitution.....	4
Article X Water [Section 4]:.....	4
Relationship to California Coastal Act.....	5
Section 30001.5 Legislative findings and declarations; goals .....	5
Section 30210 Access; recreational opportunities; posting .....	5
Section 30211 Development not to interfere with access.....	5
Section 30212 New development projects.....	5
Section 30214 Implementation of public access policies; legislative intent .....	6
Section 30220 Protection of certain water-oriented activities.....	7
Section 30221 Oceanfront land; protection for recreational use and development.....	7
Section 30222 Private lands; priority of development purposes .....	7
Section 30222.5 Oceanfront lands; aquaculture facilities; priority .....	7
Section 30223 Upland areas .....	7
Section 30224 Recreational boating use; encouragement; facilities .....	7
Section 30240 Environmentally sensitive habitat areas; adjacent developments .....	8
Section 30604 Coastal development permit; issuance prior to certification of the local coastal program; finding that development in conformity with public access and public recreation policies; housing opportunities for low and moderate income persons.....	8
Section 30609.5 State lands between the first public road and the sea; sale or transfer .....	9
Legal Basis for Public Access.....	10
Public Trust.....	10
California Constitution.....	10
Proposition 20.....	10

California Coastal Act.....	11
California Coastal Trail.....	12
<b>Public Access Plan .....</b>	<b>14</b>
North Coast Access.....	15
South Coast Access.....	16
Facilities Providing Public Access.....	16
<b>1. Public Access Acquisition.....</b>	<b>17</b>
Goal, Objectives, and Policies .....	17
<b>2. California coastal Trail .....</b>	<b>20</b>
Goal, Objectives, and Policies .....	20
Program.....	23
<b>3. Access Planning and Development.....</b>	<b>23</b>
Goal, Objectives, and Policies .....	25
Programs.....	29
Initiatives.....	29
<b>4. Parking.....</b>	<b>30</b>
Goal, Objectives, and Policies .....	30
Programs.....	31
<b>5. Facility Management and Operation .....</b>	<b>31</b>
Goal, Objective, and Policies .....	33
<b>6. Recreational Boating.....</b>	<b>34</b>
Goal, Objectives, and Policies .....	34
Initiatives.....	35

# Public Access Element

## INTRODUCTION

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One of the highest priorities in the California Coastal Act of 1976 is the mandate to maximize public access to the coast and protect oceanfront land for recreational use where consistent with protection of coastal natural resources. Provisions in Chapter 3 of the Coastal Act (Sections 30210-30214) set forth requirements for the provision of public access along the Sonoma Coast:

Coastal development shall not interfere with the public's right of access to the sea where acquired through use or legislative authorization;

Public access from the nearest public roadway to the shoreline and along the coast shall be provided in new development projects;

Public access facilities shall be distributed throughout the Sonoma Coast to prevent overcrowding or overuse.

Throughout this element, "public access" shall mean access to the coast as defined by Chapter 3 of the Coastal Act.

While public access is a high priority use, Coastal Act Section 30240 requires that development is subordinate to protection of environmentally sensitive habitat areas, and that recreation areas shall be compatible with and not adversely impact these resources: (CCC REVISED)

### **"Section 30240 Environmentally sensitive habitat areas; adjacent developments**

(a) Environmentally sensitive habitat areas shall be protected against any significant disruption of habitat values, and only uses dependent on those resources shall be allowed within those areas.

(b) Development in areas adjacent to environmentally sensitive habitat areas and parks and recreation areas shall be sited and designed to prevent impacts which would significantly degrade those areas, and shall be compatible with the continuance of those habitat and recreation areas."

Sonoma County's coastline stretches over fifty-five miles, and its Coastal Zone reaches inland over six miles. More than one-quarter of the land area on the coast is in government ownership, but not all of that land is open to the public with appropriate facilities. The Sonoma County Regional Parks Department (Sonoma County Regional Parks) and the State Department of Parks and Recreation (State Parks) own the majority of the developed facilities and undeveloped land along the coastline. Several other public agencies and private organizations operate facilities open to the public, such as the 5,600 acre Jenner Headlands Preserve.

Summer is the busiest season for coastal parks, especially during weekends and holiday weekends. Most beaches are unimproved and do not charge entry or parking fees, making it difficult to determine how many people visit the Sonoma Coast, but estimates from State and Regional Parks indicate that somewhere between 600,000 and one million people annually, with the highest use in

the area south of the Russian River, including Jenner Visitor Center, Goat Rock Beach, Wright's Beach, Portuguese Beach, Salmon Creek Beach, Bodega Head, and Doran Beach. Bodega Bay is also heavily used for commercial and sport fishing, and the bay itself is a nationally known wind surfing and kite boarding site.

## **PURPOSE**

The purpose of the Public Access Element is to protect and defend the public's constitutionally guaranteed rights of access to and along the Sonoma Coast as well as uphold the requirements of the Coastal Act. The Public Access Element establishes policies to protect existing access areas, and identifies future access areas through the Public Access Plan found in Appendix B. (CCC REVISED)

## **RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER ELEMENTS**

The Public Access Element is coordinated with the Land Use, Open Space and Resource Conservation, Agricultural Resources, Circulation & Transit, and Public Facilities and Services Elements. Following are the relationships among these Elements: (CCC REVISED)

- (1) The Land Use Element identifies how public access and outdoor recreation facilities will relate to land use types, and provides policies for establishing new park and recreation facilities.
- (2) The Open Space and Resource Conservation Element includes design and planning policies addressing Scenic Resources and protection of natural resources that apply to outdoor recreational facility acquisition and development.
- (3) The Public Facilities and Services Element include policies that address public services related to outdoor park and recreation facilities.
- (4) The Agricultural Resources Element identifies policies that address the protection and enhancement of agriculture that apply to surrounding land uses, including outdoor recreation facilities.
- (5) The Circulation & Transit Element identifies transportation policies for accessing recreational facilities as well as bikeways that are critical transportation and recreational features connecting communities and public facilities.

## **RELATIONSHIP TO CALIFORNIA CONSTITUTION**

### **Article X Water [Section 4]:**

No individual, partnership, or corporation, claiming or possessing the frontage or tidal lands of a harbor, bay, inlet, estuary, or other navigable water in this State, shall be permitted to exclude the right of way to such water whenever it is required for any public purpose, nor to destroy or obstruct the free navigation of such water; and the Legislature shall enact such laws as will give the most liberal construction to this provision, so that access to the navigable waters of this State shall be always attainable for the people thereof.

## **RELATIONSHIP TO CALIFORNIA COASTAL ACT**

### **Section 3000 I.5 Legislative findings and declarations; goals**

The Legislature further finds and declares that the basic goals of the state for the coastal zone are to:

- (a) Protect, maintain, and where feasible, enhance and restore the overall quality of the coastal zone environment and its natural and artificial resources.
- (b) Ensure orderly, balanced utilization and conservation of coastal zone resources taking into account the social and economic needs of the people of the state.
- (c) Maximize public access to and along the coast and maximize public recreational opportunities in the coastal zone consistent with sound resources conservation principles and constitutionally protected rights of private property owners.
- (d) Ensure priority for coastal-dependent and coastal-related development over other development on the coast.
- (e) Encourage state and local initiatives and cooperation in preparing procedures to implement coordinated planning and development for mutually beneficial uses, including educational uses, in the coastal zone.

### **Section 302 I 0 Access; recreational opportunities; posting**

In carrying out the requirement of Section 4 of Article X of the California Constitution, maximum access, which shall be conspicuously posted, and recreational opportunities shall be provided for all the people consistent with public safety needs and the need to protect public rights, rights of private property owners, and natural resource areas from overuse.

### **Section 302 I 1 Development not to interfere with access**

Development shall not interfere with the public's right of access to the sea where acquired through use or legislative authorization, including, but not limited to, the use of dry sand and rocky coastal beaches to the first line of terrestrial vegetation.

### **Section 302 I 2 New development projects**

- (a) Public access from the nearest public roadway to the shoreline and along the coast shall be provided in new development projects except where: (1) it is inconsistent with public safety, military security needs, or the protection of fragile coastal resources, (2) adequate access exists nearby, or, (3) agriculture would be adversely affected. Dedicated accessway shall not be required to be opened to public use until a public agency or private association agrees to accept responsibility for maintenance and liability of the accessway.
- (b) For purposes of this section, "new development" does not include:
  - (1) Replacement of any structure pursuant to the provisions of subdivision (g) of Section 30610.

- (2) The demolition and reconstruction of a single-family residence; provided, that the reconstructed residence shall not exceed either the floor area, height or bulk of the former structure by more than 10 percent, and that the reconstructed residence shall be sited in the same location on the affected property as the former structure.
- (3) Improvements to any structure which do not change the intensity of its use, which do not increase either the floor area, height, or bulk of the structure by more than 10 percent, which do not block or impede public access, and which do not result in a seaward encroachment by the structure.
- (4) The reconstruction or repair of any seawall; provided, however, that the reconstructed or repaired seawall is not a seaward of the location of the former structure.
- (5) Any repair or maintenance activity for which the commission has determined, pursuant to Section 30610, that a coastal development permit will be required unless the commission determines that the activity will have an adverse impact on lateral public access along the beach.

As used in this subdivision "bulk" means total interior cubic volume as measured from the exterior surface of the structure.

(c) Nothing in this division shall restrict public access nor shall it excuse the performance of duties and responsibilities of public agencies which are required by Sections 66478.1 to 66478.14, inclusive, of the Government Code and by Section 4 of Article X of the California Constitution.

## **Section 30214 Implementation of public access policies; legislative intent**

(a) The public access policies of this article shall be implemented in a manner that takes into account the need to regulate the time, place, and manner of public access depending on the facts and circumstances in each case including, but not limited to, the following:

- (1) Topographic and geologic site characteristics.
- (2) The capacity of the site to sustain use and at what level of intensity.
- (3) The appropriateness of limiting public access to the right to pass and repass depending on such factors as the fragility of the natural resources in the area and the proximity of the access area to adjacent residential uses.
- (4) The need to provide for the management of access areas so as to protect the privacy of adjacent property owners and to protect the aesthetic values of the area by providing for the collection of litter.

(b) It is the intent of the Legislature that the public access policies of this article be carried out in a reasonable manner that considers the equities and that balances the rights of the individual property owner with the public's constitutional right of access pursuant to Section 4 of Article X of the California Constitution. Nothing in this section or any amendment thereto shall be construed as a limitation on the rights guaranteed to the public under Section 4 of Article X of the California Constitution.



(c) In carrying out the public access policies of this article, the commission and any other responsible public agency shall consider and encourage the utilization of innovative access management techniques, including, but not limited to, agreements with private organizations which would minimize management costs and encourage the use of volunteer programs.

### **Section 30220 Protection of certain water-oriented activities**

Coastal areas suited for water-oriented recreational activities that cannot readily be provided at inland water areas shall be protected for such uses.

### **Section 30221 Oceanfront land; protection for recreational use and development**

Oceanfront land suitable for recreational use shall be protected for recreational use and development unless present and foreseeable future demand for public or commercial recreational activities that could be accommodated on the property is already adequately provided for in the area.

### **Section 30222 Private lands; priority of development purposes**

The use of private lands suitable for visitor-serving commercial recreational facilities designed to enhance public opportunities for coastal recreation shall have priority over private residential, general industrial, or general commercial development, but not over agriculture or coastal-dependent industry.

### **Section 30222.5 Oceanfront lands; aquaculture facilities; priority**

Oceanfront land that is suitable for coastal dependent aquaculture shall be protected for that use, and proposals for aquaculture facilities located on those sites shall be given priority, except over other coastal dependent developments or uses.

### **Section 30223 Upland areas**

Upland areas necessary to support coastal recreational uses shall be reserved for such uses, where feasible.

### **Section 30224 Recreational boating use; encouragement; facilities**

Increased recreational boating use of coastal waters shall be encouraged, in accordance with this division, by developing dry storage areas, increasing public launching facilities, providing additional berthing space in existing harbors, limiting non-water-dependent land uses that congest access corridors and preclude boating support facilities, providing harbors of refuge, and by providing for new boating facilities in natural harbors, new protected water areas, and in areas dredged from dry land.

## **Section 30240 Environmentally sensitive habitat areas; adjacent developments**

- (a) Environmentally sensitive habitat areas shall be protected against any significant disruption of habitat values, and only uses dependent on those resources shall be allowed within those areas.
- (b) Development in areas adjacent to environmentally sensitive habitat areas and parks and recreation areas shall be sited and designed to prevent impacts which would significantly degrade those areas, and shall be compatible with the continuance of those habitat and recreation areas.

## **Section 30604 Coastal development permit; issuance prior to certification of the local coastal program; finding that development in conformity with public access and public recreation policies; housing opportunities for low and moderate income persons**

- (a) Prior to certification of the local coastal program, a coastal development permit shall be issued if the issuing agency, or the commission on appeal, finds that the proposed development is in conformity with Chapter 3 (commencing with Section 30200) and that the permitted development will not prejudice the ability of the local government to prepare a local coastal program that is in conformity with Chapter 3 (commencing with Section 30200). A denial of a coastal development permit on grounds it would prejudice the ability of the local government to prepare a local coastal program that is in conformity with Chapter 3 (commencing with Section 30200) shall be accompanied by a specific finding which sets forth the basis for that conclusion.
- (b) After certification of the local coastal program, a coastal development permit shall be issued if the issuing agency or the commission on appeal finds that the proposed development is in conformity with the certified local coastal program.
- (c) Every coastal development permit issued for any development between the nearest public road and the sea or the shoreline of any body of water located within the coastal zone shall include a specific finding that the development is in conformity with the public access and public recreation policies of Chapter 3 (commencing with Section 30200).
- (d) No development or any portion thereof which is outside the coastal zone shall be subject to the coastal development permit requirements of this division, nor shall anything in this division authorize the denial of a coastal development permit by the commission on the grounds the proposed development within the coastal zone will have an adverse environmental effect outside the coastal zone.
- (e) No coastal development permit may be denied under this division on the grounds that a public agency is planning or contemplating to acquire the property on, or property adjacent to the property on, which the proposed development is to be located, unless the public agency has been specifically authorized to acquire the property and there are funds available, or funds which could reasonably be expected to be made available within one year, for the acquisition. If a permit has been denied for that reason and the property has not been acquired by a public agency within a reasonable period of time, a permit may not be denied for the development on grounds that the property, or adjacent property, is to be acquired by a public agency when the application for such a development is resubmitted.

(f) The commission shall encourage housing opportunities for persons of low and moderate income. In reviewing residential development applications for low- and moderate-income housing, as defined in paragraph (3) of subdivision (h) of Section 65589.5 of the Government Code, the issuing agency or the commission, on appeal, may not require measures that reduce residential densities below the density sought by an applicant if the density sought is within the permitted density or range of density established by local zoning plus the additional density permitted under Section 65915 of the Government Code, unless the issuing agency or the commission on appeal makes a finding, based on substantial evidence in the record, that the density sought by the applicant cannot feasibly be accommodated on the site in a manner that is in conformity with Chapter 3 (commencing with Section 30200) or the certified local coastal program.

(g) The Legislature finds and declares that it is important for the commission to encourage the protection of existing and the provision of new affordable housing opportunities for persons of low and moderate income in the coastal zone.

(h) When acting on a coastal development permit, the issuing agency, or the commission on appeal, may consider environmental justice, or the equitable distribution of environmental benefits throughout the state.

### **Section 30609.5 State lands between the first public road and the sea; sale or transfer**

(a) Except as provided in subdivisions (b) and (c), no state land that is located between the first public road and the sea, with an existing or potential public access way to or from the sea, or that the commission has formally designated as part of the California Coastal Trail, shall be transferred or sold by the state to any private entity unless the state retains a permanent property interest in the land adequate to provide public access to or along the sea. In any transfer or sale of real property by a state agency to a private entity or person pursuant to this section, the instrument of conveyance created by the state shall require that the private entity or person or the entity or person's successors or assigns manage the property in such a way as to ensure that existing or potential public access is not diminished. The instrument of conveyance shall further require that any violation of this management requirement shall result in the reversion of the real property to the state.

(b) This section shall not apply to the transfer of state land to a non-profit organization that exists for the purposes of preserving lands for public use and enjoyment and meets the requirements of subdivision (b) of Section 831.5 of the Government Code.

(c) Notwithstanding the provisions of subdivision (a), state lands between the first public road and the sea, that are under the possession and control of the Department of Parks and Recreation or the State Coastal Conservancy, may be transferred or sold if the department or the conservancy makes one or more of the following findings at a noticed public hearing relating to the transfer or sale of the property:

(1) The state has retained or will retain, as a condition of the transfer or sale, permanent property interests on the land providing public access to or along the sea.

(2) Equivalent or greater public access to the same beach or shoreline area is provided for than would be feasible if the land were to remain in state ownership.

(3) The land to be transferred or sold is an environmentally sensitive area with natural resources that would be adversely impacted by public use, and the state will retain permanent property interests in the land that may be necessary to protect, or otherwise provide for the permanent protection of, those resources prior to or as a condition of the transfer or sale.

(4) The land to be transferred or sold has neither existing nor potential public accessway to the sea.

(d) Nothing in this section shall be construed to interfere with the management responsibilities of state resource agencies, including, but not limited to, the responsibilities to ensure public safety and implement the California Endangered Species Act (Chapter 1.5 (commencing with Section 2050) of Division 3 of the Fish and Game Code).

(e) As used in this section, "state land" means any real property in which the state or any state agency has an ownership interest including, but not limited to, a fee, title, easement, deed restriction, or other interest in land. It does not include land in which a city, county, city and county, or district has an ownership interest.

(f) Nothing in this section is intended to restrict a private property owner's right to sell or transfer private property.

## **LEGAL BASIS FOR PUBLIC ACCESS**

### **Public Trust**

California joined the Union on September 9, 1850 and adopted English Common Law, establishing the public's right to access and use of California's waterways for navigation, fishing, boating, natural habitat protection and other water-oriented activities. Court decisions have broadened these rights to include recreation, preservation of scenic values, and protection of coastal ecosystems. Navigable waterways, tidelands, and submerged lands within 3 miles of the coast are held in public trust by California and administered by the State Lands Commission for the benefit of all people.

### **California Constitution**

The public's right of access to the tidelands is guaranteed by the California Constitution. Article X, Section 4 of the California Constitution provides:

"No individual, partnership, or corporation, claiming or possessing the frontage or tidal lands of a harbor, bay, inlet, estuary, or other navigable water in this State, shall be permitted to exclude the right of way to such water whenever it is required for any public purpose, nor to destroy or obstruct the free navigation of such water; and the Legislature shall enact such laws as will give the most liberal construction to this provision, so that access to the navigable waters of this State shall be always attainable for the people thereof."

### **Proposition 20**

The California Coastal Zone Conservation Act of 1972 (Proposition 20) was a temporary measure passed by the voters of the state as a ballot initiative. It set up temporary regional Coastal Commissions with permit authority and a directive to prepare a comprehensive coastal plan. The

coastal commissions under Proposition 20 lacked the authority to implement the Coastal Plan but were required to submit the Plan to the legislature for “adoption and implementation.” One of the key provisions of Proposition 20 was clarifying the public right to ocean access.

## California Coastal Act

In 1976, the California legislature passed the Coastal Act to carry out the provisions of Proposition 20, creating the California Coastal Commission and establishing that development may not interfere with the public’s right of access to the sea, including, but not limited to, the use of dry sand and rocky coastal beaches to the first line of terrestrial vegetation. Section 30212 requires that new development provide public access and Section 30214 provides guidance identifying and developing public access areas and related recreational facilities.

### Section 30212 New development projects

(a) Public access from the nearest public roadway to the shoreline and along the coast shall be provided in new development projects except where: (1) it is inconsistent with public safety, military security needs, or the protection of fragile coastal resources, (2) adequate access exists nearby, or, (3) agriculture would be adversely affected. Dedicated accessway shall not be required to be opened to public use until a public agency or private association agrees to accept responsibility for maintenance and liability of the accessway.

(b) For purposes of this section, "new development" does not include:

(1) Replacement of any structure pursuant to the provisions of subdivision (g) of Section 30610.

(2) The demolition and reconstruction of a single-family residence; provided, that the reconstructed residence shall not exceed either the floor area, height or bulk of the former structure by more than 10 percent, and that the reconstructed residence shall be sited in the same location on the affected property as the former structure.

(3) Improvements to any structure which do not change the intensity of its use, which do not increase either the floor area, height, or bulk of the structure by more than 10 percent, which do not block or impede public access, and which do not result in a seaward encroachment by the structure.

(4) The reconstruction or repair of any seawall; provided, however, that the reconstructed or repaired seawall is not seaward of the location of the former structure.

(5) Any repair or maintenance activity for which the commission has determined, pursuant to Section 30610, that a coastal development permit will be required unless the commission determines that the activity will have an adverse impact on lateral public access along the beach.

As used in this subdivision "bulk" means total interior cubic volume as measured from the exterior surface of the structure.

(c) Nothing in this division shall restrict public access nor shall it excuse the performance of duties and responsibilities of public agencies which are required by Sections 66478.1 to

66478.14, inclusive, of the Government Code and by Section 4 of Article X of the California Constitution.

### **Section 30214 Implementation of public access policies; legislative intent**

(a) The public access policies of this article shall be implemented in a manner that takes into account the need to regulate the time, place, and manner of public access depending on the facts and circumstances in each case including, but not limited to, the following:

- (1) Topographic and geologic site characteristics.
- (2) The capacity of the site to sustain use and at what level of intensity.
- (3) The appropriateness of limiting public access to the right to pass and repass depending on such factors as the fragility of the natural resources in the area and the proximity of the access area to adjacent residential uses.
- (4) The need to provide for the management of access areas so as to protect the privacy of adjacent property owners and to protect the aesthetic values of the area by providing for the collection of litter.

(b) It is the intent of the Legislature that the public access policies of this article be carried out in a reasonable manner that considers the equities and that balances the rights of the individual property owner with the public's constitutional right of access pursuant to Section 4 of Article X of the California Constitution. Nothing in this section or any amendment thereto shall be construed as a limitation on the rights guaranteed to the public under Section 4 of Article X of the California Constitution.

(c) In carrying out the public access policies of this article, the commission and any other responsible public agency shall consider and encourage the utilization of innovative access management techniques, including, but not limited to, agreements with private organizations which would minimize management costs and encourage the use of volunteer programs.

## **California Coastal Trail**

The California Coastal Act required local jurisdictions to identify an alignment a continuous interconnected public trail system along the California coastline. Coastal Act Section 30609.5 states that “no state land that is located between the first public road and the sea, with an existing or potential public accessway to or from the sea, or that the commission has formally designated as part of the California Coastal Trail, shall be transferred or sold by the state to any private entity unless the state retains a permanent property interest in the land adequate to provide public access to or along the sea.

Senate Bill 908 (Chesboro) charged the Coastal Conservancy in 2001 to prepare a plan, in cooperation with the Coastal Commission and State Parks Department, describing how the Coastal Trail can be completed. The plan “Completing the California Trail” was published by the California Coastal Conservancy in 2003 and established the following principles of alignment (Pages 15-16 of the Plan) that apply to all of the different components of the California Coastal Trail:

### **“Proximity**

Wherever feasible, the Coastal Trail should be within sight, sound, or at least the scent of the sea. The traveler should have a persisting awareness of the Pacific Ocean. It is the presence of the ocean that distinguishes the seaside trail from other visitor destinations.

### **Connectivity**

The trail should effectively link starting points to destinations. Like pearls on a string, our parks, ports, communities, schools, trailheads, bus stops, visitor attractions, inns, campgrounds, restaurants, and other recreational assets are strung along the edge of our coast. They are already connected by roads, streets, and highways. Our challenge is to create alternative nonautomotive connections that are sufficiently appealing to draw travelers out of their automobiles.

### **Integrity**

The Coastal Trail should be continuous and separated from motor traffic. Continuity is vitally important: if a chain is missing a link, it is useless. Where such separation is absent, the safety, pleasure, and character of the trail are impaired. Appropriate separation can take many forms. Substantial horizontal distance is generally the most desirable, thus avoiding the sight, sound, and scent of the internal combustion engine. Separation is also possible through vertical displacements of gradient, underpasses, vegetative buffer strips, barrier rails, and other means.

### **Respect**

The trail must be located and designed with a healthy regard for the protection of natural habitats, cultural and archaeological features, private property rights, neighborhoods, and agricultural operations along the way. Manmade features such as boardwalks, guidewires, and fencing can be used to protect wetlands, dunes, archaeological sites, and agricultural fields. Screening fences and vegetative barriers not only protect residential privacy but may also minimize disturbance of sensitive bird habitats.

Respect also requires understanding that this trail will exist in a context of other trail designations, including the Pacific Coast Bike Route, Humboldt Bay Trail, Lost Coast Trail, San Mateo Coastside Trail, Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail, Santa Monica Mountains Backbone Trail, Los Angeles South Bay Bicycle Trail, etc. Providing a clear identity for the Coastal Trail on maps, signs, and brochures should not compete with or displace these existing trail identities. Where the Coastal Trail alignment incorporates or is a component of these other trails, the Coastal Trail should be no more than a concurrent designation.

### **Feasibility**

To achieve timely, tangible results with the resources that are available, both interim and long-term alignments of the Coastal Trail will need to be identified.”

In collaboration with the Coastal Conservancy, in this report, the Coastal Commission identified the following criteria for development of the Coastal Trail:

- (1) Provide a continuous walking and hiking trail as close to the ocean as possible;
- (2) Provide maximum access for a variety of non-motorized uses by utilizing parallel trail segments where feasible;

- (3) Maximize connections to existing and proposed local trail systems;
- (4) Ensure that the trail has connections to trailheads, parking areas, transit stops, inland trail segments, etc. at reasonable intervals;
- (5) Maximize ocean views and scenic coastal vistas; and,
- (6) Provide an educational experience where feasible through interpretive programs, kiosks, and other facilities

The intent of the Local Coastal Plan is to provide a continuous braided trail system that contains parallel routes and point access to accommodate a wide range of users. Figures C-PA-1a-k show the existing and proposed segments of the California Coastal Trail.

“Existing” means the trail has been constructed or that significant portions of a segment are open for public use. Figures C-PA-1a-k show these locations in their existing location.

“Proposed” means the approximate location of the trail alignment has been identified as described in the Public Access Plan, or that an alignment between two end points has not been identified or that several alternative alignments need to be evaluated. For illustration purposes, future segments are shown along Highway 1, but the chosen alternative should be as close to the ocean as possible. Figures C-PA-1a-k show the general location of proposed access rather than an exact location to allow flexibility in planning and developing proposed access points. (CCC REVISED)

## **PUBLIC ACCESS PLAN**

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The Public Access Plan in **Appendix B** encompasses recommendations from the previous Local Coastal Plan; and State Parks and County Regional Parks General Plans, Master Plans, and Management Plans; and has been supplemented with input from Sonoma County Ag+Open Space District, local and national land trusts with holdings in the Coastal Zone, and comments from public workshops. This information provides the framework for recommending a range of public access areas along the Sonoma Coast, consistent with the mandates of the California Coastal Act.

The Public Access Plan is based on both local and regional needs. Because of the exceptional quality and significance of its natural resources on a local, state, and national level, the Coastal Zone contains a greater proportion of the resource-based recreational facilities and opportunities than found in other areas of Sonoma County. Therefore, the equitable distribution of recreational opportunities and facilities along and between the North and South Coasts is a goal for State Parks and County Regional Parks reflected in the Public Access Plan. The equitable distribution of recreational facilities is influenced less by resident population densities and more by providing the entire County population with a range of recreational experiences without overly impacting any one access area too much.

“Existing” means the trail has been constructed or that significant portions of a segment are open for public use. Figures C-PA-1a-k show these locations in their existing location.

“Proposed” means the approximate location of the trail alignment has been identified as described in the Public Access Plan, or that an alignment between two end points has not been identified or that several alternative alignments need to be evaluated. For illustration purposes, future segments are shown along Highway 1, but the chosen alternative should be as close to the ocean as possible.



Figures C-PA-1a-k show the general location of proposed access rather than an exact location to allow flexibility in planning and developing proposed access points. (CCC REVISED)

**State Facilities.** The proposed improvements and programs for State facilities identified in the Public Access Plan are driven by a series of California Department of Parks and Recreation programs and planning documents. Criteria for access improvements, along with the involvement of natural and cultural resources, are provided through Division 5 of the State of California Public Resources Code and the California Department of Parks and Recreation's Operations Manual. Recommendations for access improvements to meet accessibility guidelines are mandated through the Consent Decree from *Tucker v. The State of California Department of Parks and Recreation*. Proposals for specific State facilities are identified based on the need to provide safe and quality public access to facilities and protect park resources.

Proposals identified for Sonoma Coast State Park are an outgrowth of guidance provided in the Sonoma Coast State Park General Plan (2004). Proposals associated with the Carrington Property are contained in the Carrington Property Immediate Public Use Facilities Plan (2008, rev. 2010) and subsequent Mitigated Negative Declaration (2010).

**County Facilities.** Access areas to be developed by Sonoma County Regional Parks facilities identified in the Public Access Plan are based on the considerations and standards described below under Planning and Development Considerations.

## North Coast Access

The availability of public access within the Coastal Zone from Gualala to Jenner is quite varied. Some large sections of the coastline and upland areas of the Coastal Zone are open to the public, including Gualala Point Regional Park, Salt Point State Park, Fort Ross Historic State Park, and North Jenner Beach. At other large sections of the coast public access is limited, including in the area of Stewarts Point, Timber Cove, High Cliffs, and The Sea Ranch community. North Coast public access points and facilities with public access are shown in Figures C-PA-1a-g.

Access to the Russian River estuary between Duncans Mills and the river mouth is limited to certain areas, with the mouth accessible from Jenner and the Goat Rock area. From the Bridgehaven Bridge to Duncans Mills, river access is limited to the Willow Creek Environmental Campground, State Parks visitor center in Jenner, and small informal turnout areas. A public access point, subject to fees, is available in Duncans Mills at the private Cassini Ranch Campground.

There are about 40 miles of trail and over 80 parkland public access points and easements on the North Coast. The use levels tend to drop off from Russian Gulch to the north. Jenner, the southernmost area in California where recreational abalone diving is legal, is a significant recreational draw.

The California Coastal Trail on the North Coast is planned to be a continuous trail alignment extending over 40 miles, connecting Mendocino County with the Russian River estuary. Approximately half of the California Coastal Trail alignment is in public ownership and developed, with numerous gaps in the trail alignment, including the gap between Gualala Point Regional Park and Salt Point State Park.

## South Coast Access

There are a large number of public access points along the South Coast, especially in the Bodega Bay area. There are about 21 miles of trails and over 60 parkland public access points and easements on the South Coast. South Coast public access points and facilities with public access are shown in Figures C-PA-1h-k.

The majority of the coastal property from the Russian River estuary to Bodega Head is a part of Sonoma Coast State Park and provides numerous developed and informal access points. Acquisition of the Willow Creek watershed, Wright Hill Ranch, and the Carrington Ranch by public agencies will eventually provide extensive public access to the upland areas north of Salmon Creek in the Coastal Zone. Public access to the Bodega Bay tidelands is available at the County-owned facilities of Spud Point Marina, Westside Park, Bird Walk Coastal Access Trail, and Doran Regional Park. Two public access trails in the Bodega Harbor Subdivision were dedicated to County Regional Parks providing access along the coast and Shorttail Gulch.

Further south, the Sonoma Land Trust and The Wildlands Conservancy own property adjacent to the Estero Americano. At this point access is limited by these organization to tours and interpretive programs.

## Facilities Providing Public Access

<i>Type of Facility</i>	<i>Examples</i>	<i>Description/Purpose</i>
<b>State Marine Managed Areas (Marine Reserves and Marine Conservation Areas)</b>	Del Mar Landing, Bodega Bay, Gerstle Cove, Russian River estuary	Support scientific research, education, and recreation.
<b>Open Space Preserves</b>	Jenner Headlands Preserve, Estero Americano Coast Preserve	Lands that support passive recreation
<b>State and County Parks</b>	Doran Beach, Sonoma Coast State Beach,	Provide parking, camping, bathrooms, showers, maintained beaches, and other amenities.
<b>Regional Trails</b>	Kortum Trail, Pomo Canyon, Bodega Head, Bodega Dunes	Trails that provide recreation and transportation connections between protected accessible lands, communities, and/or other points of interest. They provide access and opportunities to experience cultural and natural areas, and generally accommodate non-motorized access for pedestrians, bicycles, equestrians, or multi-use.
<b>Waterway Trails</b>	Russian River estuary, Gualala River estuary, Salmon Creek, Bodega Harbor, and Estero Americano.	Public access to navigable waterways is protected by the State and Public Trust Doctrine. Navigable waterways support recreational use
<b>Coastal Access Trails</b>	Stengel Beach Trail, South Salmon Creek Trail, Miwok Trail, Stillwater Cove Trail	Coastal Access Trails are trails that provide access to the shoreline from roads or other trails. They allow pedestrians, and sometimes equestrians and bicyclists to reach the shoreline. They may have staircases, steps,

<i>Type of Facility</i>	<i>Examples</i>	<i>Description/Purpose</i>
		switchbacks, retaining walls, or other structures to provide safe access.

## **I. PUBLIC ACCESS ACQUISITION**

Acquiring public access can be accomplished in several ways including, but not limited to, purchase or donation of property, dedication of an easement for public access, or establishing that continuous historic public use has established an access easement across private property.

Acquisition location and priority are established by the Public Access Plan found in Appendix B.

### **Goal, Objectives, and Policies**

**GOAL C-PA-1: Maximize public access to and along the Sonoma County coast. Minimize adverse impacts from public access to cultural resources, public safety, public health and the environment; and minimize adverse impacts from development on public access.**

**Objective C-PA-1.1:** Acquire public access to and along the Sonoma County coast through dedication of land, easements, or rights-of-way; fee purchase, or donation.

**Objective C-PA-1.2:** Acquire public accessways in a distributed network throughout the Sonoma County coast so as not to overburden any one area.

**Objective C-PA-1.3:** Acquire private accessways through easements and develop them into public accessways.

**Objective C-PA-1.4:** Prioritize acquiring specific public access facilities within the Sonoma County Coastal Zone.

#### *Land Acquisition Priorities*

**Policy C-PA-1a:** Implement the Public Access Plan as outlined in Appendix B as the set of primary policies for acquisition of public access on the Sonoma County coast. (EXISTING LCP REVISED)

**Policy C-PA-1b:** Evaluate safety, quality of destination, public need, stability of bluff, distance from other access points, potential impacts to coastal natural resources, compatibility with agricultural and residential uses, and ease of development and operation of proposed access points. Use these criteria to establish three priority levels for acquisition as follows: (PC REVISED - CCC REVISED – EXISTING LCP REVISED)

- (1) ***Acquisition Priority I:*** Begin or continue efforts to acquire through purchase, permit requirements, donation, or other negotiations as necessary to implement the Public Access Plan.

- (2) **Acquisition Priority II:** Require an offer of dedication or dedication of an easement as a condition or approval of any Coastal Development Permit where an offer of dedication or a dedication of an easement is needed or appropriate.

When all available Priority I properties have been acquired, take positive steps toward acquiring Priority II properties. If a time sensitive Priority II property is available, consider pursuing it before all Priority I properties have been acquired.

- (3) **Acquisition Priority III:** Require an offer of dedication or dedication of an easement as a condition of any Coastal Permit where an offer of dedication or a dedication of an easement is needed or appropriate. Offers of dedication for some Priority III properties may never be exercised because adequate access is provided by private owners, there is inadequate funding, or it is determined to not be in the public's interest to open access.

When all available Priority I and II properties have been acquired, take steps toward acquiring Priority III properties. If a time sensitive Priority III property is available, consider pursuing it before all Priority I and II properties have been acquired. (EXISTING LCP REVISED)

**Policy C-PA-1c:** Evaluate impacts to coastal natural resources, public safety, cost of development, operational needs, and distance from existing developed access points to establish three priority levels for development as follows: (PC REVISED - CCC REVISED – EXISTING LCP REVISED)

- (1) **Development Priority I:** Encourage each agency or association owning or operating designated accessways to allocate funds immediately and develop Priority I accessways within their purview.
- (2) **Development Priority II:** Encourage each agency or association owning or operating designated accessways to allocate funds and develop Priority II accessways only when all Priority I and II accessways within their purview have been developed.
- (3) **Development Priority III:** Encourage each agency or association owning or operating designated accessways to allocate funds and develop Priority III accessways only when all Priority I and II accessways within their purview have been developed.

Development of accessways distant from existing developed access points are given higher priority. Safety and cost of development and operation are paramount concerns.

**Policy C-PA-1d:** Encourage acquisition and development of additional access trails that integrate with the Coastal Trail System where feasible. In the event that an opportunity arises for acquisition of property that is not identified in the Public Access Plan, the agency proposing the acquisition shall conduct an analysis covering the following points:

- (1) The relationship of the unforeseen opportunity to the recreational opportunities identified in the Public Access Plan, including analysis of how the unforeseen acquisition would meet those needs compared to facilities identified in the Plan; and
- (2) An analysis of the opportunity costs of the acquisition, including whether the proposed acquisition is intended to replace or supplement a facility identified in the Public Access Plan. This analysis may consider how the unforeseen opportunity may impact the acquisition of facilities identified in the Plan. (NEW)

### ***Development Review***

**Policy C-PA-1e:** Require dedication of a public access easement, right of way, or fee title, where an offer of dedication or a dedication of an easement is needed or appropriate, as a condition of approval for a Coastal Development Permit for projects along the alignment of the California Coastal Trail, or identified as a public access point by the Public Access Plan. The dedication shall be granted to the County of Sonoma or a State agency and must be approved by the agency accepting dedication prior to development of the project approved by the associated Coastal Development Permit. (EXISTING LCP REVISED)

**Policy C-PA-1f:** Require dedication of a public access easement, right of way, or fee title, where an offer of dedication or a dedication of an easement is needed or appropriate, as a condition of approval for a Coastal Development Permit for projects that interfere or block historic public access points or routes. Work with the California Coastal Commission to ensure that any access rights that the public may have acquired through historic use are preserved. The dedication shall be granted to the County of Sonoma or a State agency and must be approved by the agency accepting dedication prior to development of the project approved by the associated Coastal Development Permit. (CCC REVISED - EXISTING LCP REVISED)

### ***Determining Access and Recreation Needs***

**Policy C-PA-1g:** Use the Public Access Plan project list found in Appendix B as the guide for determination of undeveloped (passive) park needs in the Coastal Zone, including County Regional Open Space Parks, Regional Trails, and State Parks in order to support coastal recreation. (NEW)

**Policy C-PA-1h:** Consistent with California Government Code Section 66477 (the Quimby Act), require development to provide 5 acres of Community Parks, Neighborhood Parks, and Regional Recreation Areas per 1,000 residents in the Coastal Zone, or pay an in lieu fee. Developed park acreage that is open to the public within private residential areas shall count towards meeting the acreage standard. (CCC REVISED - NEW)

### ***Maintaining and Managing Public Access***

**Policy C-PA-1i:** Sonoma County shall either accept or work in partnership with the California Coastal Conservancy, California State Parks, and non-profit land conservation partners such as Sonoma Land Trust, LandPaths, Wildlands Conservancy, and The Trust for Public Land to accept Offers of Dedication which increase opportunities for public access to the coast consistent with the County's ability to assume liability and maintenance costs. (CCC REVISED - NEW)

**Policy PA-1j:** Require a Coastal Development Permit for closure of privately owned or controlled accessways that are open to public use or vacation of rights of way associated with public access or that provide access to existing or proposed access points. Proposals to close accessways and/or vacate rights of way shall be required to demonstrate that equivalent public access will be maintained within the property boundary or on an immediately adjacent parcel where the owner is willing to provide an access easement that does not adversely impact coastal natural resources. If providing alternative on-site or adjacent access is not feasible, offsite access may be considered if found to provide the same or greater access to the same area of the coast as the access point being closed. (CCC REVISED - NEW)

**Policy C-PA-1k:** All Offers to Dedicate easements for public access shall be subject to the procedures in the California Code of Regulations Title 14, Division 5.5, Section 13574 (Procedures for Open Space Easements and Public Access Documents), and must be acceptable to the agency being offered the dedication. (NEW)

## **2. CALIFORNIA COASTAL TRAIL**

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### **Goal, Objectives, and Policies**

**GOAL C-PA-2:** Create a continuous California Coastal Trail system of walking, hiking, and bicycling access routes and trailhead connections that maximizes coastal access, ocean views, and educational opportunities while minimizing adverse environmental impacts. (CCC REVISED)

**Objective C-PA-2.1:** Identify, prioritize, and develop California Coastal Trail sections as described in the Public Access Plan and outlined in figures C-PA-1 (a-k).

**Objective C-PA-2.2:** Provide a safe, continuous walking and hiking trail within the sight, sound, and smell of the ocean to the maximum extent feasible.

**Objective C-PA-2.3:** Provide a safe, continuous walking and hiking trail within the sight, sound, and smell of the ocean to the maximum extent feasible.

**Objective C-PA-2.4:** Study and implement future alignments of the California Coastal Trail that provide sufficient protection from the highest projection of erosion and sea level rise scenarios and preserve or establish native vegetation between the trail and the bluff edge.

**Objective C-PA-2.5:** Maximize connections to existing and proposed regional and local trail systems.

**Objective C-PA-2.6:** Ensure the California Coastal Trail has connections to trailheads, parking areas, interpretive kiosks, and inland trail segments at reasonable intervals.

**Objective C-PA-2.7:** Maximize ocean views and scenic coastal vistas from the California Coastal Trail where possible.

**Objective C-PA-2.8:** Provide an educational experience through interpretive facilities where feasible.

### ***Trail Location and Alignment***

**Policy C-PA-2a:** Multi-use trails, associated amenities, and passive recreational features shall be located to minimize impacts to sensitive habitats and other sensitive surrounding land uses, such as residences and agriculture. (PC REVISED - CCC REVISED)

**Policy C-PA-2b:** Study, identify, and develop future alignments of the California Coastal Trail that would be sufficiently protected from the highest projection of erosion and sea level rise scenarios and would preserve or establish native vegetation between the trail and the bluff edge. (CCC REVISED - NEW)

**Policy C-PA-2c:** Provide a safe, continuous walking and hiking trail consistent with the principles of proximity, connectivity, integrity, respect and feasibility established by California Coastal Conservancy 2003 plan, "Completing the California Trail". Wherever feasible, the Coastal Trail should be within sight, sound, or at least the scent of the sea. The traveler should have a persisting awareness of the Pacific Ocean. It is the presence of the ocean that distinguishes the seaside trail from other visitor destinations.

Consistent with these principles, trail segments to the sight, smell and sound of the ocean as possible, or using the following standards: (CCC REVISED)

- (1) Where it is not feasible to locate the trail along the shoreline due to natural landforms or legally authorized development that prevents passage at all times, inland bypass trail segments located as close to the shoreline as possible should be used.
- (2) Shoreline trail segments that may not be passable at all times, or that are not passable by bicycles, should be augmented by inland alternative routes that are passable and safe for pedestrians and bicycles.
- (3) New lateral trails along the bluff edge shall be set back a sufficient distance from the bluff edge to avoid impacts from erosion and sea level rise, generally 50 feet, and native vegetation shall be established and maintained between the trail and the edge to stabilize the blufftop. (CCC REVISED)

(4) Outlooks and other trail amenities shall be incorporated to discourage damage from informal trails. (CCC REVISED)

**Policy C-PA-2d:** Where gaps in a continuous alignment are identified, employ temporary trail alignments to ensure continuity of the California Coastal Trail. Temporary segments should be noted as such, with provisions that as opportunities arise, the trail shall be realigned to its optimum location. Temporary segments should meet as many of the California Coastal Trail objectives and standards as possible. Reevaluate the temporary segment and proposed alignment every 5 years to determine feasibility of the proposed alignment and the need to revise the public access plan due to changed conditions or circumstances associated with the proposed permanent segment. (CCC REVISED - NEW)

**Policy C-PA-2e:** Avoid locating the California Coastal Trail along or on roads with motorized traffic where feasible. In locations where it is not possible to avoid siting the trail along or on a roadway, the trail should be located off of the pavement, and separated from traffic by a safe distance or by physical barriers that do not obstruct, or detract from, the scenic views and visual character of their surroundings. In locations where the trail must cross a roadway, safe under- or over-crossings or other alternative at-grade crossings should be considered in connection with appropriate directional and traffic warning signage. (NEW)

**Policy C-PA-2f:** The California Coastal Trail should use existing oceanfront trails and recreational support facilities to the maximum extent feasible. (NEW)

### ***Trail Design and Construction***

**Policy C-PA-2g:** Access and recreational facilities associated with the California Coastal Trail, as well as the Trail itself shall be sited, designed and maintained to avoid or mitigate erosion, as well as accommodate long term impacts of sea level rise, and climate change. (CCC REVISED)

**Policy C-PA-2h:** Provide adequate parking and trailhead facilities for the California Coastal Trail. Consider public safety concerns, protection of environmentally sensitive habitat areas, and use patterns including the proximity of other nearby parking and trailhead facilities when determining locations. (NEW)

**Policy C-PA-2i:** Provide low cost overnight camping and lodging facilities at reasonable intervals along the California Coastal Trail corridor to support long term hiking and bicycling excursions. (CCC REVISED - NEW)

**Policy C-PA-2j:** The Coastal Trail should be designed and located to minimize impacts to environmentally sensitive habitat areas consistent with **Policy C-OSRC-8f**. Where necessary to prevent disturbance to sensitive species, sections of the trail may be closed on a seasonal basis. Alternative trail segments shall be provided where feasible. For situations where impact avoidance is not feasible, appropriate mitigation measures should be incorporated,



including but not limited to, use of boardwalks, reducing trail width and protective fencing. (CCC REVISED - NEW)

**Policy C-PA-2k:** The Coastal Trail should be designed to maximize compatibility with agricultural lands and uses. (NEW)

**Policy C-PA-2l:** Require construction of California Coastal Trail segments as conditions of approval for coastal development along the alignment involving other new or major replacement infrastructure, such as realignment of Highway 1. (NEW)

## Program

**Program C-PA-2-P1** Evaluate preservation of portions abandoned piers and associated onshore buildings in Bodega Bay if they can provide coastal access along the California Coastal Trail, and can be restored to and maintained in safe condition. (CCC REVISED - NEW – MOVED FROM WATER RESOURCES ELEMENT)

## 3. ACCESS PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

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**Facility Improvements.** Necessary facilities at a particular site depend on the expected use and the availability of facilities nearby. Because the level of use is expected to increase over time, facilities may be developed in several phases with new or expanded facilities added as needed. Among the facilities needed for public access and outdoor recreation destinations are: safe trails, restrooms, parking areas, trash receptacles, and signs.

**Quality of Destination.** The desirability and capacity of coastal destinations are important considerations in locating public access points. Areas with few attractions and limited space may not justify the cost of development and operation. However, as the population expands and overuse impacts the existing destinations, the importance of every potential public access point increases.

**Impacts on Environment.** The environmental carrying capacity, protection of wildlife habitat, protection of views, and the psychological and social capacity of recreational lands are important factors to consider in planning and developing recreational facilities. Quantifying and measuring recreational carrying capacity is difficult and each site is unique.

The Local Coastal Plan generally supports distributing recreational facilities where compatible with the sensitivity and suitability of an area. Distributing recreational facilities throughout the Sonoma County coast helps prevent overuse and damage to the coastal environment in any one location. Often it is most efficient to utilize existing park service centers and consolidate significant developed park infrastructure to support the facilities. The existing park service centers are well-situated to serve additional dispersed recreation.

In planning for recreational activities, substantial modifications of the natural environment for a specific activity should be first avoided, then minimized when avoidance is not possible. . The Coastal Act specifies that coastal dependent uses permitted on the coast have priority over non-coastal dependent recreational uses. While oceanfront sites enhance coastal facilities such as hotels,

restaurants, and campgrounds, such locations may affect important coastal views from the highway and adjacent recreation areas.

Development of park facilities must also include consideration of water supply and wastewater disposal. Groundwater resources in the Coastal Zone are scarce and near the shoreline are at risk from sea level rise; facility planning should include an early evaluation of water supply capability if water use or availability is required to support the proposed facility.

**Peak Use.** Peak use issues can be addressed through a variety of approaches. Visitors can be encouraged to use Sonoma County Transit, Mendocino County Transit, and carpool, reducing the need for new parking areas (see California Coastal Act Section 30252.1). Interpretive materials and programs can be provided to help connect visitors with lightly used access points they may not have known about such as Shorttail Gulch or Bodega Dunes Beach that provide alternatives to crowded locations such as Doran Beach or Salmon Creek Beach.

Completion of the California Coastal Trail will connect most access points, allowing visitors to park wherever parking is available and use the trail to reach their preferred access point. Heavy use at particular access points can be distributed by creating additional trails with coastal views on parkland east of State Highway 1. The Dr. Joseph Trail (Pomo Trail) is a good illustration of a popular trail with coastal views east of the highway. Measures to address use patterns at specific access points are in the Public Access Plan.

**Liability.** Liability is a concern of both public agencies and private property owners regarding public access. State laws do provide some immunity from liability. California Government Code Sections 831.2 and 831.4 provide immunity to public agencies for public recreational use of public lands and recreational trails and roadways, releasing agencies from liability if a person is injured while using the facility. California Civil Code Section 846 grants immunity to private landowners who allow people to use their property for recreational purposes. However, if a fee is collected the private landowner loses this immunity.

**Coastal Permit Findings.** The California Coastal Act requires that every coastal development permit issued for new development located between the nearest public road and the sea (i.e., west of State Highway 1) or the shoreline of any body of water located within the Coastal Zone include a specific finding that such development is in conformance with the public access and public recreation policies of Chapter 3 of the Coastal Act. This policy does not apply to types of development not considered new development, as outlined in Coastal Act Section 30212.

New development that is in conformance with the Public Access Plan of the Local Coastal Plan is not required to provide access as the Public Access Plan is certified as being in conformance with access requirements of the Coastal Act.

If the new development is not in conformance with the Public Access Plan, public access from the nearest public roadway to the shoreline and along the coast (i.e., granting of an easement to allow vertical access to the mean high tide line or lateral access) shall be provided on the project site with the following exceptions:

- (1) It is inconsistent with public safety, military security needs, or the protection of fragile coastal resources; or
- (2) Adequate access exists nearby; or

- (3) It would have a significant adverse impact on agriculture as determined by the California Coastal Commission (Coastal Act Section 30212).

## Goal, Objectives, and Policies

**GOAL C-PA-3: Maximize public access to and along the Sonoma County coast. Minimize adverse impacts from public access on people and the environment; and minimize adverse impacts from development on public access. (NEW)**

**Objective C-PA-3.1:** Minimize barriers to public coastal access to the maximum extent feasible, including ensuring that public access and recreational opportunities account for the social, physical, and economic needs of all people.

**Objective C-PA-3.2:** Maintain and enhance public access to and along the Sonoma County coast.

**Objective C-PA-3.2:** Provide adequate facilities at public accessways.

**Objective C-PA-3.3:** Develop and maintain public accessways so as to protect public health and safety, protect sensitive visual and natural resources, and prevent adverse impacts on adjacent properties.

**Objective PA-3.4:** Ensure that development does not adversely affect existing and potential public accessways.

**Objective PA-3.5:** Prioritize development of specific public accessways.

**Objective PA-3.6:** Provide enough camping to meet the latent demand, and to provide a range of camping experiences.

### *Public Access Development Priorities*

**Policy C-PA-3a:** The Public Access Plan shall establish priority of development of public access facilities such as trails, visitor serving centers, etc. on the Sonoma County coast. (CCC REVISED - EXISTING LCP REVISED)

**Policy C-PA-3a:** Require new development adjacent to public access and recreation areas vulnerable to coastal bluff erosion or sea level rise to be sited and designed to anticipate eventual loss and necessary replacement of such public access and recreation areas. (CCC REVISED)

**Policy C-PA-3a:** The distance between coastal access trails and residences should be as large as possible to protect the quality of the user experience and the privacy of the occupants of the residence. Access facilities shall be designed and managed to minimize conflicts with residential development. (CCC REVISED)

**Policy C-PA-3a:** Adopt a long-range plan or Master Plan for each facility that identifies and describes improvements necessary for continued operation, and adaptation to sea level rise and climate change. (CCC REVISED)

**Policy C-PA-3b:** All proposed public access in the Public Access Plan has been designated from the highest to lowest priority for development as Development Priority I, II, or III. The emphasis for development priority is different than that for acquisition priority. Developing accessways distant from existing developed access points are given higher priority. Public safety and the costs of development and operation are principal concerns.

Implement the Development Priorities for the Public Access Plan as follows:

- (1) ***Development Priority I:*** Encourage each agency or entity owning or operating designated public access facilities to prioritize available funds towards developing Priority I public access facilities within their purview;
- (2) ***Development Priority II:*** Encourage each agency or entity owning or operating designated public access facilities to prioritize available funds towards developing Priority II public access facilities only when all Priority I public access facilities within their purview have been developed or if funding specific to a site becomes available; or
- (3) ***Development Priority III:*** Encourage each agency or entity owning or operating designated public access facilities to prioritize available funds towards developing Priority III public access facilities only when all Priority I and II public access facilities within their purview have been developed. (PC REVISED - EXISTING LCP REVISED)

### ***Development Review***

**Policy C-PA-3c:** Consider alternative mitigation measures for the impact of new development on public access in cases where development of certain public access facilities or improvements are found to be infeasible due to potentially significant impacts on public safety, agriculture, environmentally sensitive habitat areas, or cultural resources. Alternative mitigation measures include but are not limited to development of off-site public access points of equivalent public access opportunities. If off-site public access points are developed as mitigation for the impact of new development on public access, these access points shall be as close as feasible to the location of the impact on public access. (NEW)

**Policy C-PA-3c:** Where adverse impacts to existing public coastal access cannot be avoided by new development and no feasible alternative exists, ensure that impacts are mitigated by dedication of a new access or trail easement providing equivalent access, or a proportionate fee to develop or improve other public coastal access points identified as Priority 1 Development by the Public Access Plan. (CCC REVISED)

**Policy C-PA-3e:** Conduct public hearings for review of the Coastal Permits for an existing coastal access trail if there is evidence of degradation of resources in the area of the facility or significant public interest in the facility. Any proposal to reduce or close an existing public coastal access point or trail as a result of such review shall be reviewed by the California Coastal Commission. (EXISTING LCP REVISED)

**Policy C-PA-3g:** Conduct visual analysis prior to siting parking areas for accessways. (EXISTING LCP REVISED)

**Policy C-PA-3h:** Protect and encourage a range of accommodations in parks, including the provision of low cost accommodations where appropriate, including tent or small vehicle campgrounds, hike-in and primitive campgrounds, and hostel and sleeping cabin facilities. Use existing buildings and structures for these accommodations where feasible. (CCC REVISED - EXISTING LCP REVISED)

**Policy C-PA-3i:** Locate campgrounds, whenever possible, in areas that have already been disturbed by prior uses and consequently where cultural and biotic resources are typically limited. Campgrounds should be sited in a manner that protects visual resources and consistent with County development standards. Provide separate walk-in, tent, and recreational vehicle camping areas. (EXISTING LCP REVISED)

**Policy C-PA-3j:** Scale the capacity of planned public access facilities to be consistent with available water supply and available septic or sewer capacity. (EXISTING LCP REVISED)

### ***Public Access Facilities***

**Policy C-PA-3m:** Provide safe and clear public access trails constructed with pervious surfaces. Improvements should be designed to be safe, minimize impacts to sensitive resources, minimize maintenance costs, and provide disabled accessibility to the extent feasible without substantially impacting sensitive resources. (CCC REVISED - NEW)

**Policy C-PA-3o:** Provide trash and recycling receptacles and their servicing at all major public access facilities. (NEW)

**Policy C-PA-3q:** Provide clear directional signs at all public access facilities to indicate the location of trail heads and public parking. If the trail begins on State Highway 1, only one directional sign on the highway is necessary. Signs shall be compatible with surrounding views and visual resources, consistent with County Visual Resource Assessment Guidelines. If the trail begins off the highway, there should be a directional sign on State Highway 1 and other directional signs to the trail head. (NEW)

**Policy C-PA-3r:** At trailheads provide information about regulations, contacts in case of an emergency, natural resources, the potential for fires, and the need for user cooperation. (NEW)

### ***Temporary Events***

**Policy C-PA-4e:** Until completion of **Program C-PA-3** continue to apply zoning permit standards for temporary private events on public beaches, trails, streets, recreational facilities, and/or any other area otherwise open and available for general public use, consistent with the California Coastal Commission 1993 “*Guidelines for the Exclusion of Temporary Events from Coastal Commission Permit Requirements*”. Temporary events are excluded from Coastal Development Permit requirements except for those that meet all of the following criteria:

- (1) Are held between Memorial Day weekend and Labor Day; and,
- (2) Occupy all or a portion of a sandy beach area; and,
- (3) Involve a charge for general public admission, participation, or seating where no fee is currently charged for use of the same area (not including booth or entry fees).

Events that do not meet this criteria may still be subject to a Coastal Development Permit if Permit Sonoma or the California Coastal Commission determines that unique or changing circumstances exist relative to a particular temporary event that have the potential for significant adverse impacts on coastal resources. Such circumstances may include the following:

- (1) The event, either individually or together with other temporary events scheduled before or after the particular event, precludes the general public from use of a public recreational area for a significant period of time;
- (2) The event and its associated activities or access requirements will either directly or indirectly impact environmentally sensitive habitat areas, rare or endangered species, significant scenic resources, visitor and recreational facilities, water-oriented activities, marine resources, biological resources, environmentally sensitive habitat areas, agricultural lands, and archaeological or paleontological resources;
- (3) The event is scheduled between Memorial Day weekend and Labor Day and would restrict public use of roadways or parking areas or otherwise significantly impact public use or access to coastal waters;
- (4) The event has historically required a coastal development permit to address and monitor associated impacts to coastal resources.

For the purposes of this Policy, the following definitions shall apply:

- (1) "Temporary event(s)" means an activity or use that constitutes development as defined in Section 30106 of the Coastal Act; and is an activity or function of limited duration; and involves the placement of non-permanent structures; and/or involves

exclusive use of a sandy beach, parkland, filled tidelands, water, streets or parking area which is otherwise open and available for general public use.

- (2) "Limited duration" means a period of time which does not exceed a two week period on a continual basis, or does not exceed a consecutive four month period on an intermittent basis;
- (3) "Non-permanent structures" include, but are not limited to, bleachers, perimeter fencing, vendor tents/canopies, judging stands, trailers, portable toilets, sound/video equipment, stages, platforms, movie/film sets, etc., which do not involve grading or landform alteration for installation.
- (4) "Exclusive use" means a use that precludes use in the area of the event for public recreation, beach access or access to coastal waters other than for or through the event itself.
- (5) "Sandy beach area" includes all publicly owned and all privately owned sandy areas fronting on coastal waters.

(PC REVISED - CCC REVISED)

## Programs

**Program C-PA-1:** Prepare a long-range plan or Master Plan for each State or County Park or Preserve consistent with priorities in the Public Access Element in conjunction with park development planning. (EXISTING LCP REVISED)

**Program C-PA-3:** Develop policies for review of applications for temporary private events on beaches, parkland, filled tidelands, water, streets, or parking areas which is otherwise open and available for general public use consistent with the California Coastal Commission 1993 "*Guidelines for the Exclusion of Temporary Events from Coastal Commission Permit Requirements*". The policies shall consider the type of associated coastal-dependent activities; displacement of public use; number of people; season, weekday or weekend, and hours; location and area relative to size of beach and public accessways; pedestrian access; transportation and parking; amplified music and other noise; equipment; temporary structures and enclosures; food service; warming fires; signage; admission fee; wastewater and solid waste disposal; and required mitigation measures. (CCC REVISED - NEW)

## Initiatives

**Initiative C-LU-5:** Expand collection of data on visitor use of public access facilities and the methods used for monitoring visitor use patterns, to adjust to increasing demand for facilities and to assist in identifying needs for additional facilities. (NEW)

**Initiative C-PA-1:** Encourage partnerships between public agencies and private organizations that maximize the efficiency of operating and maintaining public facilities and preventing public access facility closures. (NEW)

## 4. PARKING

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Outside of the developed area of Bodega Bay, parking along State Highway 1 is primarily used by visitors accessing the coast. Parking management influences the capacity of Highway 1 since visitors slow down while searching for parking spaces and the numerous parking lots and turnouts tend to slow traffic. Between Bodega Bay and Jenner, State Highway 1 is adjacent to the Sonoma Coast State Beaches. Roadside parking in this area is heavy and often supported by paved, striped parking lots. North of Jenner Russian Gulch and Vista Trail provide the only off road parking, although there are numerous small turnouts. Further north, Fort Ross State Historic Park, Stillwater Cove Regional Park, and Salt Point State Park provide some off-highway parking for developed park areas only. Gualala Point Regional Park and The Sea Ranch Coastal Access Trails all have off-highway parking.

While automobile dependency must be reduced, providing parking for visitors to the Sonoma Coast will continue to be necessary until an adequate public transportation system is established. Parking improvements needed on the Sonoma County coast include developing new and enlarging existing parking facilities to reduce hazardous parallel parking, improving signs and entrances to and exits from parking facilities, and increasing capacity by delineating parking spaces. Parking improvements are most needed in the Sonoma Coast State Park area between Bodega Bay and North Jenner Beach, where traffic levels and demand for parking spaces are greatest.

### Goal, Objectives, and Policies

**GOAL C-PA-4:** Establish a no or low cost parking system with adequate parking facilities for coastal parks, beaches, accessways, and trails throughout the Sonoma County coast, with minimal impacts on views, public safety, and natural resources. (CCC REVISED)

**Objective C-PA-4.1:** Ensure that adequate parking facilities, including no-or -low cost parking improvements, are provided for each new or expanded public access facility. (CCC REVISED)

**Objective C-PA-4.2:** Identify, prioritize, and implement parking improvements, including no-or -low cost parking improvements at parklands. (CCC REVISED)

The following policies, in addition to policies in the Circulation and Transit Element, shall be used to achieve these objectives:



### ***Locating and Developing Parking Improvements***

**Policy C-PA-4a:** Develop adequate parking facilities in conjunction with development of new public access facilities. Parking may be developed in phases as use levels increase. At public access facilities, provide the maximum parking capacity that does not reduce public safety or significantly impact the environment. (CCC REVISED - NEW)

**Policy C-PA-4b:** Provide bicycle racks or locked bicycle storage areas at State and County Regional Parks, beaches, and other developed parklands. (EXISTING LCP REVISED)

**Policy C-PA-4c:** Locate parking areas to directly connect with trails if possible. In locating new, large parking lots, consider the landward (east) side of State Highway 1 to reduce impacts to ocean views if safe trail crossings of the highway can be provided. (NEW)

**Policy C-PA-4d:** When feasible locate parking in areas screened from public view. (EXISTING LCP REVISED)

### ***Equitable Access***

**Policy C-PA-4e:** Provide and maintain free parking for users of public access facilities and public access points, subject to restrictions necessary to protect coastal resources, such limiting number of parking spaces to avoid impacts. (CCC REVISED - NEW GP2020 REVISED)

## **Programs**

**Program C-PA-4-P1:** Encourage the provision of transit, bicycle and pedestrian pathways, and other vehicle use reduction measures such as carpooling to reduce vehicle use to and between public and private access facilities on the coast to reduce the number of vehicles on State Highway 1 and the demand for parking spaces. (NEW)

**Program C-PA-4-P2:** Evaluate the feasibility of a Bodega Bay water taxi to connect existing recreational and commercial facilities and reduce automobile dependency. (NEW)

**Program C-PA-4-P3:** Evaluate feasibility of providing bus shuttle service from inland areas to popular coastal destinations and support expanded bus transit service consistent with the Circulation and Transit Element Policy C-CT-2d, Program C-CT-2-P1 and Initiative C-CT-2-I1. (NEW)

## **5. FACILITY MANAGEMENT AND OPERATION**

Facilities that provide public access must be managed. An agency or organization must be willing to accept responsibility for maintaining and operating the facility before it is opened to the public. Appropriate public agencies include State Parks, County Regional Parks, and California Department of Fish and Wildlife. The County would give preference to public agencies for accepting and

operating facilities. If it is not feasible for a public agency to accept a particular facility, an organization may do so after a public hearing has been conducted.

In some cases, the managing entity is different than the property owner. For example, State Parks has an agreement with County Regional Parks to operate several parcels adjacent to Stillwater Cove Regional Park on the north. This is because these parcels are close to the County Park facility. Other possibilities are public ownership of a facility which is leased back to a private party for operation, and ownership and operation of a public access facility by a private owner such as a business or non-profit group.

### ***Allowable Activities***

Allowable activities at coastal access facilities are governed by easement or deed conditions and the general plan or master plan for the specific facility. Typically, in passive use areas, allowed recreational uses include activities normally associated with beach use but do not include organized sports activities, campfires, or vehicular access.

### ***Funding***

The funding for the operation and maintenance of public park facilities can be difficult for public agencies and private businesses and nonprofits to support during challenging economic times. Because of the numerous access points to existing facilities, temporary closures are often ineffective at preventing access to facilities and can cause additional issues.

### ***Maintenance***

Properly maintaining access facilities is essential to protect natural resources and public safety and to prevent adverse impacts on adjacent properties. Coastal Permit conditions and renewals help ensure that maintenance is adequate.

### ***Policing***

Policing of recreational facilities is provided by the operating agency or private organization. The two public agencies that police most of the public recreational facilities on the Sonoma County coast are State Parks and County Regional Parks. In addition, the California Highway Patrol, State Department of Fish & Game, and County Sheriff play an important role. Current staffing levels for public agencies and many private organizations is limited.

### ***Private Fee Access***

A few landowners charge minimal day use access fees that permit the general public the opportunity to reach the shoreline, providing additional public access points. By controlling access by fee and location, the property owner can operate trails, parking, and boat launching in a manner that affords minimum interference with other land uses. (CCC REVISED)

## Goal, Objective, and Policies

**GOAL C-PA-5:** Ensure that public access facilities are operated and maintained to protect natural resources and public safety and to prevent adverse impacts on adjacent properties. (CCC REVISED)

**Objective C-PA-5.1:** Require that the public access facilities are properly operated and adequately maintained to maximize public access.

### *Public Access and Recreation Planning*

**Policy C-PA-5a:** California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) environmental analyses on proposed State Parks or County Regional Parks projects shall include estimates of current and future visitor use based on data supplied by the agency operating the facility, and analyses of adequacy of the proposed facilities to meet county-wide current and future visitor demand. (CCC REVISED - NEW)

**Policy C-PA-5b:** Planning for new, expanded, or improved State Park and County Regional Park facilities shall take into consideration the balance of distribution of facilities between the North Coast and South Coast given the higher demand for facilities located between the Russian River and Bodega Bay. (CCC REVISED - NEW)

### *Public Access and Recreation Operations and Maintenance*

**Policy C-PA-5c:** When new recreation facilities are proposed, assess proposed staffing plans of the operating agency to ensure adequate staffing for maintenance and security. (CCC REVISED - NEW)

**Policy C-PA-5d:** Use Coastal Permit conditions and renewals to ensure that recreation and access facilities are properly maintained to protect natural resources and public safety and to minimize adverse impacts on adjacent properties. (NEW)

### *Public Access Facility Closures*

**Policy C-PA-5e:** The following guidelines shall be applied to closures of public access facilities:

- (1) A beach closure or curfew cannot apply to the area of original jurisdiction of the California Coastal Commission (State tidelands, submerged lands, and public trust lands), including but not necessarily limited to the area seaward of the mean high tide line.
- (2) Public access to the water's edge and at least 20 feet inland of the wetted substrate (sand and rocks) of all beaches shall be allowed at all times, except when access is restricted to prevent impacts to protected natural resources, such as marine mammal haul out areas. (CCC REVISED)

- (3) Closure to public use of any portion of the beach inland of the mean high tide line is not encouraged, and would require a coastal development permit, a condition of which must include maintenance of the public's right to gain access to State tidelands, except when closure is necessary to prevent impacts to protected natural resources, such as marine mammal haul out areas.
- (4) Measures that limit public use of the beach shall be limited to those necessary to address documented events that could create a risk or hazard to public safety or adverse impact to the environment, and shall be the minimum necessary to address that potential risk or hazard. The need for continuation of measures that provide public safety but that limit public access to the beach shall be reassessed on a periodic basis to assure maximum feasible public access to the beach is provided. (CCC REVISED NEW)

## 6. RECREATIONAL BOATING

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The California Coastal Act of 1976 supports coastal-dependent development stressing protection of recreational boating and necessary support facilities. While Bodega Harbor is known primarily for its commercial boating, recreational boating is also important at the harbor.

### Goal, Objectives, and Policies

**GOAL C-PA-6: Provide adequate recreational boating facilities at parks, harbors, and marinas on the Sonoma County coast.**

**Objective C-PA-6.1:** Identify and develop the recreational boating facilities needed at parks, harbors, and marinas.

**Objective C-PA-6.2:** Develop a sustainable economic approach to support the boating facilities in Bodega Bay.

**Policy C-PA-6a:** Encourage public and private harbor and marina operators to accommodate existing and future demand for recreational and commercial boating facilities. (NEW)

**Policy C-PA-6b:** Encourage continuing the existing boat rental and launch facilities at the coast and coastal waterways and providing additional facilities that provide new recreational opportunities compatible with natural resources. (NEW)

**Policy C-PA-6c:** Provide the maximum public access feasible to new boat wharves and piers. (NEW)

**Policy C-PA-6d:** Encourage the establishment of waterway trails for non-motorized boating to promote environmentally sensitive water based education, recreation, and tourism. Provide information at launch sites for safe and responsible boating. (NEW)

## Initiatives

**Initiative C-PA-6-I1:** Work with Regional Parks to evaluate the reuse of Mason's Marina to concentrate the County's marina services and to support other boating related uses. (NEW)

**Initiative C-PA-6-I2:** Encourage the formation of a harbor district at Bodega Bay to improve recreational and commercial boating. The harbor district could facilitate the economic basis for providing improved boating facilities and public outreach. (NEW)

# Water Resources Element: Table of Contents

Water Resources Element.....	3
Introduction.....	3
Purpose.....	3
Relationship to Other Elements.....	3
Relationship to California Coastal Act.....	3
Section 30230 Marine resources; maintenance.....	3
Section 30231 Biological productivity; water quality.....	3
Section 30236 Water supply and flood control.....	4
Section 30411 Department of Fish & Wildlife; Fish & Game Commission; management programs; wetlands; aquaculture; coastal sites.....	4
Section 30412 State Water Resources Control Board & Regional Water Quality Control Boards.....	5
Regulatory Framework.....	6
National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System.....	6
Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA).....	7
Total Maximum Daily Load Program.....	7
Water Rights.....	7
Reasonable and Beneficial Use.....	7
Types of Water Rights.....	7
Biotic Resources and Water.....	8
1. Water Resources.....	8
Water Cycle.....	8
Watersheds.....	8
Russian River Watershed.....	9
Gualala River Watershed.....	9
Frontal Pacific Ocean Watershed.....	9
1.1 Goal, Objectives, and Policies.....	10

1.2 Programs .....	15
1.3 Initiatives .....	16
2. Groundwater.....	17
Groundwater Availability .....	17
2.1 Goal, Objectives, and Policies .....	19
2.1 Programs .....	20
2.1 Initiatives .....	21
3. Public Water Systems .....	21
3.1 Goal, Objectives, and Policies .....	22
3.1 Program .....	24
3.1 Initiatives .....	24
4. Water Conservation and Re-Use.....	24
4.1 Goal, Objectives, and Policies .....	25
4.1 Programs .....	26
4.1 Initiative .....	27
5. Watershed Management .....	27
5.1 Goal, Objective, and Policy .....	27

# Water Resources Element

## INTRODUCTION

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### PURPOSE

The primary purpose of this element is to ensure that coastal water resources are protected. Water resource management should consider the amount of quality water that can be used over the long-term without exceeding the replenishment rates over time or causing long-term declines or degradation in available surface water or groundwater resources. The Water Resources Element establishes goals, objectives, and policies to protect and sustainably manage coastal water resources for all beneficial uses. Programs needed to implement proposed policies are also identified. In addition, the element calls out Other Initiatives—ongoing or potential future County initiatives that support water quality efforts and promote inter-agency and community collaboration. Nothing in this element should be construed to encourage or condone illegal use of water.

### RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER ELEMENTS

The Water Resources Element addresses a range of water related issues in the Sonoma County Coastal Zone. Some other water-related topics are also addressed in other Elements. Water availability as a factor in Land Use Map densities is addressed in the Land Use Element. The Open Space and Resource Conservation Element addresses riparian corridors, wetlands, wildlife protection, tree protection, fishery resources and other biotic resources, soil erosion, forestry, and mineral resources. The Public Access Element addresses water oriented recreation. The Public Facilities and Services Element addresses connections to public water systems. The Public Safety Element addresses flood hazards, fire suppression, and hazardous materials. The Agricultural Resources Element addresses aquaculture. (CCC REVISED)

### RELATIONSHIP TO CALIFORNIA COASTAL ACT

#### Section 30230 Marine resources; maintenance

Marine resources shall be maintained, enhanced, and where feasible, restored. Special protection shall be given to areas and species of special biological or economic significance. Uses of the marine environment shall be carried out in a manner that will sustain the biological productivity of coastal waters and that will maintain healthy populations of all species of marine organisms adequate for long-term commercial, recreational, scientific, and educational purposes.

#### Section 3023 I Biological productivity; water quality

The biological productivity and the quality of coastal waters, streams, wetlands, estuaries, and lakes appropriate to maintain optimum populations of marine organisms and for the protection of human health shall be maintained and, where feasible, restored through, among other means, minimizing



adverse effects of waste water discharges and entrainment, controlling runoff, preventing depletion of ground water supplies and substantial interference with surface waterflow, encouraging waste water reclamation, maintaining natural vegetation buffer areas that protect riparian habitats, and minimizing alteration of natural streams.

### **Section 30236 Water supply and flood control**

Channelizations, dams, or other substantial alterations of rivers and streams shall incorporate the best mitigation measures feasible, and be limited to (1) necessary water supply projects, (2) flood control projects where no other method for protecting existing structures in the flood plain is feasible and where such protection is necessary for public safety or to protect existing development, or (3) developments where the primary function is the improvement of fish and wildlife habitat.

### **Section 30411 Department of Fish & Wildlife; Fish & Game Commission; management programs; wetlands; aquaculture; coastal sites**

(a) The Department of Fish and Wildlife and the Fish and Game Commission are the principal state agencies responsible for the establishment and control of wildlife and fishery management programs and the commission shall not establish or impose any controls with respect thereto that duplicate or exceed regulatory controls established by these agencies pursuant to specific statutory requirements or authorization.

(b) The Department of Fish and Wildlife, in consultation with the commission and the Department of Boating and Waterways within the Department of Parks and Recreation, may study degraded wetlands and identify those which can most feasibly be restored in conjunction with development of a boating facility as provided in subdivision (a) of Section 30233. Any such study shall include consideration of all of the following:

(1) Whether the wetland is so severely degraded and its natural processes so substantially impaired that it is not capable of recovering and maintaining a high level of biological productivity without major restoration activities.

(2) Whether a substantial portion of the degraded wetland, but in no event less than 75 percent, can be restored and maintained as a highly productive wetland in conjunction with a boating facilities project.

(3) Whether restoration of the wetland's natural values, including its biological productivity and wildlife habitat features, can most feasibly be achieved and maintained in conjunction with a boating facility or whether there are other feasible ways to achieve these values.

(c) The Legislature finds and declares that salt water or brackish water aquaculture is a coastal-dependent use which should be encouraged to augment food supplies and to further the policies set forth in Chapter 4 (commencing with Section 825) of Division 1. The Department of Fish and Wildlife may identify coastal sites it determines to be appropriate for aquaculture facilities. If the department identifies these sites, it shall transmit information identifying the sites to the commission and the relevant local government agency. The commission and, where appropriate, local governments shall, consistent with the coastal planning requirements of this division, provide for as

many coastal sites identified by the Department of Fish and Wildlife for any uses that are consistent with the policies of Chapter 3 (commencing with Section 30200).

(d) Any agency of the state owning or managing land in the coastal zone for public purposes shall be an active participant in the selection of suitable sites for aquaculture facilities and shall make the land available for use in aquaculture when feasible and consistent with other policies of this division and other law.

## **Section 30412 State Water Resources Control Board & Regional Water Quality Control Boards**

(a) In addition to Section 13142.5 of the Water Code, this section shall apply to the commission and the State Water Resources Control Board and the California regional water quality control boards.

(b) The State Water Resources Control Board and the California regional water quality control boards are the state agencies with primary responsibility for the coordination and control of water quality. The State Water Resources Control Board has primary responsibility for the administration of water rights pursuant to applicable law. The commission shall assure that proposed development and local coastal programs shall not frustrate this section. The commission shall not, except as provided in subdivision (c), modify, adopt conditions, or take any action in conflict with any determination by the State Water Resources Control Board or any California regional water quality control board in matters relating to water quality or the administration of water rights.

Except as provided in this section, nothing herein shall be interpreted in any way either as prohibiting or limiting the commission, local government, or port governing body from exercising the regulatory controls over development pursuant to this division in a manner necessary to carry out this division.

(c) Any development within the coastal zone or outside the coastal zone which provides service to any area within the coastal zone that constitutes a treatment work shall be reviewed by the commission and any permit it issues, if any, shall be determinative only with respect to the following aspects of the development:

- (1) The siting and visual appearance of treatment works within the coastal zone.
- (2) The geographic limits of service areas within the coastal zone which are to be served by particular treatment works and the timing of the use of capacity of treatment works for those service areas to allow for phasing of development and use of facilities consistent with this division.
- (3) Development projections which determine the sizing of treatment works for providing service within the coastal zone.

The commission shall make these determinations in accordance with the policies of this division and shall make its final determination on a permit application for a treatment work prior to the final approval by the State Water Resources Control Board for the funding of such treatment works. Except as specifically provided in this subdivision, the decisions of the State Water Resources Control Board relative to the construction of treatment works shall be final and binding upon the commission.

(d) The commission shall provide or require reservations of sites for the construction of treatment works and points of discharge within the coastal zone adequate for the protection of coastal resources consistent with the provisions of this division.

(e) Nothing in this section shall require the State Water Resources Control Board to fund or certify for funding, any specific treatment works within the coastal zone or to prohibit the State Water Resources Control Board or any California regional water quality control board from requiring a higher degree of treatment at any existing treatment works.

## **REGULATORY FRAMEWORK**

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Development and land use in the Coastal Zone has the potential to create erosion, sedimentation, and degrade surface water quality in coastal waterways, estuaries, wetlands, and coastal waters. Surface water quality concerns include low levels of dissolved oxygen; elevated water temperatures; pesticide runoff, and high levels of pollutants such as coliform bacteria, ammonia, toxic metals, and residual pharmaceuticals. These watershed conditions will impact coastal waters, especially in sensitive areas such as bays, lagoons, and coastal estuaries.

Watersheds in the Coastal Zone are regulated by the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Water Board). Waste discharge requirements are set by the Regional Water Board for point sources of pollution, including industrial and commercial uses, community wastewater, agricultural runoff, and storm water management systems, and individual septic systems.

California's Non-point Source Pollution Control Program (CA NPS Program) addresses federal requirements under both the Clean Water Act and the Coastal Zone Management Act (Section 6217 of the Coastal Zone Act Reauthorization Amendments of 1990), by implementing California's Coastal Nonpoint Pollution Control Program on a statewide basis. The lead State agencies responsible for implementing the CA NPS Program are the State Water Resources Control Board (designated as the lead water quality agency) and the California Coastal Commission (designated as the lead coastal zone management agency), along with the nine Regional Water Boards. The California Coastal Act also mandates protection and restoration of water resources in the Coastal Zone. Sonoma County's Coastal Zone is primarily designated as a Class 4 Groundwater Availability Area; therefore, groundwater quantity and quality shall be protected. (PC REVISED)

The Local Coastal Program provides water quality protection measures in accordance with Coastal Act requirements for development in the Coastal Zone, which supplement the State Board's regulations. The Local Coastal Program is the standard of review for the Coastal Act Development Permits, issued by Sonoma County, including appeals to the Coastal Commission of Coastal Development Permits issued by Sonoma County.

### **National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System**

The focus of regulatory efforts has expanded in recent years to address surface runoff and pollutants entering into drainage channels, streams, and groundwater. The National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) program requires individual permits for construction sites that disturb more than one acre of land, and for certain industrial and commercial activities such as fish processing and boat repair yards.

## **Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA)**

The Sustainable Groundwater Management Act of 2014 (SGMA) provides for establishment of Groundwater Sustainability Agencies in designated groundwater basins and grants these agencies new authorities to manage groundwater use, recharge, and environmental impacts. The Act requires development of sustainable groundwater management plans for groundwater basins designated by Department of Water Resources as medium- or high-priority groundwater basins. There are no medium- or high-priority basins in the Coastal Zone, but as of 2020, Sonoma County is in the process of complying with SGMA.

## **Total Maximum Daily Load Program**

The other major Clean Water Act program affecting the County in the future is the Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) program. The Regional Water Board is required to determine which surface water bodies are impaired, assess pollutant sources, determine acceptable levels, allocate allowable pollutant loads to various sources, and establish implementation programs. Impaired water bodies are those where beneficial uses of water are limited due to certain pollutants. Water bodies in the Sonoma County Coastal Zone that have been identified as impaired are the Russian River, Gualala River and Estero Americano. Pollutants of concern typically in Sonoma County are sediment/siltation, nutrients, pathogens, and temperature but also include low dissolved oxygen, mercury, other metals, herbicides and exotic species. The listing of impaired water bodies is periodically re-evaluated by the Regional Water Board, and TMDLs are being developed by the Regional Water Board for surface waters in the Coastal Zone.

## **WATER RIGHTS**

### **Reasonable and Beneficial Use**

The Reasonable and Beneficial Use Doctrine in the California Constitution requires that water be used in a reasonable and beneficial manner and prohibits misuse and waste of water. Water is used beneficially when, for example, it is used to drink, grow crops. What is reasonable water use depends on the circumstances. For example, it could be unreasonable for some water usages during a drought. All types of water rights are subject to this constitutional provision, and the State Water Resources Control Board is authorized to take action to prevent unreasonable uses of water. (CCC REVISED)

### **Types of Water Rights**

There are two principal types of surface water rights in California: riparian rights and appropriative rights. A riparian water right allows a landowner bordering a watercourse to share the water flowing past his property with other riparian landowners. An appropriative right is a use-based right dependent upon physical control and beneficial use of the water, rather than any special relationship between land and water. Since 1914, all new appropriations of surface water require a permit from the State.

## BIOTIC RESOURCES AND WATER

Biotic resources include vegetation, trees and other natural vegetation that depend on water, but their presence also affects the long-term quality and quantity of water resources in several ways. The natural vegetation found around wetlands, streams, and lakes benefits water quality by filtering out sediment and pollutants from stormwater runoff before it enters surface water bodies. Vegetation can also block stream flows and increase the retention of stormwater, thereby recharging groundwater, absorbing pollutants, and modifying peak flood levels. Vegetation on stream banks reduces bank erosion as a source of sediment. Trees and shrubs provide shade which can lower the temperature of the water and increase its value as fishery habitat in a warm climate. Streamside trees that fall into stream channels may aid fishery habitat by providing shelter, diverting flood flows, and scouring deep holes.

## I. WATER RESOURCES

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### WATER CYCLE

Sonoma County has a Mediterranean climate where most precipitation falls as rain during the winter; there is very little measurable precipitation during the summer. Most rainfall arrives with storms characterized as atmospheric rivers, relatively narrow atmosphere currents of air with high water vapor content. Precipitation across Sonoma County is highly variable—flatter areas near Petaluma receive an average of roughly 25 inches annually while mountainous areas in the northern Coastal Zone receive over 70 inches.

Rain may either be absorbed into soil or runoff directly into surface water (streams, rivers, lakes, etc.) that drain back to the sea. Rain that is absorbed into the soil may be retained in the soil, flow along shallow subsurface flow paths to surface waters, or infiltrate into groundwater. Groundwater moves slowly through subsurface layers to streams, lakes, and the ocean, or may be extracted through wells for irrigation or human uses. Soil water is absorbed by plants and evapotranspired.

### WATERSHEDS

The term “watershed” refers to the area of land that includes a particular river or lake and all the rivers, streams, and creeks that flow into it. Most land in Sonoma County falls within the three main watersheds: Russian River, Gualala River, and San Pablo Bay. **Table C-WR-1** and **Figures C-WR-1a-c** show the areas and locations, respectively, of the watersheds and sub-watersheds of the Sonoma County Coastal Zone, which lay both inside and outside Sonoma County.

**Table C-WR-1. Area of Watersheds and Sub-Watersheds of the Sonoma County Coastal Zone**

<i>Watershed</i>	<i>Sub-Watershed</i>	<i>Total Area (square miles)</i>	<i>Area Within Coastal Zone (square miles)</i>
<b>Abbotts Lagoon-Frontal Pacific Ocean</b>	n/a	107	<1
<b>Gualala River</b>	n/a	299	2
<b>Gualala River</b>	South Fork Gualala River	44	2
<b>Lower Russian River</b>	n/a	148	15

<b>Watershed</b>	<b>Sub-Watershed</b>	<b>Total Area (square miles)</b>	<b>Area Within Coastal Zone (square miles)</b>
<b>Lower Russian River</b>	Dutch Bill Creek-Russian River	55	<1
<b>Lower Russian River</b>	Willow Creek-Russian River	24	15
<b>Salmon Creek-Frontal Pacific Ocean</b>	n/a	256	52
<b>Salmon Creek-Frontal Pacific Ocean</b>	Bodega Harbor-Frontal Pacific Ocean	55	11
<b>Salmon Creek-Frontal Pacific Ocean</b>	Russian Gulch-Frontal Pacific Ocean	166	36
<b>Salmon Creek-Frontal Pacific Ocean</b>	Salmon Creek	35	4
<b>Tomaes Bay-Bodega Bay</b>	n/a	160	17
<b>Tomaes Bay-Bodega Bay</b>	Bodega Bay	16	1
<b>Tomaes Bay-Bodega Bay</b>	Bodega Harbor	9	7
<b>Tomaes Bay-Bodega Bay</b>	Estero Americano	38	9

## **Russian River Watershed**

Most of central Sonoma County is part of the Russian River watershed and ultimately drains west to the Pacific Ocean. This area has moderate topography and lies in the ancient alluvial floodplain of the Russian River. Much of the suburban and urban development of Sonoma County is located inland within sub-watersheds, including Healdsburg, Windsor, Santa Rosa, Sebastopol, Rohnert Park, and Cotati. These inland sub-watersheds drain to, and have the potential to impact, coastal surface waters and groundwater.

## **Gualala River Watershed**

The watershed is elongated, running over 32 miles long north-south, with an average width of 14 miles east-west. A continuous history of movement along the San Andreas and Tombs Creek faults has been a dominant force in shaping the basin. In 1993, the USEPA listed the Gualala River on its federal Clean Water Act §303(d) list of impaired water bodies due to declines in anadromous salmonids from excessive sedimentation. The §303(d) listing was updated in 2003, and water temperatures in the basin are now considered impaired as well. The Gualala River North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board estimates that 85% of the anthropogenic sediment sources impacting the river today are derived from poorly constructed timber and ranch roads. (NEW)

## **Frontal Pacific Ocean Watershed**

The Coastal Zone includes many small watersheds which are drained by stream segments that flow a short distance from the first coastal ridgeline directly to the Pacific Ocean. These individual small coastal drainage basins are collectively referred to as the Frontal Pacific Ocean watershed. Streams in these watersheds flow through areas of steep terrain and marine terraces. Coastal streams typically enter the ocean at small sandy beach inlets along steep rocky coastal bluffs.

## I.1 Goal, Objectives, and Policies

### **GOAL C-WR-1: Protect, restore, and enhance the quality of surface and groundwater resources to meet the needs of all reasonable beneficial uses.**

**Objective C-WR-1.1:** Protect and, where feasible, restore the quality of coastal waters to implement Coastal Act policy (in particular Sections 30230 and 30231). Coastal waters include ocean, rivers, streams, wetlands, estuaries, lakes, and groundwater.

**Objective C-WR-1.2:** Protect unimpaired waters and improve water quality of impaired surface waters, prioritizing watersheds which contain surface waters that are the most impaired, have the highest value for fish and wildlife, or are at most risk from future development.

**Objective C-WR-1.3:** Plan, site, and design development to minimize the transport of pollutants in runoff from the development, to avoid pollution of coastal waters.

**Objective C-WR-1.4:** Plan, site, and design development to minimize post-development changes in the site's runoff volume, flow rate, timing, and duration, to prevent adverse changes in the hydrology of coastal waters.

**Objective C-WR-1.5:** Prevent the degradation of surface and ground water quality from the failure of septic and other wastewater treatment systems. (PC REVISED)

**Objective C-WR-1.6:** Educate the public about practices and programs to minimize water pollution, and provide educational and technical assistance to agriculture in order to reduce sedimentation, and to increase on-site retention and recharge of storm water, to the maximum extent feasible. (PC REVISED - CCC REVISED)

**Objective C-WR-1.7:** Secure funding sources for development of Sonoma County Coastal Zone groundwater quality assessment, monitoring, remedial and corrective action, and awareness/education programs. (CCC REVISED)

**Objective C-WR-1.8:** Require treated water to conform with beneficial water use standards to the maximum extent feasible. (CCC REVISED)

**Objective C-WR-1.9:** Minimize the pollution of stormwater runoff and the degradation of surface water quality from roads and other paved surfaces, commercial development, waterfront development, and agricultural facilities. (CCC REVISED)

**Objective C-WR-1.11:** Encourage new groundwater recharge opportunities and protect existing groundwater recharge areas. (CCC REVISED)

**Objective C-WR-1.12:** Require consideration of naturally occurring and human caused contaminants in groundwater in development projects. Educate the public on evaluating groundwater quality. (CCC REVISED)

**Objective C-WR-1.14:** Protect groundwater from saltwater intrusion. (CCC REVISED)

**Policy C-WR-1a:** The approval for any project proposed within 200 feet of an impaired surface water shall include as conditions of approval design features and mitigation measures to prevent impacts to the quality of such waters. (NEW)

**Policy C-WR-1b:** Require that permits and approvals for new development include evaluation and consideration of naturally-occurring and human caused contaminants in groundwater.

**Policy C-WR-1c:** New development and redevelopment shall include measures to minimize post-development changes in the runoff flow regime, control pollutant sources, and, where necessary, remove pollutants. Such measures shall take into account existing site characteristics that affect runoff (such as topography, drainage, vegetation, soil conditions, natural hydrologic features, and infiltration conditions). In addition, these measures should be considered early in site design planning and through alternative analysis. Such measures include, but may not be limited to the following: (PC REVISED - CCC REVISED)

- (1) Give precedence to a Low Impact Development (LID) approach to stormwater management in all development. LID integrates Site Design strategies with small-scale, distributed BMPs to replicate the site's natural hydrologic balance through infiltration, evapotranspiration, harvesting, detention, or retention of stormwater close to its source. Use pollutant Source Control Best Management Practices (BMPs), which can be operational actions (during construction) or structural features (post construction) in all development to minimize the transport of pollutants in runoff from the development.
- (2) Incorporate Treatment Control BMPs to remove pollutants of concern when the combination of site design and source control BMPs are not sufficient to protect water quality, and to meet State and Federal water quality objectives.
- (3) Plan, site, and design development to maintain or enhance on-site infiltration of runoff, where appropriate and feasible. Minimize the installation of impervious surfaces, especially directly-connected impervious areas, and, where feasible, increase the area of pervious surfaces in re-development, to reduce runoff and increase recharge capacity.
- (4) Plan, site, and design development to protect and, where feasible, restore natural hydrologic features such as groundwater recharge areas, natural stream corridors, floodplains, and wetlands.
- (5) Plan, site, and design development to preserve or enhance native vegetation. When feasible, native species should be selected to achieve water quality benefits such as transpiration, interception of rainfall, pollutant uptake, shading of waterways to maintain water temperature, and erosion control.
- (6) In areas adjacent to an Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Area (ESHA), plan, site, and design development to protect the ESHA from any significant disruption of habitat values resulting from the discharge of storm water or dry weather flows. (NEW)  
(MODEL LCP)



**Policy C-WR-1d:** Post-development peak storm water runoff discharge rates shall not exceed the estimated pre-development rate. (NEW)

**Policy C-WR-1e:** Avoid construction of new storm water outfalls and direct storm water to existing facilities with appropriate treatment and filtration, where feasible. Where new outfalls cannot be avoided, plan, site, and design outfalls to minimize adverse impacts to coastal resources from outfall discharges, including consolidation of existing and new outfalls where appropriate to minimize increased flow. (PC REVISED - NEW)

**Policy C-WR-1f:** Developments within 200 feet of the ocean, coastal wetlands or streams, or ESHA, or discharge runoff directly to the ocean, coastal waters, or to a stream or wetland buffer as defined by the Biological Resource policies of the LCP a high potential for adverse impacts to water quality and hydrology due to proximity of the discharge relative to protected coastal resources. "Discharge runoff directly" is defined as runoff that flows from the development to the ocean, coastal waters, or to a stream or wetland buffer that is not first combined with flows from any other adjacent areas. Uses including, but not limited to, motor vehicle fuel outlets, boat yards, agricultural processing, and food service establishments, may be considered to have a high potential for adverse impacts regardless of location. (CCC REVISED)

As determined by Permit Sonoma, on a case-by-case basis, such developments may require Treatment Control Best Management Practices (BMPs) for post-construction treatment of storm water runoff. Applicants for these types of developments shall do the following:

- (1) Conduct a polluted runoff and hydrologic site characterization by a qualified licensed professional, early in the development planning and design stage, and document the expected effectiveness of the proposed BMPs.
- (2) Conduct an alternatives analysis to demonstrate that there are no appropriate and feasible alternative project designs, including reduction of project scope, which would substantially improve on-site runoff retention. Coastal Development Permits may be denied for projects that are inconsistent with the lowest impact alternative. (PC REVISED)
- (3) Use treatment control BMPs or suites of BMPs designed to treat, infiltrate, or filter the amount of storm water runoff produced by all storm events up to and including the 1st inch of a 24 hour storm event, and/or the 85th percentile, 1-hour storm event (with an appropriate safety factor of 2 or greater) for flow-based BMPs.
- (4) Use treatment control BMPs or suites of BMPs to remove pollutants from any portion of the design storm runoff volume that will not be retained on-site, or if additional pollutant removal is necessary to protect coastal waters.

- (5) Use a runoff control BMP or suites of BMPs including LID and minimization of impervious surfaces for the design storm (Policy C-WR-1e (3) above), consistent with Regional Water Quality Control Board storm water permits or applicable State Water Resources Control Board requirements, to minimize adverse post-development changes in the runoff flow regime. (NEW)

**Policy C-WR-1g:** Permits for new development shall require an inspection, monitoring, repair, and maintenance of Source Control and Treatment Control Best Management Practices (BMPs) by Permit Sonoma as necessary so that they function properly for the economic life of the development. The condition shall specify that this requirement runs with the land, such that the burden for implementing this requirement becomes the responsibility of the new owner upon transfer of the property. (NEW) (MODEL LCP)

**Policy C-WR-1h:** Approvals for new development and redevelopment shall ensure water quality impacts from construction are minimized through the following siting and design requirements: (CCC REVISED)

- (1) Preserve the existing hydrologic conditions, drainage system, stormwater runoff infiltration, filtration, and retention functions to the maximum extent feasible including maintaining volume and velocity of stormwater and dry weather runoff as close to existing levels as feasible.
- (2) Limit the project footprint, phase grading activities, implement soil stabilization and pollution prevention measures, and avoid soil compaction;
- (3) Maximize percent cover by pervious surfaces, and minimize percent cover by impervious surfaces, especially those that are directly connected;
- (4) Maximize the use of vegetated strips of land or other techniques of increasing stormwater infiltration and filtration before reaching storm drain inlets.
- (5) Limit land disturbance from construction (e.g., clearing, grading, and cut-and-fill), especially in erosive areas (including steep slopes exceeding 35 percent), unstable areas, and erosive soils);
- (6) Requiring soil stabilization Best Management Practices (BMPs) be implemented over disturbed areas as soon as possible during construction.
- (7) Requiring that grading plans include measures to avoid soil erosion and sedimentation of storm water to the maximum extent feasible;
- (8) Requiring as a condition of grading permit approval for all new development, regardless of the area of land to be disturbed, that soil stabilization and erosion

control measures be installed in erosive areas of construction sites (e.g., steep slopes exceeding 35 percent), unstable areas, and erosive soils);

- (9) Requiring treatment control BMP's adequate to remove pollutants of concern when the combination of site design and source control BMPs are not sufficient to protect water quality, or to meet State and Federal water quality objectives and avoid adverse impacts to habitat and water quality be identified and implemented for new development in or adjacent to Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Areas on sites that drain directly to surface waters, regardless of the area of land to be disturbed;
- (10) Requiring inspection of construction sites to verify implementation of approved erosion control plans and Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plans; and
- (11) Requiring BMPs be implemented for constructing, maintaining, and repairing roads and trails in County parks, including stabilizing erosion, clearing vegetation, resurfacing, and removing slide debris. Where feasible use pervious surfaces to reduce stormwater runoff. (PC REVISED - CCC REVISED - NEW)

**Policy C-WR-1i:** All projects which involve construction of new storm drain inlets or maintenance of existing inlets shall be required to add a sign or stencil to each inlet with the equivalent of this language: "No dumping, drains into creek/ocean." (NEW)

**Policy C-WR-1j:** For new development and redevelopment projects that could affect water resources of Sonoma County's Coastal Zone, as a condition of permit approval and prior to permit issuance, require the applicant to:

- (1) Provide proof that all applicable local, state, and federal approvals related to water resources protection have been obtained. Such permits may include, but are not necessarily limited to the following:
  - a. National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Permits (State and Regional Water Quality Control Boards)
  - b. Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreement (California Department of Fish and Wildlife)
  - c. Clean Water Act Section 404 Permit (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers)
- (2) Submit final project designs that demonstrate incorporation of applicable regulatory requirements, resource agency conditions of permit approval, and associated best management practices related to water resources protection. (NEW)

**Policy C-WR-1k:** Remove, repair, and/or replace failing septic systems that pose a risk to public health or have potential to pollute groundwater. (GP2020)

**Policy C-WR-1l:** Prohibit new development proposals or impose moratoria on building and other permits that would result in a substantial increase in demand in areas within Bodega Bay and The Sea Ranch that are served by municipal wastewater service if the wastewater plant fails to meet standards set by the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board. (CCC REVISED GP2020)

**Policy C-WR-1m:** Ensure that agricultural operations reduce non-point source pollution through the development and implementation of California Water Resource Control Board approved ranch plans and farm plans that demonstrate how the applicant will avoid, minimize, or mitigate the impact to water quality from agriculture to the maximum extent feasible. (GP2020)

**Policy C-WR-1n:** Design, construct, and maintain County buildings, roads, bridges, drainage, parks, marinas, parking lots, and trails to avoid or minimize sediment and other pollutants in storm water runoff. Implement Best Management Practices for their ongoing maintenance and operation. (CCC REVISED - GP2020)

## **I.2 Programs**

**Program C-WR-1-P1:** Develop and provide educational, outreach, or technical assistance programs focusing on water quality to owners and managers of agricultural operations and timberlands. Inform owners and managers of agricultural lands, including vineyards, orchards, row crops, grazing, ranches, and dairies, about the Agricultural Commissioner's Best Management Practices for erosion and sediment control, including on-site retention of storm water, maintenance of natural sheetflow and drainage patterns, and avoidance of concentrated runoff, particularly on steep slopes exceeding 35 percent; and for protection of streams and other surface waters from the effects of livestock grazing and other agricultural uses or timber operations. (PC REVISED - CCC REVISED - NEW)

**Program C-WR-1-P2:** Develop and require compliance with standards for the siting and design of harbors, marinas, and other waterfront development, regardless of the size of the area to be disturbed. Require stormwater source control Best Management Practices to minimize polluted runoff including installation of trash receptacles with lids, posting of No Littering signs; and installation and maintenance of filters in storm drains designed to capture hydrocarbon runoff and other pollutants from roadways and parking lots. (CCC REVISED - NEW)

**Program C-WR-1-P3:** Create guidelines for development that would provide for retention of the site's pre-development rate of groundwater recharge. (GP2020 REVISED)

**Program C-WR-1-P4:** Develop a program to facilitate tracking and maintaining consistency between the adopted Local Coastal Plan, adopted groundwater sustainability plans, urban water management plans, and the master facilities plans of public water suppliers. Such a program should include meetings between Permit Sonoma, public water suppliers, the North

Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board and the California Coastal Commission to develop the tracking plan. As part of plan development, Permit Sonoma will review all proposed master facilities plans, and develop Local Coastal Plan amendments necessary to implement both the master facilities plans and the water resource tracking plan. (PC REVISED - GP2020)

### **1.3 Initiatives**

**Initiative C-WR-1-I1:** Work with the California Coastal Commission, Regional Water Board, Sonoma County Water Agency, public water suppliers, and other interested parties to minimize polluted runoff from development, and to continue to develop and implement effective water quality plans and measures. (GP2020)

**Initiative C-WR-1-I2:** Coordinate with the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board and California Department of Water Resources to promote stormwater impoundments for agricultural uses. (GP2020)

**Initiative C-WR-1-I3:** Seek funding for comprehensive studies of long-term changes in climate and precipitation patterns in the County and region. (GP2020)

**Initiative C-WR-1-I4:** Support the Sonoma County Water Agency with development of flood control design criteria that considers stream geomorphic analysis, and the use of biotechnical bank stabilization methods for the purpose of preventing erosion and siltation in drainage swales and streams. (GP2020)

**Initiative C-WR-1-I5:** Coordinate with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, NOAA Greater Farallones National Marine Sanctuary, the Regional Water Quality Control Board and the Coastal Commission to continue maintenance dredging in Bodega Bay and other areas on the Sonoma Coast in accordance with the California Coastal Act. Dispose of dredge spoils in a manner that protects habitat and water quality and in accordance with all local, state, and federal permit requirements. (NEW)

**Initiative C-WR-1-I6:** Work with the Regional Board in development of TMDLs, TMDL Implementation Plans, water quality monitoring, and programs and projects for water quality restoration and remediation for impaired water bodies to improve water quality. (GP2020)

**Initiative C-WR-1-I7:** Continue to cooperate with Mendocino County, the Regional Water Board, and CalFire to reduce water quality impacts of timber harvest in the Gualala River watershed. (NEW)

**Initiative C-WR-1-I8:** Coordinate with the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board, California Coastal Commission, watershed focus groups, and stakeholders in collecting, evaluating, and using coastal watershed-specific water resource information. (GP2020)

## 2. GROUNDWATER

### Groundwater Availability

The amount of groundwater in an area varies by the recharge from rainfall, the surface runoff in streams and drainage channels, and the local underground geology. The alluvial soils, sand, and gravel found in valleys generally can hold large amounts of water and thus constitute the largest aquifers in the County. Sandstone and some other sedimentary rocks can still absorb some water.

The climate of coastal Sonoma County provides abundant rainfall during the winter months, and potentially abundant groundwater recharge on an annual basis. This pattern of reliable groundwater recharge will be influenced by climate change and groundwater resources will likely be less predictable and more limited in the future.

Most of the County's groundwater basins are centered along major creek and river valleys. However, many upland areas and the Coastal Zone are comprised of harder Franciscan rock formations that lack water storage capacity that underlie the area. The Franciscan Formation is a large area of mixed sedimentary, metamorphic, and igneous rocks. Groundwater is stored in the fractures, joints, cavities, and bedding planes of the rocks. The Franciscan Complex is generally considered to be non-water bearing; water availability largely depends on the nature of the fractures and their interconnection. The location of water-bearing bedrock is difficult to predict, so water availability is uncertain. Rainfall that would otherwise percolate into the aquifer simply runs off into creeks and streams and then to the ocean for lack of storage space in most of the rocks. Groundwater in these areas will become increasingly brackish as salt water intrusion increases with sea level rise. This

### Groundwater Quality

Poor groundwater quality can be the result of geologic conditions, such as the highly mineralized water extracted from Franciscan Complex Formation that underlies most of the Sonoma Coast. Some groundwater naturally contains dissolved substances that can cause health problems, depending on the concentrations and combinations of the substances present, such as arsenic, asbestos, boron, selenium, or mercury.

According to the State Water Resources Control Board, groundwater is also often polluted by human activities that generate contaminants such as microorganisms, gasoline and diesel fuels, solvents, nitrates, pesticides, pharmaceuticals, and metals. The underground flow and concentration of these contaminants, as well as the intrusion of ocean saltwater into groundwater, can be influenced by the extraction of groundwater, changes in levels of groundwater and sea level rise.

increase will be exacerbated by increased groundwater extraction, creating exceptional challenges to sustainably increasing the capacity of existing water systems.

Chert, greenstone, and sandstone members of the Franciscan may possess water-bearing fractures that yield sufficient and occasionally abundant water in some locations. The location of water-bearing bedrock is difficult to predict, so water availability is uncertain. (CCC REVISED)

***Water Availability Classification***

Using information on geology and water yields, the County uses a four-tier classification system to indicate general areas of groundwater availability.

<b>Class 1</b>	Major Groundwater Basins
<b>Class 2</b>	Major Natural Recharge Areas
<b>Class 3</b>	Marginal Groundwater Availability Areas
<b>Class 4</b>	Areas with Low or Highly Variable Water Yield

The California Department of Water Resources (DWR) has identified the groundwater basins and subbasins in the Sonoma County Coastal Zone as follows:

<b>Name and DWR Identifier</b>	<b>Size</b>	<b>Classification</b>
Bodega Bay Area (DWR I-57)	2,680 acres	Class 4
Wilson Grove Formation Highlands (DWR I-59)	size unavailable	Class 2
Lower Russian River Valley (DWR I-60)	10 square miles	Class 1
Fort Ross Terrace Deposits (DWR I-61)	3.5 square miles	Class 3

Source: Department of Water Resources Bulletin 118

Except for relatively small area near Fort Ross, the Russian River, and Bodega Bay, most of the Sonoma Coast is within the Class 4 Groundwater Availability Area.

In addition to County mapping, the State regularly updates the maps of groundwater basins and prioritizes groundwater basins for sustainable management in the County.

Figures C-WR-2a-c shows the locations of the groundwater basins in the Coastal Zone. None of these groundwater basins are currently designated by DWR as medium- or high-priority groundwater basins.

***Groundwater Depletion***

Public concerns over depletion of groundwater supplies have increased as development that relies on groundwater supply has increased. The County fully participates in the California Statewide Groundwater Elevation Monitoring (CASGEM) and continues to collect data about existing groundwater levels, water quality, and water use to best inform planning decisions.

In response to reports that groundwater levels have declined in some areas, the County has initiated a long-term program to increase the available data on groundwater resources and to systematically organize and use it as development is planned and new well permits are sought. Programs are underway to assess the available groundwater in the County’s three major basins, Santa Rosa Plain, Sonoma Valley, and Petaluma Valley. In the fractured rock areas of the Coastal Zone, data from monitoring will improve our understanding of available groundwater resources. This growing body of data will produce better information for County decision makers to determine what further measures may be appropriate in order to properly manage groundwater resources.

## 2.1 Goal, Objectives, and Policies

### **GOAL C-WR-2: Manage groundwater as a valuable and limited shared resource.**

**Objective C-WR-2.1:** Conserve, enhance, and manage groundwater resources on a sustainable basis that assures sufficient amounts of clean water required for future generations, the uses allowed by the Local Coastal Plan, and the natural environment.

**Objective C-WR-2.2:** Develop a scientifically based program to collect the data needed to assess and understand groundwater conditions.

**Objective C-WR-2.3:** Encourage new groundwater recharge opportunities and protect existing groundwater recharge areas.

**Objective C-WR-2.4:** Increase institutional capacity and expertise within the County to competently review hydrogeologic reports and data for critical indicators and criteria.

**Objective C-WR-2.5:** Avoid additional land subsidence caused by groundwater extraction

**Policy C-WR-2a:** Ensure sufficient groundwater quantity and quality for existing and proposed uses reliant upon groundwater wells through application of County standards for pump tests, well yields, pollutant levels, and water storage. Require that streamflow depletion that affect surface water quality or quantity is avoided or fully mitigated and require streamflow depletion impact analysis for projects with potential to deplete surface waters. (PC REVISED - GP2020)

**Policy C-WR-2b:** Continue the County program to require groundwater monitoring for new or expanded commercial and industrial operations using wells. Where justified by the monitoring program, establish additional monitoring requirements for other new wells. (GP2020)

**Policy C-WR-2c:** Permit applications for new development that result in a net increase in groundwater use in a Class 3 and 4 Groundwater Availability Areas, or within a watershed that is designated as critical habitat for Steelhead or Coho Salmon shall be denied unless the applicant can demonstrate through a hydrogeologic report that the proposed use will not cause an adverse effect on groundwater resources of the groundwater basin, subbasin, or fractured rock aquifer, and associated stream levels. . The hydrogeologic reports shall consider the following when evaluating impacts to groundwater resources: lowering of groundwater levels, reduction in groundwater storage, seawater intrusion, degradation of water quality, land subsidence, and depletion of interconnected surface water. The hydrogeologic report shall discuss if the development is consistent with an adopted groundwater sustainability plan or groundwater management plan, as applicable to the project site. (CCC REVISED - GP2020 REVISED TO FOR CONSISTENCY WITH SGMA CRITERIA)



**Policy C-WR-2d:** Require new or expanded public water suppliers to monitor and report groundwater levels, yields, and other information on groundwater conditions. (PC REVISED - GP2020 REVISED)

## 2.1 Programs

**Program C-WR-2-P1:** In order to assess groundwater resources, review well permit data, monitoring data and identify special study areas where additional groundwater studies are needed. In each such special study area that is approved by the Board, develop a comprehensive groundwater assessment that includes the following:

- (1) Existing system of monitoring wells and stream gauges;
- (2) Locations of water wells;
- (3) Available data on groundwater and surface water levels and contamination;
- (4) Maps and graphs that show past and present data and changes in precipitation, imports, groundwater levels, groundwater quality, rates of extraction, and the relationship of groundwater to surface water;
- (5) Drillers' logs, geologic data and monitoring data needed to estimate water yields in the area;
- (6) A water budget for the area under existing and foreseeable conditions that estimates inputs, outputs, and the total amount of water gain or loss in the area;
- (7) Consideration of the following groundwater sustainability indicators: lowering of groundwater levels, reduction in groundwater storage, seawater intrusion, degradation of water quality, land subsidence, and depletion of interconnected surface water;
- (8) Recommendations for well monitoring, data collection and reporting; and
- (9) Provisions for applicant fees and other funding of County costs.

If an assessment, as defined above, demonstrates a need for additional management actions to address existing or foreseeable groundwater problems, a groundwater management plan shall be prepared. The groundwater management plan shall define groundwater sustainably for the special study area, include recommendations for sustainable yield and sustainable management criteria with minimum thresholds and measurable objectives, and include recommendation for groundwater management policy necessary to achieve groundwater sustainability, pursuant to the California Water Code or the County's land use or other legal

authority. Include involvement by the affected water users, well drillers, local agencies, private water companies and landowners. (GP2020 REVISED)

**Program C-WR-2-P2:** In cooperation with the Sonoma County Water Agency, California Department of Water Resources, other public agencies, and well owners, establish and maintain a system of voluntary monitoring of wells throughout the County, using public water system wells and private wells where available. Encourage participation in voluntary monitoring programs and, if funds are available, consider funding of well monitoring where determined necessary in order to stimulate participation. (GP2020)

**Program C-WR-2-P3:** Work with the State Water Resources Control Board, California Department of Water Resources, California Department of Health Services, California Environmental Protection Agency, public water suppliers, and applicable County agencies to secure funding sources for developing groundwater assessment, protection, enhancement, and management programs. (GP2020)

## 2.1 Initiatives

**Initiative C-WR-2-11:** Encourage and support research on and monitoring of local groundwater conditions, aquifer recharge, watersheds, and streams where needed to assess groundwater quantity and quality. (GP2020)

**Initiative C-WR-2-12:** Work with the Regional Water Board and coastal communities to evaluate and monitor impacts on surface and groundwater quality caused by the operation of septic systems in existing and suspected problem areas. (NEW)

## 3. PUBLIC WATER SYSTEMS

An adequate and sustainable water supply is essential if Sonoma County is to serve projected increases in population, housing, employment, business, and agriculture. The main purpose of this section is to address what the County can do to help maintain the long-term adequacy of water supply services provided by public and private entities, given the legal limitations on the County's authority over such services.

The Sonoma Coast has about 16 water systems which fall under the regulatory authority of State Water Resources Control Board Division of Drinking Water as a public water system.

The large public water systems on the coast are The Sea Ranch Water Company with approximately 1,900 connections and the Bodega Bay Public Utilities District with approximately 1,100 connections. The small public water systems range from the Sereno del Mar Mutual Water Company with 168 connections to the Blue Heron Restaurant with a single connection. The small public water systems supply water to a wide variety of uses such as businesses, residences, schools, and small unincorporated communities. Most are owned by mutual companies or other private entities, and a few are operated by special districts. These systems have small revenue bases and relatively high per capita costs and often have difficulty financing major capital investments needed to replace aging facilities or

accommodate growth. Additional information about public water systems on the coast is provided in Public Facilities and Services Element Section 3.1 (Water Services) and **Table C-PF-1**.

All public water systems must meet and maintain water quality standards established by the Sonoma County Department of Health Services and the Regional Water Quality Control Boards. The suppliers are required to prepare and adopt wellhead protection plans that will avoid future contamination, and policies shall avoid unnecessary restrictions on development associated with protecting public water wells.

All public water systems in the Sonoma Coast rely on groundwater supplies near the ocean that are at risk from salinization as a result of sea level rise and less predictable recharge during the winter rainy season due to climate change. In light of uncertain future availability of water from surface and groundwater sources, water conservation, re-use, and alternative resources are increasingly important to providing adequate water supplies in the future.

### **3.1 Goal, Objectives, and Policies**

**GOAL C-WR-3: Encourage public water suppliers to provide an adequate water supply that meets long-term needs, is consistent with the adopted Local Coastal Plan and community water management plans, and maintains water resources for other water users while protecting the natural environment.**

**Objective C-WR-3.1:** Assist public water suppliers in collecting and disseminating surface and groundwater data, assessing available water supplies, and protecting water quality.

**Objective C-WR-3.2:** Work with public water suppliers in developing and implementing long-term plans for water supply, storage, and delivery necessary to first meet existing water demands; and secondly to meet planned growth within the designated service areas, consistent with the sustainable yield of water resources.

**Objective C-WR-3.3:** Work with public water suppliers to balance reliance on groundwater and surface water to assure the sustainability of both resources.

**Policy C-WR-3a:** Assist public water suppliers in complying with Federal and State water quality standards by assuring that water sources used for public water systems are not contaminated by land uses or pollutants in the watershed, by supporting continued study and monitoring of water quality, and by encouraging acquisition of critical watershed areas by the water suppliers or the Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District. In furtherance of this initiative, work with public water suppliers in developing and implementing wellhead protection plans. (GP2020)

**Policy C-WR-3b:** Require local public agencies that are public water suppliers, including county-dependent districts, special districts, and other local public agencies, to consult with the County prior to acquiring a site or developing any well or facility for public water supplies in the unincorporated area; and require a determination of consistency with the

Local Coastal Plan and supporting technical documentation for development of any such well or facility. (CCC REVISED - GP2020)

**Policy C-WR-3c:** Require public water systems to prepare master facilities plans that contain, but are not limited to, the following items and information: (CCC REVISED)

- (1) Maps showing future service area boundaries.
- (2) Forecasted growth and relationship to Local Coastal Plan projections and limits.
- (3) Projected service and facility needs.
- (4) Evaluation of the impact a 7-foot increase in sea level will have on existing and future facilities. (PC REVISED)
- (5) Production from new and future wells is sustainable and will not have an impact to local groundwater quality or quantity.
- (6) Estimated costs and revenues for needed improvements.
- (7) System design parameters and assumptions.
- (8) Monitoring and mitigation measures to assure long-term adequacy of sources, including during possible drought conditions.
- (9) Identify and prevent cumulative impacts. (PC REVISED)
- (10) Water conservation measures.

**Policy C-WR-3d:** If a water system master plan required by **Policy C-WR-3c** or a monitoring program fails to show adequate water supply or facility capacity for planned growth within the water system service area, connections to new development is prohibited in order to protect services to existing residents, existing beneficial uses and implement Land Use Element **Policy C-LU-4t**. (PC REVISED- CCC REVISED - GP2020)

**Policy C-WR-3e:** Support the actions and facilities needed by public water suppliers to meet the demands estimated in adopted master facilities plans, consistent with the adopted Local Coastal Plan, community water management plans, and in a manner that protects coastal resources. (CCC REVISED - GP2020)

**Policy C-WR-3f:** Require public water suppliers to avoid or minimize significant adverse impacts on the environment resulting from water supply, storage, and transmission facilities, including impacts on other water users. (CCC REVISED - GP2020)

**Policy C-WR-3g:** Support cooperative inter-regional planning efforts by the public water suppliers, their contractors, and other existing water users, to consider future demand projections concurrently with the availability of sustainable water supplies. (GP2020 REVISED)

### **3.1 Program**

**Program C-WR-3-P1:** Where a problem related to a public water supply is identified, promote and seek funding for evaluating and remediating the problem through a watershed management approach. (GP2020)

### **3.1 Initiatives**

**Initiative C-WR-3-I1:** Cooperate with public water suppliers in planning, developing, and constructing storage and transmission facilities needed to supply water in compliance with adopted Local Coastal Plan policies, urban water management plans, water supply agreements, sustainability goals, master facilities plans and, where applicable, programs to mitigate identified groundwater overdraft conditions. (PC REVISED - GP2020)

**Initiative C-WR-3-I2:** Work with public water suppliers in assessments of the sustainable yield of surface water, groundwater, recycled water, and conserved water, including during possible drought periods. This work should include the exploration of potentially feasible alternative water supplies within the watershed serving the water users. Surface and groundwater supplies must remain sustainable and not exceed sustainable yield. (PC REVISED - GP2020)

**Initiative C-WR-3-I3:** Request technical assistance and water resource data from public water suppliers and share available water resource information with them and the public. (GP2020)

## **4. WATER CONSERVATION AND RE-USE**

Water conservation has long been a practice in Sonoma County households, businesses, and agriculture. The rise of environmental consciousness in the 1970s and a prolonged drought in 1976 and 1977 led to the early efforts by some water suppliers to reduce demand. Planned re-use of treated water in the Santa Rosa Plain was initiated by the Santa Rosa Subregional Long-Term Wastewater Management Plan during this same period as part of developing a regional wastewater system. Given future forecasts in changes to local precipitation patterns due to climate change, and increasing salinization of groundwater created by sea level rise, and future increased in demand, water conservation strategy research should be continued.

In recent years, both water conservation and re-use programs have expanded considerably. As advanced treatment has become an increasingly standard practice, re-use programs are becoming even more viable. Meeting peak water demands in the future may require increased water conservation efforts and water recycling by water users in both urban and rural areas.

The Sonoma Coast has always been a water-scarce area. As described above in Section 1 Groundwater Resources, most of the County's Coastal Zone is in a Class 4 Groundwater Availability Area.

Therefore, there is an even greater need in the Coastal Zone to increase the efficiency of water use and reduce demand for water by applying new water conservation and re-use technology and implementing water conservation programs.

## 4.1 Goal, Objectives, and Policies

**GOAL C-WR-4: Increase the role of water conservation and safe, beneficial water re-use in meeting water supply needs of both urban and rural users.**

**Objective C-WR-4.1:** Increase the use of recycled water where it meets appropriate standards of quality and quantity for the intended use.

**Objective C-WR-4.2:** Promote and encourage the efficient use of water by all water users.

**Objective C-WR-4.3:** Conserve and recognize stormwater as a valuable resource.

**Policy C-WR-4a:** Water conserving plumbing and water conserving landscaping shall be required in all new development projects. Prior to building permit issuance, the applicant shall submit to Permit Sonoma for review and approval a Water Conservation Plan for all buildings and landscaping. The Water Conservation Plan shall include all reasonably feasible measures to reduce water demand to the maximum extent feasible and enhance water resource recovery to maintain sustainable water supplies. Measures that must be evaluated include: installation of low-flow fixtures, best available conservation technologies for all water uses, rainwater and stormwater collection systems and graywater reuse. Landscaping plans must comply with the County Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance. Verification from a qualified irrigation specialist that landscaping plan complies with the County Ordinance shall be provided. The measures in the plan shall be implemented by the applicant and verified by Permit Sonoma staff prior to Certificate of Occupancy or operation of the use.  
(GP2020 REVISED)

**Policy C-WR-4b:** County operated water systems shall be required to minimize water loss and waste and promote programs to minimize water loss and waste by public water suppliers and their customers. (GP2020 REVISED)

**Policy C-WR-4c:** Require conservation of water resources for agricultural through activities that increase the efficiency of water use for crop irrigation, frost protection, and livestock.  
(CCC REVISED - GP2020)

**Policy C-WR-4d:** Ensure that public wastewater disposal systems are designed to reclaim and reuse recycled water for agriculture, geothermal facilities, landscaping, parks, public facilities, wildlife enhancement, and other uses to the extent practicable, provided that the water meets the applicable water quality standards and is supplied in appropriate quantities for the intended uses. (GP2020)

**Policy C-WR-4e:** Allow graywater systems, roof catchment of rainwater, and other methods of re-using water; and minimizing the need to use potable surface water or groundwater. (CCC REVISED - GP2020)

**Policy CWR-4f:** Require property owners to incorporate only native, drought-tolerant, and low water use plants to conserve water and reduce the potential for runoff and erosion. (CCC REVISED - NEW)

**Policy C-WR-4g:** Support programs to monitor and determine per capita or per unit water use in each community and area, and use these data in groundwater management plans, master facilities plans, and wastewater treatment plans. (GP2020)

**Policy C-WR-4h:** Encourage monitoring for all water use and require water metering for public water suppliers that require water users to pay for costs of the amount of water used. Encourage tiering and other pricing mechanisms for public water suppliers that provide incentives for water users to employ conservation and reuse programs. Actively encourage public water suppliers to maximize water re-use and conservation prior to increasing net water use for new development. (PC REVISED - GP2020)

**Policy C-WR-4i:** Establish programs for retrofitting plumbing, providing cost rebates, identifying leaks, changing landscaping, irrigating efficiently, and other methods of reducing water consumption by existing users. (GP2020)

**Policy C-WR-4j:** Require new development in the Bodega Bay Urban Service Area to maintain the site's pre-development rate of groundwater recharge, both in quantity and quality, to the maximum extent feasible. (PC REVISED - CCC REVISED)

## 4.1 Programs

**Program C-WR-4-P1:** Initiate and support educational programs to inform residents, business and agriculture owners and operators, and other groundwater users of best management practices in the areas of efficient water use, water conservation, and increasing groundwater recharge. (GP2020)

**Program C-WR-4-P2:** Assess water use by County buildings and facilities and reduce water consumption to the maximum extent feasible. (GP2020)

**Program C-WR-4-P3:** Develop new standards for County codes that will permit increased the use of recycled water for new commercial, residential, and agricultural development. (GP2020 REVISED)

**Program C-WR-4-P4:** Use water effectively and reduce water demand by developing programs to:

- (1) Increase water conserving design and equipment in new construction, including the use of design and technologies based on green building principles;
- (2) Educate water users on water conserving landscaping and other conservation measures;
- (3) Encourage retrofitting with water conserving devices;
- (4) Design wastewater collection systems to minimize inflow and infiltration; and
- (5) Reduce impervious surfaces to minimize runoff and increase groundwater recharge.  
(GP2020)

## 4.1 Initiative

**Initiative C-WR-4-I1:** Help public water suppliers disseminate information on the limits of available water supplies, how the supplies can be used efficiently, the possible effects of drought conditions, acceptable levels of risk of shortage for various water users, priorities for allocation of the available water supply, conditions for use of limited supplies, and limits of alternate sources that could be used or developed. Towards this end, support water conservation and education programs which provide measurable targets for public water suppliers. (GP2020)

## 5. WATERSHED MANAGEMENT

Watershed management is a holistic approach to managing water resources and other watershed functions such as fish and wildlife, riparian functions, and ecological services. Watershed management allows for an integrated approach to surface water, groundwater, and water supply management taking into account effects on stream flow, groundwater levels, water quality and habitat conditions.

### 5.1 Goal, Objective, and Policy

**GOAL C-WR-5: Improve the understanding, valuation, and sound management of the water resources in the diverse watersheds of the Sonoma County coast.**

**Objective C-WR-5.1:** Seek and secure funding for addressing water resource issues on a watershed basis and prioritize a watershed management approach to remediating identified water related problems. (GP2020 REVISED)

**Policy C-WR-5a:** Utilize the North Coast Integrated Coastal Watershed Management Plans for the Salmon Creek and the Russian River Watersheds where appropriate and feasible.  
(NEW)



# Public Safety Element: Table of Contents

- Public Safety Element .....3
- Introduction .....3
  - Purpose.....3
  - Relationship to Other Elements.....4
  - Relationship to California Coastal Act.....4
    - Section 30006.5 Legislative findings and declarations; technical advice and recommendations ..... 4
    - Section 30270 Sea level rise ..... 4
    - Section 30235 Construction altering natural shoreline ..... 4
    - Section 30253 Minimization of adverse impacts ..... 5
  - Relationship to Other Plans, Reports, and Regulations .....5
    - Global and Regional Sea Level Rise Scenarios for the United States..... 6
    - United States Coast Guard Sector San Francisco Area Contingency Plan..... 6
    - Sonoma County Hazard Mitigation Plan..... 7
    - Sonoma County Climate Action Plan ..... 7
    - California Environmental Quality Act..... 8
    - Other Laws and Regulations ..... 8
  - Determination of Acceptable Risks.....8
- 1. General Hazards.....9
  - Goal, Objectives, and Policies ..... 9
  - Programs..... 12
  - Initiative ..... 13
- 2. Geologic Hazards..... 13
  - Seismic Hazards ..... 13
  - Related Seismic Hazard Plans and Regulations ..... 15

Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act .....	15
Seismic Hazards Mapping Act.....	15
Other Seismic Safety Regulations .....	15
Other Geologic Hazards.....	16
Expansive Soils.....	16
Slope Instability .....	16
Coastal Bluff Erosion .....	17
Shoreline Protection Structures .....	19
Goal, Objectives, and Policies .....	20
Program.....	22
<b>3. Flood and Inundation Hazards.....</b>	<b>22</b>
Stream and River Flooding .....	23
Coastal Flooding and Storm Surge .....	24
Tsunamis .....	24
Floodplain Management .....	25
Goal, Objectives, and Policies .....	26
Programs.....	28
Initiatives.....	29
<b>4. Sea Level Rise Hazards.....</b>	<b>29</b>
Sea Level Rise Forecasts.....	30
Sea Level Rise Vulnerability Assessment for the Sonoma Coast.....	31
Exposure to Inundation and Erosion.....	35
Living Shorelines and Natural Infrastructure .....	35
Adaptation Strategies .....	36
Sea Level Rise Forecast Standard.....	36
Goal, Objectives, and Policies .....	37
Programs.....	39
<b>5. Wildland Fire Hazards.....</b>	<b>40</b>
Hazards and Risk Assessment .....	42
Land Use Planning.....	42

The Sea Ranch Fuels Management.....	42
Fire Safety Standards .....	42
Public Education.....	43
Goal, Objectives, and Policies .....	43
Initiatives.....	45
6. Hazardous Materials .....	45
Federal Hazardous Materials and Waste Programs .....	46
State of California Hazardous Materials and Waste Programs.....	46
California Coastal Act.....	47
Sonoma County Hazardous Materials and Waste Lead Agencies and CUPAs .....	47
Goal, Objective, and Policies .....	48
Initiatives.....	49
References.....	49

# Public Safety Element

## INTRODUCTION

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### PURPOSE

The Public Safety Element establishes goals, objectives, and policies to minimize potential human injury and property damage by guiding future development to reduce the exposure of persons and property to the above hazards. The policies in this Element are intended to avoid development which would result in unacceptable risks to the residents, visitors, private property, public facilities, and infrastructure in the Coastal Zone; and to minimize risks for existing development already located in hazard areas. Acceptable levels of risk are based on the nature of each hazard, the frequency of exposure, the number of persons exposed, and the potential damage.

The policies in the Public Safety Element are intended to avoid development which would adversely affect existing and future residents, visitors, and property; and to not place an undue financial burden on property owners and taxpayers by allowing development in hazard areas which may have unusually high costs for public services and disaster relief. The Public Safety Element is based on the best available science and information and official data sources to delineate areas potentially at risk from various hazards. It includes maps of known high hazard areas to not only guide development but also to increase awareness of inhabitants and aid in disclosure of potential hazards in real estate transactions.

The Public Safety Element is only one part of a comprehensive countywide approach to address hazards that also includes emergency response plans, pre-disaster preparation and training, pre-disaster mitigation, design and construction standards, and education.

## **RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER ELEMENTS**

The hazards addressed in the Public Safety Element and the sensitivity of various land uses have been considered in preparing the Land Use Element. Policies in the Land Use Element limits the range of land uses allowed in high hazard areas to reduce the number of people and structures exposed to risk. The Public Safety Element policies are also coordinated with the policies of the Open Space and Resource Conservation, Public Facilities and Services, Circulation and Transit, and Land Use Elements.

## **RELATIONSHIP TO CALIFORNIA COASTAL ACT**

### **Section 30006.5 Legislative findings and declarations; technical advice and recommendations**

The Legislature further finds and declares that sound and timely scientific recommendations are necessary for many coastal planning, conservation, and development decisions and that the commission should, in addition to developing its own expertise in significant applicable fields of science, interact with members of the scientific and academic communities in the social, physical, and natural sciences so that the commission may receive technical advice and recommendations with regard to its decision making, especially with regard to issues such as coastal erosion and geology, agriculture, marine biodiversity, wetland restoration, sea level rise, desalination plants, and the cumulative impact of coastal zone developments.

### **Section 30270 Sea level rise**

The commission shall take into account the effects of sea level rise in coastal resources planning and management policies and activities in order to identify, assess, and, to the extent feasible, avoid and mitigate the adverse effects of sea level rise.

### **Section 30235 Construction altering natural shoreline**

Revetments, breakwaters, groins, harbor channels, seawalls, cliff retaining walls, and other such construction that alters natural shoreline processes shall be permitted when required to serve coastal-

dependent uses or to protect existing structures or public beaches in danger from erosion, and when designed to eliminate or mitigate adverse impacts on local shoreline sand supply. Existing marine structures causing water stagnation contributing to pollution problems and fishkills should be phased out or upgraded where feasible.

## **Section 30253 Minimization of adverse impacts**

New development shall do all of the following:

- (1) Minimize risks to life and property in areas of high geologic, flood, and fire hazard.
- (2) Assure stability and structural integrity, and neither create nor contribute significantly to erosion, geologic instability, or destruction of the site or surrounding area or in any way require the construction of protective devices that would substantially alter natural landforms along coastal bluff and cliffs.
- (3) Be consistent with requirements imposed by an air pollution control district or the State Air Resources Control Board as to each particular development.
- (4) Minimize energy consumption and vehicle miles traveled.
- (5) Where appropriate, protect special communities and neighborhoods that, because of their unique characteristics, are popular visitor destination points for recreational uses.

The Public Safety Element establishes goals, objectives, and policies to minimize potential human injury and property damage by guiding future development to reduce the exposure of persons and property to the above hazards. The policies in this Element are intended to avoid development which would result in unacceptable risks to the residents, visitors, private property, public facilities, and infrastructure in the Coastal Zone; and to minimize risks for existing development already located in hazard areas. Acceptable levels of risk are context sensitive and based on the nature of each hazard, the frequency of exposure, the number of persons exposed, and the potential damage.

The policies in the Public Safety Element are intended to avoid development which would adversely affect existing and future residents, visitors, and property; and to not place an undue financial burden on property owners and taxpayers by allowing development in hazard areas which may have unusually high costs for public services and disaster relief. The Public Safety Element is based on the best available science and information and official data sources to delineate areas potentially at risk from various hazards. It includes maps of known high hazard areas to not only guide development but also to increase awareness of inhabitants and aid in disclosure of potential hazards in real estate transactions.

The Public Safety Element is only one part of a comprehensive countywide approach to address hazards that also includes emergency response plans, pre-disaster preparation and training, pre-disaster mitigation, design and construction standards, and education.

## **RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER PLANS, REPORTS, AND REGULATIONS**

The Local Coastal Plan, and Coastal Zoning Ordinance that implement it, are not the only means to minimize risks to public safety and property from hazards in the Coastal Zone. Local Coastal Plan

policies are intended to be complementary to federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and plans that impose siting and design or other regulatory requirements to minimize risks from natural hazards to public safety and property and increase community resilience to these hazards. Implicit in the Public Safety Element is the assumption that the County will continue to comply with these laws, regulations, and plans.

## **Global and Regional Sea Level Rise Scenarios for the United States**

This plan, published in February 2022 by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration in partnership with U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, National Aeronautics and Space Administration, U.S. Geological Survey, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Department of Defense, and the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa represents the best forecasts of sea level rise currently available. This report and accompanying datasets from the U.S. Sea Level Rise and Coastal Flood Hazard Scenarios and Tools Interagency Task Force provide 1) sea level rise scenarios to 2150 by decade that include estimates of vertical land motion and 2) a set of extreme water level probabilities for various heights along the U.S. coastline. These data are available at 1-degree grids along the U.S. coastline and downscaled specifically at NOAA tide-gauge locations. Estimates of flood exposure are assessed using contemporary U.S. coastal flood-severity thresholds for current conditions (e.g., sea levels and infrastructure footprint) and for the next 30 years (out to year 2050), assuming no additional risk reduction measures are enacted.

Forecasts and data for the California coast contained in this plan as well as findings in the National Academy of Sciences "*Sea Level Rise for the Coasts of California, Oregon, and Washington: Past, Present, and Future*" are the primary scientific studies used to develop policies in response to sea level rise hazards. (CCC REVISED)

## **United States Coast Guard Sector San Francisco Area Contingency Plan**

The Federal Water Pollution Control Act (Clean Water Act) prohibits discharges of oil and hazardous substances into or upon the Nation's waterways, shorelines, and adjoining areas. The Act mandates development of a National Contingency Plan, providing for coordinated federal response to releases of such materials. The Act also provides for the preparation of Area Contingency Plans (ACPs) for specific geographic regions.

The Sector San Francisco ACP covers the land masses and waters of Northern California, including Sonoma County and describes the authorities, roles, and responsibilities of parties involved in National Contingency Plan development and implementation. The ACP includes an inventory, along with maps and descriptions where appropriate, of notable sensitive resources that could be damaged by a release of oil or other hazardous material. The inventory includes biological and cultural resources at dozens of sites along the Sonoma Coast. For each site, the ACP describes resources of concern, known natural hazards in the area, response strategies specific to the site, and an overview of response logistics.

The U.S. Coast Guard has authority and jurisdiction to coordinate spill responses within the Coastal Zone. In the event of a spill or release, a U.S. Coast Guard representative, or Federal On-Scene Coordinator, evaluates the severity of the event and coordinates the response with other federal,

state, and local agency representatives, in accordance with the ACP and other applicable plans, laws, and regulations. Sonoma County Departments that could be involved in the response effort include the Fire and Emergency Services Department, Sherriff's Office, and Department of Health Services, among others.

## **Sonoma County Hazard Mitigation Plan**

The Federal Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 requires local governments to adopt and implement a local hazard mitigation plan in order to be eligible for various types of pre-disaster and post-disaster community aid and grant programs from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Unlike an emergency response plan, a hazard mitigation plan focuses on identifying mitigation actions that can be taken before disasters occur to reduce the level of property damage, personal injury, and community disruption that might otherwise result. It is based on the premise that many of the losses that could result from hazards could be avoided, prevented, or minimized through better planning, construction, design, and education.

In April 2017, the County adopted the most recent Sonoma County Hazard Mitigation Plan (Hazard Mitigation Plan) to help reduce the level of injury and property damage resulting from hazards including seismic hazards, landslides, floods, wildfires, and hazards resulting from climate change. The Hazard Mitigation Plan also addresses erosion, erosion is the loosening and transportation of rock and soil debris by wind, rain, or other running water or the gradual wearing away of the upper layers of the earth, sea-level rise, and tsunami, as secondary hazards. The Hazard Mitigation Plan includes hazard maps and a five-year implementation plan. The implementation plan identifies community policies, actions, and tools to reduce the public's exposure to hazards, minimize potential property damage and disruption, and reduce the costs of disaster relief. The Hazard Mitigation Plan implementation plan as amended is incorporated by reference into this Public Safety Element to ensure consistency as it is updated and revised every five years.

## **Sonoma County Climate Action Plan**

Sonoma County has long recognized the need for local action to help meet the global challenge of climate change. In July 2016 the Regional Climate Protection Authority adopted the *Climate Action Plan 2020 and Beyond (Climate Action Plan 2020)*. The Climate Action Plan 2020 recommendations will be implemented by local jurisdictions.

The Climate Action Plan 2020 is the outcome of a coordinated, multi-partner planning effort to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in Sonoma County. It builds on previous efforts, and provides a framework for implementing measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions adopted by the County and the nine cities.

The Climate Action Plan 2020 contain regional and project-level measures to support the County's effort to achieve the reaffirmed statewide reduction targets of 25 percent below 1990 levels by 2020, with long-term goals of 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030, and 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2050. It includes a backcast of 1990 greenhouse emissions and a robust inventory of 2010 levels.

## **California Environmental Quality Act**

Under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), prior to any action on a project subject to CEQA, the lead agency which is the public agency that has the principal responsibility for carrying out or approving a project, must prepare an analysis of the impacts of the proposed project. The analysis must include an assessment of whether it would expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving rupture of a known earthquake fault; strong seismic ground shaking; seismic-related ground failure; landslide; flooding in the 100-year floodplain; inundation by a seiche, tsunami, or mudflow; or hazardous materials. A seiche is a standing wave that oscillates in a lake as a result of seismic or atmospheric disturbances creating huge fluctuations of water levels. A seiche has to occur in an enclosed body of water such as a lake, bay or gulf. The hundreds year flood is the magnitude of a flood expected to occur on the average every 100 years, based on historical data. The 100-year flood has a 1/100, or one percent, chance of occurring in any given year.

The assessment must identify potential mitigation measures and project revisions or alternatives which may be considered to reduce the risks from such hazards to a level of less than significant. Most development projects in the Local Coastal Zone are subject to analysis under CEQA.

## **Other Laws and Regulations**

A number of other state and federal laws and regulations complement the Local Coastal Plan's public safety intent by establishing siting constraints, study requirements, and building standards for specific types of development such as essential services buildings, dams, schools, hospitals, power plants, pipeline and transmission lines, and water supply and water treatment facilities. In addition, new construction in the Coastal Zone must comply with and meet the applicable standards of the California and Sonoma County Building Codes to increase resistance to or reduce risks from seismic events, geologic hazards, flooding, fires, and hazardous materials. The County will continue to apply and enforce all applicable design and siting requirements established by state and County Codes to increase the safety and disaster resistance of new or existing buildings whether private or public through the permit review process.

## **DETERMINATION OF ACCEPTABLE RISKS**

Acceptable levels of risk are based upon the nature of each hazard, the frequency of exposure, the number of persons exposed, and the potential damage. Specific standards for acceptable levels of risk for each hazard are found within each hazard category. The County is not able to guarantee that any particular development will not, at some time in the future, be adversely affected by the hazards identified in this Element because such hazards, by their nature, defy precise prediction. Acceptable levels of risk may vary depending on the type of hazard, degree of certainty of hazard exposure, and state of existing development. Acceptable risk can only be determined after all effort has been made to reduce the risk and does not include development that increases known risks to human health and safety in identified hazard areas.

Maps included in the Public Safety element are for illustrative purposes only and are not a suitable basis for parcel or site-specific decisions. The map scale and reproduction methods limit precision in



physical features displayed. The parcels boundaries and physical features are not intended to represent surveyed data. Site-specific studies are required to draw parcel-specific conclusions.

Although there are significant regulatory requirements and controls to regulate the location and design of new construction or development and minimize the hazard risks to acceptable levels, it may not be possible to reach the same level of hazard avoidance or risk reduction for existing development, which has already been located in hazard areas or constructed prior to the enactment of applicable building and zoning codes designed to minimize hazard risk and vulnerability. Additionally, many sites within the coastal zone are subject to potential risks for multiple hazards, as such policies for all of the applicable hazards must be addressed, with the most restrictive or specific regulation applied.

Even with adequate planning, regulation, and mitigation, natural hazards and disasters cannot be prevented from occurring and the risk of impacts from such events cannot be eliminated altogether. Natural hazards and disasters will continue to occur. Although the County will take actions to guide future development, considerable development has already occurred in areas subject to hazards. The County will work to increase public and private disaster preparedness and response and plan accordingly to reduce the potential for harm and damage from such events, however, the potential for significant harm and damage arising from natural hazards and disasters remains.

Existing development and future development potential of parcels may be lost as a result of natural hazards and disasters. There is no obligation on the part of the County to compensate property owners for their losses or to allow rebuilding and development on parcels which cannot meet current building and zoning standards.

## **I. GENERAL HAZARDS**

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### **Goal, Objectives, and Policies**

**GOAL C-PS-I: Prevent unnecessary exposure of people and property to risks of injury or damage from earthquake, geologic, flood, inundation, and wildland fire hazards and hazardous materials.**

**Objective C-PS-I.1:** Comply with all applicable land use, building, and development regulations codified by federal, state, and local government to minimize risks of personal injury and property damage from hazard events.

**Objective C-PS-I.2:** Make fully-informed decisions on land use, development, and real estate regarding hazards through the use and dissemination of the best available science, information, and analysis.

**Objective C-PS-I.3:** Implement pre-disaster mitigation actions identified in the most recent California Governor's Office of Emergency Services approved Hazard Mitigation Plan implementation plan to help reduce the level of risk and the level of personal injury and property damage that could result from hazards.

**Objective C-PS-I.4:** Minimize public costs for development in high hazard areas that are associates with high costs for public services and disaster relief.

**Policy C-PS-1a:** As a condition of coastal permit approval for new development in an area subject to current or future hazards, applicants shall be required to acknowledge and agree, and private applicants must also record a deed restriction on the property to acknowledge and agree that:

- (1) The development is located in a hazardous area, or an area that may become hazardous in the future;
- (2) To assume the risks of injury and damage from such hazards in connection with the permitted development;
- (3) To unconditionally waive any claim of damage or liability against the County of Sonoma and Coastal Commission, its officers, agents, and employees for injury or damage from such hazards;
- (4) To indemnify and hold harmless the County of Sonoma, and Coastal Commission, its officers, agents, and employees with respect to approval of the project against any and all liability, claims, demands, damages, costs (including costs and fees incurred in defense of such claims), expenses, and amounts paid in settlement arising from any injury or damage due to such hazards;
- (5) They have no rights under Coastal Act Section 30235 and related LCP policies to shoreline armoring in the future;
- (6) Sea level rise could render it difficult or impossible to provide services to the site (e.g., maintenance of roadways, utilities, wastewater disposal, or water service), thereby constraining allowed uses of the site or rendering it uninhabitable;
- (7) The boundary between public trust land and private land is likely to shift with rising seas, causing the structure or portion of the structure to eventually be located on public trust lands, and the development approval does not permit encroachment onto public trust land
- (8) Any future encroachment on to public trust lands must be removed unless the Coastal Commission determines that the encroachment is legally permissible pursuant to the Coastal Act and authorizes it to remain, and any future encroachment would also be subject to the State Lands Commission's (or other trustee agency's) leasing approval
- (9) The structure may be required to be removed or relocated and the site restored if it becomes unsafe.

(CCC REVISED)

**Policy C-PS-1b:** Continue to apply, update, and enforce all applicable design, siting, and construction requirements and standards established by federal, state, and the County government to increase the safety and natural disaster resistance, resilience, and accommodation of new or existing public or private buildings through the permit review process. Where a parcel is subject to multiple hazards the most restrictive or specific regulation will be applied. (NEW/GP2020)

**Policy C-PS-1c:** Make natural hazard maps, data, and information available for public use and review at the County permit office and County website. Provide maps, data, and information in order to guide land use, development, and real estate decisions that affect risks to public safety and property from natural hazards. Post notices at the offices of the Sonoma County Recorder, Sonoma County Assessor, and Permit Sonoma that identify the location of these maps, data, and information. (NEW/GP2020)

**Policy C-PS-1d:** Evaluate and update hazard data every 3 years or at intervals recommended by responsible agencies, whichever is more frequent, to reflect any changes made by various responsible agencies including, but not limited to, the FEMA, United States Geological Survey (USGS), California Geologic Survey and /or California State Geologist, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), National Ocean Protection Council, California Coastal Commission, and California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE). In the event of conflicting information among these sources, Permit Sonoma staff shall determine which is most appropriate in consultation with California Coastal Commission staff. Provide locally generated hazard data to these agencies involved in hazard mapping. (CCC REVISED)

**Policy C-PS-1e:** Use the most recent natural hazard data, maps, analyses, and impact and vulnerability assessments from appropriate agencies; and require preparation of additional site-specific or project-specific hazards analyses for development projects when necessary to ensure full consideration of risks from natural hazards in the design and development review processes. (CCC REVISED - NEW/GP2020)

**Policy C-PS-1f:** Where new hazard data or information, analyses, or maps become available as a result of agency research, database updates, or more detailed site specific analyses, the best available science and information shall be used and considered consistent with the Local Coastal Plan even if it departs from the hazard maps and policies adopted with the Local Coastal Plan. As used in this element, best available science is defined as:

Recently published scientific information about coastal hazards and sea level rise that be used in vulnerability assessments, evaluation of coastal development permit applications that present hazard risks, and preparation of technical reports and related findings. Sources of information may include, but shall not be limited to, state and federal agencies, research and academic institutions, peer-reviewed scientific journals, and research published by organizations that focus on climate change and sea level rise, such as the California Coastal Commission, Ocean Protection Council, and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. (CCC REVISED - NEW)

**Policy C-PS-1g:** Where there is a significant factual question about whether a particular development has sufficiently mitigated the potential risks from natural hazards to an acceptable level, the applicant shall provide evidence that the development would not cause damage or substantial adverse impacts on coastal resources. If the development is consistent with the Local Coastal Plan, and the property owner wishes to proceed in the face of a factual question regarding risks from natural hazards, the property owner shall provide indemnification to the County in the form of a deed restriction, insurance or other security, and a recorded notice which will protect the interests of the County and notify future purchasers of the property of the potential problem. (CCC REVISED - NEW/GP2020)

**Policy C-PS-1h:** Property owners shall be responsible for conducting their own research, and determining, and understanding the vulnerabilities and risks to their real estate investments from hazard events. Property owners shall be encouraged to develop an emergency response plan and mitigation plan to address those hazards before emergency conditions occur, and to carry their own hazards insurance. In developing such plans, property owners shall be encouraged to consider the FEMA's National Flood Insurance Program and Community Hazard Rating System, as well as the State of California Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan. (NEW)

**Policy C-PS-1i:** Where existing development is located in a natural hazard area and is destroyed by a hazard event, there is no inherent public obligation to allow coastal redevelopment that cannot meet current health and safety Codes and standards or to compensate the owner for the loss of their investment. (CCC REVISED - NEW)

**Policy C-PS-1j:** As a condition of Coastal Development Permit approval for development subject to hazard risks in the Geologic Hazard Area Zone, Flood Hazard Area Zone, and areas subject to inundation from sea level rise, require the applicant to record a document approved by Permit Sonoma indemnifying the County from liability for any personal or property damage caused by natural geologic or other hazards on such properties and acknowledging that future shoreline protective devices to protect structures is prohibited. (CCC REVISED)

**Policy C-PS-1k:** Land divisions, shall be prohibited unless all proposed parcels can be demonstrated to be safe from flooding, erosion, fire and geologic hazards; would not require the construction of shoreline protective devices; and can accommodate a safe, all-weather access. (NEW)

**Policy C-PS-1l:** Facilitate response and recovery from natural hazard events by improving the ability of public infrastructure and facilities to withstand and remain functional after hazard events. Where infrastructure is determined to be at risk from repetitive loss, retrofit, replace, or relocate existing infrastructure and facilities to reduce public safety risks associated with temporary or permanent loss of public infrastructure and facilities. (CCC REVISED - NEW)

**Policy C-PS-1m:** Evaluate policies and standards for wetland, ESHA, and stream buffers to ensure protection of sensitive habitat into the future and to maximize the role natural habitats can play in reducing the impacts of sea level rise. (CCC REVISED)

## Programs

**Program C-PS-1-P1:** Develop a comprehensive adaptation plan and incentives for planned retreat or relocation from hazard areas;

- (1) Establish mandatory rolling setbacks for future development or significant coastal redevelopment in areas that are likely to be affected by the impacts from sea level rise within the anticipated lifetime of the structures.
- (2) Identify funding or other incentives for purchase or relocation of existing structures out of vulnerable areas or areas exposed to significant hazards risks.

- (3) Limit rebuilding of structures in vulnerable areas that have been damaged by storms or the impacts from sea level rise, including increased rates of erosion. (NEW)

**Program C-PS-1-P2:** Identify existing green infrastructure (coastal land, habitats, vegetation, natural features, and ecological processes) which may be used to increase coastal resiliency to climate change, sea-level rise, and flood and geologic hazards (erosion); and strategies for adapting to climate change and sea-level rise through maintenance or enhancement of this green infrastructure. These adaptation strategies may include, but are not limited to, planned retreat, land preservation, habitat conservation, and habitat restoration. (NEW)

**Program C-PS-1-P3:** Prepare a study of the impacts of sea level rise and other coastal hazards on public facilities and infrastructure, private development, communities, and natural ecosystems based on the best available scientific estimates and current state guidance as part of future updates to the Hazard Mitigation Plan. (NEW)

**Program C-PS-1-P3:** Develop a Strategic Plan for and incorporate into existing plans, damage assessment and recovery of essential service buildings and facilities consistent with Policy PS-1n of the General Plan 2020. (GP2020)

## Initiative

**Initiative C-PS-1-I1:** Work with stakeholders to develop a disclosure for real estate transactions involving properties subject to inundation, flooding, and/or coastal erosion hazards as a result of projected future sea level rise. Prior to the lease, sale, or other conveyance of any portion of public property, or issuance of a Coastal Development Permit for the use or development of public lands subject to projected sea level rise, provide a Real Estate Disclosure Statement which states that the property is located in an area that is subject to inundation, flooding, or coastal erosion hazards as a result of projected sea level rise. (NEW)

## 2. GEOLOGIC HAZARDS

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### Seismic Hazards

Earthquakes are usually caused by sudden movement along geologic faults. Sonoma County has four active or potentially active earthquake faults within its boundaries identified by the state Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Maps. Known geologic faults, including the San Andreas Fault system, within the 10 SubAreas of the Coastal Zone are shown on **Figures C-PS-1a-c**.

While a seismic event along any fault in the county could result in noticeable impacts along the Sonoma County coast, a seismic event along the Northern Segment of the San Andreas Fault system would be expected to have the greatest potential impact in the Coastal Zone due to the potential for surface fault rupture and violent ground shaking. As shown on Figures C-PS-1a-c, this fault generally lies off the west coast of the County. The fault crosses land at Bodega Bay, passes offshore, then crosses land again at Fort Ross running northward, through the Sea Ranch community, and continuing north into Mendocino County. Analysis of seismic data indicates that 8.5 magnitude

earthquakes can be expected along the San Andreas Fault, and that earthquakes of 8.0 or more along this fault can be expected every 200 to 400 years (Prentice, 1989).

The adverse effects of earthquakes result from the physical effects of ground shaking, surface fault rupture, liquefaction, and earthquake-induced landslides; or secondary effects such as fires, tsunamis, seiches, dam failure, and hazardous materials releases. Each of these effects is briefly discussed below.

**Ground shaking.** Ground shaking from earthquakes affects the greatest number of people and can cause the most damage of any geologic hazard. According to the *California Hazard Mitigation Plan*, damage due to ground shaking produces over 98 percent of all building losses in a typical earthquake. During an earthquake, the ground can shake for a few seconds or over a minute. The amount (strength and duration) of ground shaking is affected by many factors. Distance from the earthquake epicenter, the point on Earth's surface directly above the focus point of where the earthquake is originating underground, is the most significant factor. However, geologic conditions and the direction, magnitude, and depth of the fault rupture are also critical. Shaking, particularly horizontal shaking, results in the most earthquake damage because structures often have inadequate resistance to this type of motion. Unconsolidated and poorly consolidated alluvium, which is detrital materials such as clay, silt, sand, or gravel that has been deposited by running water, and terrace deposits will undergo greater ground shaking than consolidated bedrock formations. Unstable slopes also may undergo greater ground shaking, increasing the risk of landslides after an earthquake event. Figures C-PS-1a-c show ground shaking hazard potential on the Sonoma County coast based on maps produced by the California Geological Survey.

**Ground Failure.** Strong ground shaking during earthquakes can also result in ground failure. This risk increases with earthquake magnitude and ground shaking intensity but is also influenced by other factors such as slope, ground moisture, and the type and content of bedrock. Ground shaking on gentle and moderate slopes of poorly consolidated surface deposits can result in differential compaction, settlement and liquefaction. Liquefaction occurs when a saturated or partially saturated soil substantially loses strength and stiffness in response to an applied stress such as shaking during an earthquake or other sudden change in stress condition, in which material that is ordinarily a solid behaves like a liquid. Damage from ground shaking can be increased by liquefaction and landslides. Liquefaction changes water-saturated soil to a semi-liquid state, removing support from foundations and causing buildings to sink. The most likely areas to experience liquefaction are valleys and tidal marshes with high water tables and sandy soils. Landslides, mudflows, and rock falls can result from ground shaking and are most common on steep slopes but may also occur in areas of gentle slopes due to liquefaction of subsurface materials.

**Ground Displacement along Faults.** Surface fault ruptures can result from large magnitude earthquakes. Surface rupture occurs when movement on a fault deep within the earth breaks through to the surface. Structures located within the fault rupture zone are subjected to excessive force. Most structures are not designed to withstand such large deformations and experience major damage. Pipelines crossing the fault zones can also be damaged by ground failure. During the 1906 earthquake, horizontal displacement along the San Andreas Fault averaged 15 feet in Sonoma County. Hazards from surface fault ruptures are generally avoided or minimized by limiting development in active fault zones in compliance with the Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act.

**Secondary Effects of Earthquakes.** Earthquakes can result in additional property damage and human injury from secondary effects. Some earthquakes can result in large tsunami waves along the ocean shoreline or seiches on lakes which can cause damage by their force and by inundation of low-lying developed areas adjacent to the shoreline. Tsunamis and seiches are discussed in greater detail in Section 4 (Flood and Inundation Hazards). In addition, damage to utilities and other public facilities can produce disastrous secondary effects. Much of the destruction from the 1906 earthquake in Sonoma County was from fires that could not be put out due to broken water lines, damaged roads, and lack of communication. In addition, seismic events could trigger slope failure resulting in landslides which block or damage roads and infrastructure. Risks resulting from the secondary effects of earthquakes can be reduced by various methods, but locating essential facilities and dense populations within high hazard areas increase the potential for damage.

## **Related Seismic Hazard Plans and Regulations**

### ***Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act***

The Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act was passed in 1972 to mitigate the hazard of surface fault rupture by preventing the construction of buildings used for human occupancy on the surface trace of active faults. The Act does not address hazards associated with earthquakes such as ground shaking, landslides, or liquefaction.

Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act requires counties to designate Earthquake Fault Zones where movement of the earth's surface has taken place during the last 11,000 years; and to require a geologic report for projects proposed within these zones. The State Geologist has identified active faults and mapped Earthquake Fault Zones around the surface traces of the faults. The maps are provided to local agencies which must regulate development projects within the Earthquake Fault Zones. Figures C-PS-1a-c show the San Andreas Earthquake Fault Zones along the Sonoma County coast.

### ***Seismic Hazards Mapping Act***

The 1991 Seismic Hazards Mapping Act seeks to protect the public from the hazards caused by earthquakes. The Act requires the State Geologist to delineate and designate areas subject to strong ground shaking, landslides, and liquefaction as Seismic Hazard Zones; and for the California Geological Survey to prepare maps of these Hazard Zones. Counties must regulate certain types of development projects and withhold the development permits for sites within Seismic Hazard Zones until the geologic and soil conditions of the project site are investigated and appropriate mitigation measures, if any, are incorporated into the project plans. Counties must also take these Seismic Hazard Zones into account when adopting and revising land use planning and permitting ordinances and reviewing building permits. California Civil Code Sections 1103-1103.14 require disclosure through a Natural Hazard Disclosure Statement in real estate transactions if the property is located in an Earthquake Fault Zone or Seismic Hazard Zone.

### ***Other Seismic Safety Regulations***

In addition to the above, several other seismic safety regulations have been developed over the last century. A summary of these regulations is provided below:

- (1) The 1933 Field Act and Other School Seismic Safety Legislation requires thorough reviews of plans, strict inspections, and quality control standards for school construction.
- (2) The 1968 Geologist and Geophysicist Act requires geologic or seismic assessments to be carried out by qualified geologists and geophysicists.
- (3) The 1973 Alfred E. Alquist Hospital Seismic Safety Act requires all hospitals built after 1973 to be built to higher seismic standards so they can be reoccupied and remain functional after major earthquakes.
- (4) The 1979 Beverly Act authorizes creation of a Geologic Hazard Abatement District (GHAD) as a means to reduce geotechnical problems associated with development in geologically active areas such as erosion and failure of coastal bluffs. A GHAD is an independent public entity (public agency) formed as a Board of Directors which oversees the prevention, mitigation, and abatement of geologic hazards. Funding of a GHAD is through supplemental property tax assessments. A GHAD was proposed for shoreline protection and coastal bluff stabilization for the Gleason Beach community in 2003, but was not adopted.
- (5) The 1986 Unreinforced Masonry Building Act requires local jurisdictions to address the life safety risks posed by Unreinforced Masonry (URM) buildings that were constructed before the adoption of seismic-resistant building codes.
- (6) The 1986 Essential Services Building Seismic Safety Act requires that essential services buildings be designed and constructed to be capable of providing essential services to the public after a disaster.

## **Other Geologic Hazards**

The Sonoma County coast has other geologic hazards in addition to those arising from seismic events, which include expansive soils; slope instability, which can result in landslides; and coastal bluff erosion. Erosion is the loosening and transportation of rock and soil debris by wind, rain, or other running water or the gradual wearing away of the upper layers of the earth. Each of these hazards is discussed below. However, unlike other coastal communities, Sonoma County does not experience significant beach sand erosion issues.

### ***Expansive Soils***

Buildings, utilities, and roads can be damaged by underlying soils rich in clay that swell each winter and shrink each summer depending on rainfall. This is a less obvious geologic hazard than earthquakes or landslides, but the gradual cracking, settling, and weakening of buildings over time could be significant.

### ***Slope Instability***

Slope instability includes landslides and other shallow soil slippage events that involve various forms of mass earth and rock movement downslope. The most common type of slope instability in Sonoma County is landslides. Landslide potential is generally greater on areas of steeper slope and can be triggered by heavy rainfall; earthquakes; road cuts; and construction activities such as grading and filling, placing culverts, and installing septic tanks. Logging, grazing, and removing vegetation may



also adversely affect slope stability. Landslides and shallow soil slippage are prevalent in the Coastal Zone. **Figures C-PS-2a-c** show the areas on the Sonoma County coast subject to slope instability.

Landslides and coastal bluff erosion play a role in threatening development along the Sonoma County coastline. Development of homes, septic systems, landscape irrigation, and drainage as well as heavy rainfall and tidal action impact the rate of coastal erosion. Intensive grazing, tilling of slopes, and road construction have resulted in erosion on the Sonoma County coast through shallow slippage, gullying, sheet wash, and wind action. Ongoing coastal erosion has contributed greatly to historic sedimentation of Bodega Harbor, the Estero Americano, and other water bodies. State Highway 1 on the North Coast experiences landslides and erosion to the extent that the road is frequently closed for repair.

### ***Coastal Bluff Erosion***

According to the National Academy of Sciences (2012), most of the damage along the California coast is caused by storms, particularly by the confluence of large waves, storm surges, and high astronomical tides during a strong El Niño event; and a rising sea level would magnify the impacts of high waves and storm surges on the coastline. Storms and sea level rise are causing California coastal bluffs, beaches, and dunes to retreat at rates from a few centimeters to several meters per year. Coastal bluff erosion could increase abruptly from an episodic event such as a tsunami or an unusually severe winter storm. The National Academy of Sciences (2012) projects that California coastal bluffs could retreat more than 100 feet by 2100.

While the entire Sonoma Coast is subject to high rates of erosion and frequent landslides, the greatest hazards located between Bodega Bay and the Russian River. This section of the coast is characterized by a broad coastal prairie terminating in a steep coastal bluff that drops 50 to 100 feet down to narrow rocky beaches. In the early 1900's the Bodega-Jenner Highway, later to become Highway 1, was constructed along the western edge of the coastal prairie. Beginning in the late 1920's, hundreds of small parcels were created in the land west of Highway 1 and sold as vacation home sites. The majority of this development occurred before passage of the Coastal Act, with a substantial number of homes constructed before Sonoma County first required building permits in 1963.

Geologically, the coastal prairie is a thick layer of Franciscan mélangé, which is highly fractured, easily erodible, and unstable. The combination of weak bedrock geology, high rainfall, and direct exposure to storm waves generates one of the highest rates of shoreline retreat in California. As coastal bluff retreat began to threaten existing development west of Highway 1, property owners modified drainage and armored the shoreline, which failed to protect homes and actually accelerated erosion rates.

As of 2022, the greatest hazards from coastal erosion are at Gleason Beach, north of Scotty Creek. When these lots between Highway 1 and the ocean were created in 1927, the average lot was 300 feet deep. Twenty-one homes were developed on these lots. By the spring of 2017, only seven houses remained, and the edge of the coastal bluff reached the fog line on Highway 1. Recognizing that previous attempts to stabilize Highway 1 were unsuccessful, Caltrans implemented a managed retreat project that relocates approximately one mile of Highway 1 inland by approximately 450 feet in anticipation of a projected sea level rise in this area. This project is also removing debris from former

homes along the top of the bluff, removing shoreline armoring, restoring of the coastal bluff to a natural condition.

Avoidance is the preferred method for minimizing the risk to and vulnerability of development from coastal bluff erosion. In cases where existing development is threatened, the first priority should be to evaluate the feasibility of relocating the development. Only when all other options are deemed infeasible should shoreline protection structures be considered. By appropriately siting new development, the need for a seawall, revetment, or other shoreline protection structure or alteration to the coastal bluff may be avoided.

If a coastal bluff is determined to be stable, the setback from the top of the coastal bluff should be calculated by the coastal bluff retreat times the life expectancy of the house or building to be protected. If the coastal bluff is determined to be unstable, a buffer should be added as a safety factor to the setback from the top of the coastal bluff. The buffer should be calculated through a site-specific quantitative slope stability analysis that incorporates historic data. Safety and stability must be demonstrated for the predicted position of the bluff and bluff top edge following bluff recession over at least 100 years, considering both historical data and the influence of future sea level rise.

For purposes of this Local Coastal Plan, the terms coastal bluff, bluff edge, bluff top, coastal redevelopment and embankment have specific meanings, which are defined below and in the Glossary.

***Bluff Edge.*** The line of intersection between the steeply sloping coastal bluff face and the flat or more gently sloping coastal bluff top; or the upper termination of a coastal bluff, cliff, or seacliff. In cases where the top edge of the coastal bluff is rounded away from the face of the coastal bluff as a result of erosion processes related to the presence of the steep coastal bluff face, the coastal bluff line or edge shall be defined as that point nearest the coastal bluff beyond which the downward gradient of the surface increases more or less continuously until it reaches the general gradient of the coastal bluff. In a case where there is a step-like feature at the top of the coastal bluff face, the landward edge of the topmost riser shall be taken to be the coastal bluff edge. Coastal bluff edges typically retreat landward due to coastal erosion, landslides, development of gullies, or by grading (cut). In areas where the coastal bluff top or coastal bluff face has been cut or notched by grading, the coastal bluff edge shall be the landward most position of either the current or historic coastal bluff edge. In areas where fill has been placed near or over the historic coastal bluff edge, the original natural coastal bluff edge, even if buried beneath fill, shall be taken to be the coastal bluff edge.

***Bluff Top.*** The upper surface of a coastal bluff or cliff.

***Coastal Redevelopment:*** Development located between public trust lands and a point 100 feet inland of the top of a coastal bluff, adjoining or near the ocean and land interface, or at very low-lying elevations along the shoreline that consists of:

- (1) Additions to an existing structure;
- (2) Exterior or interior renovations; or
- (3) Demolition of an existing coastal bluff top home or other principal structure, or portions thereof, which results in:

(a) Alteration of 50 percent or more of major structural components including exterior walls, floor and roof, and foundation; or a 50 percent increase in floor area. Alterations are not additive between individual major structural components; however, changes to individual major structural components are cumulative over time from the effective date of the Coastal Act (January 1, 1977).

(b) Demolition, renovation, or replacement of less than 50 percent of a major structural component where the proposed alteration would result in cumulative alterations exceeding 50% or more of a major structural component, taking into consideration previous alterations approved on or after the effective date of the Coastal Act (January 1, 1977); or an alteration that constitutes a less than 50 percent increase in floor area where the proposed alteration would result in a cumulative addition of greater than 50 percent of floor area, taking into consideration previous additions approved on or after the effective date of the Coastal Act (January 1, 1977).

**Coastal Bluff:** Area between the cliff edge and the highest high tide line. Bluffs or cliffs are scarps or steep faces of rock, decomposed rock, sediment or soil resulting from erosion, faulting, folding or excavation. When the top edge of the cliff is rounded away from the face of the cliff, the edge shall be defined as that point nearest the cliff beyond which the downward gradient of the land surface increase more or less continuously until it reaches the general gradient of the cliff.

**Embankment:** A man-made ridge, bank, mound, or dike of earth, gravel, or stone that carries a road or railway or confines or holds back water in a waterway.

### ***Shoreline Protection Structures***

Section 30235 of the Coastal Act establishes the following limits on shoreline protection devices:

“Revetments, breakwaters, groins, harbor channels, seawalls, cliff retaining walls, and other such construction that alters natural shoreline processes shall be permitted when required to serve coastal-dependent uses or to protect existing structures or public beaches in danger from erosion, and when designed to eliminate or mitigate adverse impacts on local shoreline sand supply. Existing marine structures causing water stagnation contributing to pollution problems and fishkills should be phased out or upgraded where feasible.” (CCC REVISED)

Seawalls, groins, breakwaters, and other shoreline protection structures are hardened structures installed along the coast which provide a physical barrier that armors and stabilizes the shoreline landward of the structure from the erosive forces of wave action. Shoreline protection structures are typically installed by private landowners or local, state, and federal governments in order to provide stabilization and protection of coastal development from floods, storms, and sea level rise. The use of shoreline protection structures is allowable in some circumstances to serve coastal-dependent uses or to protect existing structures or public beaches when designed to eliminate or mitigate adverse impacts.

Although shoreline protection structures can be used to protect coastal development they are not appropriate to use in most circumstances due to the large amount of adverse environmental impacts that they generate. Shoreline protection structures prevent beaches from migrating inland and induce erosion in adjacent unprotected shoreline. These structures also have adverse impacts on recreational beach uses, scenic resources, and the natural supply of sand to shoreline areas which will be

exacerbated by sea level rise. In addition, they also have potential ecological impacts including loss of habitat, creation of habitat for invasive species and effects on dune habitat by preventing natural sand movement. Shoreline protection structures also have a relatively short structural lifespan relative to the high cost of installing and removing the structures. Despite the significant cost of installation, there are instances where the performance of such structures has been inadequate and the erosion and damage they were installed to prevent or reduce still occurs. Remnants of failed shoreline protection structures and collapsed private buildings degrade the natural beauty of the Sonoma County coastline. Clean-up of these structures on the beach can pose a problem due to the high cost of funding a full clean-up or if equipment access to the beach is limited.

## Goal, Objectives, and Policies

**GOAL C-PS-2: Prevent unnecessary exposure of people and property to risks of injury or damage from earthquakes, landslides, coastal erosion, and other geologic hazards.**

**Objective C-PS-2.1:** Locate and design new development to avoid risks of human injury and property damage from existing and anticipated geologic hazards, including coastal bluff erosion. (CCC REVISED)

**Objective C-PS-2.3:** Minimize the need to construct seawalls or other shoreline protection structures to reduce impacts to natural shoreline processes, cultural and biological resources, views, and coastal access.

**Policy C-PS-2a:** Encourage the consolidation of lots and new structures in high hazard areas. (EXISTING LCP REVISED)

**Policy C-PS-2b:** A site-specific geologic hazards report prepared by a licensed Geotechnical Engineer, Engineering Geologist, or Geophysicist shall be required for development projects proposed within Geologic Hazard Areas, as shown in **Figures C-PS-1a-c and C-PS-2a-c**. A geologic hazards report shall also be prepared where a site evaluation conducted for a Coastal Permit, building permit or grading permit application has identified that such a report is required. The geologic hazards report shall include the following information:

- (a) Description of the types and locations of the geologic hazards on the project site.
- (b) Analyses of the risks of human injury and property damage from geologic hazards associated with the proposed development, including but not limited to site preparation, grading, installation of septic systems, installation of drainage and road improvements, construction of foundations, and construction of buildings and structures.
- (c) Design siting and construction mitigation measures for the proposed development to minimize the potential for collapse; debris falling on occupants or pedestrians; failure of critical mechanical or electrical systems; releases of large quantities of hazardous or toxic materials; and substantial economic loss from geologic hazards.

- (d) Certification from the Geotechnical Engineer, Engineering Geologist, or Geophysicist that the risks of human injury and property damage from geologic hazards associated with the proposed development have been mitigated to an acceptable level. (NEW)

**Policy C-PS-2c:** Require all public facility projects, including but not limited to roads, utilities, parks, schools, and emergency response facilities to incorporate measures that mitigate geologic hazards to a level that does not pose a risk to public safety. (CCC REVISED - GP2020)

**Policy C-PS-2d:** Applications for new development or coastal redevelopment on coastal bluff property shall be required to include a site-specific coastal bluff erosion hazards report from a licensed Geotechnical Engineer, Engineering Geologist, or Geophysicist that establishes a geologic setback line for proposed new development. This setback shall be no less than 100 feet and shall establish where on the bluff top stability can reasonably be assured for the economic life of the development (no less than 100 years). All new structures for human occupancy and infrastructure located on a coastal bluff top shall be setback to ensure that it will not be endangered by coastal bluff erosion, retreat, and collapse; and thereby avoid the need for shoreline protection devices during the economic life of the development. Shoreline protection devices are prohibited for new development and shall not be considered when evaluating setback from coastal hazards.

The coastal bluff erosion hazards report shall take the following factors into account in establishment of the geologic setback line:

- (1) Proposed extent of grading and site preparation.
- (2) Proposed plans for construction of roads, driveways, foundations, water lines, drainage improvements, and septic systems and leachfields.
- (3) Increase in erosion and bluff retreat created sea level rise.
- (3) Maximum coastal bluff retreat, taking into account sea level rise, projected to occur within the economic life of the development (100 years). The projected coastal bluff retreat shall be calculated considering the specific geologic and hydrologic conditions on the site; historic coastal bluff retreat data; projections for future sea level rise according to the best available science; and existing and projections for changes in storm frequency, magnitude, and duration due to climate change. (CCC REVISED - NEW)

**Policy C-PS-2e:** Where existing development is threatened by coastal bluff erosion, the first priority shall be to evaluate the feasibility of relocating the development. The second priority shall be to consider the feasibility of less environmentally damaging alternatives than shoreline protection structures. Only when all other options are deemed infeasible should shoreline protection structures be considered. Regardless of other alternatives being found infeasible, shoreline protection devices still need to go through a full coastal act review and meet the following criteria:

- (1) All coastal resource impacts shall be appropriately and proportionally mitigated.
- (2) Shoreline protection structures shall not impact public access or create hazards on public trust lands.

- (3) Shoreline protection structures shall be designed to minimizing alteration of and visually blending with the surrounding natural shoreline.
- (4) Shoreline protection structures shall be minimally sized and designed to perform without maintenance for the life of the structure being protected.
- (5) Shoreline protection structures may not have an adverse impact on cultural and historic resources, consistent with policies found in the Cultural and Historic Resources Element.  
(CCC REVISED - NEW)

**Policy C-PS-2f:** Where, as a result of coastal erosion, it is no longer feasible based on size and environmental conditions for a parcel to meet the minimum requirements for development under the Sonoma County Code, the development potential of the parcel may be considered lost due to the forces of nature. There shall be no obligation on the part of the County to restore the development potential of such parcels through Code variances, lot line adjustments, transfer of development rights, or other means. (NEW)

**Policy C-PS-2g:** Avoid shoreline protection device construction, reconstruction, expansion, alteration, and/or replacement unless determined necessary by and compliant with California Coastal Commission and County of Sonoma Standards (**Appendix F**). (NEW)

**Policy C-PS-2h:** Shoreline protective devices shall only be authorized until the time when the existing principal structure that is protected by such a device is no longer present, no longer requires armoring; or is redeveloped. Permittees shall be required to submit a coastal permit application to remove the authorized shoreline protective device within six months of a determination that the shoreline protective device is no longer authorized to protect the structure it was designed to protect because the structure is no longer present or no longer requires armoring and the device is not needed to protect adjacent development that is still entitled to shoreline armoring. In the case of redevelopment, any potential rights to protection are terminated and removal of the shoreline protective device shall be required as part of demolition and alteration of the structure being redeveloped. (CCC REVISED)

## Program

**Program C-PS-2-P1:** Where geologic hazards threaten multiple properties in the same vicinity and all would benefit from a unified, coordinated response to minimize risks, consider the formation of a Geologic Hazard Abatement District (GHAD) as a means to reduce geotechnical problems associated with development in geologically active areas. A GHAD is an independent public entity (public agency) which oversees the prevention, mitigation, and abatement of geologic hazards. Funding of the GHAD is through supplemental property tax assessments. (NEW)

## 3. FLOOD AND INUNDATION HAZARDS

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Flooding along rivers and creeks on the Sonoma County coast is a natural, annual phenomenon. Many smaller creeks and drainages along the coast drain smaller areas directly into the ocean without causing the flooding problems that occur on larger watershed basins or river systems. Floods on small streams usually peak and recede quickly, while floods on larger systems like the lower Russian River

may not peak for two days or more after the start of a storm and may exceed flood stage for four days or more. In larger drainage basins, streams overflow banks when runoff from the watershed exceeds the capacity of the stream channel to carry the flow. Because the Coastal Zone is a narrow band of land near the coast, most of the flood waters draining to the ocean originate from inland areas outside the Coastal Zone.

Flooding can move, destroy, or damage buildings, roads, infrastructure, and personal property, not only by inundation but also by the force of flowing waters. Flood damage may weaken building materials and increase mildew, mold, bacteria and other disease vectors. Floods can result in human injury and pose a threat to life. Floods can wash away soil, erode banks, destroy crops, and transport loose objects and flood debris downstream; and may end up degrading Sonoma County beaches or offshore marine habitats.

Although floods are primarily associated with the overflow of rivers and creeks, damage from flooding and inundation can also result from dam failure, tsunamis, seiches, ocean surges and higher waves during storms, and sea level rise. Localized flooding can also occur from blocked or undersized storm water conveyance channels and infrastructure.

## **Stream and River Flooding**

Flooding is most often associated with an overflowing stream or river. The floodplain is the area adjacent to the watercourse that is subject to recurring inundation from floods.

The magnitude of floods, can be described in terms of flow (cubic feet per second), elevation (height above a defined datum), or by the areal extent of flood water inundation. However, the more frequent and universal way of describing flood magnitudes is by their projected recurrence level - the bigger the flood, the more years that would typically be expected to pass statistically before it reoccurs. For instance, a flood level that would occur on average once every two years is referred to as the 2-year flood, and it would statistically have a 50 percent chance of occurring in any given year. A 10-year flood has a 10 percent chance of occurrence, a 50-year flood has a 2 percent chance, a 100-year flood has a 1 percent chance, and a 500-year flood has a 0.2 percent chance of occurring in any given year. Although the recurrence level is based on statistical averages, the actual occurrence of flood events varies and could occur at shorter intervals or even within the same year.

Storms are described in the same way - as the storm event of such a magnitude (amount of rainfall during a specified length of time) that it has a certain percent chance of occurring in any given year. For instance, the 100-year flood is the storm event of such a magnitude that it has a 1 percent chance of occurring in any given year. Similarly, the 10-year storm is a storm event of such a magnitude that it has a 10 percent probability of occurring in any given year.

Floodplains or flood zones are described with reference to the associated flood - as the areal extent of land that would be covered by the flood event of such a magnitude that it has a certain percent chance of occurring in any given year. For instance, the 100-year floodplain is the area that would be covered by the 100-year flood.

The FEMA and Federal Insurance Administration have assessed flood hazards for most major streams in Sonoma County, however these assessments do not consider increased flood hazard due to sea level rise. These assessments are periodically updated to reflect new data from flood studies and actual

flood events. The FEMA maps show the 100-year floodplain and are commonly used as the primary source of flooding information for planning and development review and floodplain management. Where the subject river or stream has been studied by detailed hydrologic and hydraulic methods, FEMA may also designate a floodway within the 100-year floodplain. According to FEMA, the floodway is “where the water is likely to be deepest and fastest - the area of the floodplain that should be reserved (kept free of obstructions and development) to allow floodwaters to move downstream.” The floodway is generally considered to be the area where the flood risk is highest and the vulnerability of development is greatest.

Currently the Russian River is the only river on the Sonoma County coast for which the 100-year flood plain has been mapped by FEMA, shown on **Figures C-PS-3f-ii, 3g-ii, 3h-ii, and 3j-ii**. It shows the land area adjacent to a watercourse, drainage way, or creek which has been or may be covered by floodwaters. The boundaries of a flood plain are typically described in terms of the magnitude of a flood event such as the "100 year flood plain". Portions of the older unincorporated communities of Duncans Mills and Jenner lie within the 100-year flood zone of the Russian River in the Coastal Zone.

Within the area covered by the 100-year floodplain of the Russian River, the risk of human injury and property damage from flooding increases with the topographic depth, frequency of flooding, and force of the flood current. Properties within the floodway (approximate 10-year floodplain) would be subject to a greater depth and frequency of flooding and greater magnitude of cross currents than properties within the 25-year or 50-year floodplains. Development is prohibited within the river's floodway because the risk of human injury and property damage in this area is unacceptable.

The greatest threat to public safety and property exists where development is located in areas subject to recurring flooding. The Russian River has the highest frequency of flooding and greatest flood hazards in the Coastal Zone due to the size of its drainage basin and the amount of historic development in the floodplain. The Coastal Zone contains only about 237 of the 1,485 square miles (16 percent) of the Russian River Watershed. Therefore, most of the flood waters from the Russian River draining to the ocean originate from inland areas outside the Coastal Zone.

## **Coastal Flooding and Storm Surge**

Areas designated as the VE Zone on FEMA's Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) are considered to be in a Coastal High Hazard Area subject to high velocity waters from coastal flooding, tidal inundation, and tsunamis. However, FEMA has not designated all potential Coastal High Hazard Areas, and is in the process of updating its mapping of these areas.

## **Tsunamis**

A tsunami is a series of traveling ocean waves, generated by a distant or near-shore undersea earthquake or landslide, that decrease in speed and increase in height as they enter shallow coastal waters. If these waves are much larger than usual, they can become a threat to human life and property by the force of the wave as well as by inundation. Following arrival of the first wave, subsequent waves may increase in height and arrive minutes to hours later. Factors influencing the size and speed of a tsunami include the source and magnitude of the triggering event, water depth, offshore topography, onshore topography, and coastline shape.



The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) heads the National Tsunami Mitigation Program, a federal and multi-state initiative to address tsunami hazards in the United States. The Program develops tsunami inundation and evacuation maps for at-risk communities. NOAA, the California Emergency Management Agency (CalEMA), California Geological Survey (CGS), and University of Southern California have conducted systematic analyses of all historic and possible tsunami hazards along the coast of California for the purpose of mapping tsunami run-up zones from nearshore events in these at-risk communities. Based on a comparison of historic tsunami events along the west coast of California and consideration of tidal fluctuations and other factors, a maximum tsunami wave height of 21 feet along the Sonoma County coast could be created by a large seismic event. However, given the limits of available data, and the possibility that future events may differ from historic events, it is possible that the actual inundation from a tsunami could be greater than currently projected.

For the purposes of this Local Coastal Plan and the *Sonoma County Operational Area Tsunami Response Plan and Evacuation Plan* (part of the *Sonoma County Hazard Mitigation Plan*), a conservative approach was assumed and a maximum tsunami wave height of 25 feet (7.6 meters) along the Sonoma County coast and 5 feet (1.5 meters) in San Pablo Bay were used to identify potential tsunami inundation areas.

Tsunami inundation maps for the Sonoma County coast and San Pablo Bay were released in 2009. The tsunami inundation zone on the Sonoma County coast is shown on **Figures C-PS-3a-k**. Not all tsunamis will inundate all areas in the potential zone. Some tsunamis may be only a few inches or a few feet and affect only a portion of the potential tsunami inundation zone.

Since most of the County coastline is elevated, most areas along the coast are considered safely out of reach of a potential tsunami wave. However, the low-lying coastal communities along the southern Sonoma County coast extending from Jenner to Bodega Bay have area of significant exposure and risk of human injury and property damage because they contain low-lying public beaches, parks, and infrastructure; and residential and commercial development. Although there are no known recorded deaths from a tsunami in Sonoma County, there were small impacts from tsunamis in 1946 and 1960.

Under the California Coastal Analysis and Mapping Project (CCAMP), FEMA is initiating flood studies/mapping projects in coastal areas as a result of Congressional appropriations for flood hazards mapping. These efforts will address gaps in required engineering and mapping for high flood risk areas impacted by coastal flooding. The Open Pacific Coast Study is a component of CCAMP that involves detailed coastal engineering analysis and mapping of the Pacific coast of California. Results from the Open Pacific Coast Study will be used to remap the coastal flood risk and wave hazards for fifteen California counties, including Sonoma County.

## **Floodplain Management**

The primary method of reducing the risk of hazards and impacts from flooding is through floodplain management. In addition to mapping flood hazards, floodplain management may include restrictions on the type and location of land uses and development in the floodplain. Land uses which can sustain periodic flooding and decrease flood hazards downstream would be encouraged. Floodplain management may also include establishing development and construction standards that minimize vulnerability to flood hazards, such as requiring the first floor of structures to be one foot above the

base flood elevation. Floodplain management may also include increased retention of stormwater runoff in the watershed, acquisition of property in flood hazard zones, public education and outreach, and other methods which reduce the need for costly construction projects and disaster relief.

Floodplain management is required by federal and state law. Various incentives such as flood insurance, loans, and State funding of flood control projects are offered if flood management practices are followed including measures that are taken to increase the hydrologic capacity of a natural water course or to create new man-made channels or reservoirs to drain and contain precipitation that otherwise exceeds the capacity of the water course, in an effort to reduce flood damage, usually to man made improvements. In Sonoma County, floodplain management has reduced flood damage primarily by limiting the kind and extent of new construction in flood hazard areas and by elevating existing structures above the base flood elevation. However, property damage from flooding is still a major and persistent problem along the Russian River, which has resulted in Sonoma County having the highest rate of repetitive property losses from flooding in California; and which indicates that a more proactive approach is needed.

The floodplain policies of this Local Coastal Plan are intended to limit development within 100-year flood plain areas; require compliance with siting, development, and constructions standards to minimize the risk of flood hazards for new development; and collaborating and participating in the County's multi-strategy approach to reduce repetitive flood loss properties and minimize the risks for existing development.

## Goal, Objectives, and Policies

### **GOAL C-PS-3: Prevent unnecessary exposure of people and property to risks of human injury and property damage from flooding and other types of inundation hazards**

**Objective C-PS-3.1:** Regulate new development to reduce the risks of human injury and property damage from existing and anticipated flood hazards to acceptable levels.

**Objective C-PS-3.2:** Minimize risks of human injury and property damage for existing development within flood hazard areas with an emphasis on reducing repetitive property losses.

**Policy C-PS-3a:** Any area that would be inundated by a 100-year flood event shall be considered to be a flood hazard zone. The Flood Insurance Rate Maps (Flood Rate Maps) adopted by FEMA shall be used as the official source of flood elevation data and flood hazard zone mapping and the 100-year flood and to support the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) and associated flood insurance studies. Land use planning and development review shall be based on the Flood Rate Maps except where more detailed parcel-specific and site-specific analyses of flood elevations and flood hazard zones based on scaled interpretations of the Flood Rate Maps are available. Where local analyses indicate flood elevations or flood hazard zones which differ from the adopted Flood Rate Maps, such data shall be provided to FEMA so they may be amended. (NEW/GP2020)

**Policy C-PS-3b:** Floodplain management shall be given priority over flood control structures for preventing property damage from flooding, except where the intensity of development requires a high level of protection, justifies the costs of a bank or shoreline protection structure, and such

structure complies with requirements of the California Coastal Act and shoreline protection structure requirements of this Public Safety Element. (GP2020)

**Policy C-PS-3c:** Encourage increased stormwater retention and decreased stormwater runoff both within and outside of the Coastal Zone to reduce flooding within the Coastal Zone. Floodplain storage capacity shall be preserved by avoiding fill in areas outside of the FEMA 100-year flood hazard zones which retain or could retain flood waters. (GP2020)

**Policy C-PS-3d:** New development, water diversion, vegetation removal, and grading shall be regulated to minimize any increase in flooding and related human injury and property damage. (GP2020)

**Policy C-PS-3e:** Where additional data and information is necessary to adequately assess the on-site and off-site flood and inundation hazards from a proposed development, to develop mitigation measures, or to determine compliance of an existing or proposed development with the Coastal Zoning Ordinance, a supplemental site-specific flood and inundation hazards analysis shall be required. The site-specific analysis may include but is not limited to:

- (1) Topographic mapping.
- (2) Analysis of the influence of sea level rise on flood elevations and flood and inundation hazards and zones.
- (3) Delineation of flood and inundation hazard zones.
- (4) Calculation of expected flood elevations.
- (5) Calculation of expected flood velocity.
- (6) Analysis of the impacts on on-site and off-site flooding, drainage, and stormwater runoff.
- (7) Using construction details and specifications, analysis of compliance with the Coastal Zoning Ordinance.
- (8) Using cost and appraisal data, analysis of when reconstruction, rehabilitation, additions, or other improvements to structures would constitute a substantial improvement under the Sonoma County Code.
- (9) Development of mitigation measures to reduce or eliminate the potential for human injury and property loss from flood and inundation hazards, particularly in areas subject to repetitive property loss. (NEW – PROGRAM BECAME POLICY)

**Policy C-PS-3f:** Drainage facilities shall be designed to minimize off-site drainage and flooding according to the most current County flood control and design criteria. Alternative bio-engineered drainage designs (e.g., low impact development techniques) are preferred and shall be proposed where they provide adequate capacity and performance to handle expected stormwater flows. The cost of drainage facilities required to handle stormwater runoff from new development shall be the responsibility of the new development. (GP2020)

**Policy C-PS-3g:** Construction of structures within 100 feet of the top of any natural or manmade embankment which defines a channel shall be prohibited, except where Permit Sonoma finds the flood hazard risk to life and property has been minimized. Reductions to building setbacks in 100-year floodplains shall be avoided. Where this policy conflicts with **C-OSRC-4c** of the Open Space and Resource Conservation Element, the more restrictive of the two shall apply. (EXISTING LCP REVISED)

**Policy C-PS-3h:** Assess potential hazards from proposed development on a case by case basis to ensure that siting, mitigation measures, or design changes are sufficient to reduce exposure to these hazards to an acceptable level. Such assessments shall consider hazards from river and creek flooding, dam failure, storm surge and high waves during storms, sea level rise, and undersized or blocked stormwater facilities. (NEW)

**Policy C-PS-3i:** New residential development is prohibited in Tsunami Hazard Zones. (EXISTING LCP REVISED)

**Policy C-PS-3j:** Tentative and final subdivision maps and approved site plans shall show areas subject to flooding as designated on the Flood Rate Maps adopted by the FEMA. (GP2020)

**Policy C-PS-3k:** Evaluate potential flood and inundation hazards for development projects relative to potential repetitive property loss, and incorporate mitigation measures to reduce the potential for human injury and property damage to a level of less than significant. Evaluate impacts from sea level rise, and storm inundation events. Consider unique coastal characteristics, infrastructure, and adaptive capacity in project design. (GP2020 REVISED)

**Policy C-PS-3l:** Work with County Departments, responsible agencies, public, and other stakeholders to develop and implement a long-term plan for reducing repetitive property losses from flooding as detailed in Policy PS-2d of General Plan 2020. Conduct ongoing flood monitoring, implementation of the Local Hazard Mitigation Plan, consider participation in federal hazard programs. (GP2020)

## Programs

**Program C-PS-3-P1:** Establish a new Flood Hazard Area Combining Zone to include regulations for the permissible types of uses, intensities, and development standards in the following flood and inundation hazard areas:

- (1) 10-Year Base Flood Zones
- (2) 100-Year Base Flood Zones
- (3) Areas at risk from a 7-foot sea level rise and storm surge – Flooding (CCC REVISED – PC REVISED)
- (4) Areas at risk from a 7-foot sea level rise – Landward Limit of Erosion High Hazard Zone (CCC REVISED – PC REVISED)
- (5) Areas at risk from tsunamis of up to 25 Feet

**Program C-PS-3-P2:** Develop an ordinance that prioritizes relocation and allows reconstruction of a structure damaged or lost from inundation or flooding related to sea level rise where certain criteria

can be met; an evaluation of the feasibility of relocation to a location where hazard risks are minimized is provided; where relocation is not feasible, a reconstructed structure must be raised a minimum number of feet above the anticipated base flood elevation considering projected future sea level rise during the economic life of the structure based on the most up-to-date science; and where such an adaptation approach is considered feasible and practical and is expected to minimize the risk of inundation and flooding of the structure to an acceptable level. (NEW)

## Initiatives

**Initiative C-PS-3-I1:** Coordinate flood hazard analysis and floodplain management activities with the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACOE), FEMA, State Office of Emergency Services (State OES), Sonoma County Fire and Emergency Services Department, Sonoma County Water Agency (SCWA), and other responsible agencies. (GP2020)

**Initiative C-PS-3-I2:** Encourage FEMA to update its flood insurance studies and Flood Insurance Rate Maps (Flood Rate Maps) to show the following information. This mapping would allow regulations and mitigation efforts to focus on the areas at the highest risk of flood hazards, and allow flood insurance premiums to be more reflective of the actual flood hazard risks on specific properties. Provide FEMA data generated from detailed parcel-specific and site-specific analyses of flood elevations and flood hazard zones when available to assist in updating flood insurance studies and Flood Insurance Rate Maps.

- (1) Flood elevations and flood hazard zones which reflect inundation hazards unique to the Coastal Zone such as sea level rise and greater ocean surges and larger waves during storms based on the most up-to-date data and science, including data developed under the California Coastal Analysis and Mapping Project and Open Pacific Coast Study (OPC Study); and
- (2) Detailed mapping of the 100-year floodplain to delineate the 10-year, 25-year, and 50-year floodplains. (NEW)

**Initiative C-PS-3-I3:** Coordinate with state and local emergency services to educate the public about the areas subject to inundation from a tsunami, where to go in the event of an earthquake, and evacuation routes in the event of a tsunami by distributing educational materials to parcel owners within the tsunami run-up zone and by erecting signage specified by the Sonoma County Operational Area Tsunami Response Plan. (NEW)

**Initiative C-PS-3-I4:** Encourage the California Department of Parks and Recreation, Sonoma County Regional Parks Department, Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District, Sonoma Land Trust, and similar organizations to purchase natural lands adjacent to wetlands or other sensitive natural habitats which are at risk of inundation or flooding from projected sea level rise, based on the best available science, for use as wildlife habitat. (NEW)

## 4. SEA LEVEL RISE HAZARDS

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Section 30006.5 of the California Coastal Act identifies sea level rise as one of the topics for which additional scientific and technical analysis and recommendations are necessary to aid coastal planning, conservation, and development decisions. This Local Coastal Plan includes policies to

address hazards from sea level rise to enhance the safety of residents and visitors, while providing a framework for consideration and permitting of coastal development projects. This Local Coastal Plan acknowledges the threat of sea level rise and supports appropriate responses, while recognizing that sea level rise is a global rather than a purely local issue.

## Sea Level Rise Forecasts

The State of California has long-supported the development of scientific information on climate change and sea level rise to help guide planning and decision-making. In April 2017, a working group of the Ocean Protection Council's (OPC) Science Advisory Team published *Rising Seas in California: An Update on Sea-Level Rise Science*, and provided additional guidance in the *State of California Sea-Level Rise Guidance 2018 Update*. The 2018 update synthesizes recent evolving research on sea level rise science, notably including a discussion of probabilistic sea level rise projections as well as the potential for rapid ice loss leading to extreme sea level rise. This study projected that there could be approximately 7.3 feet of sea level rise by 2100, assuming that carbon emissions continue at the current rate.

In February 2022, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration published the *Global and Regional Sea Level Rise Scenarios for the United States*. This document, prepared in partnership with U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, National Aeronautics and Space Administration, U.S. Geological Survey, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Department of Defense, and the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa represents the best forecasts of sea level rise and associated impacts currently available. Key findings of this study are:

- (1) An increasingly larger body of climate science data provides better forecast of rise in sea level by 2050, but also finds that flooding from increased storm surge heights will increase the frequency of disruptive high tide flooding. Within the next 30 years, frequency of destructive flood levels that exceed 1.2 meters above 2020 sea level will increase from the current 0.04 events per year to 0.2 events per year.
- (2) Higher global temperatures will rapidly increase the rate of sea level rise due to accelerated melting of ice sheets in Antarctica and Greenland, and expansion of water as oceans become warmer. Additional influences such as deformational effects due to land ice loss and local increases in sea level rise due to changes in ocean currents reduce confidence in longer range projections beyond 2050, but if global mean temperatures were to rise as high as about 3°–5°C, much larger amounts of sea level rise would become increasingly possible, as instabilities in ice-sheet dynamics would potentially come into play. This increase in global mean temperatures is likely by 2100 if no effort is made to reduce activities and emissions that contribute to climate change, and would result in a 2.0 meter increase in sea level along the coast of California.

Another important resource specific to the west coastal is *Sea Level Rise for the Coasts of California, Oregon, and Washington: Past, Present, and Future* (National Academy of Sciences 2012; National Academy Report). The National Academy Report found a steep change in projected sea level rise at Cape Mendocino in Humboldt County due to tectonic uplift. The report states that much of the land on the coast north of Cape Mendocino is rising at up to 0.1 inch per year, whereas the land on the coast south of Cape Mendocino is sinking at an average rate of about half that. As a result, relative sea

level north of Cape Mendocino has been falling over the past ten decades while the level south of Cape Mendocino has been rising.

While the Sonoma Coast regularly experiences erosion, flooding, and significant storm events, sea level rise would exacerbate these natural processes, and lead to significant social, environmental, and economic impacts. The Fourth National Climate Assessment finds that the cost of doing nothing in response to sea level rise exceeds the costs associated with adapting to sea level rise by 4 to 10 times. Therefore, it is critically important that the Local Coastal Plan provide policies that prepare for and adapt to sea level rise to ensure public resources and coastal communities are resilient for present and future generations. Future Development considerations should include future vulnerabilities to sea level rise and corresponding habitat migration.

**Table C-PS-1** below shows the projected sea level rise over time for the Sonoma Coast based on these studies:

**Table C-PS-1. Sea Level Rise Projections Relative to 1983-2001 National Tidal Datum Epoch (Medium to High Risk Aversion Forecast – High GHG Emission Model)**

Year	Projected Sea Level Rise	
	feet	meters
2030	0.8	0.25
2040	1.3	0.4
2050	2.0	0.6
2060	2.7	0.8
2070	3.5	1.0
2080	4.6	1.4
2090	5.6	1.7
2100	7.0	2.1

Sonoma County Planning staff examined the digital data from the Pacific Institute Report that was used to prepare **Figures C-PS-3a-k**. **Table C-PS-2** shows, by SubArea, the public roads, State facilities, and County facilities projected to be permanently inundated or temporarily flooded as a result of sea level rise and the 100-year storm event forecast for 2100. In addition to the public roads and facilities listed in **Table C-PS-2**, numerous private properties are projected to also be inundated or flooded.

Sea level rise inundation maps were prepared for Sonoma County using the Pacific Institute Report’s projected sea level rise, together with 100-year fluvial flood events for year 2100. **Figures C-PS-4a-c** illustrate the areas along the Sonoma County coast at risk from erosion, and **Figures C-PS-3a-k** illustrate the areas at risk from permanent inundation and temporary flooding as a result of a 7-foot sea level rise during a 100-year storm event by year 2100.

### **Sea Level Rise Vulnerability Assessment for the Sonoma Coast**

In May 2017 Sonoma County completed a sea level rise adaptation planning effort for the Sonoma Coast. The County first conducted a general assessment of the coastal areas, communities, land uses, development, and public facilities most vulnerable to sea level rise impacts to prioritize development of community-specific focused vulnerability assessments. The *Sonoma County Coast General Vulnerability Assessment* was completed in June 2016. The *General Vulnerability Assessment* depicts

the inundation from sea-level rise in 1-foot increments up to 6 feet (2100 scenario). The results are those SubAreas with a relative vulnerability of “high” are Highcliffs/Muniz-Jenner (SubArea 6), Pacific View/Willow Creek (SubArea 8), and State Beach-Bodega Bay (SubArea 9).

Based on these results, the County identified the community of Bodega Bay as the subject for a focused vulnerability assessment. The *Bodega Bay Focused Vulnerability Assessment and Adaptation Strategies* (Vulnerability Assessment) and recommendations are located in **Appendix G**.



**Table C-PS-2. Public Roads, Federal Facility, State Facilities, and County Facilities on the Sonoma County Coast Potentially Inundated or Flooded as a Result of 7-foot Sea Level Rise and the 100-Year Flood forecast for 2100.**

<b>SubArea</b>	<b>Public Roads</b>	<b>State Facilities</b>	<b>County Facilities</b>
<b>1 The Sea Ranch North</b>	Highway 1	Del Mar Landing State Ecological Reserve	Gualala Point Regional Park & Beach The Sea Ranch Access Trails: Coastal bluff-Top; Salal; and Walk-on Beach
<b>2 The Sea Ranch South</b>			The Sea Ranch Access Trails: Shell Beach; Stengel Beach; Pebble Beach; and Black Point Beach
<b>4 Salt Point</b>		Salt Point State Park: Fisk Mill Cove; Gerstle Cove; Horseshoe Cove; Horseshoe Point; Salt Point; and Stump Beach	
<b>5 Timber Cove/ Fort Ross</b>	Highway 1	Fort Ross State Historic Park: Fort Ross Cove; Kohlmer Gulch; Sandy Cove; and Windermere Point	Stillwater Cove Regional Park: Stillwater Cove & Boat Launch; Stillwater Cove Expansion: Pocket Cove and Coastal Bluff Trail – Ocean Cove to Stillwater Cove
<b>7 Duncans Mills</b>	Highway 1 Hwy 116 B Street Freezeout Rd Main St Steelhead Blvd	Sonoma Coast State Park Access Trails: Duncans Mills River; Rancho del Paradiso - Freezeout River; Steelhead Boulevard River; and Willow Creek – Freezeout Jenner Visitors Center	
<b>8 Pacific View/ Willow Creek</b>	State Highway 1 Emery Rd Willow Creek Rd Wrights Beach Access Rd	Sonoma Coast State Park & Beach: Arched Rock; Duncans Cove, Point, & Landing; Penny Island; Blind Beach; Furlong Gulch Beach; Goat Rock Beach; Mann Beach; No Name Beach; North Portuguese Beach; Portuguese Beach; Wrights Beach; Monte Rio to Willow Creek Trail; and Willow Creek Campground & River Access Trail	Gleason Beach Accessway California Coastal Trail

Sonoma County Local Coastal Plan | Planning Commission Recommended  
Public Safety Element

<b>SubArea</b>	<b>Public Roads</b>	<b>State Facilities</b>	<b>County Facilities</b>
<b>9 State Beach/ Bodega Bay</b>	Highway I Bay Flat Rd Bean Ave Brooke Rd Churchill St Doran Beach Rd Driftwood Rd Extension–Westshore to Whaleship Roads Maryana Dr Ocean View Ave Shaw Ct Smith Brothers Rd Westshore Rd	Bodega Dunes Campground North Salmon Creek Beach South Salmon Creek Beach U.C. Davis Bodega Marine Lab (access road) Bodega Head (access road) Federal: U.S. Coast Guard facility at Doran Beach	Birdwalk Loop Trail Doran Regional Park & Beach Doran Beach Jetty Day Use Area; Miwok Tent Campground; boat launch & parking; and visitor’s center/ operations Westside Regional Park: boat launch; RV & tent campsites; and parking Mason’s Marina Spud Point Marina Bodega Bay Sport Fishing Center Bodega Harbour Yacht Club (county owned)
<b>10 Valley Ford</b>	Highway I John’s St Middle Rd School St (Main St) Valley Ford – Estero Rd Valley Ford – Freestone Rd Valley Ford Rd		Gold Ridge Soil Conservation District Office

References:

- Global and Regional Sea Level Rise Scenarios for the United States* (NOAA 2022)
- Rising Seas in California: An Update on Sea-Level Rise Science* (Ocean Protection Council 2017)
- Sea Level Rise for the Coasts of California, Oregon, and Washington: Past, Present, and Future* (National Academy of Sciences 2012)
- The Impacts of Sea-Level Rise on the California Coast* Pacific Institute Report (Heberger et al., 2009)

Note:

The County’s hazards maps and tables can be used as a resource for identification of potential hazard areas and vulnerable properties; however, absence of a hazard area on the maps cannot be considered absence of hazard, and local site conditions must be examined using the best available science.

## Exposure to Inundation and Erosion

As part of the Sonoma County coast sea level rise adaptation planning effort funded by the Ocean Protection Council, the Center for Ocean Solutions analyzed the relative exposure of coastline areas to erosion and sedimentation caused by storms, and the role of natural habitat in reducing this exposure (Hartge et. al., 2016a).

The Center of Ocean Solutions (COS) and the National Capital Project (NCP) have conducted spatial analyses areas along the Sonoma County coastline at risk of erosion and inundation caused by storms. In addition, the analyses evaluated the role of natural habitat in reducing coastal exposure in Sonoma County. The information below summarizes the findings for the spatial analyses under a 2030 sea level rise scenario (National Academies of Science, 2012).

**Figures C-PS-4a-c** depict the findings of the analyses of coastal exposure for Sonoma County to erosion and inundation caused by storms under a 2030 sea level rise scenario. The coastal exposure values reflect the relative exposure of different coastline segments to erosion and inundation caused by coastal storms. The map is based on spatial data that includes the 2030 projection for sea level rise, coastal geomorphology, coastal topography and bathymetry, surge potential, wind and wave exposure, natural habitats, and human population. This mapping approach is qualitative and provides a broad overview of the spatial patterns of coastal exposure along the Sonoma County coastline to help prioritize future nature-based adaptation planning strategies for specific locations. **Policy C-PS-1d** requires review and updating of hazard maps every 3 years to assure that mapping reflects the best available science and most recent data.

## Living Shorelines and Natural Infrastructure

The habitats fringing a coastline attenuate waves and thus reduce storm-related damage to shorelines from erosion and inundation. North of the Russian River mouth to the northern extent of Sonoma County, kelp forest habitat backed by rocky cliffs dominate the landscape and are generally low exposure. In contrast, south of the Russian River mouth, a greater diversity of habitats (e.g., wetlands, beaches, dune systems) are present and are habitats that are highly exposed to erosion and inundation during storms compared to north of the River mouth. As coastal development and rising sea levels alter or damage these habitats, coastlines and nearby infrastructure become increasingly vulnerable to storms.

Coastal habitats provide an ecosystem service by reducing the impacts of storms and by increasing resilience in coastal areas. However, with ever increasing stresses on ecosystems, it is important to identify where natural habitats provide the greatest benefits to prioritize adaptation planning efforts that protect or restore those critical natural habitats. The habitat types which provide the highest level of natural protection have been identified and mapped.

**Figures C-PS-5a-c** depict the areas along the Sonoma County coastline in which natural habitat plays a role in reducing exposure to erosion and inundation during storms. For example, the dark brown areas in Doran Beach and south of Salmon Creek indicate locations where habitats play the largest role in reducing exposure. The lighter tones in the map also indicate where habitat areas provide a protective coastal ecosystem service.

## Adaptation Strategies

Much is at stake from sea level rise, and in order to minimize damage and losses, California's coastal communities must make adaptation to sea level rise a priority by conducting community sea level rise vulnerability and risk assessments and developing a Sea Level Rise Adaptation Plan. Developing a risk assessment involves considering the actual or future threats or hazards of concern, the economic importance or value of public facilities and infrastructure to the community, and the certainty of projected impacts to the degree that these are known or can be expected. Developing a Sea Level Rise Adaptation Plan involves setting goals, identifying objectives and adaptation measures, developing adaptation strategies for different types of land uses and facilities. The Adaptation Plan should consider public access, unique water dependent infrastructure, inundation caused by storm events, salt water intrusion, and consistency across any state and federal sea level rise projections.

In any coastal community there are three types of areas to be considered for adaptation planning: (1) undeveloped land that is considered or zoned to be developable; (2) existing unprotected development, including residential and commercial areas as well as infrastructure; and (3) existing development that has already been armored. The major armored area along the Sonoma County coast is a portion of the residential development above Gleason Beach. The Gleason Beach Highway 1 Realignment project proposed by Caltrans is an example of a "retreat" adaptation strategy. The proposal is to realign a 3,700 foot, two-lane section of Highway 1 about 400 feet inland of the current alignment at Gleason Beach. The purpose of the project is to provide a safe transportation facility that is no longer vulnerable to advancing coastal erosion.

Adaptation strategies for private property may be different or more difficult from those appropriate for and public property. Over a longer timescale, the cost of restricting or limiting new development in areas vulnerable to the hazards or impacts from sea level rise is far lower than the cost of addressing damaged or threatened development.

Based on the costs and benefits as well as the risks, adaptation strategies will identify the threshold at which the community should take action to prevent, reduce, or adapt to impacts from sea level rise. For example, a coastal park or parking lot can be used intermittently for a long time with periodic winter flooding, but a water or wastewater treatment plant at or near beach elevation must be retrofitted, relocated, or replaced well in advance of facility flooding or failure to ensure continued public services.

## Sea Level Rise Forecast Standard

The Sonoma County Local Coastal Plan uses a **7-foot sea level rise forecast** as the basis for integrating sea level planning and resiliency into all elements of this plan. This is slightly higher than worst case scenario forecasts of 2 meters (6.56 feet) found in the recent studies *Rising Seas in California: An Update on Sea-Level Rise Science*, and *Global and Regional Sea Level Rise Scenarios for the United States* and consistent with the 2.1 meter (7 feet) medium-to-high risk forecast of the Ocean Protection Council's *State of California Sea-Level Rise Guidance 2018 Update*.

## Goal, Objectives, and Policies

**GOAL C-PS-4: Prevent unnecessary exposure of people, property, and coastal resources to risks of injury, damage, or loss from sea level rise. (CCC REVISED)**

**Objective C-PS-4.1:** Regulate new development to reduce the risks of human injury or property damage in areas subject to projected future sea level rise and other coastal hazards to an acceptable level, incorporating adaptive capacity in design and operation when hazard risk exceeds a project-specific threshold.

**Objective C-PS-4.2:** Minimize the risks of human health and safety, and property damage associated with existing development that may result from sea level rise consistent with LCP and Coastal Act policies regarding new shoreline protection structures or repair of existing shoreline protection structures. (CCC REVISED)

**Objective C-PS-4.3:** Identify and assess risks to existing development, public facilities, infrastructure, and coastal resources that are vulnerable to projected future sea level rise inundation from seasonal storm events, and other coastal hazards. (CCC REVISED)

**Objective C-PS-4.4:** Develop a plan for community adaptation to projected future sea level rise and other coastal hazards to reduce the risks and impacts to an acceptable level.

**Policy C-PS-4a:** Sea Level is defined as the locally corrected mean high water level referenced to the average of all the high water heights observed over the 1983-2001 National Tidal Datum Epoch at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Point Reyes Station Datum, Station ID 9415020. (PC REVISED - CCC REVISED)

**Policy C-PS-4b:** Sea Level Rise is defined as a 7-foot increase in sea level relative to the locally corrected mean high water level referenced to the average of all the high water heights observed over the 1983-2001 National Tidal Datum Epoch at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Point Reyes Station Datum, Station ID 9415020. (PC REVISED - CCC REVISED)

**Policy C-PS-4c:** For the purposes of vulnerability and risk assessments, mapping, land use planning, and adaptation planning, identify the areas projected to be inundated by sea level rise as defined in Policy C-4b, including under projected high tides, high water conditions in combination with high tides, storm wave run up and storm surge. (CCC REVISED - NEW)

**Policy C-PS-4d:** Update hazard data every 3 years or at intervals recommended by responsible agencies, whichever is more frequent, using the best available scientific estimates, aligning with projections used by regional, state and federal agencies. (CCC REVISED)

**Policy C-PS-4e:** Use the best available science and technical analyses available in combination with site-specific information when evaluating land use or development proposals in areas subject to sea level rise and other coastal hazards. (NEW)

**Policy C-PS-4f:** Applications for Coastal Development Permits for development potentially subject to hazards from projected sea level rise, shall include a geologic/flood hazards report prepared by a licensed Geotechnical Engineer that evaluates the potential risk from inundation and/or coastal

erosion over the economic life of the development. The report shall evaluate hazards in the context of a 7-foot sea level rise and include recommendations on development location, design, and construction to reduce risk from coastal hazards and avoid impacts to coastal natural resources. (CCC REVISED - NEW)

**Policy C-PS-4g:** Restrict rebuilding or coastal redevelopment of structures in vulnerable areas that have experienced repetitive damage from storms, flooding, landslides, or the impacts from sea level rise. (CCC REVISED)

**Policy C-PS-4h:** New development shall be set back a sufficient distance landward or otherwise sited and designed to avoid or minimize, to the maximum extent feasible, inundation and/or coastal erosion resulting from the extent of projected sea level rise, storm events, and other coastal hazards based on the best available science over the expected economic life of the development. Shoreline protection devices are prohibited for new development and shall not be considered when evaluating setback from coastal hazards. (CCC REVISED - NEW)

**Policy C-PS-4i:** For development proposed where potential inundation, flooding, and/or coastal erosion resulting from projected sea level rise cannot be completely avoided, sea level rise adaptation measures, including requirement for future removal of development, shall be evaluated and incorporated into the development siting, design, construction, and operation. These measures shall not have an adverse impact on coastal natural resources, and risk disclosures and deed restrictions shall be required. (CCC REVISED - NEW)

**Policy C-PS-4j:** New development shall be avoided on undeveloped land immediately adjacent to wetlands or other sensitive habitats that are at risk of inundation or flooding resulting from projected sea level rise so that these lands are available for wetland or other habitat restoration projects. (NEW)

**Policy C-PS-4k:** Buffers to protect wetlands and riparian habitat shall be measured from the extent of a projected 7 foot sea level rise in tidally influenced areas based on the best available science. Consultation with California Department of Fish & Game, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is required to establish buffers in these areas. (CCC REVISED - NEW)

**Policy C-PS-4l:** Development shall be removed and the disturbed area restored to a natural condition if:

- (1) Permit Sonoma declares the development unsafe for occupancy and/or use regardless of whether a new shoreline protective device would make the development safe for occupancy or use.
- (2) Development that encroaches onto current or future public trust land due to sea level rise and the State Lands Commission or other public trust land authority, denies a grant, lease, or other legal mechanism that would otherwise allow the development to remain in place. This does not apply to legally established development currently elevated above public trust lands on Bodega Bay.
- (3) Bluff top erosion reduces setback between the development and the bluff top below minimum setback required by **Policy C-PS-2d**. (CCC Revised)

**Policy C-PS-4m:** The conditions of approval for any Coastal Development Permit on public or private property that is subject to hazards from projected sea level rise shall include the requirement that the owner shall record a deed with the following notice included: “The subject property is located in an area subject to inundation, flooding, or coastal erosion hazards as a result of projected sea level rise.”  
(NEW)

## Programs

### Program C-PS-4-P1

Develop adoption plans for public infrastructure and local communities. For existing private development in vulnerable areas, develop the following strategies for addressing the impacts from sea level rise:

- (1) Incentives for planned retreat or relocation from vulnerable areas; establish mandatory rolling setbacks for future development or significant coastal redevelopment in areas that are likely to be affected by the impacts from sea level rise within the anticipated lifetime of the structures.
- (2) Identify funding for purchase or relocation of existing structures out of vulnerable areas.

For existing public infrastructure or community resources including ports, and public trust uses such as navigation and recreation in vulnerable areas, develop the following strategies for addressing the impacts from sea level rise:

- (1) Retreat or retrofit plans for existing infrastructure subject to future flooding, and remove and relocate or replace the infrastructure according to the plans.
- (2) Increasing adaptive capacity of shoreline roads, and determine the feasibility of relocating shoreline roads and increasing culvert and roadside ditch capacity. Work with entities such as Caltrans that plan, construct, or operate infrastructure.
- (3) Amendments to the Local Coastal Plan Public Access Element and Public Access Plan to ensure long-term protection of the function and connectivity of existing public access and recreation resources.
- (5) Reduce and eliminate dependence on shoreline protection structures. Identify critical structures where short term armoring is necessary until long-term solutions can be designed and implemented.

Based on the costs and benefits as well as the risks, the adaptation plan should then identify the threshold at which the community should take action to prevent, reduce, or adapt to impacts from sea level rise. For example, a coastal park or parking lot can be used intermittently for a long time with periodic winter flooding, but a water or wastewater treatment plant at or near beach elevation must be retrofitted, relocated, or replaced well in advance of facility flooding or failure to ensure continued public services. (CCC REVISED)

**Program C-PS-4-P2:** Prepare a Sea Level Rise Vulnerability and Risk Assessment, and Adaption Plan for the Sonoma County coast based on guidance from the California Coastal Commission’s Sea-Level Rise Policy Guidance (2018), the California Ocean Protection Council’s Sea-Level Rise Guidance (2018), and other applicable publications. Focus on those SubAreas of the Sonoma County coast at the

highest risk of inundation, flooding, or coastal erosion resulting from sea level rise, which include The Highcliffs/Muniz/Jenner (SubArea 6), Pacific View/Willow Creek (SubArea 8), Duncans Mills (SubArea 7), and State Beach/Bodega Bay (SubArea 9).

Preparation of the Sea Level Rise and Coastal Hazards Adaptation Plan shall involve collaboration with pertinent County of Sonoma departments and agencies, independent utility districts, and responsible federal and state agencies; and participation of the public.

The Sea Level Rise and Coastal Hazards Adaptation Plan shall focus on public and quasi-public facilities and infrastructure and include the following components:

- (1) Discussion of the following planning tools to help communities adapt to sea level rise and other coastal hazards: public purchase of private property for public uses, sale or transfer of public land to accommodate relocated roads and infrastructure, transfer of development rights, parcel reconfiguration, and zoning and land use designation amendments.
- (2) Requirements and standards for siting, design, and construction of new public facilities and infrastructure and private structures in areas subject to sea level rise and other coastal hazards as mapped in the Vulnerability Assessment.
- (3) Requirements and standards for maintenance and removal of abandoned structures.
- (4) Cost/benefit analyses of: a) adaptation measures versus no adaptation measures and b) carrying-out adaptation measures pre-inundation versus post-inundation (i.e., emergency conditions).
- (5) Plan for full disclosure of potential hazards to owners of property in areas subject to sea level rise and other coastal hazards as mapped in the Vulnerability Assessment.
- (6) Identify options and mechanisms to minimize or avoid County obligations to compensate for private property loss or damage resulting from sea level rise and other coastal hazards.

The County will continue to work with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, California Coastal Commission, Ocean Protection Council and other agencies and organizations to develop possible adaptation strategies for particular areas of the Sonoma County coast. (NEW)

**Program C-PS-4-P3:** Study, monitor, develop, and implement a plan to mitigate the impacts to groundwater from saltwater intrusion resulting from sea level rise and storm events based on the best available science. (NEW)

## **5. WILDLAND FIRE HAZARDS**

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The combination of highly flammable fuel, long dry summers and steep slopes creates a significant natural hazard of large wildland fires in many areas of Sonoma County. Wildland fire results in death, injury, economic losses, and a large public investment in firefighting efforts. Woodlands and other natural vegetation are destroyed resulting in the loss of timber, wildlife habitat, scenic quality and



recreation. Soil erosion, sedimentation of fisheries and reservoirs, and downstream flooding can also result.

Most damage results from a few large fires in the dry weather months. There were 21 wildland fires of 100 acres or more in the County between 1989 and 2000.

Fire hazard severity has been mapped by the CAL FIRE. Areas on the County coast with a high or very high fire risk are shown on **Figures C-PS-6a-c** and include Timber Cove and Sea Ranch. The highest fire hazard in Sonoma County is found in mountainous areas with dry summers, plenty of fuel, and steep slopes.

Residences have increased the number of fires in rural areas. Ninety-seven percent of the wildland fires over 50 acres in Sonoma County since 1989 were caused by human activities or facilities.

Residences in rural areas cause fire suppression agencies to devote limited resources to structural protection while the wildfire spreads.

The probability of large damaging fires in developed areas is affected by weather conditions and the spread of fires in surrounding wildland areas. The type of construction, preventive measures, and the extent of fire suppression services are the chief factors which determine how far these fires spread.

The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) has lead responsibility for fighting wildland fires in designated State Responsibility Areas. The Sonoma County Fire and Emergency Services Department (County Fire) provides fire prevention, fire protection, rescue, emergency medical, code enforcement, and arson investigation services for the unincorporated areas of Sonoma County that are not included in an independent fire protection district. County Fire is responsible for enforcing the California Fire Code and other fire-related codes and ordinances. It enforces vegetation management, reviews building construction plans, and performs inspections of new construction for fire code compliance. In addition, three volunteer fire districts providing fire protection services to different portions of the Sonoma County Coastal Zone. See the Public Facilities and Services Element for a more detailed description of the fire protection services in the Coastal Zone.

The Sonoma County Fire Code is based on the National Fire Code, California Fire Code, Uniform Building Code, and California Subdivision and Development Code; constitutes the local adoption of the California Building Code; and is in Chapter 13 of the Sonoma County Code. It sets forth the requirements of the Sonoma County Fire Safety Ordinance, referred to as the Fire Safe Standards. The County Fire Code was adopted to establish minimum fire safe standards for development within the unincorporated area of the county. The County Fire Code requirements ensure that all new development within the unincorporated area of the county will provide a basic level of fire protection around itself making it easier and safer for fire fighters to fight wildland and structure fires.

The Fire Safety Standards include but are not limited to requirements for emergency access, road naming and addressing, minimum emergency water supply and sprinklers to ensure a supply of water to fight or defend property from a fire, fuel modification and defensible space to reduce the possibility and intensity of a wildfire, and other fire protection measures. Due to the severe fire risk in many areas of the County, the County's Fire Safe Standards which outline development standards

for emergency access, water supply, and vegetation management are more stringent than those required by the California Fire Code.

## **Hazards and Risk Assessment**

Fire hazards shown on Figures C-PS-6a-c are only a general picture of the actual hazard because of the size of the areas and differences in vegetation and slope. The maps show the fire hazards only in unincorporated areas which are classified as wildlands and are therefore within the State Responsibility Area served by CAL FIRE.

## **Land Use Planning**

In order to reduce the risks of property damage and human injury from wildland fires in rural areas, the types and intensities of land uses should be limited. Rural development should be most restricted where natural fire hazards are high, fire protection is limited, and road access prevents timely response by firefighting personnel and rapid evacuation by residents. Wildland fire hazards may be reduced by mitigation measures including removing vegetation and installing dependable water systems, but cannot be eliminated entirely.

## **The Sea Ranch Fuels Management**

A landscape and fire management plan for The Sea Ranch was implemented in the 1990s to balance fire safety with the basic concept of preserving the natural landscape. In 2002 The Sea Ranch Association (TSRA) introduced a more aggressive Fuels Management Program to reduce fuel loads throughout The Sea Ranch. The Sea Ranch Association has continued to implement and expand the program. It incorporates the Sonoma County Fire Safe Standards (see Regulatory Environment below) and includes the following objectives and actions: create roadside fuel breaks to allow for safe evacuation and emergency access; reduce fuels on hillsides below homes to reduce fire intensity; enlarge the Highway 1 fuel break and reduce fuels on both sides of the highway; introduce sheep and goat grazing in the meadows on both sides of Highway 1; enhance riparian vegetation and remove conifers in drainages; and control new vegetation growth. TSRA also addresses fire safety around individual structures through its Defensible Space Fuel Management Resolution which requires the owners of developed property to maintain the fuel breaks around structures mandated by CAL FIRE; and its Design Manual Rules, which outline the permit process, procedure, and standards for fuels management on private lots and neighboring property.

## **Fire Safety Standards**

Fire hazard regulations are intended to minimize on-site property damage and personal injury, avoid damage to adjacent properties, and reduce the cost of fire suppression services. Increasing built-in fire protection in those areas where new construction is allowed is the most cost effective way of achieving these objectives. All development must have adequate water available for fire suppression, whether from a hydrant and community system or from an on-site storage tank.

Where development is permitted near wildlands and natural vegetation, the fire hazard must be further mitigated by other measures. The locations of subdivision lots and building envelopes can maximize access by emergency vehicles and minimize construction in steep or wooded areas. Fire

retardant roof materials are now required in high fire hazard areas. Preventing the spread of wildland fires to and from structures also requires use of fire retardant materials and/or removal of surrounding vegetation and clearing of fuel breaks.

Differences in local, state, and federal fire safety standards and requirements and in staffing and training among local fire districts prompted the formation of the Sonoma County Department of Fire Services in 1985, now the Sonoma County Fire and Emergency Services Department. Improvements in standards for road design, water supply, and sprinkler systems have increased the effectiveness of local fire protection services. In February 2003 the County Board of Supervisors approved Ordinance Nos. 5402 and 5373 that amended the County Fire Code to require fire sprinklers for both residential and commercial development with some exceptions. In recent years, fire services have reorganized and consolidated in order to minimize administrative costs and to promote more efficient and consistent service response.

CalFire enforces requirements for firefighting and prevention, works with property owners on controlled burns, and advises rural residents on fire prevention methods. CalFire is currently preparing minimum fire safety standards for wildland areas. See “Regulatory Setting” below for more information about CalFire responsibilities and activities.

Another important component of fire safety is an improved system of street addresses throughout the county. Fire response time, particularly in rural areas, is occasionally affected by the ability of the responder to locate the affected address. Improved visibility and standardizing street addresses can result in reduced emergency response time.

## **Public Education**

Increased public awareness of fire hazards and fire safe practices is an effective way to avoid or reduce future fire damages and loss of life. Emergency service providers typically provide educational programs that focus on fire prevention. In addition to continuing to promote these ongoing programs, fire prevention information can be provided directly to the general public and to prospective permit applicants for incorporation into the building design. Such a program can be further expanded to include fire hazard information by providing fire hazard warning signs along roadways in particularly vulnerable fire hazard areas.

## **Goal, Objectives, and Policies**

**GOAL C-PS-5: Prevent unnecessary exposure of people and property to risks of injury or damage from wildland and structural fires.**

**Objective C-PS-5.1:** Work with other fire agencies to improve fire safety standards, carry-out fire prevention and protection programs, and educate the public about fire hazards and fire prevention.

**Objective C-PS-5.2:** Regulate new development to reduce the risks of human injury and property damage from known fire hazards to an acceptable level.

**Policy C-PS-5a:** Encourage continued operation of California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection programs for fuel breaks, brush management, controlled burns revegetation, and fire

roads; however, brush clearing and controlled burns shall not take place in designated environmentally sensitive habitat areas or other sensitive habitats. (EXISTING LCP REVISED)

**Policy C-PS-5b:** New development shall meet all applicable fire safety standards and shall be sited and designed to minimize required initial and future fuel modification and brush clearance in general, to the maximum feasible extent, and to avoid such activities within environmentally sensitive habitat areas and environmentally sensitive habitat areas buffers on site and on neighboring property, including parkland. All such requirements shall be applied as conditions of approval applicable for the life of the development. (CCC REVISED)

**Policy C-PS-5c:** Removal of major vegetation adjacent to existing development for fire safety purposes shall be allowed upon a finding that fuel modification and brush clearance techniques are required in accordance with applicable fire safety regulations and are being carried out in a manner which reduces coastal resource impacts to the maximum feasible extent. In addition to the foregoing requirements, removal of environmentally sensitive habitat, or removal of materials in an environmentally sensitive habitat areas buffer shall only be allowed for fire safety purposes and must demonstrate that: (CCC REVISED)

- (1) Removal does not conflict with prior conditions of approval
- (2) There are no other feasible alternatives for achieving compliance with required fire safety regulations
- (3) Impacts are mitigated in a manner that leads to no net loss of ESHA resource value.

**Policy C-PS-5d:** Controlled burns shall be allowed on agricultural land with a permit from the local fire agency and in consultation with the local Air Quality Management District and California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection. (EXISTING LCP)

**Policy C-PS-5e:** The severity of natural fire hazards, potential damage from wildland and structural fires, adequacy of fire protection services, and mitigation measures consistent with the Public Safety Element shall be considered in the review of proposed development projects. (GP2020)

**Policy C-PS-5f:** Fire management plans shall be required for subdivisions and new or expanded recreational facilities in non-urban areas, including development of California Department of Parks and Recreation and Sonoma County Regional Parks holdings. Such plans shall include, but not be limited to, adequate water storage, adequate ingress and egress for emergency vehicles and occupant evacuation, and building siting to minimize fire hazards. (EXISTING LCP REVISED)

**Policy C-PS-5g:** Encourage and promote fire safe practices and the distribution of fire safe educational materials to the general public, permit applicants, and local planning agencies. (GP2020)

**Policy C-PS-5h:** Provide fire hazard information signs in Areas of Very High or High Potential for Large Wildland Fires in a manner that is consistent with the Local Coastal Plan and does not degrade Scenic Highway Corridors or scenic views. (GP2020)

**Policy C-PS-5i:** Encourage private individuals and communities on the Sonoma coast to construct small-scale water storage facilities for back-up use in the case of fire and for back-up non-potable water demand. (EXISTING LCP REVISED)

## Initiatives

**Initiative C-PS-5-I1:** Work with the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection to identify areas of high fire fuel loads and take advantage of opportunities to reduce those fuel loads, particularly in Areas with Very High or High Potential for Large Wildland Fires and in High Fire Hazard Severity Zones. (GP2020)

**Initiative C-PS-5-I2:** The Sonoma County Department of Emergency Services shall offer assistance to local agencies in adopting and enforcing fire safety regulations and shall work with local agencies to develop proposed improvements to related County Codes and standards. (GP2020)

**Initiative C-PS-5-I3:** Encourage the California Department of Parks and Recreation, and the Sonoma County Regional Parks Department to continue efforts to educate the public about fire hazards and fire prevention. (EXISTING LCP REVISED)

## 6. HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

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Many substances can be hazardous to human health and the environment, which includes air, soil, water, plants, and animals. The California Health & Safety Code defines a hazardous material as "any material that, because of its quantity, concentration, or physical or chemical characteristics, poses a significant present or potential hazard to human health and the environment if released into the workplace or the environment." Common hazardous materials include oils, fuels, paints and varnishes, antifreeze, cleaning products, solvents, pesticides (includes herbicides, insecticides, fungicides, and rodenticides), and the associated hazardous waste. The increased use of hazardous materials has increased the potential hazards from hazardous materials and actual human injury and environmental damage, especially when they are used and disposed of near surface water. Public concerns have led to tighter controls on the production, transport, storage, sale, and use of hazardous materials, particularly on the handling and disposal of concentrated residues and wastes produced by power plants and other industrial operations.

Hazardous materials are found at many locations in Sonoma County. The electrical generating plants in The Geysers geothermal area use and produce hazardous materials hauled on winding mountain roads. Spills and releases of such materials have occurred. Petroleum fuels get into groundwater and surface water, particularly from underground storage tanks at gasoline stations and marinas. Preventing hazardous materials in the County's solid waste landfills and transfer stations and industrial operations is important because these materials could affect water quality. Boat use, repair, and maintenance activities at Bodega Bay, Spud Point Marina, and Porto Bodega in the Coastal Zone involve the storage, handling, use, and disposal of hazardous materials such as oils and fuels, paints and varnishes, solvents, and cleaning agents that may drain to surface water.

Pesticides are another hazardous material commonly used in Sonoma County by agricultural, residential, commercial, and recreational land uses. While state law preempts local regulation of

pesticides, the County does have the authority to establish use restrictions applicable to its own operations. By doing so, the County can set an example that will encourage others to reduce reliance on pesticides.

Concerns about Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) oil and gas development led to the approval of Ordinance 3592R in the late 1980s, a countywide ballot initiative that requires voter approval of any proposed Local Coastal Plan Amendment to allow onshore facilities that would support OCS oil and gas development (see Outer Continental Shelf Development Policy in the Land Use Element). The issue of potential oil or other hazardous material spills from onshore support facilities would be addressed in the required environmental documents on the proposed projects.

The management of hazardous materials is included in this Public Safety Element because it has become a major public safety issue requiring attention significant personnel and financial resources and attention by local agencies. Different local, state, and federal agencies have different responsibilities in regulating hazardous materials, and are discussed below.

## **Federal Hazardous Materials and Waste Programs**

The primary federal laws regulating hazardous materials, administered by the United States Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA), are the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act of 1976 (RCRA) and the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act of 1980 (CERCLA). CERCLA, often referred to as the Superfund, was enacted to provide broad federal authority to clean up releases or threatened releases of hazardous substances at abandoned hazardous waste sites in the U.S. The hazardous materials waste program under RCRA establishes a system for controlling hazardous waste from the time it is generated until its ultimate disposal — in effect, from cradle to grave. In any given State, U.S. EPA or the State hazardous waste regulatory agency enforces hazardous waste laws. The U.S. EPA encourages States to assume primary responsibility for implementing a hazardous materials and waste program through State adoption, authorization, and implementation of the regulations.

## **State of California Hazardous Materials and Waste Programs**

The State of California has assumed the primary responsibility for implementing the federal hazardous materials and waste program. California legislation in 1993 (Senate Bill 1082) established the Unified Hazardous Waste and Hazardous Materials Management Regulatory Program (Unified Program). The Unified Program consolidates, coordinates, and makes consistent the California Environmental Protection Agency (Cal EPA) environmental programs which include:

- (1) Hazardous materials inventories and business plans
- (2) Permitting for generators of hazardous waste and operators of on-site hazardous waste treatment
- (3) Aboveground storage tanks
- (4) Underground storage tanks
- (5) Spill or accidental release prevention, control, and response
- (6) Fire code management plans

Under the Unified Program, Cal EPA certifies local agencies to implement the six state environmental programs listed above within their jurisdictions. The appointed local lead agencies are referred to as Certified Unified Program Agencies (CUPAs).

## California Coastal Act

Section 30232 of the California Coastal Act requires that protection against the spillage of crude oil, gas, petroleum products, or hazardous substances shall be provided in relation to any development or transportation of such materials. Effective containment and cleanup facilities and procedures shall be provided for accidental spills that do occur.

## Sonoma County Hazardous Materials and Waste Lead Agencies and CUPAs

**Hazardous Materials.** The California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) is vested with the primary authority through the U.S. EPA to enforce federal and state laws pertaining to the regulation of hazardous materials and waste in California. The DTSC has authorized the Sonoma County Fire and Emergency Services Department as the lead agency and CUPA to enforce federal, state, and local laws pertaining to hazardous materials and hazardous waste management.

The Fire and Emergency Services Department enforces Chapter 29 of the Sonoma County Code regarding hazardous materials management, and for preparing a comprehensive hazardous materials and hazardous waste management plan. Chapter 29 regulates the storage, handling, and management of hazardous materials, whether in waste or non-waste form, unless specifically preempted by state or federal law. The Fire and Emergency Services Department is also responsible for emergency response to hazardous materials incidents throughout most of the County in coordination with local fire and police personnel, and enforces portions of the California Fire Code which address hazardous materials, including routine inspections.

**Underground Storage Tanks.** The State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) is vested with the primary authority through the U.S. EPA to enforce federal and state laws pertaining to leaking Underground Storage Tanks containing hazardous substances. The SWRCB has authorized the Sonoma County Department of Health Services as the lead agency and CUPA to enforce federal, state, and local laws pertaining to leaking underground storage tanks in the County.

**Pesticides.** The California Department of Pesticide Regulation (DPR) is vested with the primary authority through the U.S. EPA to enforce federal and state laws pertaining to the proper and safe use of pesticides in California. DPR's enforcement of pesticide use in the field is largely carried out in California's 58 counties by County Agricultural Commissioner Offices and their staffs. The DPR has authorized the Sonoma County Office of the Agricultural Commissioner as the lead agency and CUPA to enforce federal, state, and local laws pertaining to the use, storage, and sales of pesticides in the County. Additional pesticide restrictions on pesticide use within the Sonoma coastal zone are found in **Policy C-OSRC-7c**.

**Oil Spills.** The Oil Pollution Act of 1990 (OPA) improved the nation's ability to prevent and respond to oil spills by establishing provisions that expand the federal government's ability, and provide the money and resources necessary, to respond to oil spills. Under the OPA, the U.S. Coast Guard and

U.S. EPA are the lead responsible agencies for preventing, preparing for, and responding to oil spills that occur in and around coastal waters and inland waters of the United States, respectively.

The Office of Spill Prevention and Response (OSPR), within the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, serves the responsibilities as public trustee and custodian for the protection, management, and restoration of the fish, wildlife, and plants across the State. As such, it is one of only a few agencies in the United States that both maintains major pollution response authority and public trustee authority for wildlife and habitat. In 2014, Governor Jerry Brown expanded the capabilities of the OSPR to include all state surface waters at risk of oil spills from any source, which more effectively captured possible spills from pipelines, production facilities, and railroad oil shipments (California features more than 7,000 rail crossings over water bodies).

**Transport of Hazardous Waste.** The California Department of Toxics Substances Control (DTSC) is vested with the primary authority through the U.S. EPA to enforce federal and state laws pertaining to the transport of hazardous waste in California. The DTSC has authorized the California Highway Patrol and Office of the State Fire Marshal to enforce some of the federal, state, and local laws pertaining to the transport of hazardous waste.

To operate in California, hazardous waste transporters must be registered with the DTSC. Unless specifically exempted, hazardous waste transporters must comply with the regulations of the U.S. Department of Transportation, DTSC, California Highway Patrol, and Office of the State Fire Marshal.

## Goal, Objective, and Policies

**GOAL C-PS-6: Prevent unnecessary exposure of people and property to risks of injury or property damage from hazardous materials.**

**Objective C-PS-6.1:** Regulate the handling, storage, use, and disposal of hazardous materials in order to reduce the risks of injury or property damage from hazardous materials.

**Policy C-PS-6a:** Siting of hazardous waste repositories, incinerators, facilities that use a substantial quantity of hazardous materials, or other similar facilities intended primarily for hazardous waste disposal shall be avoided in any area subject to inundation, flooding, coastal erosion hazards resulting from projected sea level rise and other coastal hazards, and in areas subject to heightened ground shaking during an earthquake event (Modified Mercalli Index (MMI) Ground shaking Intensity Level higher than Strong (VII) as identified on Figures C-PS-1a-c or within one quarter mile of schools. Siting shall be avoided in any area designated for urban residential or rural residential use; on agricultural lands; or near waterways, bays, or the ocean. (GP2020)

**Policy C-PS-6b:** A use permit shall be required for any commercial or industrial use involving hazardous materials in threshold planning quantities as determined by Federal and State laws. A hazardous materials management plan shall be required as a condition of approval for such permits. (GP2020)



## Program

**Program C-PS-6-P1:** Create a new hazard combining zone to address impacts related to development and coastal redevelopment in hazard areas and on coastal bluffs in order to protect such development from the effects of coastal bluff erosion. (CCC REVISED - EXISTING LCP REVISED)

## Initiatives

**Initiative C-PS-6-I1:** Continue to educate the general public about and promote the reduction in use of hazardous materials, proper disposal of hazardous materials, and the use of safe alternatives to hazardous materials in County operations and private businesses. (GP2020 REVISED)

**Initiative C-PS-6-I2:** Work with applicable regulatory agencies to regulate the use, disposal, and transport of hazardous materials consistent with adopted County policies. (GP2020 REVISED)

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# Circulation and Transit Element: Table of Contents

Circulation and Transit Element .....	2
Introduction .....	2
Purpose.....	2
Relationship to Other Elements.....	3
Relationship to California Coastal Act.....	3
Section 30211 Development not to interfere with access.....	3
Section 30270 Sea level rise .....	3
Section 30251 Scenic and visual qualities.....	3
Section 30252 Maintenance and enhancement of public access.....	3
Section 30253 Minimization of adverse impacts .....	4
Section 30254 Public works facilities .....	4
Scope and Organization .....	4
Background .....	5
Circulation and Transit System .....	5
Existing and Projected Transportation Conditions in 2022.....	5
Traffic and Circulation Conditions .....	5
Roadway Safety, Maintenance, and Existing Conditions .....	6
Transportation Improvements .....	6
Active Transportation and Transit .....	7
California Coastal Trail.....	7
1. General Transportation.....	8
Goal, Objectives, and Policies .....	8
Programs.....	8
Initiative .....	10
2. Transit and Automobile Trip Reduction .....	10
Goal, Objectives, and Policies .....	10
Program.....	11

Initiative .....	11
3. Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities .....	12
Goal, Objectives, and Policies .....	12
Initiative .....	18
4. Transportation System Carrying Capacity And Safety.....	18
Goal, Objectives, and Policies .....	18
Transportation Design Guidelines Policies .....	19
Roadway Safety Improvement Policies .....	20
Programs.....	22
5. Phasing and Funding .....	23
Goal, Objectives, and Policies .....	23
Program.....	23

# Circulation and Transit Element

## **INTRODUCTION**

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### **PURPOSE**

The Circulation and Transit Element addresses the planned transportation routes and facilities along the coast, including goals, objectives, and policies affecting the mobility of future residents, businesses, and visitors. Highway 1 is the main route serving the Sonoma Coast, and all modes of transportation and transit in the coastal zone rely on this facility to provide mobility for residents and visitors to the Sonoma Coast. Coastal Act Section 30251 states “that it is the intent of the Legislature that State Highway Route 1 in rural areas of the coastal zone remain a scenic two-lane road.”

The location of Highway 1 along the ocean bluffs puts this highway and nearby local roads at risk from the effects of climate change, including sea level rise, wildfires, and bluff erosion. To improve resiliency of Highway 1, Caltrans, in partnership with the Coastal Commission, developed the “Sonoma State Route 1 Repair Guidelines” that provides guidance for maintaining a resilient transportation facility while avoiding impacts to coastal resources.

In addition to Highway 1, the Circulation and Transit Element also addresses maintenance of local roadways, and challenges associated with reducing reliance on automobile use by residents and visitors to the Sonoma Coast. (CCC REVISED)

## **RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER ELEMENTS**

The Circulation and Transit Element and its implementing measures are coordinated with the Land Use Element to assure that the transportation system serves future travel demand, is resilient to sea level rise, reduces automobile dependency, and helps attain the desired land use plan. Land Use policies that related to these topics are also addressed in the Open Space and Resource Conservation, Public Facilities and Public Access Elements. (CCC REVISED)

## **RELATIONSHIP TO CALIFORNIA COASTAL ACT**

The following California Coastal Act policies inform and guide goals, objectives, policies, programs, and initiatives of the Sonoma County Local Coastal Plan Circulation and Transit Element:

### **Section 3021 I Development not to interfere with access**

Development shall not interfere with the public's right of access to the sea where acquired through use or legislative authorization, including, but not limited to, the use of dry sand and rocky coastal beaches to the first line of terrestrial vegetation.

### **Section 30270 Sea level rise**

The commission shall take into account the effects of sea level rise in coastal resources planning and management policies and activities in order to identify, assess, and, to the extent feasible, avoid and mitigate the adverse effects of sea level rise.

### **Section 3025 I Scenic and visual qualities**

The scenic and visual qualities of coastal areas shall be considered and protected as a resource of public importance. Permitted development shall be sited and designed to protect views to and along the ocean and scenic coastal areas, to minimize the alteration of natural land forms, to be visually compatible with the character of surrounding areas, and, where feasible, to restore and enhance visual quality in visually degraded areas. New development in highly scenic areas such as those designated in the California Coastline Preservation and Recreation Plan prepared by the Department of Parks and Recreation and by local government shall be subordinate to the character of its setting.

### **Section 30252 Maintenance and enhancement of public access**

The location and amount of new development should maintain and enhance public access to the coast by (1) facilitating the provision or extension of transit service, (2) providing commercial facilities within or adjoining residential development or in other areas that will minimize the use of coastal access roads, (3) providing nonautomotive circulation within the development, (4) providing adequate parking facilities or providing substitute means of serving the development with public transportation, (5) assuring the potential for public transit for high intensity uses such as high-rise office buildings, and by (6) assuring that the recreational needs of new residents will not overload nearby coastal recreation areas by correlating the amount of development with local park acquisition and development plans with the provision of onsite recreational facilities to serve the new development.

### **Section 30253 Minimization of adverse impacts**

New development shall do all of the following:

- (a) Minimize risks to life and property in areas of high geologic, flood, and fire hazard.
- (b) Assure stability and structural integrity, and neither create nor contribute significantly to erosion, geologic instability, or destruction of the site or surrounding area or in any way require the construction of protective devices that would substantially alter natural landforms along bluffs and cliffs.
- (c) Be consistent with requirements imposed by an air pollution control district or the State Air Resources Board as to each particular development.
- (d) Minimize energy consumption and vehicle miles traveled.
- (e) Where appropriate, protect special communities and neighborhoods that, because of their unique characteristics, are popular visitor destination points for recreational uses.

### **Section 30254 Public works facilities**

New or expanded public works facilities shall be designed and limited to accommodate needs generated by development or uses permitted consistent with the provisions of this division; provided, however, that it is the intent of the Legislature that State Highway Route 1 in rural areas of the coastal zone remain a scenic two-lane road. Special districts shall not be formed or expanded except where assessment for, and provision of, the service would not induce new development inconsistent with this division. Where existing or planned public works facilities can accommodate only a limited amount of new development, services to coastal dependent land use, essential public services and basic industries vital to the economic health of the region, state, or nation, public recreation, commercial recreation, and visitor-serving land uses shall not be precluded by other development.

## **SCOPE AND ORGANIZATION**

The Circulation and Transit Element contains four sections outlining the goals, objectives, policies, programs, and initiatives for (1) the planned circulation and transit system, (2) public transit, pedestrian and bicycle transportation, and reduction of automobile use, highway system, and phasing and funding of improvements. Programs needed to implement proposed policies are also identified. In addition, the Element calls out ongoing or potential future County initiatives, referred to as “Other

Initiatives”, intended to support maintenance and improvement of the transportation system, and promote inter-agency and community collaboration.

## **BACKGROUND**

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The road network in the Coastal Zone is a critical component of coastal access, as well as providing essential transportation infrastructure necessary to supply goods, services, and emergency response for residents and businesses located along the Coastal Zone. Coastal roads also provide recreational and transportation opportunities for bicyclists and pedestrians, but use is limited by narrow roadways that lack adequate shoulders, sidewalks and bike lanes.

Numerous public access areas, large areas of protected open space, and attractive public beaches are distributed across over 55 miles of coastline with virtually no public transit available, making automobiles the primary means of transportation for visitors to the coast. This dependency on automobile transportation, combined with limited parking, results in congestion and lack of adequate parking, especially during weekends and holidays.

Safety of all road users, especially bicyclists and pedestrians, remains a challenge in the Coastal Zone due to limited rights of way and the need to balance impacts to coastal resources with road improvements and trail development necessary to improve safety.

## **CIRCULATION AND TRANSIT SYSTEM**

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### **EXISTING AND PROJECTED TRANSPORTATION CONDITIONS IN 2022**

The Sonoma Coast/Gualala Basin region has a sparse roadway network due to its remote location and very low population density. The major roadways, all two-lane rural roads, are State Highway 1, State Highway 116, Bodega Highway, Stewarts Point-Skaggs Springs Road, Coleman Valley Road, Annapolis Road, and Valley Ford-Freestone Road. With the exception of State Highway 1, these roadways run east-west (**Figures C-CT-1a-c**). Other roads serve only as minor access routes, but could be important as alternate routes in emergencies. Daily buses connect the small communities along State Highway 1 to Sebastopol, Santa Rosa, and Mendocino County. With limited public transportation and lack of adequate bicycle and pedestrian facilities, private automobiles are the most common transportation mode to the Coastal Zone.

Full time residential population of the Coastal Zone is low, and the majority of trips are generated by visitors to the coast, particularly on weekends.

#### ***Traffic and Circulation Conditions***

Traffic volume on State Highway 1 has increased since the first transportation study was conducted for the 1981 Local Coastal Plan. Most traffic is related to tourism, with trips originating outside of the Coastal Zone. The steady increase in tourism has resulted a corresponding increase in traffic and congestion along Highway 1, and is especially acute on the weekends in the region south of Jenner

and adjacent to public beaches, trailheads, and campgrounds. This traffic often results in delayed emergency response and residents experiencing difficulty accessing their homes and local businesses.

**Table C-CT-1. Traffic Volume Trends Highway 1 2007-2017**

<b>Intersection</b>	<b>Peak Hour Increase</b>	<b>Peak Month Daily Average</b>	<b>Annual Average Daily Traffic</b>
Valley Ford Road	150.0%	34.7%	31.0%
Valley Ford/Freestone Road	96.1%	31.8%	28.9%
Bodega Highway	77.8%	136.8%	116.7%
Bodega Eastshore Road	16.9%	-1.8%	-9.6%
JCT. RTE. 116 East	29.0%	7.7%	11.1%
Jenner	51.5%	7.7%	11.1%
Fort Ross, Fort Ross Road	73.9%	6.7%	8.1%
Stewarts Point/Skaggs Springs Road	42.9%	-2.3%	0.0%

The large increase in peak hour volumes at the southernmost intersections shows a growing trend for commuters living in the Sebastopol area to use Highway 1 as an alternative route to job centers in Petaluma and Marin County. The increase in traffic volume between Bodega Highway and Jenner appears directly related to tourism, as commute traffic heading south will generally use Valley Ford / Freestone Road.

***Roadway Safety, Maintenance, and Existing Conditions***

Highway 1 provides the only north-south transportation corridor in the Coastal Zone, and is extremely vulnerable to erosion from storms, landslides, and sea level rise, as well as damage from wildfires. These hazards are increasing in frequency and severity due to climate change, and maintenance of Highway 1, as well as other roads at risk from sea level rise, must shift from armoring and reinforcement to a strategy of planned retreat, elevated roadway sections, or living shorelines. (CCC REVISED)

Roads in the Coastal Zone have narrow shoulders, inadequate sight lines, narrow travel lanes, and limited opportunity for safe passing, creating unsafe conditions for all road users, especially bicyclists and pedestrians. Improving these conditions will require increasing the overall road prism. Unstable geologic conditions, Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Areas, and lack of undeveloped land adjacent to the right-of-way in developed areas create a situation where improvements are challenging. Road improvements should be limited to those needed to provide sea level rise resiliency, improve safety, or provide improved facilities for people traveling by bicycle, on foot, or public transit rather than increasing capacity or reducing congestion. (CCC REVISED)

***Transportation Improvements***

Providing turning lanes at intersections and parking areas is the most effective approach to improving safety along Highway 1 in Jenner, Bodega Bay, and at entrances to public beaches.

Other safety improvements proposed for Highway 1 are sea level rise adaption and resiliency, wildfire hardening, limited widening and road alignments where necessary to improve safety, parking management, enforcement programs; and road improvements such as roadway striping and marking, bicycle lanes and pedestrian pathways. Improvements to Highway 1 such as construction of

bicycle paths or widening of shoulders will be necessary to construct portions of the Sonoma County segment of the California Coastal Trail (see discussion below).

Minor road improvements in the community of Bodega Bay will not relieve traffic congestion or improve safety, and establishing a bypass route has proven infeasible. Delays associated with automobile use along this section of Highway 1 will continue until adequate and convenient alternatives to travel by automobile are developed. These alternatives include improved bus transit, installing pedestrian walkways, and providing safe bicycle lanes. Additional measures to improve safety include restricting turning movements across traffic, and reducing vehicle speeds. (CCC REVISED)

## **Active Transportation and Transit**

The Complete Streets Act of 2008, which mandates that all cities and counties modify the circulation element of their general plans to provide for a transportation network that equitably meets the mobility needs of all, including pedestrians, bicyclists, children, students, persons with disabilities, users of public transportation, together with motorists and movers of commercial goods.

A comprehensive, safe, and convenient bicycle and pedestrian transportation network is a critical component of an overall strategy to reduce automobile dependency for residents and visitors, as well helping to meet greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions reduction standards established under the California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006 (AB 32).

Improving bicyclist and pedestrian safety along the Coastal Zone is critical to enabling people to choose to walk or bike rather than drive. Highway 1 is narrow, winding, and dangerous for bicyclists, and lacks sidewalks in developed areas. The lack of shoulders and sidewalks is especially acute in Bodega Bay, forcing residents to drive even when running short distance local errands.

Class I bicycle paths or multi-use trails along Highway 1 would alleviate these issues therefore separated trails are the preference when feasible and in balance with consideration of other coastal act resources. Reconfiguration of the existing roadway to create larger shoulders should be considered as an option for making roads safer for all users. However, there should be special consideration when reconfiguring shoulders so that shoulders do not impinge on habitat and necessary buffers, as well as continues protection of visual resources. (CCC REVISED)

Public transit is provided by Mendocino Transit Authority and Sonoma County Transit. Mendocino Transit Authority operates bus route 95, which is the only year-round transit service in the Coastal Zone. Service is limited to a single daily trip running southbound to Santa Rosa in the morning and returning in the afternoon. Service frequency and routes must be improved in order to provide a viable alternative to driving for residents of the Coastal Zone.

Sonoma County Transit routes 29A and 29B provide seasonal service on weekends to the Coastal Zone from June through early September. These routes provide several trips per day, with Route 29A connecting Bodega Bay to Sebastopol and Santa Rosa. Route 29B connects Bodega Bay to Jenner, Duncan's Mills, Monte Rio, and Guerneville.

## **California Coastal Trail**

The 1975 California Coastal Plan mandated the California Coastal Conservancy (Coastal Conservancy) to develop and implement the California Coastal Trail, a continuous public trail or



system of trails along the length of the coastline, with the exact alignment and location to be determined locally through community input. In some locations, the Sonoma County segment of the California Coastal Trail could also function as a local transportation facility for bicyclists and pedestrians. Details on the California Coastal Trail can be found in the Public Access Element.

## **I. GENERAL TRANSPORTATION**

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### **Goal, Objectives, and Policies**

**GOAL C-CT-1:** Provide a well-integrated and sustainable circulation and transit network that provides coastal access, protects coastal resources, supports community-centered growth, reduces Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) and equitably meets the mobility needs of all. (GP2020 REVISED)

**Objective C-CT-1.2:** Reduce the need for automobile use by a combination of infrastructure and transit improvements and incentives that prioritize active transportation over automobile use. (PC REVISED)

**Objective C-CT-1.3:** Reduce greenhouse gas emissions by reducing vehicle miles (VMT) traveled, especially VMT associated with vehicles powered by hydrocarbon fuels, such as gasoline and diesel, and providing sufficient charging stations for electric vehicles. (PC REVISED)

**Policy C-CT-1a:** Transportation improvements shall first avoid, then lessen, and finally minimize adverse impacts to biotic resource and Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Areas, coastal views, public access, and disruption of neighborhoods and communities. Where improvements cannot avoid impacts to these resources, require appropriate mitigation measures to be identified and implemented prior to project construction. (CCC REVISED - GP2020 REVISED)

**Policy C-CT-1b:** Require new development, when applicable, to include adequate charging stations for electric vehicles and to reduce vehicle miles traveled generated by the development. (PC REVISED - GP2020 REVISED)

**Policy C-CT-1c:** Reduce vehicle miles traveled by locating new housing near areas where jobs are concentrated. (WAS OBJECTIVE C-CT-1.5 REVISED)

**Policy C-CT-1d:** Encourage development of broadband telecommunication infrastructure in the Coastal Zone to support telecommuting. (WAS OBJECTIVE C-CT-1.5 REVISED)

**Policy C-CT-1e:** Circulation and transit system improvements shall be done in a manner that is consistent with protection of Coastal resources, preserving community and rural character, and minimizing vehicle miles traveled. (WAS OBJECTIVE C-CT-1.4)

### **Programs**

**Program C-CT-1-P1:** Monitor the effectiveness of the planned circulation and transit system on an ongoing basis. Cooperate with the Sonoma County Transportation Authority to establish and maintain an ongoing Countywide traffic modeling program that:

- (1) Maintains a coordinated land use database on an annual basis for cumulative impact analysis of the circulation and transit system;
- (2) Assesses vehicle miles traveled generated and develop strategies for reducing automobile dependency for both tourists and local residents. The model must be capable of considering regional travel demand to accurately forecast trip generation for tourism and visitor serving uses in the Coastal Zone.
- (3) Establishes the nexus for allocating fair share funding of transportation improvements within the Coastal Zone;
- (4) Identifies the impacts of projects and appropriate mitigation measures on the circulation and transit system;
- (5) Assists in the planning of detailed operation improvements in individual communities, and
- (6) Is capable of modeling weekend and off-peak travel demand in order to plan for tourism and special event traffic.

**Program C-CT-1-P2:** Monitor coastal erosion and flooding to identify road segments that will require realignment, elevation, or abandonment due to sea level rise and climate change. As part of this program evaluate existing development served by these road segments and develop a plan for relocation of development served by the road segment or alternative routes that are adequate to support continued use of existing development. The plan shall establish priorities for these sea level rise resiliency measures and include an evaluation of the useful economic life of development served by a road segment and provide a fiscal analysis of the cost of maintain road connectivity as compared to the economic value of development that is dependent on the road segment. Where road segments are necessary to support a coastal access point, consider alternative means of access as an alternative to maintaining a roadway designed for motor vehicle use (PC REVISED - CC REVISED)

**Program C-CT-1-P3:** Coordinate with Caltrans, California State Department of Parks and Recreation, the California Coastal Commission, Sonoma County Transportation and Public Works, Sonoma County Regional Parks, and other appropriate entities in developing and implementing guidelines for expediting the review and permitting of road repair and maintenance activities consistent with the policies of the Local Coastal Plan. These guidelines shall contain specific guidance for emergency repairs and procedure for determining if a project can be excluded from needing a Coastal Development Permit. (CCC REVISED)

**Program C-CT-1-P4:** Classify, designate, and design roadways and trails according to the current version of guidelines for road, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, including the Caltrans Highway Design Manual, the State Parks Trails Handbook, publications of the National Association of City Transportation Officials, and the American Association of State Highway Transportation Officials. Use flexibility provisions in these standards to reduce adverse impacts on coastal resources and provide maximum safety and convenience for bicyclists and pedestrians. (PC REVISED - GP2020 REVISED)

**Program C-CT-1-P5** Require repair of transportation infrastructure in response to wildfire damage use fire resistant materials and that support structures be hardened against wildfire to the maximum extent possible, consistent with avoiding adverse impacts to visual or biotic resources, and work with Coastal Commission staff to identify fire hardening standards that could be excluded from needing a Coastal Development Permit. (CCC REVISED)

## Initiative

**Initiative C-CT-1-I1:** Work with transportation agencies to maximize funding from Federal and State governments to address existing deficiencies, improve safety, and support ongoing maintenance of the circulation and transit system. (GP2020 REVISED)

## 2. TRANSIT AND AUTOMOBILE TRIP REDUCTION

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### Goal, Objectives, and Policies

**GOAL C-CT-2:** Provide opportunities for people to use public transit, walking, and bicycling as an alternative to travel by automobile. (GP2020 REVISED)

**Objective C-CT-2.1:** Improve bus transit services to and within the Coastal Zone.

**Objective C-CT-2.2:** Increase the share of home based work or commute trips taken by public transit.

**Objective C-CT-2.3:** Design, implement, and maintain a transit system that serves seniors, persons with disabilities, youth and persons with limited incomes so that they may participate in a full range of activities.

**Objective C-CT-2.4:** Use Transportation Demand Management strategies, which are a program of information, encouragement and incentives provided by local or regional organizations to help people know about and use all their transportation options to optimize all modes in the system and counterbalance the emphasis on roads and parking in the transportation network.

**Objective C-CT-2.5:** Develop bicycle and pedestrian facilities consistent with the Sonoma County Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan to provide alternatives to automobile use. (GP2020 REVISED)

**Policy C-CT-2a:** Provide efficient, affordable public transportation service within and to the Coastal Zone and require expansion of active modes of transportation where opportunities are identified. (PC REVISED)

**Policy C-CT-2b:** Require development projects, when applicable, to implement measures that favor pedestrians, increase the average occupancy of vehicles, and reduce vehicle miles traveled such as: (PC REVISED GP2020 REVISED)

- (1) Vanpools or carpools, ridesharing programs for employees, preferential parking, parking subsidies for rideshare vehicles, and transportation coordinator positions, and
- (2) Preferential parking space and fees for rideshare vehicles, flexibility in parking requirements. (GP2020)

**Policy C-CT-2c:** Require development, when applicable, to include measures that divert automobile commute trips to transit, including:

- (1) Establishment of site design standards to allow for transit access, bus turnouts and passenger shelters, pedestrian access ways between transit stops and buildings, secure bicycle lockers and shower facilities, complementary street layouts and geometrics that accommodate buses and bicycles, and transportation kiosks for tenants of business;
- (2) Programs that promote transit use to existing job centers and schools, such as transit information centers, on-site sale of transit tickets and passes, shuttles to transit stations or stops, transit ticket subsidies for employees and students, private or subscription transit service, parking fees and transportation allowances. (GP2020)

**Policy C-CT-2d:** Provide incentive programs at businesses and visitor destinations that reduce automobile trips and/or greenhouse gas emissions, such as secure bike parking, shower facilities, telecommuting, flexible schedules, electric vehicle charging stations etc. Programs may apply to existing employers as well as to new development. Establish measurable goals for these programs, collect data, and provide periodic reports on Vehicle Miles Traveled to and within the coastal zone and on program effectiveness. (GP2020 REVISED)

## **Program**

**Program C-CT-2-P1:** Work with Sonoma County Transit to increase bus service between Bodega Bay and Jenner with regular connections to inland communities and job centers that will provide an alternative to commuting by automobile. Coordinate routes, schedules, and fares among transit providers to make transfers convenient between the various transit systems during commute periods. (PC REVISED - GP2020 REVISED)

## **Initiative**

**Initiative C-CT-2-I1:** Encourage Sonoma County Transit to coordinate with inland transit routes as well as with Mendocino Transit Authority and Marin Transit to improve and expand regional bus service for Sonoma County coast visitors and residents. (NEW)

### **3. BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN FACILITIES**

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Bicycle transportation facilities (bikeways) are classified as Class I, II, III, and IV as defined below.

Class I Bikeways are also known as multi-use paths. Class I bikeways provide bicycle travel on an all-weather surface within a right-of-way that is for exclusive use by pedestrians, bicyclists and other non-motorized modes. Class I bikeway surface must be compliant with provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). These bikeways are intended to provide superior safety, connectivity, and recreational opportunities as compared to facilities that share right-of-way with automobiles.

Class II Bike Lanes are on-street bike lanes and provide a striped and stenciled lane for one-way travel on either side of a street or highway. Unlike Class III bikeways (below), Class II bikeways have specific width, geometric, and maintenance standards.

Class III Bike Routes identify roads that are preferred routes for people riding bicycles, and have signs reminding motorists of the California Vehicle Code safe passing regulations and to be aware of bicyclists using the road. By law, bicycles are allowed on all roadways in California except on freeways when a suitable alternate route exists

Class IV Protected Bike Lane is physically separated from the vehicle travel lane by grade separation, flexible bollards or permanent barriers and provide enhanced safety and comfort for people riding bicycle on roadways.

#### **Goal, Objectives, and Policies**

**GOAL C-CT-3:** Establish a safe and convenient bicycle and pedestrian transportation network, well integrated with transit, to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, increase outdoor recreational opportunities, reduce dependency on automobiles, and improve public health. (GP2020)

**Objective CT-3.1:** Design, construct and maintain a comprehensive Bikeways Network that links communities, coastal access points, and other major activity centers including, but not limited to, schools, public facilities, commercial centers, recreational areas and employment centers. (GP2020)

**Objective CT-3.2:** Provide safe, convenient routes for bicyclists and pedestrians with adequate end of trip facilities at workplaces. (GP2020 REVISED)

**Objective CT-3.3:** Provide incentives for business and public facilities to increase the use of walking and bicycling by employees for both commuting and daily operations. (GP2020)

**Objective CT-3.4:** Incorporate Vision Zero strategies into all transportation improvements, with a focus on intrinsically safe roadway design. These strategies include continuous collection

and analysis of data to understand trends and potential disproportionate impacts of traffic deaths on certain populations, and using this data to design a transportation network that can achieve a goal of zero deaths and serious injuries. (CCC REVISED)

**Objective CT-3.5:** Provide a diverse range of recreational opportunities through a well-designed network of bikeways, multi-use trails, sidewalks, and related support facilities. (GP2020)

**Objective CT-3.6:** Eliminate potential obstacles to walking and cycling by providing continuous and well-connected pedestrian walkways and bicycle facilities, and safe road crossings, with a focus on trips of less than 3 miles within and/or near to developed coastal communities. (PC REVISED GP2020 REVISED)

**Policy CT-3a:** Use the adopted Sonoma County Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan as the detailed planning document for existing and proposed bikeways and pedestrian facilities in the Coastal Zone. (GP2020)

**Policy CT-3b:** Use the policies of the Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan whenever reviewing development projects to insure that projects are consistent with the Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan and incorporate necessary bicycle and pedestrian improvements identified in the Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan as a condition of project approval. (GP2020)

**Policy CT-3c:** BPAC shall be responsible for advising the Coastal Commission, Board of Supervisors, Planning Commission, Board of Zoning Adjustments, Project Review Advisory Committee, and County staff on the ongoing planning and coordination of the County's bicycle and pedestrian transportation network. (GP2020)

**Policy CT-3d:** The Regional Parks Department shall be responsible for establishing and maintaining Class I bikeways, and the Department of Transportation and Public Works (TPW) shall be responsible for establishing and maintaining Class II, III, and IV bikeways and pedestrian facilities along County rights-of-way in unincorporated areas. (PC REVISED GP2020)

**Policy CT-3e:** Regional Parks and TPW shall be responsible for periodically collecting bicycle and pedestrian counts at locations shown in the Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan consistent with Metropolitan Transportation Commission standards. The BPAC, in consultation with Regional Parks and TPW, shall review this data to determine effectiveness in applying such data for County improvement projects and update the count locations as needed. (GP2020 REVISED)

**Policy CT-3f:** Revise County Traffic Guidelines to require that traffic studies identify impacts to existing and planned bicycle and pedestrian facilities. Consider development of bicycle and pedestrian facilities as mitigation measures for projects generating additional vehicle miles traveled and greenhouse gas emission impacts. (GP2020 REVISED)

**Policy CT-3g:** Develop an objective standard for identifying safety and connectivity of the bicycle and pedestrian transportation network within and connecting to the Coastal Zone that takes into consideration travel distance, bicycle and pedestrian transportation needs, and existing network deficiencies and gaps. (GP2020 REVISED)

**Policy CT-3h:** Use the performance standard developed by **Policy CT-3g** to evaluate impacts to bicycle and pedestrian facilities that may result from discretionary projects, and identify corrections and/or improvements necessary to mitigate those impacts. (GP2020)

**Policy CT-3i:** Use the following standards for selection of new routes: (GP2020 REVISED)

- (1) Route shall be located along the most direct line of travel that is convenient and safe for bicyclists and pedestrians.
- (2) Routes and bikeway design shall be ADA compliant.
- (3) Avoid routes that cross driveways serving commercial and visitor serving uses. Where no alternative route can be identified, consider reconfiguration of on-street parking in these areas to improve safety.
- (4) Pavement surface quality - Bikeways shall be free of surface defects that compromise bicycle safety. Utility covers and drains shall align with the bikeway surface and be located outside of the bikeway when feasible. Drainage grates shall be aligned perpendicular to the direction of travel in order to avoid catching bicycle wheels.
- (5) Where bus stops are located along bikeways, design bus turnouts and the bike lane to conflicts between passengers, buses, and bicycles.
- (6) Identification of a reliable source of funds to support maintenance and operation shall be considered before identifying a new Class I Bikeway alignment.
- (7) Bikeway design and route selection shall maximize public benefit and safety per dollar invested.

**Policy CT-3j:** Use the most recent version of design guidelines for bicycle and pedestrian facilities, such as those published by NACTO, Chapter 1000 of the Caltrans Highway Design Manual, AASHTO's "Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities", and the "California Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices" (MUTCD) as general design guidelines for design, construction and maintenance of bikeways. (PC REVISED GP2020)

**Policy CT-3k:** In addition to the general standards found in **Policy CT-3j** above, use standards found in the most recently adopted Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan for selection, design, construction, and maintenance of Class I, II, III, and IV bikeways. (GP2020)

**Policy CT-3l:** Where an existing or proposed bicycle route is located on a bridge or over a culvert, bicycle and pedestrian facilities shall be included as part of replacement or major reconstruction. “Major reconstruction” is defined as any activity requiring a Coastal Development Permit, Coastal Development Waiver, and/or Streambed Alteration Agreement. Improvements are required regardless of priority of the remainder of the bicycle route served by the bridge or culvert. (GP2020 REVISED)

**Policy CT-3m:** Where several bikeways of different classes follow a similar route or provide similar connectivity, the BPAC shall be consulted when construction of one facility appears to reduce the need or function of other facilities. (GP2020)

**Policy CT-3n:** Use the following criteria to determine consistency of public and private projects with the Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan: (GP2020 REVISED)

- (1) Class I bikeways are a component of coastal access, and development of lands traversed or adjoined by an existing or future Class I bikeway shall not preclude establishment of the bikeway, nor conflict with use and operation of the bikeway or adversely affect long term maintenance and safety of the facility.
- (2) Construction, widening, or maintenance of roads with designated bikeways shall be consistent with design and maintenance standards for the appropriate class of bikeway as specified by the Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan.

**Policy CT-3o:** Design, construct, and improve bikeways consistent with the Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan Project Priority List. This list shall establish the priority, class, and location of Sonoma County bikeways projects. (GP2020)

**Policy CT-3p:** The following projects shall be referred to the BPAC for a determination of consistency with the Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan and to evaluate potential for creating hazards or barriers to walking or bicycling: (GP2020)

- (1) Road widening projects.
- (2) Road capacity improvement projects.
- (3) Resurfacing, restoration, and/or rehabilitation of roads with existing or proposed Class II, III, or IV bikeways. (PC REVISED)
- (4) Resurfacing, restoration, and/or rehabilitation of roads that include the installation of rumble strips, AC berms or similar barriers, and/or roadway dots in the shoulder area.
- (5) Traffic calming improvements.
- (6) Discretionary projects adjacent to existing or proposed Class I bikeways and/or roads with existing or proposed Class II, III, or IV bikeways. (PC REVISED)



(7) Discretionary projects anticipated to be conditioned with roadway improvements along existing or proposed Class I, II, III, or IV bikeways. (PC REVISED)

**Policy CT-3q:** Require that bikeway improvements be included as part of all road maintenance or improvement projects along road segments with existing or proposed bikeways to the maximum extent feasible. (GP2020)

**Policy CT-3r:** Where nexus exists, require private or public development to plan, design, and construct bicycle and pedestrian facilities to integrate with the existing and planned bicycle and pedestrian network. (GP2020)

**Policy CT-3s:** Where discretionary projects are found to create additional demand for bicycle travel, require the project to directly provide or participate in the funding of bikeway improvements such as gap closures, shoulder widening, safety improvements and signage that will improve bicycle access to destinations located within 3 miles of the project site. (GP2020)

**Policy CT-3t:** Require mitigation either through in-lieu fees, or development of alternative facilities that have been recommended by the BPAC, when development projects or road improvements are anticipated to result in a loss of existing bicycle and pedestrian facilities or jeopardize development of future facilities identified in the Bicycle and Pedestrian. (GP2020)

**Policy CT-3u:** Develop a maintenance reporting system for bikeways with a central point of contact that can be used to report, track, and respond to routine bicycle and pedestrian maintenance issues in a timely manner. (GP2020)

**Policy CT-3v:** Require road construction projects to minimize their impacts on bicyclists and pedestrians through the proper placement of construction signs and equipment and by providing adequate, safe, well-marked detours. Where it is safe to do so, allow bicyclists and pedestrians to pass through construction areas in order to avoid detours. Where two-way bicycle and pedestrian travel can be safely accommodated in a one-way traffic control zone, adequate signage shall be placed to alert motorists of bicycles and pedestrians in the lane. (GP2020)

**Policy CT-3w:** Caltrans, Sonoma County Regional Parks, Sonoma County Transportation and Public Works shall coordinate efforts to close gaps in the bikeway network and ensure the system is constructed, and maintained. (GP2020 REVISED)

**Policy CT-3x:** Require dedication or purchase of right of way for Class I bikeways when a nexus can be established between the proposed development and Class I bikeway projects identified by the Sonoma County Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan. (GP2020 REVISED)

**Policy CT-3y:** Provide adequate bicycle parking as part of all new school, public transit stops, public facilities, and commercial, industrial, and retail development following standards established in adopted Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan. (GP2020)

**Policy CT-3z:** Require transit agencies to accommodate bicycles on buses. (GP2020 REVISED)

**Policy CT-3aa:** The BPAC shall review bicycle parking at transit facilities and accommodations to carry bicycle on-board buses every 2 years to assure that anticipated demand for bicycle parking and on-board accommodations can be met. (PC REVISED GP2020 REVISED)

**Policy CT-3bb:** Collect bicycle and pedestrian crash data in the Coastal Zone on an annual basis. The BPAC shall review this data and provide recommendations on infrastructure improvements or policies that will prevent future crashes. (GP2020 REVISED)

**Policy CT-3cc:** Give highest priority to constructing safety related pedestrian facilities in the vicinity of schools, public transit facilities, crossings in communities, and coastal access areas. (GP2020 REVISED)

**Policy CT-3dd:** Require that Highway 1 improvements in developed areas such as, but not limited to, Bodega Bay and Jenner include pedestrian-oriented street design features such as sidewalks and crosswalks. (GP2020 REVISED)

**Policy CT-3ee:** Require centrally located shared parking in local communities whenever feasible for commercial uses rather than requiring individual businesses to provide separate parking areas. (GP2020)

**Policy CT-3ff:** Where discretionary projects are found to create additional demand for pedestrian travel, require the project to directly provide or participate in the funding of pedestrian improvements such as sidewalks, gap closures, steps, safety improvements, and/or trails that will improve pedestrian access to destinations located within 2 miles of the project site. (GP2020)

**Policy CT-3gg:** Provide high-visibility crosswalk marking at all pedestrian crossings. Wherever possible, install pedestrian signalization, refuge islands and signage warning vehicles to stop for pedestrians and watch for bicyclists. (GP2020)

**Policy CT-3hh:** Inventory safety needs/hazards along routes to and around schools in order to identify improvements necessary to improve safety and create a priority list of projects necessary to correct these hazards. (GP2020)

**Policy CT-3ii:** Require school districts to participate in providing safe bicycle and pedestrian connections that serve students from surrounding neighborhoods when constructing or improving schools and provide secure bicycle parking areas for students, faculty, and staff.

When applicable, require schools to provide continuous pedestrian pathways and bicycle facilities from adjacent residential communities to the school grounds. (GP2020)

**Policy CT-3jj:** Coordinate Bicycle Safety Education Programs at schools, with law enforcement agencies, school districts, advocacy groups, local bicycle shops, and other interested organizations. The program shall include traffic rules, bicycle handling skills, the importance of good helmets, lights and reflectors, bicycling clothing, and bicycle maintenance courses in cooperation with local bicycle shops and organizations. (GP2020)

**Policy CT-3kk:** Support constructive efforts from advocacy groups to address bicycle and pedestrian transportation issues. (GP2020)

**Policy CT-3ll:** Provide the option of flexible work schedules to County employees who live or work in the Coastal Zone in order to accommodate commuting by bicycle, walking, or transit. (GP2020 REVISED)

**Policy CT-3mm:** Expand the Guaranteed Ride Program for those who regularly bicycle, walk, vanpool, carpool, or use transit for their trip to work or school. The program encourage uses of alternative transportation modes by providing free transportation in the event of personal emergencies, illness, or unscheduled overtime. (PC REVISED GP2020)

**Policy CT-3nn:** Develop a long range strategy to provide long term funding necessary to maintain Class I bikeways and multi-use trails in the Coastal Zone. (GP2020 REVISED)

## Initiative

**Initiative C-CT-3-I1:** Encourage ongoing development of the Safe Routes to School program by coordinating efforts of advocacy groups, school districts, and County departments. (GP 2020)

## 4. TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM CARRYING CAPACITY AND SAFETY

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### Goal, Objectives, and Policies

**GOAL C-CT-4:** Provide and maintain a road, transit, and trail system within the carrying capacity of coastal resources that will reduce vehicle miles traveled while equitably meeting the mobility needs of all, including pedestrians, bicyclists, children, students, people with disabilities, users of public transportation, motorists, and commercial transportation. (PC REVISED- GP2020 REVISED)

**Objective C-CT-4.I:** Develop road, transit, and trail system design standards that avoid impacts to Coastal resources and are resilient to sea level rise and climate change while providing equitable public access and mobility to and within the Sonoma Coast. (PC REVISED)

**Objective C-CT-4.2:** Develop a Heritage Road Program for coastal roadways in consultation with the Coastal Commission, Sonoma County Transportation and Public Works, and Caltrans. This program will identify criteria for selecting heritage roads and create special design guidelines to protect the unique character of these roads while maintaining safety, and protecting coastal resources. (CCC REVISED)

***Transportation Design Guidelines Policies***

**Policy C-CT-4a:** Use the current version of design guidelines for road, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, such as the Caltrans Highway Design Manual, the State Parks Trails Handbook, and publications of the National Association of City Transportation Officials, American Association of State Highway Transportation Officials functional classification system, and the "California Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices" as guidelines for physical design of the highway and trail network. (PC REVISED - GP2020 OBJECTIVE BECAME POLICY)

**Policy C-CT-4b:** Road and trail design and maintenance activities shall be consistent with the principals of the Complete Streets Act of 2008 and consider the mobility needs of all road users on an equitable basis. (PC REVISED - NEW)

**Policy C-CT-4c:** The following policies apply to Highway 1 and Highway 116 within the Coastal Zone:

- (1) Repair and maintenance of Highway 1 shall be consistent with 2019 Caltrans "Sonoma State Route 1 Repair Guidelines" found in Appendix K. (CCC REVISED)
- (2) Prohibit development of new driveways along Highway 1 and Highway 116 except where reasonable access cannot be provided by using existing driveways or local roads for access.
- (3) Set and enforce access standards for new driveways and other encroachments to the Arterial Road system. These standards may include functional layout, location, and spacing requirements to minimize side frictions.
- (4) In agricultural areas, include measures such as road signs, wider shoulders, and turnouts or over/under passes to provide safer roads for the agricultural industry, residents, and visitors where compatible with the character of the area, does not impede public access, and does not impact other sensitive coastal resources. (CCC REVISED)

**Policy C-CT-4d:** Designate and design Local Roads as routes that are intended to provide access to property and to carry local traffic to Highway 1 and Highway 116. The following policies apply to Local Roads:

- (1) Design local roads for access by emergency and service vehicles.

- (2) Design roads to maximize safety of pedestrians and bicyclists.
- (3) Locate horizontal and vertical road alignments to correspond to natural topography, except where these alignments will have an adverse impact on environmentally sensitive habitat areas or create unsafe conditions for road users.
- (4) In agricultural areas, include measures such as road signs, wider shoulders, and turnouts or over/under passes to provide safer roads for the agricultural industry, residents, and visitors where compatible with the character of the area and with protecting visual resources and public access. (GP2020 REVISED)

### ***Roadway Safety Improvement Policies***

**Policy C-CT-4e:** When a nexus is identified between a project and the need for safety improvements, require the safety improvements as a condition of approval. (GP2020 REVISED)

**Policy C-CT-4f:** Road improvements intended to improve safety, especially for pedestrians, bicyclists, and users of public transit, shall be given funding priority over capacity improvements. (CCC REVISED)

**Policy C-CT-4g:** Provide intersection management improvements at intersections with high crash rates and/or long delays for turning movements. These may include installation of stop signs, traffic signals, signal timing, re-striping, lengthening, turn lane additions, or other improvements, provided the improvements are consistent with the applicable road classifications and protection of coastal resources. Only where clearly identified as necessary to lower crash rates, turn lane additions may be constructed. (PC-REVISED-GP2020/EXISTING LCP)

**Policy C-CT-4h:** Construct improvements such as realignment, signalization, roundabouts, turn restrictions, one-way streets, and traffic calming at the following intersections to improve safety at the following intersections: (GP2020/EXISTING LCP REVISED)

- (1) Bay Flat Road/Bodega and Cypress Dunes Campgrounds (Sonoma Coast State Beach)
- (2) Bay Flat Road/Eastshore Road
- (3) State Highway 1/Eastside Road
- (4) State Highway 1/Taylor Street
- (5) State Highway 1/ Bay Hill Road
- (6) State Highway 1 / State Highway 116 (EXISTING LCP REVISED)

**Policy C-CT-4i:** Using a projected 7-foot rise in sea level relative to identify road segments at risk from sea level rise and coastal erosion and routes for realignment or alternative routes in the event that maintaining the roadway is not feasible. (PC REVISED - CCC REVISED)

**Policy C-CT-4j:** Construct the following sets of road improvements to increase safety of State Highway 1 through Jenner:

- (1) *State Highway 1* – from western property line of assessor’s parcel number (APN) 099-150-013 (10990 State Highway 1) to 200 feet from intersection with Burke Avenue; and Burke Avenue - 200 feet: road realignment and widening, curbing, turn lane for parking and Burke Avenue, one-way parking circulation, and parking restrictions.
- (2) *State Highway 1* – about eastern bank of Jenner Creek to about opposite northern property line of APN 099-113-012 (10469 Riverside Drive); Riverside Drive - about 65 feet; and 65 Willig Drive - about 80 feet: road widening, turn lanes, and parking restrictions. (CCC REVISED)
- (3) *Intersection of Highway 1 and 116* – Roundabout, minor realignment to provide more sight distance and/or signalization to improve safety. Consider minor realignment consistent with protection of Coastal resources. (NEW)

**Policy C-CT-4k:** Provide turn lanes at The Sea Ranch intersections listed below. An intersection improvement of lower priority could be constructed before an intersection improvement of higher priority if funding is available.

- (1) ***Priority I***
  - The Stables and North Recreation Center entrance (already widened)
  - Annapolis Road
  - Longmeadow Road
  - Moonraker and Whalebone Reach
- (2) ***Priority II***
  - Lodge Entrance
- (3) ***Priority III***
  - Leeward Spur
  - Deerfield Road
  - Breaker Reach
  - Vantage Road
  - Pine Meadow
  - Whitebluff Road
  - Headlands Reach
  - Navigators Reach
  - Lodge Entrance and Halcyon (EXISTING LCP REVISED)

**Policy C-CT-4l:** Improve safety at the Bodega Highway / Highway 1 and Freestone-Valley Ford Road / Highway 1 intersections with improvements such as restriping, lane realignment and warning lights. (CCC REVISED)

**Policy C-CT-4m:** Implement the following safety improvements along State Route 1:

- (1) Reduce vehicle speeds where Highway 1 passes through developed areas to the maximum extent permitted by State law. (EXISTING LCP REVISED)
- (2) Restrict turning movements at parking areas where necessary to promote safe entry and exit.
- (3) Construct turning lanes and entry improvements at parking areas listed in The Public Access Plan. (EXISTING LCP REVISED)

**Policy C-CT-4n:** Consider traffic calming improvements on Highway 1 in the unincorporated communities of Bodega Bay, Jenner, and Timber Cove. (GP2020 REVISED)

**Policy C-CT-4o:** Roads may not be expanded beyond two lanes, except for lanes associated with safety improvements such as turn pockets, center turn lanes, emergency vehicle access, and similar road features. (NEW)

## Programs

**Program C-CT-4-P1:** Develop a Heritage Road Program to preserve public roads with unique scenic, historic, recreational, cultural, archeological and/or natural qualities that may be compromised if the road is fully improved to meet current road standards. As part of this program, adopt special design standards to balance necessary improvements, safety, and maintenance with the unique character of these roads while maintaining coastal access for all road users, protecting coastal resources, and maintaining sea level rise resiliency. (CCC REVISED)

**Program C-CT-4-P2:** Identify reliable data sources for vehicle counts and parking data and collect this information annually to support Program C-CT-4-P3 as well as provide data for evaluate transportation impacts created by new development, local transportation needs, and tourism. Produce a report every three years that identifies impacted areas, peak days and months, and evaluates trends. Work with the Economic Development Board and Visitor Tourism Bureau to fund this program.

**Program C-CT-4-P3:** Monitor traffic volumes on County-maintained road segments, and work with Caltrans on similar State Highway 1 segments that are projected to experience high traffic volumes during peak weekend periods, particularly in the summer and fall months, and produce a report summarizing this data and analyzing trends. The report shall be updated every two years and provided to Sonoma County, SCTA, and Caltrans and include forecasts on origin and destination of trips where data exists to support this analysis.

Use this information to develop strategies for transportation alternatives, such as shuttle bus routes, to reduce coastal visitor's dependency on automobiles while maintaining convenient and equitable access to the coast for all visitors. (PC REVISED - GP2020 REVISED)

## 5. PHASING AND FUNDING

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### Goal, Objectives, and Policies

**GOAL C-CT-5:** Integrate the funding and development of planned circulation and transit system improvements with countywide transportation planning efforts and land use planning and development approval. (GP2020)

**Objective C-CT-5.1:** Equitably allocate the costs of circulation and transit system improvements among the responsible public and private entities responsible for creating the need for system improvements.

**Objective C-CT-5.2:** Work with the SCTA and Federal and State governments to obtain the necessary funding for the planned circulation and transit system.

**Policy C-CT-5a:** Require that new development provide project area improvements necessary to accommodate vehicle, pedestrian, bicycle, and transit movement in the vicinity of the project, including safety improvements, traffic calming, right-of-way acquisition, access to the applicable roadway, and other mitigation measures necessary to accommodate the development without inhibiting public access. (GP2020 REVISED)

**Policy C-CT-5b:** Carry out on an as needed basis projects that enhance traffic safety but do not measurably increase capacity, including but not limited to traffic control devices (signals and signs), curvature reduction, turn lanes at intersections, shoulder improvements, reconstruction, and resurfacing. Approval of these projects should be balanced with impacts on coastal resources and be consistent with Coastal Act Polices and this LCP including but not limited to habitat, habitat buffers, as well as view protections. (PC REVISED CCC REVISED)

**Policy C-CT-5c:** Continue to implement traffic mitigation fees. (GP2020)

### Program

**Program C-CT-5-P1:** Based upon an established nexus, assign responsibility for funding transportation improvements to new development in the affected area by assessing development fees or fair share contributions. (GP2020 REVISED)



# Public Facilities and Services Element: Table of Contents

Public Facilities and Services Element .....	3
Introduction .....	3
Purpose.....	3
Relationship to Other Elements.....	3
Relationship to California Coastal Act.....	3
Section 30118 Special district.....	3
Section 30114 Public works .....	4
Section 30212.5 Public facilities; distribution .....	4
Section 30222 Private lands; priority of development purposes .....	4
Section 30231 Biological productivity; water quality .....	4
Section 30233 Diking, filling or dredging; continued movement of sediment and nutrients .....	4
Section 30234 Commercial fishing and recreational boating facilities.....	6
Section 30234.5 Economic, commercial, and recreational importance of fishing .....	6
Section 30250 Location; existing developed area.....	6
Section 30254 Public works facilities .....	6
Section 30254.5 Terms or conditions on sewage treatment plant development; prohibition .....	6
Section 30504 Special districts; submission of plans .....	7
1. General Public Facilities.....	7
Goal, Objectives, and Policies .....	7
Programs.....	8
2. Water and Wastewater Treatment Facilities .....	8
Water Supply.....	8
Public Water Systems .....	9
Wastewater Treatment and Disposal Services.....	1
On Site Wastewater Treatment Systems .....	1

Goal, Objectives, and Policies .....	2
Programs.....	6
<b>3. Parks and Recreation .....</b>	<b>7</b>
Goal, Objectives, and Policies .....	7
Program.....	8
Initiative .....	8
<b>4. Public Education .....</b>	<b>9</b>
Schools.....	9
Elementary Schools .....	9
High Schools .....	10
Goal, Objective, and Policy.....	10
Initiatives.....	11
<b>5. Fire Protection and Emergency Medical Services .....</b>	<b>11</b>
Emergency Medical Services.....	12
Goal, Objectives, and Policies .....	13
Programs.....	14
<b>6. Law Enforcement Services.....</b>	<b>14</b>
Goal, Objective, and Policy.....	15
<b>7. Solid Waste Management Services .....</b>	<b>16</b>
Goal, Objective, and Policies .....	17
<b>8. Public Utilities And Telecommunications .....</b>	<b>18</b>
Goal, Objective, and Policy.....	19
Initiatives.....	19
<b>9. Youth and Family Services .....</b>	<b>20</b>
Goal, Objectives, and Policies .....	20
Program.....	21
Initiative .....	22

# Public Facilities and Services Element

## INTRODUCTION

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### PURPOSE

The Public Facilities and Services Element addresses nine types of public services mainly related to the physical development of the Sonoma County coast. These services include: water, wastewater disposal, public education, fire protection, law enforcement, medical, solid waste management, public utilities, and youth and family services.

The purpose of this Element is to lay the groundwork for future decisions related to these public services and infrastructure, to establish future policy regarding providing facilities for these services, and to integrate public service concerns into land use decision making. This Element is designed to increase the likelihood that public services will be available when needed to serve the residents and businesses of the Sonoma County coast.

The Public Works policy of the 1976 California Coastal Act allows, consistent with the General Plan, development of public works capacity to accommodate needs identified by the Local Coastal Plan. Where the capacity of basic public works is limited, development of land uses encouraged by the Coastal Act, such as coastal dependent industry, receive priority over other uses.

The Public Facilities and Services Element describes the current status of public services in terms of service capacity and demand in relation to projected growth. It is divided into sections providing policy direction for each type of public facility or service. Programs needed to implement proposed policies are also identified. In addition, the Element calls out ongoing or potential future County initiatives, referred to as "Other Initiatives," that support the provision and maintenance of adequate public facilities and services within the Coastal Zone.

### RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER ELEMENTS

Highway and public transportation needs are identified and addressed in the Circulation and Transit Element. Water supply and water quality issues are addressed in the Water Resources Element. Needed park and recreation facilities are identified and addressed in the Public Access Element.

### RELATIONSHIP TO CALIFORNIA COASTAL ACT

#### Section 30118 Special district

"Special district" means any public agency, other than a local government as defined in this chapter, formed pursuant to general law or special act for the local performance of governmental or

proprietary functions within limited boundaries. "Special district" includes, but is not limited to, a county service area, a maintenance district or area, an improvement district or improvement zone, or any other zone or area, formed for the purpose of designating an area within which a property tax rate will be levied to pay for service or improvement benefiting that area.

### **Section 30114 Public works**

"Public works" means the following:

- (a) All production, storage, transmission, and recovery facilities for water, sewerage, telephone, and other similar utilities owned or operated by any public agency or by any utility subject to the jurisdiction of the Public Utilities Commission, except for energy facilities.
- (b) All public transportation facilities, including streets, roads, highways, public parking lots and structures, ports, harbors, airports, railroads, and mass transit facilities and stations, bridges, trolley wires, and other related facilities. For purposes of this division, neither the Ports of Hueneme, Long Beach, Los Angeles, nor San Diego Unified Port District nor any of the developments within these ports shall be considered public works.
- (c) All publicly financed recreational facilities, all projects of the State Coastal Conservancy, and any development by a special district.
- (d) All community college facilities.

### **Section 30212.5 Public facilities; distribution**

Wherever appropriate and feasible, public facilities, including parking areas or facilities, shall be distributed throughout an area so as to mitigate against the impacts, social and otherwise, of overcrowding or overuse by the public of any single area.

### **Section 30222 Private lands; priority of development purposes**

The use of private lands suitable for visitor-serving commercial recreational facilities designed to enhance public opportunities for coastal recreation shall have priority over private residential, general industrial, or general commercial development, but not over agriculture or coastal-dependent industry.

### **Section 30231 Biological productivity; water quality**

The biological productivity and the quality of coastal waters, streams, wetlands, estuaries, and lakes appropriate to maintain optimum populations of marine organisms and for the protection of human health shall be maintained and, where feasible, restored through, among other means, minimizing adverse effects of waste water discharges and entrainment, controlling runoff, preventing depletion of ground water supplies and substantial interference with surface waterflow, encouraging waste water reclamation, maintaining natural vegetation buffer areas that protect riparian habitats, and minimizing alteration of natural streams.

### **Section 30233 Diking, filling or dredging; continued movement of sediment and nutrients**

(a) The diking, filling, or dredging of open coastal waters, wetlands, estuaries, and lakes shall be permitted in accordance with other applicable provisions of this division, where there is no feasible less environmentally damaging alternative, and where feasible mitigation measures have been provided to minimize adverse environmental effects, and shall be limited to the following:

- (1) New or expanded port, energy, and coastal-dependent industrial facilities, including commercial fishing facilities.
- (2) Maintaining existing, or restoring previously dredged, depths in existing navigational channels, turning basins, vessel berthing and mooring areas, and boat launching ramps.
- (3) In open coastal waters, other than wetlands, including streams, estuaries, and lakes, new or expanded boating facilities and the placement of structural pilings for public recreational piers that provide public access and recreational opportunities.
- (4) Incidental public service purposes, including but not limited to, burying cables and pipes or inspection of piers and maintenance of existing intake and outfall lines.
- (5) Mineral extraction, including sand for restoring beaches, except in environmentally sensitive areas.
- (6) Restoration purposes.
- (7) Nature study, aquaculture, or similar resource dependent activities.

(b) Dredging and spoils disposal shall be planned and carried out to avoid significant disruption to marine and wildlife habitats and water circulation. Dredge spoils suitable for beach replenishment should be transported for these purposes to appropriate beaches or into suitable longshore current systems.

(c) In addition to the other provisions of this section, diking, filling, or dredging in existing estuaries and wetlands shall maintain or enhance the functional capacity of the wetland or estuary. Any alteration of coastal wetlands identified by the Department of Fish and Game, including, but not limited to, the 19 coastal wetlands identified in its report entitled, "Acquisition Priorities for the Coastal Wetlands of California", shall be limited to very minor incidental public facilities, restorative measures, nature study, commercial fishing facilities in Bodega Bay, and development in already developed parts of south San Diego Bay, if otherwise in accordance with this division.

For the purposes of this section, "commercial fishing facilities in Bodega Bay" means that not less than 80 percent of all boating facilities proposed to be developed or improved, where the improvement would create additional berths in Bodega Bay, shall be designed and used for commercial fishing activities.

(d) Erosion control and flood control facilities constructed on watercourses can impede the movement of sediment and nutrients that would otherwise be carried by storm runoff into coastal waters. To facilitate the continued delivery of these sediments to the littoral zone, whenever feasible, the material removed from these facilities may be placed at appropriate points on the shoreline in accordance with other applicable provisions of this division, where feasible mitigation measures have been provided to minimize adverse environmental effects. Aspects that shall be considered before issuing a coastal development permit for these purposes are the method of placement, time of year of placement, and sensitivity of the placement area.

## **Section 30234 Commercial fishing and recreational boating facilities**

Facilities serving the commercial fishing and recreational boating industries shall be protected and, where feasible, upgraded. Existing commercial fishing and recreational boating harbor space shall not be reduced unless the demand for those facilities no longer exists or adequate substitute space has been provided. Proposed recreational boating facilities shall, where feasible, be designed and located in such a fashion as not to interfere with the needs of the commercial fishing industry.

## **Section 30234.5 Economic, commercial, and recreational importance of fishing**

The economic, commercial, and recreational importance of fishing activities shall be recognized and protected.

## **Section 30250 Location; existing developed area**

(a) New residential, commercial, or industrial development, except as otherwise provided in this division, shall be located within, contiguous with, or in close proximity to, existing developed areas able to accommodate it or, where such areas are not able to accommodate it, in other areas with adequate public services and where it will not have significant adverse effects, either individually or cumulatively, on coastal resources. In addition, land divisions, other than leases for agricultural uses, outside existing developed areas shall be permitted only where 50 percent of the usable parcels in the area have been developed and the created parcels would be no smaller than the average size of surrounding parcels.

(b) Where feasible, new hazardous industrial development shall be located away from existing developed areas.

(c) Visitor-serving facilities that cannot feasibly be located in existing developed areas shall be located in existing isolated developments or at selected points of attraction for visitors.

## **Section 30254 Public works facilities**

New or expanded public works facilities shall be designed and limited to accommodate needs generated by development or uses permitted consistent with the provisions of this division; provided, however, that it is the intent of the Legislature that State Highway Route 1 in rural areas of the coastal zone remain a scenic two-lane road. Special districts shall not be formed or expanded except where assessment for, and provision of, the service would not induce new development inconsistent with this division. Where existing or planned public works facilities can accommodate only a limited amount of new development, services to coastal dependent land use, essential public services and basic industries vital to the economic health of the region, state, or nation, public recreation, commercial recreation, and visitor-serving land uses shall not be precluded by other development.

## **Section 30254.5 Terms or conditions on sewage treatment plant development; prohibition**

Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the commission may not impose any term or condition on the development of any sewage treatment plant which is applicable to any future development

that the commission finds can be accommodated by that plan consistent with this division. Nothing in this section modifies the provisions and requirements of Sections 30254 and 30412.

## **Section 30504 Special districts; submission of plans**

Special districts, which issue permits or otherwise grant approval for development or which conduct development activities that may affect coastal resources, shall submit their development plans to the affected local government pursuant to Section 65401 of the Government Code. Such plans shall be considered by the affected local government in the preparation of its local coastal program.

## **I. GENERAL PUBLIC FACILITIES**

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### **Goal, Objectives, and Policies**

**Goal C-PF-1:** Ensure that water supply and wastewater treatment and disposal, park and recreation, public education, fire protection and emergency medical, law enforcement, medical, and solid waste management services and public utility sites are available to meet the future needs of Coastal Zone residents and visitors.

**Objective C-PF-1.1:** Limit water supply and wastewater treatment and disposal, parks and recreation, public education, fire protection and emergency medical, law enforcement, solid waste management, and public utilities facilities and services to those needed for projected demand from existing development.

**Objective C-PF-1.2:** Help County Service Areas and Special Districts to provide needed public facilities and services.

**The following policies, in addition to those in the Water Resources and Open Space and Resource Conservation Elements, shall be used to achieve these objectives:**

**Policy C-PF-1a:** Water supply and wastewater treatment and disposal, parks and recreation, public education, fire protection and emergency medical, law enforcement, solid waste management, and public utilities facilities and services shall be planned, designed, and constructed in accordance with projected demand from existing development as identified by Local Coastal Program (LCP) land use policies and the Chapter 3 requirements of the Coastal Act. (CCC REVISED - GP2020)

**Policy C-PF-1b:** New Special Districts shall only be established within defined Urban Service Areas and Rural Community Boundaries as designated in the Local Coastal Plan. Special districts shall only be formed or expanded where assessment for, and provision of, service would not induce new development inconsistent with policies of the LCP. (EXISTING LCP REVISED)

**Program C-PF-1-P1:** Install charging stations for, electric, or other alternative fuel vehicles at public facilities and other visitor serving uses. (CCC REVISED – WAS PROGRAM)

## Programs

**Program C-PF-1-P2:** Work with the County Service Areas and Special Districts to provide local parks and recreation, public education, fire and emergency medical, law enforcement, solid waste management, and public utilities facilities and services. (GP2020)

## **2. WATER AND WASTEWATER TREATMENT FACILITIES**

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On the Sonoma County coast, development is concentrated in Urban Service Areas and Rural Communities. The Coastal Act mandates that new development be located in close proximity to developed areas with public facilities and services. To delineate the areas appropriate for development in the Coastal Zone, Urban Service Areas have been established on the Local Coastal Plan Land Use Map (C-LU-1a thru 1k) and include The Sea Ranch and Bodega Bay. Rural Community Boundaries, areas that were previously subdivided or developed with public water and private Onsite Waste Water Treatment Systems (OWTS, also known as “septic systems”), have also been established on the Land Use Map and include Duncans Mills, Jenner, Sereno del Mar/Carmet, Salmon Creek, Timber Cove, and Valley Ford.

On the coast expansion of public sewer beyond the boundaries of Urban Service Areas and expansion of public water or public sewer beyond the boundaries of Rural Communities are prohibited except under when necessary to mitigate impacts to coastal resources and public health created by a failing OWTS serving existing development. Development infill is expected where water and OWTSs or sewer regulations can be met. Part of the development infill strategy is to encourage consolidation of adjacent lots in high hazard areas or visually and environmentally sensitive areas in accordance with Coastal Act policies to protect views and coastal resources and minimize public safety hazards.

### **Water Supply**

An adequate and healthful water supply is essential if the Sonoma County coast is to sustain its residential population and its economic stability. As noted above, the Water Resources Element establishes goals, objectives, and policies addressing a broad range of water-related issues, including water quality and supply pertaining to private wells and public water systems. This section is intended to address issues regarding improving water systems for moderate expansion of planned communities, developing new water systems, and extending water services to new areas not currently served.

The Sonoma Coast is a water scarce area, and developing reliable water sources for urban development is very difficult. Several wells or springs may be needed to produce even modest water yields. Most of the water systems on the coast are small and substandard in some respect. The main problems are insufficient water and limited financial capability. Water sources are generally wells or creeks which may run low in summer months when demand is highest. Most coastal wells produce only a limited



amount of water at any time due to the geology of the area. The owners of small water systems cannot afford extensive search for and development of additional water supplies.

No additional sources of water supply appear feasible for the communities of Jenner, Rancho del Paradiso, Bridgehaven, West Beach, and Valley Ford. The Salmon Creek subdivision has marginally adequate water supplies for existing development. If adequate water supplies are not available, some lots in the existing subdivisions may be unbuildable. Water system development and improvement continues at The Sea Ranch, Timber Cove, Sereno del Mar, Carmet, and Bodega Bay. Water supplies sufficient for subdivision buildout or moderate additional expansion appears limited to these five areas and Duncans Mills.

Maintaining the quality of water in small water systems, especially surface springs and storage tanks, is problematic because it requires periodic monitoring and testing. Several older small water systems are poorly designed or maintained resulting in inadequate water pressure. The firefighting capability of most of the systems is inadequate because of limited water supplies or low water pressure.

## Public Water Systems

The definitions of a public water system and different types of public water systems are given below. These definitions are in Section 116275 of the California Safe Drinking Water Act which is contained in Part 12, Chapter 4 of the California Health and Safety Code:

116275. Definitions.

(h) **“Public water system”** means a system for the provision of water for human consumption through pipes or other constructed conveyances that has 15 or more service connections or regularly serves at least 25 individuals daily at least 60 days out of the year. A public water system includes the following:

- (1) Any collection, treatment, storage, and distribution facilities under control of the operator of the system that are used primarily in connection with the system.
- (2) Any collection or pretreatment storage facilities not under the control of the operator that are used primarily in connection with the system.
- (3) Any water system that treats water on behalf of one or more public water systems for the purpose of rendering it safe for human consumption.

(e) **“Human consumption”** means the use of water for drinking, bathing or showering, handwashing, oral hygiene, or cooking, including, but not limited to, preparing food and washing dishes.

(i) **“Community water system”** means a public water system that serves at least 15 service connections used by yearlong residents or regularly serves at least 25 yearlong residents of the area served by the system.

(j) “**Noncommunity water system**” means a public water system that is not a community water system.

(k) “**Nontransient noncommunity** water system” means a public water system that is not a community water system and that regularly serves at least 25 of the same persons over six months per year.

The Sonoma County coast has about 16 water systems that fall under the regulatory authority of the State Water Resources Control Board (Water Resources Board) as a “public water system”, ranging in size from The Sea Ranch Water Company, a Community system with 1,872 connections; to the Blue Heron Restaurant, a Non-Community Transient system with one connection. **Table C-PF-1** provides general information about the public and private water systems on the coast.

**Table C-PF-1. Characteristics of Public Water Systems**  
Information supplied by system operator and California Water Resources Control Board Division of Drinking Water

<b>Water System</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Uses Served</b>	<b># Connections/ Lots Served</b>	<b># Vacant Lots or Lots Not Served</b>	<b>Source of Water Supply</b>	<b>Adequacy of Water Supply</b>
<b>Bodega Bay Public Utilities District</b>	Community	Residential Commercial Industrial	1,215	194	Salmon Creek (2 wells) Roppolo wellfield - 3 wells Sand Dunes wellfield - 2 wells	Adequate for existing development
<b>Fort Ross School District</b>	Non-Transient Non-Community	School	2	0	Groundwater well onsite	Adequate for existing development
<b>Sonoma County County Service Area (CSA) 34 - Jenner</b>	Community	Residential Restaurant Hotel/Motel Public (297 parcels total)	136	174	Jenner Creek	May be inadequate for existing development. Surface water source vulnerable to climate change
<b>Sonoma County CSA 41 - Salmon Creek</b>	Community	Residential Public (130 parcels total)	99	36	Groundwater well on Maryana Drive; Spring - general subsurface flow of water from hills east of Salmon Creek; water collection and treatment system improvement project constructed in 2014	Adequate for existing development. Water collection and treatment system improvement project constructed in 2014
<b>Timber Cove County Water District</b>	Community	Residential	187	129	Timber Cove Creek, water stored in reservoir at 22108 Timber Cove Road constructed in 1997	Adequate for existing development and future development of vacant residential parcels. Reservoir volume adequate to supply 4 months water supply at build-out
<b>Blue Heron Restaurant</b>	Transient Non-Community	Restaurant	1	0	Groundwater well	Adequate
<b>Bridgehaven Trailer Park</b>	Community	Recreation	31	0	Spring about 150 yards uphill from water treatment building at trailer park Stream about 100 yards from south end of bridge at Jenner (from Red Hill)	Adequate supply. Surface water diversion may require additional treatment.

**Table C-PF-1. Characteristics of Public Water Systems**  
Information supplied by system operator and California Water Resources Control Board Division of Drinking Water

<b>Water System</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Uses Served</b>	<b># Connections/ Lots Served</b>	<b># Vacant Lots or Lots Not Served</b>	<b>Source of Water Supply</b>	<b>Adequacy of Water Supply</b>
<b>Casini Ranch Campground Water System</b>	Transient Non-Community	Recreation	14	0	2 wells 1 spring	Adequate for existing and future expansion of campground
<b>Duncans Mills Camping Company Duncans Mills Trading Company</b>	Transient Non-Community Transient Non-Community	Recreation Restaurant Retail	20	0	Well 1,400 feet from Russian River	Adequate for existing development. Supply may not be adequate for expansion of existing commercial uses.
<b>Fort Ross Lodge &amp; Store</b>	Transient Non-Community	Restaurant Hotel/Motel	2	0	Well below lowest unit of lodge	Adequate for existing use and future expansion.
<b>Rancho Del Paradiso - California Water Service Company</b>	Community	Residential	60	8	Intertie pipeline to Sweetwater Springs Water District facility in Monte Rio constructed in 2006	Adequate for existing development and future development of vacant residential parcels.
<b>Russian River Utility Sereno Del Mar Water Company - Sereno del Mar</b>	Community	Residential	136	9	9 wells - two gallery inlets from underflow of Scotty Creek, seven wells 70 feet deep; One spring about half mile east	Adequate for existing development and future development of vacant residential parcels.
<b>Russian River Utility Carmet-by-the-Sea Mutual Water System - Carmet</b>	Community	Residential	64	0	2 horizontal wells on hillside east of subdivision	Adequate for existing development. May be inadequate for future development.
<b>Russian River Utility Sereno Del Mar Water Company - Gleason Beach</b>	Community	Residential	6	15	50 meter wells and Carmet-by-the-Sea springs	Adequate for existing development. No potential for future development due to bluff collapse.
<b>The Sea Ranch Water Company</b>	Community	Residential Commercial	1,872	605	Gualala River	Adequate for existing development and future development of vacant residential parcels.
<b>Timber Cove Inn</b>	Non-Transient Non-Community	Hotel/Motel	3	N/A	Timber Cove County Water District	Adequate for existing development.

**Table C-PF-1. Characteristics of Public Water Systems**  
Information supplied by system operator and California Water Resources Control Board Division of Drinking Water

<b>Water System</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Uses Served</b>	<b># Connections/ Lots Served</b>	<b># Vacant Lots or Lots Not Served</b>	<b>Source of Water Supply</b>	<b>Adequacy of Water Supply</b>
<b>Valley Ford Water Association</b>	Community	Residential Commercial	23	0	3 wells south of community along north side of Estero Americano	Adequate supply, inadequate quality for existing development. Inadequate for expansion of existing uses.
<b>Valley Ford Hotel</b>	Transient Non-Community	Commercial	1	0	Groundwater well on site	Adequate for existing development. Inadequate for expansion of use.
<b>Stillwater Cove Regional Park</b>	Transient Non-Community	Recreation (campground w/22 sites, Ranger residence, office)	2	0	Canyon well – winter & spring (next to Regional Parks office driveway) Creek well – summer & fall (next to Stockholm Creek)	Adequate for existing use and future development of existing campground.

## **Wastewater Treatment and Disposal Services**

Untreated or improperly treated wastewater contains bacteria, viruses, chemicals, and nutrients that can cause human diseases; kill or injure plants and animals; and produce surface waters that are contaminated, discolored, or odorous. Since all wastewater is eventually returned to the environment, the public has a vital interest in assuring proper wastewater management. The Water Resources Element establishes goals, objectives, and policies pertaining to water quality and wastewater management. This section of the Public Facilities and Services Element addresses issues regarding improving existing wastewater treatment systems, developing new wastewater treatment systems, and extending wastewater treatment services to new areas not currently served.

### **On Site Wastewater Treatment Systems**

An on-site wastewater treatment system (OWTS) is an individual wastewater treatment and dispersal system, small community collection, treatment and dispersal systems, or alternative collection and dispersal systems that use subsurface dispersal. These systems are commonly referred to as “septic systems”. OWTSs do not include graywater systems pursuant to the Health and Safety Code Section 17922.12.

A standard OWTS consists of a tank and leachfield (subsurface treatment and disposal of wastewater) and may include a diversion valve and/or pump. Wastewater enters the tank and is retained long enough so that large solid particles and very small solid particles joined together settle to the bottom. Bacteria digest the solids that accumulate in the tank at the bottom (sludge); and the fats, oils, grease, and other materials that float to the surface (scum); the resulting solids must be pumped out periodically. The partially treated wastewater (effluent) leaves the tank in pipes and is discharged below the ground surface into the leachfield, which consists of perforated pipes laid over gravel in trenches (leachlines). The effluent flows along the length of the pipes where it gradually percolates into the soil. The effluent receives secondary treatment through natural physical and microbiological processes in the soil.

New and replacement OWTSs shall be located, designed, constructed, and operated in a manner to ensure that sewage effluent does not surface at any time, that is protective of public health, safety and the environment and that percolation of effluent into the soil will not adversely affect beneficial uses of the waters of the State of California. (OWTS Manual)

The Sonoma County OWTS Manual establishes standards for all on-site wastewater systems in Sonoma County. These standards implement provisions of the Porter Cologne Water Quality Control Act, the State Water Resources Control Board OWTS Policy, and applicable sections of Sonoma County Code Chapters 7 and 24. California Water Code 13282 authorizes counties to adopt and enforce regulations, conditions, restrictions, and limitations regarding the dispersal of waste. The Sonoma County OWTS Manual is the local implementation of this authority.

On coastal parcels, meeting OWTS standards is often the limiting factor for development. On many lots it is difficult to meet the setbacks to property lines, road cuts, streams, drainage courses, cliffs, and the 10-year floodplain due to the small size of the lots, which in many cases were created prior to current OWTS regulations. For example, on small lots in Carmet, Jenner, Sereno del Mar and Salmon Creek, even if the soil has an adequate percolation rate, there is not enough room for even a one-

bedroom OWTS. A lot fronting Salmon Creek that is 40 feet long will not meet the required 100-foot setback from the 10-year floodplain. Steep slopes and shallow fractured bedrock also contribute to inadequate conditions for OWTS, as the effluent can move laterally and break out to the surface along the slope.

### **On Site Wastewater Treatment Systems Regulations**

The State Regional Water Quality Control Boards (Regional Board) is responsible for establishing standards for OWTSs to protect water resources and public health. Permit Sonoma is the delegated authority for implementation and enforcement of State and County specific OWTS regulations. New OWTSs must meet standards for slope, soil depth, depth to groundwater, percolation rate, and system setback distance.

In areas where failure of OWTSs are likely to cause health hazards or impair water quality, Permit Sonoma or the pertinent Region Board (North Coast or San Francisco Bay) may issue an Order to prohibit any waiver of existing OWTS installation regulations in a specific area. This Order referred to as a “Waiver Prohibition Area,” is intended to decrease the likelihood of failure of new OWTSs. Jenner, Rancho del Paradiso, Sereno del Mar, Carmet, and Salmon Creek are in Waiver Prohibition areas.

On May 13, 2013, the North Coast Regional Board amended their Basin Plan to adopt the OWTS Policy. This policy establishes minimum standards for OWTSs that are constructed or replaced or are subject to a major repair. The OWTS Policy also includes minimum operating requirements for OWTSs that include requirements for siting, construction, and performance; OWTSs near certain waters listed as impaired under Section 303(d) of the Clean Water Act; corrective action; monitoring; exemption criteria; determining when an existing OWTS is subject to major repair; a conditional waiver of waste discharge; and authorizing local agency implementation of the OWTS Policy.

**OWTS Monitoring and Maintenance Program (On-Site Wastewater Disposal Zone).** An OWTS monitoring and maintenance program, also referred to as an on-site wastewater disposal zone, is another alternative to individual OWTSs. Such a program does not make more lots buildable, rather has the potential for extending the useful life of OWTS and promptly correcting operational problems. A public agency which is authorized to acquire, construct, maintain, or operate sewage treatment systems may run such a program. Once an on-site wastewater disposal zone is established, the agency has the power within that zone to acquire, design, own, construct, install, operate, monitor, inspect, and maintain individual OWTSs. The potential for this type of program is widespread on the Sonoma Coast.

A wastewater system monitoring and maintenance program is required for The Sea Ranch. In the late 1980s The Sea Ranch Association and the County of Sonoma created an On-Site Wastewater Disposal Zone (Zone) to address problems with about 1,570 on-site individual OWTSs at The Sea Ranch. In July 1989 the Zone was created under the agreement that the Board of Supervisors would contract with The Sea Ranch Association to operate, monitor, inspect, and maintain the OWTSs. In July 1995 the Zone was designated as CSA 41 and came under the direction of Permit Sonoma. (CCC REVISED)

## **Goal, Objectives, and Policies**

**GOAL C-PF-2: Ensure that growth and development match existing water and wastewater treatment and disposal capacities.**

**Objective C-PF-2.1:** Plan for growth and development to match existing water and wastewater treatment and disposal capacities and facilities.

**Objective C-PF-2.2:** Operate County water and wastewater treatment and disposal facilities in compliance with applicable State and Federal standards.

**Objective C-PF-2.3:** Help resolve water problems resulting from proliferation of small water systems.

**Objective C-PF-2.4:** Limit extension of public water and sewer services into rural areas.

**Policy C-PF-2a:** Growth and development shall be planned in accordance with existing water and wastewater treatment and disposal capacities. Development, including land divisions, shall be prohibited unless a master plan consistent with Policy C-PF-2d identifies adequate water and wastewater treatment and disposal capacities and facilities to accommodate such development. In acting on any Coastal Development Permit, determine that adequate capacity is available and reserved in the system to serve priority land uses as shown in Land Use Element Table C-LU-1. In areas with limited service capacity, new development for a non-priority use, including land divisions, is prohibited unless adequate capacity remains for Coastal Act priority land uses within the service area. (CCC REVISED - NEW)

**Policy C-PF-2b:** A public water or wastewater district shall not be formed or expanded except where assessment for, and provision of, the service would not induce new development inconsistent with the Local Coastal Plan in accordance with California Coastal Act Section 30254. New development within the service boundary of a public water or wastewater district shall be required to connect to the district for water or wastewater service. (NEW)

**Policy C-PF-2c:** A Coastal Permit shall be required for water or wastewater management facility expansion or improvement projects unless otherwise exempt by the Local Coastal Program, or the Coastal Act. Development of new or expansion of existing water or wastewater management facilities shall be in phase with the availability of other public works infrastructure. (CCC REVISED - NEW)

**Policy C-PF-2d:** Master plans or equivalent documentation shall be prepared for all water and wastewater management systems prior to approval of facility expansion or improvement projects. All facilities shall be designed and constructed in accordance with the existing and planned development in the applicable jurisdictions. In the event that a master plan or monitoring fails to show adequate facilities or supplies for existing development, zoning changes, building permits, or other entitlements in order to protect services to existing residents.

The minimum contents necessary for an adequate master plan or equivalent documentation are:

- (1) Maps showing potential future service area boundaries in accordance with California Coastal Act Section 30254.



- (2) Existing development within the existing and potential future service area boundaries.
- (3) Impact that sea level rise and climate change will have on existing and proposed facilities.  
(CCC REVISED)
- (4) Projected growth and the related service and facility needs;
- (5) Estimated costs and revenues for needed improvements;
- (6) System design parameters and assumptions;
- (7) A program for water use reduction; and
- (8) A program to reduce stormwater infiltration. (GP2020)

**Policy C-PF-2e:** Extension of public sewer services outside of the boundary of The Sea Ranch and Bodega Bay Urban Service Areas shall be avoided. Exceptions to this policy shall be considered, to the extent allowed by law, only:

- (1) Where necessary to resolve a public health hazard resulting from existing development (i.e., contamination of land, surface water, or groundwater resulting from failure of an existing OWTS or other wastewater management system); or
- (2) Where appropriate to allow for development of public park or recreation facilities.

**Policy C-PF-2f:** Where several failing OWTSs or other health and safety problems which pose a significant hazard to human health and safety exist outside an Urban Service Area that could be addressed by extension of public sewer service, use Outside Service Area Agreements which limit the use of existing development. The evaluation should assure sufficient capacity to serve existing connections and potential buildout in the existing Urban Service Area.

A Coastal Development Permit shall be required for extension of public sewer services outside of an Urban Service Area. (CCC REVISED - GP2020 REVISED)

**Policy C-PF-2g:** The following guidelines shall be used for any exception allowed by **Policy C-PF-2e:**

- (1) The property must adjoin the Urban Service Area Boundary, or the proposed connection to a public sewer system must be no more than 200 feet from the Urban Service Area Boundary;
- (2) Size sewage facilities to serve development consistent with the Local Coastal Plan;
- (3) Require written certification by the service provider that adequate service capacity, consistent with the facility master plan, is available for the use to be connected to the system; and (CCC - REVISED)
- (4) Use agreements, covenants, and zoning to limit the growth inducement potential of extension of public sewer services. (GP2020 REVISED)

**Policy C-PF-2h:** Extension of public water service to a property that is outside the boundary of an Urban Service Area or Rural Community (i.e., Duncans Mills, Jenner, Sereno del Mar, Carmet, Salmon Creek, Timber Cove, and Valley Ford) shall be avoided. Exceptions to this policy shall be considered, to the extent allowed by law, only:

- (1) Where necessary to resolve a public health hazard resulting from existing development (i.e., failure of water wells or contamination of land, surface water, or groundwater resulting from failure of an existing OWTS or other wastewater management system); or
- (2) Where appropriate to allow for development of public park and recreational facilities.

A Coastal Permit shall be required for extension of public water service. (GP2020)

**Policy C-PF-2i:** The following guidelines shall be used for any exception allowed by **Policy C-PF-2g:**

- (1) Size facilities to serve development consistent with the Local Coastal Plan;
- (2) Require written certification that adequate service capacity is available for the economic life of the development to be connected to the system or planned to be connected in the future; and (CCC REVISED)
- (3) Use out-of-service area agreements that limit the use to existing development rather than annexations. (GP2020)

**Policy C-PF-2j:** Applications for subdivision of land or new development or uses within a water or wastewater service area shall be required to include written certification from the service provider that existing water and wastewater services are available to serve the new parcels, development, and uses; or that the service provider will make improvements to the water or wastewater systems necessary to accommodate the new development and uses prior to final project approval. The proposed project shall not be considered for approval if this written certification is not provided. (EXISTING LCP REVISED)

**Policy C-PF-2k:** When considering formation of new water service agencies, systems owned and operated by a governmental entity shall be favored over privately or mutually owned systems. New privately or mutually owned systems shall be authorized only if system revenues and water supplies are adequate to serve existing and projected growth for the life of the system, which shall be ensured through agreements or other mechanisms that set aside funds for long-term capital improvements and operation and maintenance costs. (GP2020)

**Policy C-PF-2l:** Approval of new wastewater treatment and disposal systems owned and operated by a governmental entity shall be considered only when necessary to resolve an existing public health hazard. (GP2020)

**Policy C-PF-2m:** New privately owned package treatment plants which serve multiple uses or serve separate parcels shall be avoided. Use of package treatment plants to serve affordable

housing or other projects on a single parcel under one ownership shall be allowed provided that they comply with the following criteria:

- (1) The package treatment plant must comply with water quality and health standards and protect water resources;
- (2) The design and appearance of package treatment plants located in agricultural and other rural areas must be compatible with the rural area's character;
- (3) The project must include provisions for the long-term operation, maintenance, and eventual replacement and/or removal of the package treatment plant; and include adequate financing for these provisions through bonds, sinking funds, or other mechanisms; and
- (4) The package treatment plant is not to be used as a basis for approving a new affordable housing development in Rural Communities or on other rural land, or amending the Local Coastal Plan to allow for more intensive development. (GP2020)

**Policy C-PF-2n:** Consider use of alternative (non-standard) sewage disposal systems only to serve a single land use on a single parcel, and only if the availability of the system does not result in new development, except as allowed by the Local Coastal Plan. (GP2020)

**Policy C-PF-2o:** Any waiver of Regional Board standards for on-site wastewater disposal in Jenner, Carmet, Rancho del Paradiso, Sereno del Mar, and Salmon Creek shall be prohibited. (EXISTING LCP REVISED)

**Policy C-PF-2p:** Consider development or expansion of a community wastewater treatment system in areas with widespread OWTS problems that are a health concern and cannot be addressed by an on-site wastewater maintenance and management program, in compliance with the policies of this Local Coastal Plan. (GP2020)

**Policy C-PF-2q:** Where existing or planned public works facilities can accommodate only a limited amount of new development, services to coastal dependent land use, essential public services and basic industries, public recreation, commercial recreation, and visitor-serving land uses shall not be precluded by other development in accordance with California Coastal Act Sections 30222 and 30254. The use of private lands suitable for visitor-serving commercial recreational facilities designed to enhance public opportunities for coastal recreation shall have priority consistent with coastal priority land uses of the Coastal Act. (NEW)

## Programs

**Program C-PF-2-P1:** Create a total water supply and use budget for the Sonoma County Coastal Zone that considers future impacts on water including, but not limited to: loss of groundwater to salt water intrusion, potential droughts, increased water usage for increased development, and fire suppression.

Use this information guide land use planning and identify adequacy of individual water districts and suppliers. Once developed, review and update this information every 5 years. (CCC REVISED - NEW)

**Program C-PF-2-P2:** Develop and implement programs that include obtaining grants for supporting and assisting communities in upgrading failing OWTs or developing on-site wastewater maintenance and management districts, community leachfields, or community wastewater treatment systems. (GP2020)

**Program C-PF-2-P3:** Consider development of on-site wastewater maintenance and management districts in areas with OWTs problems. (GP2020)

**Program C-PF-2-P4:** Consider the following and develop improvement plans where appropriate:

- (1) A community leachfield at Duncans Mills.
- (2) Relocation of the OWTs at Bridgehaven and Rancho del Paradiso.
- (3) A community wastewater collection and treatment system or a package wastewater treatment plant at Jenner.
- (4) A community wastewater collection and treatment system or a package wastewater treatment plant at Carmet.

At Salmon Creek and Wrights Beach: construction of a package wastewater treatment plant, relocation of the OWTs away from houses, or construction of a community leachfield. (NEW)

### **3. PARKS AND RECREATION**

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Outdoor recreation contributes to the tourism economy, enhances the quality of life for County residents and visitors, and conserves unique natural and cultural resources. The Public Facilities and Services Element describes the current status of public recreation in general terms of service capacity and demand in relation to projected growth. The needed park and recreation facilities are identified and addressed in the Public Access Element.

The various types of parkland found in Sonoma County are based on the Board of Supervisors approved parkland classification system. County planning staff considers a variety of factors in determining the need for local parks (e.g., Neighborhood and Community Parks) and the more intensively developed park and recreation facilities (e.g., Regional Recreation Areas). These factors include, but are not limited to, community preference, nearby population densities, proximity to other recreational areas and facilities, local and regional tourism, and accessibility, among others. Parkland needs for the resource-based park and recreation facilities (e.g., Regional Open Space Parks, Preserves, and Trails) are determined by these and other criteria, and are described in the Public Access Element.

### **Goal, Objectives, and Policies**

**Goal C-PF-3: Provide adequate park and recreation services on the Sonoma County coast.**

**Objective C-PF-3.1:** Provide an adequate supply and equitable geographic distribution of regional and local park and recreation services based on population projections, estimated user demand, and Local Coastal Plan resource objectives.

**Objective C-PF-3.2:** Use guidelines established by the Board of Supervisors as the minimum standards for determining park needs.

**Policy C-PF-3a:** The Public Access Element and Plan shall be used to determine regional park needs, including County regional open space parks, County trails, and State parks in order to support recreation in the Coastal Zone. (NEW)

**Policy C-PF-3b:** The proposed accessway, park, and trail descriptions in the Public Access Plan shall be used to determine Local Coastal Plan consistency of proposed accessways, parks, and trails as consistent with the Public Access Element. (GP2020)

**Policy C-PF-3c:** Continue to implement park impact mitigation that allows for the dedication of land, the payment of fees, or both as a condition of approval for development projects. (GP2020)

**Policy C-PA-3d:** Allow park residences in areas visible to the public where necessary for security reasons and when impacts on views are mitigated. (EXISTING LCP REVISED)

**Policy C-PA-3e:** Allow extension of sewer service to parklands only where consistent with policies of the Public Facilities and Services Element of this Local Coastal Plan. (EXISTING LCP REVISED)

**Policy C-PA-3f:** Provide restrooms at significant recreational areas to protect coastal resources and public health and safety. Consider use patterns and the proximity of other nearby public restrooms when determining facility needs. (EXISTING LCP REVISED)

**Policy C-PA-3g:** Encourage the California Department of Parks and Recreation to install emergency communication facilities at Goat Rock. (NEW)

## **Program**

**Program C-PF-3-P1:** Where there is an unmet need for local park facilities in an area, and County Regional Parks does not have plans for facilities in the area, encourage the existing or formation of new County Service Areas or other Special Districts to meet the need, if economically feasible. (GP2020)

## **Initiative**

**Initiative C-PF-3-I1:** Promote State funding of costs for patrolling new parks and public accessways which are mandated by the California Coastal Act. (EXISTING LCP REVISED)

## 4. PUBLIC EDUCATION

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### SCHOOLS

As the Sonoma County coast has relatively low population densities, schools are widely spaced in five Elementary School Districts and three High School Districts, and tend to be small with combined classes. Specialized education facilities are minimal. Each school district has its own revenue base, elected board, and administration. The Sonoma County Office of Education provides some administrative and business services to all districts. **Figures C-PF-1a to C-PF-1c** show the Public School Districts on the coast.

A major issue in planning for new facilities is the need for increased coordination between land use and facilities planning. Districts must be aware of the projected residential growth in their service area so that new school needs can be accurately forecast. An important source of financing for new school facilities is the "school impact" fee on new residential construction. State law now authorizes local school districts to charge development fees for permanent facilities. However, funding will likely continue to depend on State sources. California law also enables a County to acquire new school sites by dedication as a condition of subdivision approval.

### Elementary Schools

All elementary school districts must meet minimum state requirements regarding class sizes. Maximum class sizes for grades K-8 vary per California Education Code sections 41376 and 41378, which prescribe the maximum class sizes and penalties for districts across California. For Kindergarten, the average class size must not exceed 31 students, with no class larger than 33 students; for grades 1-3, the average class size must not exceed 30 students, with no class larger than 32 students; for grades 4-8, the average class size must not exceed either 29.9 students or the average of the district in 1964, whichever is smaller. Additional classrooms are usually constructed only when these limits are reached.

**Horicon Elementary School District.** Horicon Elementary School District consists of one school, Horicon Elementary School, which is located in the community of Annapolis. Enrollment at Horicon Elementary School decreased from 80 students in four classrooms in 1979 to 47 students in four combined classrooms at the start of the 2015-2016 school year. According to the District, the number of students has been declining, as is common with general school enrollment trends statewide. Over the last eight school years, the student population has fluctuated between 70 students in 2011, 57 students in 2012, 60 students in 2013, 66 students 2014, 61 students in 2015, 47 students in 2015-2016 school year, 59 students in the 2016-2017 school year, 62 students in the 2017-2018 school year before reaching a total of 69 students in the current 2018-2019 school year. The school serves students from the communities of The Sea Ranch and Annapolis. According to the District, there is no anticipated growth or need for additional facilities.

**Fort Ross School District.** The Timber Cove Subdivision is the largest planned residential development in, and the main growth area for, the Fort Ross School District. Enrollment at the Fort Ross Elementary School decreased from 53 students in two classrooms in 1979 to 32 students in two classrooms during the 2014-2015 school year, to 28 students in two classrooms during the 2015-2016 school year. Since then the student population continues on the downward trend having 24 students

in the 2016-2017 school year, 19 students in the 2017-2018 school year, and finally 21 students for the current school year. The District has seen a fluctuation within the last few years between 27 and 32 students, but generally the District enrollment has been steadily declining over the last 20 years. The District has a preschool site within a classroom at the Fort Ross Elementary School which is run by River to Coast Children's Services based in Guerneville. However, there is no current enrollment at the preschool. When enrollment resumes, the River to Coast Children's Services would remain responsible for running the preschool program at the school.

**Monte Rio School District (outside Coastal Zone).** Coastal areas are not expected to contribute significant numbers of new students to the Monte Rio School District. Enrollment at Monte Rio Elementary School decreased from 219 students in eight classrooms in 1979 to 112 students in six classrooms in 2005. There has been an additional decrease in student population figures, with 84 students using nine classrooms in 2015. The District believes that the decline in enrollment is due to the decrease in families moving to the area. The 2015-2016 school year brought one additional student to make 85 students for the school year, 90 students in 2016-2017, the 2017 to 2018 school year had 89 students, and 84 students in the current school year of 2018-2019. The District projects a decrease in enrollment in the future for the same reason.

**Shoreline School District.** South Coast students attend Bodega Bay Elementary School for grades K-5, and are bused to Tomales Elementary School (outside of Sonoma County Coastal Zone) for grades 6-8. As most students attending Bodega Bay Elementary School are from the immediate area, construction of additional classrooms would be needed to accommodate additional Bodega Bay area growth. Enrollment at the Bodega Bay Elementary School decreased from 70 students in three classrooms in 1979 to 40 students in three classrooms in a new school in 2005, to 19 students using two classrooms in 2015-2016 school year. Since then there was a slight increase to 25 students for the 2016-2017 school year, 26 students in 2017-2018, and 23 students in the current school year 2018-2019. The District believes that enrollment numbers could fluctuate because of interdistrict transfers largely from Coast Guard families.

## High Schools

The Sonoma County coast is served by three high schools in three school districts, however, none of the high schools are located within the Sonoma County coastal zone. Students from Annapolis, The Sea Ranch, and Stewarts Point attend Point Arena High School in Mendocino County; students from Fort Ross through Bodega Bay attend Analy High School in Sebastopol, and South Coast students attend Tomales High School in Marin County.

Impacts of growth on high schools are not as severe as for elementary schools and are harder to estimate. Class sizes, schools, and district areas are larger. High schools have more flexibility in handling increments of students from specific development areas without adding classrooms or teachers.

## Goal, Objective, and Policy

**Goal C-PF-4: Provide school facilities adequate to meet the future needs of Sonoma County coast residents.**

**Objective C-PF-4.1:** Accommodate new school sites as needed, consistent with protection of coastal resources. (CCC REVISED)

**Policy C-PF-4a:** Continue to implement school impact mitigation that allows for the dedication of land, the payment of fees, or both as a condition of approval for development projects. (GP2020)

**Initiatives**

**Initiative C-PF-4-I1:** Work with school districts to provide safe walking and bicycle paths around schools and neighborhoods. (GP2020)

**Initiative C-PF-4-I2:** Encourage schools to offer recreation programs and before-school and after-school care whenever possible. (GP2020)

**Initiative C-PF-4-I3:** Work with Community Service Districts, Park & Recreation Districts, and School Districts to meet local community park needs. (GP2020)

**Initiative C-PF-4-I4:** Assist school districts in estimating the amount, rate, and location of projected population growth in their attendance areas. (GP2020)

**5. FIRE PROTECTION AND EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES**

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Fire protection and emergency medical and rescue services are essential to the protection of life and property in the unincorporated areas of Sonoma County. They are provided by four types of agencies. The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CalFire) provides services to State Responsibility Areas. Fire Protection Districts provide services with revenues from property taxes, and are usually created to provide a reliable funding source to sustain a stable and/or increased level of fire protection services to certain areas of the County. Volunteer fire companies provide local services in rural communities. Community Service Areas (CSAs) and Community Service Districts (CSDs) are areas of the County that have approved special tax assessment for particular types of extended services, such as structural fire protection. **Figures C-PF-2a to C-PF-2c** show the Fire Districts that provide primary emergency response in the coastal zone.

Fire protection services are highly dependent on paid on-call, paid part-time, and volunteer personnel. Although this dependency remains, the number of volunteer firefighters has fallen off in recent years. While the County generally has been receiving acceptable levels of fire protection services, problems have resulted from the condition of existing equipment and matching the type of equipment and staff training to the type of fire. Sonoma County Fire District Station 10, and North Sonoma Coast Fire



Protection District South Station, staffed by CalFire personnel funded through CSA 40, provide the only fire protection services by full time staff on the Sonoma County coast.

CSA 40 is a County entity that provides a moderate amount of funding and relies primarily on volunteer staff in various CSAs. CSA 40 also provides management oversight for, directs, and coordinates the various volunteer fire companies; and supplies training, safety equipment, and insurance coverage for voluntary staff.

The County has established the Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DES) to coordinate the fire protection service agencies in the County. DES contracts with various Fire Protection Districts and municipal fire agencies to provide support services including code enforcement, construction plan checking, and fire safe planning.

Demand for increased fire suppression and emergency medical services will not be generated by housing, population, or job growth alone. Increases in tourism, increases in level of service expectations, and changes in the population mix will also affect demand.

The primary tasks with regard to fire services planning are to ensure that needed organizational changes occur in a timely and cost effective manner, and to secure adequate revenue sources. Emergency medical services should also be evaluated, since the growth in medical calls over the first half of the decade has consistently outpaced fire emergency calls.

Structural fire protection on the coast has general inadequacies common to many rural areas. The Sea Ranch, Timber Cove, and Bodega Bay are the only areas with adequate water supply and water pressure for firefighting. Most departments lack paid staff and up-to-date firefighting equipment. The average age of fire apparatus is 26 years. Most of the fire stations are in need of maintenance and repair, and some need to be replaced. Fire protection response areas tend to be large, with limited road access. These factors combined with volunteer fire departments make for relatively long response times.

Increases in coastal development are not likely to bring about substantial changes in the organization of coastal fire departments because the costs for fire protection are too high. Only The Sea Ranch and Bodega Bay are expected to reach levels of development where minimal paid staffing levels would be possible. However, increased development and public access to the Sonoma Coast will increase fire risk and demand for emergency medical services. The aging demographics of coastal communities will make the recruitment of young volunteers problematic. Increasingly limited funds at Federal, State, and local levels make acquisition of fire equipment difficult, especially for departments that have relatively low call volume.

## **Emergency Medical Services**

The Sonoma County Coastal Zone lacks any hospitals, trauma centers, or health care clinics, with the exception of limited services provided by the Gualala Health Center located just north of the county line in Gualala. Medical emergencies require patients to be stabilized by fire protection district first responders and transported to medical facilities located inland along the Highway 101 corridor by ambulance or helicopter, with transport times of up to two hours. Maintaining emergency medical services is critical to protecting the health and safety of residents and visitors to the Sonoma Coast, and fire protection districts struggle with inadequate staffing, resources, and financial support.

The Coast Life Support District (CLSD) is a special tax district charged with providing basic and advanced life support ambulance services north of the Fort Ross Store, and includes the communities of The Sea Ranch, Annapolis, Stewarts Point, Timber Cove, and Fort Ross. CLSD serves a large geographic area from the town of Gualala in Mendocino County. Because of the large area, ambulance service from the Russian River Fire Protection District in Guerneville supplements the ambulance services provided by CLSD. The Russian River Fire Protection District also provide ambulance services to the central Coastal Zone between Fort Ross and Shell Beach near Wright Hill Road.

Sonoma County Fire District provides emergency medical and advanced life support ambulance service to the South Coast, from the Russian River south to Tomales Bay and Dillon Beach in Marin County. This area includes most of the population and accounts for the majority of calls for service in the Coastal Zone. Sonoma County Fire District responds to 750 calls per year for medical emergencies, with the majority of these calls related to rescue and emergency medical services for visitors to the Coastal Zone. Maintaining Sonoma County Fire District's 24-hour paid staff of emergency medical technicians and paramedics is an important component of providing the public with safe access to the Sonoma Coast.

## **Goal, Objectives, and Policies**

**Goal C-PF-5: Ensure that adequate fire protection and emergency medical services are provided to meet the future needs of Coastal Zone residents and visitors.**

**Objective C-PF-5.1:** Improve fire protection services to the Sonoma County coast.

**Objective C-PF-5.2:** Promote cooperation among fire protection and emergency medical service agencies in the area of public education and awareness, especially in those areas isolated from emergency service providers either by distance or topography.

**Objective C-PF-5.3:** Encourage more effective use of existing fire protection and emergency medical services by emphasizing an integrated response system on the Sonoma County coast.

**Objective C-PF-5.4:** Maintain health, emergency medical, and other medical services to the Sonoma County coast, particularly to the South Coast.

**Policy C-PF-5a:** Emergency Services shall review and comment on any proposed changes in the boundaries of areas of State and local responsibility for wildland fire protection, and the service boundaries of local Fire Protection Districts and volunteer fire companies. (GP2020)

**Policy C-PF-5b:** Prior to project approval, require written certification from the applicable fire service agency that the project meets or exceeds current fire regulations and that fire protection and related services customarily provided to comparable uses are adequate and available or will be available prior to occupancy for projects within the service area. (GP2020 REVISED)

**Policy C-PF-5c:** Support establishment of a health clinic in Bodega Bay or another location on the southern portion of the Sonoma County coast. (EXISTING LCP REVISED)

**Policy C-PF-5d:** Continue to coordinate fire protection services and planning with all other related agencies.

**Policy C-PF-5e:** Support actions, including consolidation of fire districts and increased tax revenue that will provide sustainable fire protection and emergency medical services. Identify funding opportunities that will require visitor serving uses to provide support to emergency service providers that is proportional to the demand for service created by visitors to the Coastal Zone. (NEW)

## Programs

**Program C-PF-5-P1:** Establish an adequate and reliable source of funding for fire protection agencies that would provide for adequate staffing, adequate volunteer support, and purchasing and maintaining modern fire equipment. Consider new or amended impact fees for new subdivisions or development as a means of funding improved fire protection services and facilities in the Coastal Zone. (GP2020 REVISED)

**Program C-PF-5-P2:** Support establishment of a regional fire protection district that provides adequate and reliable sources of funding for fire protection services. (NEW)

**Program C-PF-5-P3:** Support the work of the County Fire Services Advisory Committee and its rural firefighting network assessment. Prepare a Fire Services Master Plan for urban and rural areas in cooperation with the State and other fire service agencies. The Master Plan shall be incorporated into the Local Coastal Plan. The minimum contents necessary for an adequate Master Plan are:

- (1) A statement of objectives, policies, and programs.
- (2) A forecast of growth.
- (3) Projected fire protection and emergency medical service needs.
- (4) A level of service assessment.
- (5) A discussion of fire regulations and policies for “defensible space” consistent with California Coastal Act sections applicable to Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Areas (ESHAs). (GP2020)

## 6. LAW ENFORCEMENT SERVICES

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Law enforcement on the Sonoma County coast is the responsibility of the California Highway Patrol, Sonoma County Sheriff's Department, and State and County Park Rangers. The Sea Ranch maintains a private security force.

The coast is a large, sparsely populated area with limited access roads and rugged terrain. As such, provision of law enforcement services is necessarily limited. Resident Sheriff deputies are stationed at The Sea Ranch, Fort Ross, Timber Cove, and Bodega Bay. They investigate criminal complaints and respond to service calls, including search and rescue calls. Each deputy is on call five days a week and deputies alternate days off. Manpower is very limited.

The California Highway Patrol (CHP) has no regular beat along the Sonoma Coast. The traffic levels and accident rates are too low to merit one, and the region is too remote for efficient deployment of manpower. The CHP responds to accidents or other service calls on coastal roadways, but response times vary depending on where officers are and what else is happening at the time the call comes in.

State and County Park Rangers enforce park regulations which include vehicle parking, camping, and park use restrictions. They also render assistance and respond to emergencies on State and County park property.

Park Ranger staffing at State and County Parks on the Sonoma County coast in 2015 was as follows:

- (1) Bodega Bay Area Regional Parks (Doran and Westside Parks): 5 rangers
- (2) North Coast Regional Parks (Stillwater Cove and Gualala Point): 2 rangers
- (3) Salt Point State Park and Kruse Rhododendron Preserve, and Fort Ross State Historic Park (State): 3 rangers
- (4) Sonoma Coast State Beach, Armstrong State Reserve, and Austin Creek State Recreation Area (State): 7 rangers

New development on the coast will increase pressure for additional law enforcement protection by the County Sheriff and CHP. Residents in rural subdivisions often do not realize that urban emergency response times cannot be provided at isolated locations in rural areas, and become dissatisfied with the service levels. Even existing service levels cannot be maintained with an increase in service calls unless additional manpower is available.

Parking management is another law enforcement responsibility which may increase as a result of implementation of this Local Coastal Plan. Policies call for closing small or poorly located parking turnouts, prohibiting parallel parking along parts of State Highway 1, and enforcing parking restrictions. Only park rangers presently enforce parking restrictions, and their responsibility is limited to park lands. On peak weekends when park rangers are busiest with service calls and parking problems are greatest, parking enforcement receives low priority and little attention. The Sheriff and CHP currently do not enforce parking, since there is only one restricted parking area along Highway 1.

Acquisition and development of additional park land and public accessways, mandated by the California Coastal Act, will require increases in park rangers and other staff to maintain and operate them. The expected growth in park use will also cause an increase in ranger responsibilities. Law enforcement agencies are concerned about these expected increases in responsibilities. However, they have little recourse other than to request additional staff when service levels deteriorate. One option would be to pursue State funds for law enforcement services needed to patrol the new park land and public accessways.

## **Goal, Objective, and Policy**

**Goal C-PF-6: Ensure that law enforcement services are provided to meet the future needs of Coastal Zone residents and visitors.**

**Objective C-PF-6.1:** Improve law enforcement services to the Sonoma County coast, particularly patrolling State Highway 1, parks, and public accessways.

The following policy shall be used to achieve these objectives:

**Policy C-PF-6a:** Encourage an increase in traffic patrol of State Highway 1 through use of a CHP helicopter and any other feasible means. (EXISTING LCP REVISED)

## **7. SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT SERVICES**

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The Sonoma County Waste Management Agency (SCWMA) is the joint powers authority of the nine incorporated cities (Cloverdale, Cotati, Healdsburg, Petaluma, Rohnert Park, Santa Rosa, Sebastopol, Sonoma, and Windsor) and the County of Sonoma, and this agency manages waste diversion throughout the County per AB 939. Along with standard waste diversion, the programs that SCWMA provides include household hazardous waste removal, composting, wood waste recycling, planning, and education.

Along the Sonoma County coast north of the Russian River/Jenner, solid waste collected by a licensed hauler is delivered to the Annapolis Transfer Station, from which it is transferred to the Central Disposal Site in Petaluma. Solid waste hauled by self-haul customers could be taken to the Annapolis Transfer Station or the Guerneville Transfer Station, from which it is transferred to the Central Disposal Site. On the coast south of the Russian River, solid waste collected by a licensed hauler is delivered to the Guerneville Transfer Station or directly to the Central Disposal Site. Solid waste hauled by self-haul customers would likely be taken to the Guerneville Transfer Station and could be taken directly to the Central Disposal Site. In 2013, the County entered into a long-term (effective April 1, 2015 for a 20-year term) Master Operations Agreement with Republic Services of Sonoma County, Inc. for operations of the Central Disposal Site and the County's solid waste transfer stations (Sonoma, Healdsburg, Guerneville, and Annapolis).

State law requires cities and/or counties to prepare a Countywide Integrated Waste Management Plan (CoIWMP) to identify and reserve sites for solid waste facilities, and ensure that land uses adjacent to or near solid waste facilities are compatible with those facilities. Sonoma County, in cooperation with the cities in the County, prepared a CoIWMP in 1994. The most recent amendment to the CoIWMP was approved by the California Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery in May 2010.

The CoIWMP is the principal planning document for solid waste management in the County. Solid waste management facilities located in unincorporated areas, including landfills and transfer stations, are designated in the Land Use Element. Issues pertaining to solid waste management addressed in the CoIWMP include:

- (1) The need to temporarily close the Central Landfill and transition from a landfill based system to an outhaul based system (truck and/or rail transport) due to the expense and regulatory uncertainty associated with expanding the Central Landfill and securing flow-control agreements from the cities.

- (2) The need to accommodate the sludge disposal needs of wastewater treatment facilities serving both cities and unincorporated areas; and other types of waste matter, including compostable yard waste and organic matter, recyclable inorganic products (plastic, glass, metal, etc.) and non-compostable organic matter, by treating them as a resource rather than a waste product.
- (3) Reduction of the quantity of waste deposited in landfills by 50% or greater after 2000, based on waste generation rates of 1990.

The CoIWMP contains goals, policies, and short, medium, and long-range objectives, together with measures designed to guide solid waste management and disposal actions of the County and other applicable agencies. The Public Facilities and Services Element is intended to complement the adopted policies of the CoIWMP and any subsequent amendments thereto.

## **Goal, Objective, and Policy**

**Goal C-PF-7: Ensure that solid waste management facilities are sited to minimize adverse impacts on the Coastal Zone environment.**

**Objective C-PF-7.1:** Locate solid waste management facilities to minimize adverse effects on natural and scenic resources.

**Policy C-PF-7a:** The application of biosolids generated in Sonoma County to agricultural lands in the County shall be allowed if it meets all of the following criteria. In the event that one or more of the criteria are not met, a Local Coastal Plan amendment shall be required.

- (1) The project's primary purpose is to enhance agricultural use. The rate of biosolid application shall be designed to enhance existing agricultural operations or designed in conjunction with a detailed management plan for proposed agricultural use.
- (2) The rate of biosolid application shall not result in any future limitations on the potential agricultural use of the area of application.
- (3) The project shall be subject to the approval of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board.
- (4) A use permit and, if necessary, a solid waste facility permit, shall be obtained.
- (5) A permit shall be obtained from the local solid waste enforcement agency.
- (6) The biosolids to be applied to agricultural lands shall be limited to those originating from an approved Sonoma County biosolids source.
- (7) The project shall include provisions for periodic review and evaluations of long-term impacts on soils, water, and agricultural production.
- (8) The site for biosolids application does not contain and is at least 100 feet from wetlands and other ESHAs.

In the event that the biosolids generated in the County is inadequate to address the agricultural demand for biosolids, the County may consider site specific Local Coastal Plan text amendments for the application of biosolids generated outside of the County, provided that the above criteria 1-5 and 7-8 are met and that:

- (1) The applicant can satisfy local public health officials that the method of production and content of the biosolids will not be detrimental to public health.
- (2) The applicant demonstrates that traffic and other impacts of the proposed project are mitigated to the maximum extent feasible.
- (3) The applicant demonstrates that there are no alternative sources of biosolids in the County.
- (4) The applicant demonstrates as part of the analysis that solid waste management facilities will not have a significant adverse effect on coastal resources and will mitigate against any potential impacts. (CCC REVISED - GP2020)

## **Program**

**Program C-PF-7-P1:** Encourage and seek funding from the Economic Development Board and Visitor Tourism Bureau for the siting and development of publicly accessible restrooms, waste receptacles, and potable water.

## **8. PUBLIC UTILITIES AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS**

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The Land Use Element designates existing public utilities as Public/Quasi-Public. Public utilities such as electricity, natural gas, broadband, and telephone services, require transmission and maintenance facilities that may affect natural and scenic resources or neighborhood character. The need for expanded and improved telecommunications services such as fiber and wireless broadband on the Sonoma County coast has been identified by residents and businesses.

In October 2006, Governor Schwarzenegger signed Executive Order S-23-06 to streamline approvals for building broadband networks; ensure all government agencies are using the best technologies to serve the people; and create a broadband task force that lets experts from government and business work together to identify and eliminate obstacles to making broadband internet access ubiquitous in the State. One of the issues raised at the Local Coastal Plan public workshops at The Sea Ranch and Jenner in May and June 2013 is the need for expansion and improvement of telecommunications services, including wireless broadband, on the Sonoma and Mendocino county coasts to provide access to emergency, medical, and educational services; improve the economy; and close the gap in the fiber-optic cable between AT&T on the North Coast and Verizon on the South Coast. In June 2015 The Sea Ranch filed an application for a Coastal Permit and Use Permit to build 59.8 miles of fiber optic

telecommunications network, which is now in service providing broadband to residents of The Sea Ranch.

Expansion and improvement of broadband on the Sonoma County coast would close the “digital divide” by providing equality of opportunity for rural residents and businesses to have the same information and resources provided online to urban residents; boost the coast economy by allowing large, small, and home-based businesses to have a more level playing field from which to compete for a fair share of the market; increase opportunities for education, training, and employment of residents; and save lives and improve healthcare by decreasing emergency response times and increasing opportunities for telemedicine (the remote diagnosis and treatment of patients by means of telecommunications technology).

The “Economic Development Strategy and Jobs Plan - November 2011” developed by the Sonoma County Economic Development Board includes “Strategic Objective 6 – Facilitate Broadband Development in Rural Parts of the County”. The project and associated action steps are described in the “Economic Development Strategy and Jobs Plan” as follows:

*Access to broadband is becoming increasingly important to rural areas of the county, particularly for businesses such as hospitality, wine, agriculture, food processing and professional services. State funding has become available for consortia to participate in consortiums to develop three year plans for broadband deployment (training, promotion, and adoption) and there soon may be funds available for “middle mile” and “last mile” deployment. The County has joined with the North Bay North Coast Broadband Consortium (NBNCBC) in their planning efforts, and should position itself to seek funds for middle and last mile broadband deployment locally, as well as be prepared for funds that may arise for further service. Extending broadband services into unserved and underserved areas would greatly benefit the current population of tourist destination wineries, creative professionals, and others, and provide opportunities as infrastructure needed for economic development is made available.*

## **Goal, Objective, and Policy**

**Goal C-PF-8: Provide access to broadband telecommunications throughout the Coastal Zone.**

**Objective C-PF-8.1:** Extend broadband services into unserved and underserved areas in the Coastal Zone to serve residents and tourists, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions by making telecommuting possible throughout the Coastal Zone. (NEW)

**The following policy shall be used to achieve this objective:**

**Policy C-PF-8a:** Identify underserved broadband areas and support efforts of the Economic Development Board through its Access Sonoma Broadband division to coordinate countywide broadband planning and broadband deployment, grant application development, and outreach.

## **Initiatives**



**Initiative C-PF-8-I1:** Encourage the providers of telecommunication services, including broadband, to expand and improve services to the Sonoma County coast, based on areas of identified need, including closure of the gap in existing fiber-optic cable between the north and south coast. (CCC REVISED - NEW)

**Initiative C-PF-8-I2:** Support the Sonoma County Economic Development Board and the Broadband Alliance of Mendocino County in their efforts to expand and improve wireless broadband services on the Sonoma and Mendocino County coasts. (NEW)

## 9. YOUTH AND FAMILY SERVICES

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The traditional focus of the Local Coastal Plan has been on land use, housing, open space, and other land use related matters. While youth, family, and other social services are not typically considered in this context, many local jurisdictions are beginning to acknowledge the valuable contribution that these services make to a community's quality of life. Issues such as housing, recreation, and child care have a direct link to land use and applicable policies have been developed and are presented in this section. Other issues, such as neighborhood security, youth participation in government, child abuse, drug and alcohol prevention, etc. are not as directly related to land use but, nonetheless, Sonoma County recognizes the importance of these issues and will continue to solicit Federal and State funding to address a full range of health and human service programs designed to create an environment where the County's children, youth and families, senior citizens, and persons with disabilities live in secure and healthy communities. The County would continue to support programs intended to address such significant issues as the prevention of child abuse, youth violence, and drug and alcohol use by minors; as well as those programs which enhance diversity, promote parent education and support services, affordable child care, youth recreation programs, neighborhood revitalization, school based health services, and programs which provide for the needs of low income seniors and disabled persons.

### Goal, Objectives, and Policies

**Goal C-PF-9:** Provide a full range of health and human services to create secure and healthy communities.

**Objective C-PF-9.1:** Promote living conditions in homes and neighborhoods that support safety and security for residents of unincorporated areas.

**Objective C-PF-9.2:** Encourage the development of quality child care facilities, including large and small family child care homes, and public and private daycare centers, in order to provide a wide range of alternatives that meet the diverse needs of children and parents.

**Objective C-PF-9.3:** Foster a safe living environment that encourages independence, promotes opportunities for socialization, and facilitates the creation of adequate and affordable housing options for seniors and persons with disabilities that consider all levels of care,

including independent living, assisted living, board and care, skilled nursing facilities, and day care options.

**Policy C-PF-9a:** Public spaces shall be designed to reflect the needs of children, youth, families, seniors, and persons with disabilities; and to protect their safety. In designing park and recreational facilities, recognize that accessibility will vary depending on the location and purpose of the facility, consistent with State and Federal guidelines. (GP2020)

**Policy C-PF-9b:** Consider the potential negative impacts of proposed projects involving the selling or serving of alcohol or tobacco products or any other controlled substance of a similar nature. When reviewing new proposals, consider the site's proximity to other such uses and to youth serving facilities, and consider denial of Use Permit applications that would result in negative impacts. (GP2020)

**Policy C-PF-9c:** Encourage and support the availability of sites for community based health services, including school based health services and facilities. (GP2020)

**Policy C-PF-9d:** Encourage and support the availability of sites for alcohol, drug, and mental health treatment; as well as housing for persons receiving such treatment. (GP2020)

**Policy C-PF-9e:** Encourage opportunities for safe physical activity as an important component in the design and development of parks and public spaces. (GP2020)

**Policy C-PF-9f:** Child care facilities shall be allowed in all land use designations and encouraged in underserved areas. (GP2020)

**Policy C-PF-9g:** Child care facilities shall be allowed in new housing or office/industrial developments, and required in large projects where a legal nexus between the new development and the need for childcare can be established. (GP2020)

**Policy C-PF-9h:** Consider the needs of youth in transportation planning. Seek youth participation in such decisions. (GP2020)

**Policy C-PF-9i:** New housing and public facilities which provide youth, family, and senior services shall be sited near transit stops when feasible. (GP2020)

**Policy C-PF-9j:** Consider the needs and limitations of senior citizens and persons with disabilities when planning for public transit routes and equipment. (GP2020)

**Policy C-PF-9k:** Consistent with the Land Use Element, provide seniors and persons with disabilities with access to affordable housing by continuing to assist in the planning and construction of such housing. (GP2020)

## **Program**

**Program C-PF-9-P1:** Consider streamlining zoning regulations, for which a Local Coastal Plan Amendment would be required, and reducing fees for large family child care homes and day care centers. Cooperate with the Sonoma County Child Care Planning Council and non-governmental organizations in creating a uniform and simplified review process for childcare facilities. (GP2020)

## **Initiative**

**Initiative C-PF-9-I1:** Collaborate with stakeholders to establish long-term goals for improving the living conditions of children, youth, families, senior citizens, and persons with disabilities; and continue to monitor available data regarding their status. (GP2020)

# Cultural and Historic Resources Element: Table of Contents

Cultural and Historic Resources Element .....	1
Introduction.....	1
Purpose.....	1
Relationship to Other Elements.....	2
Relationship to California Coastal Act.....	2
Section 30244 Archaeological or paleontological resources.....	2
1. Cultural and Historic Resources.....	2
1.1 Goal, Objectives, and Policies .....	2
1.2 Programs.....	5

# Cultural and Historic Resources Element

## INTRODUCTION

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### PURPOSE

The Sonoma County Coastal Zone has a rich cultural history and contains significant archaeological and paleontological resources as well as historic structures and sites. These resources serve important social, commercial, recreational, and educational roles in the community. Cultural resources are also tied to the identity and practices of Native American peoples, and their relationship to these resources is much different than the relationship the general non-native community has to them. The

Sonoma County coast is rich in cultural resources tied to the identity, history, and practices of tribal peoples, and their unique relationship to the landscape.

“Cultural resources” refers collectively to archaeological and paleontological resources, including Native American cultural and sacred sites, tribal cultural resources, artifacts, and remains. In addition “Tribal cultural resources” includes but is not limited to viewscapes, vistas, landscape features, living vegetation, and species used for cultural practices and subsistence.

“Historic resources” refers to structures, sites and artifacts associated with colonization, settlement, and development of the Coastal Zone by non-Native American cultures. Historic resources are generally structures, sites and artifacts associated with non-Native American cultures during and after the Russian and Spanish colonial periods, but these sites may also contain Native American cultural and sacred sites, tribal cultural resources, artifacts, and remains.

## **RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER ELEMENTS**

Policies that address protection and preservation of significant archaeological, historical, and tribal cultural sites apply to all coastal development policies found in the Land Use Element as well as ground disturbing development related to the Circulation and Transit, Public Fac. Policies for protection of resources from sea level rise and the effects of climate change are found in the Public Safety Element.

## **RELATIONSHIP TO CALIFORNIA COASTAL ACT**

The following California Coastal Act policies inform and guide goals, objectives, policies, programs, and initiatives of the Sonoma County Local Coastal Plan Cultural and Historic Resources Element:

### **Section 30244 Archaeological or paleontological resources**

Where development would adversely impact archaeological or paleontological resources as identified by the State Historic Preservation Officer, reasonable mitigation measures shall be required.

## **I. CULTURAL AND HISTORIC RESOURCES**

### **I.1 Goal, Objectives, and Policies**

**GOAL C-CH-1: Protect and preserve historical, archaeological and paleontological resources, including federally and non-federally recognized California Native American Tribes (Tribes) cultural and sacred sites, tribal cultural resources, artifacts, and remains.**

**Objective C-CH-1.1:** Establish and maintain a respectful and effective means of communicating and consulting with Tribes with regard to identification, protection, preservation of, and access to these resources.

**Objective C-CH-1.2:** Require coastal development projects to identify, preserve, and protect historic and Tribal cultural resources, sacred sites, places, features, and objects, including historic or prehistoric ruins, burial grounds, cemeteries, and ceremonial sites. Ensure appropriate treatment of Native American and other human remains discovered during the project.

**Policy C-CH-1a:** Refer all applications for coastal development permits to the Northwest Information Center at Sonoma State University to determine if the project site may contain archaeological or historic resources. If a project site is likely to have archeological, or tribal cultural resources the project is to be referred to Tribes which are traditionally and culturally affiliated with the geographic for review and response regarding whether mitigation is required to ensure there are no impacts to cultural resources. (EXISTING LCP REVISED)

**Policy C-CH-1b:** Refer applications for coastal development permits that involve the removal, demolition, or alteration of a building, structure, site, cemetery, feature, or object identified in a Historic Resource Survey to the Sonoma County Landmarks Commission for review and mitigation, with the exception of such projects within The Sea Ranch, which shall be referred to The Sea Ranch Design Committee. Measures for removal or demolition may include reuse, relocation, preparation of as-built drawings, and photo-documentation. (GP2020)

**Policy C-CH-1c:** Development projects resulting in new ground disturbance, including but not limited to building, grading, or demolition projects shall provide a study prepared by a qualified professional evaluating historical, archaeological and paleontological resources, including Native American cultural and sacred sites, tribal cultural resources, artifacts, and remains. Studies will be referred to Tribes for early and frequent comment and confirmation of adequacy. If a site is likely to have archaeological, cultural or tribal resources, a field survey and an archaeological resources report that contains the results of the survey and includes appropriate mitigation measures shall be required. If the site is likely to have historic resources, a field survey and an historic resources report that contains an evaluation of whether the historic resources are significant under state and federal criteria shall be required. (NEW)

**Policy C-CH-1d:** State law regarding tribal consultation shall be considered the minimum standard of review for Local Coastal Program amendments, implementation of programs and initiatives, review of coastal development permits, and CEQA review and shall follow the principles found in Policy C-CH-1e. (GP2020 REVISED)

**Policy C-CH-1e:** To establish and maintain a respectful and effective means of communicating and consulting with Tribes the following principles shall be followed when evaluating coastal development projects: (NEW)

- (1) Communicate and consult with federally and non-federally recognized California Native American Tribes in a manner that is considerate, respectful, and cognizant of

the Tribes individual rights and interests. Seek tribal input regarding the identification of potential issues, possible means of addressing those issues, and appropriate actions, if any, to be taken by the County.

- (2) Assess the potential impact of proposed County actions on Tribal rights and interests and ensure, to the maximum extent feasible and required by law, that tribal concerns are considered before such actions are taken, such that impacts are avoided, minimized, or mitigated in conformity with Coastal Act and other applicable legal requirements.
- (3) Provide Tribes with meaningful opportunities to respond and participate in County decision-making processes that affect Tribal rights and Interests. Consult with Tribes early and often to ensure Tribal rights and interests are protected and enforced.
- (4) Acknowledge and respect both the confidential nature of information concerning cultural practices, traditions, beliefs, tribal histories, and Tribal lands, and legal protections of the confidentiality of certain tribal cultural information (e.g., Gov. Code §§ 6254(r), 6254.10, Pub. Res. Code § 21082.3(c)). The County will take all lawful and necessary steps to ensure confidential information provided by a Tribe is not disclosed without the prior written permission from the Tribe.
- (5) Encourage collaborative and cooperative relationships with Tribes in matters affecting coastal resources.
- (6) Acknowledge and seek ways to accommodate Tribes with limited financial and staffing resources, and staffing resources of the County and the California Coastal Commission to ensure effective communication and consultation, including joint consultation with the Coastal Commission Tribal Liaison staff.
- (7) Identify and recommend means to remove procedural impediments to working directly and effectively with Tribes.
- (8) Consultation should not be viewed as a one-time, one-meeting activity, but rather an iterative process.

**Policy C-CH-1f:** New development shall avoid impacts to cultural resources through siting and design measures to the extent feasible or required by law. Any unavoidable impacts, disturbance, or substantial adverse changes caused by development on cultural resources shall be mitigated through measures such as preservation in place or site sampling and salvage in coordination with Tribal representatives. The preferred and required alternatives for mitigating impacts, if feasible, are avoidance or preservation in place. Consult with affected Tribe(s) on appropriate alternatives. (EXISTING LCP REVISED)

**Policy C-CH-1g:** Continue to apply standard conditions requiring notification and evaluation in the event of the discovery of a burial or suspected human remains or other cultural resources, including consultation with the Most Likely Descendant as identified by the California Native American Heritage Commission, in the event that the remains are determined to be Native American. (GP2020 REVISED)

**Policy C-CH-1h:** Require all known and newly discovered cultural resources to be reported to the appropriate tribe or tribal community, agency, or organization. These may include but are not limited to the California Native American Heritage Commission, the State Historical Resources Commission, or the California Office of Historic Preservation. (NEW)

**Policy C-CH-1i:** Require all known and newly discovered cultural resources to be reported to the appropriate tribe or tribal community, agency, or organization. These may include but are not limited to the California Native American Heritage Commission, the State Historical Resources Commission, or the California Office of Historic Preservation. (NEW)

**Policy C-CH-1j:** Ensure that cultural resources are protected from the impacts of environmental hazards, including sea level rise and climate change, especially risk from wildfire. Work with the State Historic Preservation Officer to identify actions such as mitigation and monitoring programs to protect archaeological and paleontological resources including Native American artifacts at risk from hazards such as erosion, inundation, and sea level rise in a manner consistent with the policies of the LCP and other applicable provisions of the Coastal Act. (CCC REVISED - NEW)

**Policy C-CH-1k:** Where a project has the potential to impact a tribal cultural resource a cultural conservation easement may be utilized as a potential means of mitigation. Tribal access easements shall be encouraged.

**Policy C-CH-1l:** Require projects to maintain and preserve the integrity of historic structures and features associated with or may be affected by the proposed project. (PC REVISED)

## **I.2 Programs**

**Program C-CH-P1:** In coordination with Tribes develop a comprehensive procedure for review of projects and activities including public land acquisitions that may impact archeological or cultural resources or have the potential to provide opportunities to increase and protect the access of the Tribes to cultural resources. This procedure should include referral processes for projects which are potentially exempt from formal consultation under state law, and identify best management practices for ensuring the protection of cultural resources.

**Program C-CH-P2:** Create an inventory of historic resources that are at risk from neglect and/or the effects of sea level rise and climate change. This inventory would identify



preservation priorities based on historic significance, current condition, level of risk, and funding needs as well as strategies for preservation, consistent with protection of coastal natural resources. (PC REVISED)

# Glossary

Unless the context clearly implies a contrary meaning or unless a rigid application of the definition would be contrary to the law, the following words, when used in the Local Coastal Plan, shall be construed as follows:

## **Goals, Objectives, Policies, Programs, and Initiatives**

**Goals:** General guidelines that explain what the County seeks to achieve through Local Coastal Plan implementation.

**Objectives:** Statements that set forth strategies or implementation measures to help attain the stated goals.

**Policies:** Statements that bind or directly guide the County's actions and establish the standards of review for determining whether land use and development decisions, zoning changes, or other County actions are consistent with the Local Coastal Plan.

**Programs:** Ongoing or future actions necessary or potential steps for implementation of the Local Coastal Program; for example, further study and development of plans or ordinances.

**Initiatives:** Non-binding and/or advisory statements of intent, encouragement, or pledges of support for specific endeavors, programs, partnership or outcomes; and which may set guidelines and priorities for County actions.

## **Definitions and Commonly Used Terms**

**Abut:** To touch along a border or with a projecting part; to border on.

**Accessory Building:** A structure that is incidental and subordinate to existing development that supports the principally permitted use on a parcel. Garages, workshops, and accessory dwelling units are examples of accessory structures in a residential land use.

**Accessory Dwelling Unit:** An attached or detached residential dwelling unit provided in compliance with Section 26C-325.1, which provides complete independent living facilities for one (1) or more persons, and includes separate permanent provisions for entry, living, sleeping, eating, cooking and sanitation on the same parcel as a single-family dwelling. An accessory dwelling unit may also be provided as an efficiency dwelling unit and/or a manufactured home, as defined in this section. Also known as Second Dwelling Units.

**Adaptive Reuse:** The process of reusing an existing building for a purpose other than which it was originally built or designed for.

**Adjacent:** Having a common border.

**Adjoin:** Lie next to or in contact with.

**Affordable Housing:** Housing which costs no more than 30 percent of a low or very low income household's gross monthly income. For rental housing, the residents pay up to 30 percent of gross income on full-service rent (including utilities) or the combination of rent and separate utility costs. For home ownership, residents pay up to 30 percent on the combination of mortgage payments, taxes, insurance, and utility costs.

**Agricultural Area:** Land used to produce food, fiber, or plant materials, and its immediate surrounding area. See Agricultural Production Area

**Agricultural Employee Housing:** See Farmworker Housing

**Agricultural Farmstay:** See Farmstays

**Agricultural Land:** Land designated within an agricultural land use category.

**Agricultural Operation:** A specific agricultural use or business.

**Agricultural Production Activities:** Those activities directly associated with agriculture, but not including agricultural support services, processing, and visitor serving uses. This is the act of changing an agricultural product from its natural state to a different form, activities include growing, harvesting, crop storage, milking, etc.

**Agricultural Production Area:** Land used to produce food, fiber, or plant materials, and its immediate surrounding area.

**Agricultural Support Services:** Processing of food and fiber grown within the Sonoma County coastal zone, maintenance and repair of farm machinery and equipment, veterinary clinics, contract farming and farm management services, agricultural waste handling and disposal services, and other similar services that directly support agriculture within the coastal zone.

**Agricultural Tourism:** An activity carried out on a farm or ranch that allows members of the general public, for recreational, entertainment or educational purposes, to view or participate in agricultural activities such as farming, processing of agricultural products, ranching or similar natural activities and attractions that are directly related to the production of food or fiber. (CCC REVISED)

**Agriculture:** The production of food, fiber, plant materials, and the raising and maintaining of livestock, horses, donkeys, mules, and similar farm animals.

**Alluvium:** clay, silt, sand, gravel, or similar detrital material deposited by running water

**Alternative Septic System:** Also known as an alternative sewage disposal system. These are non-standard engineered septic and leach field systems that Sonoma County authorized by the most recent Onsite Wastewater Treatment Systems (OWTS) manual. Installation of these systems may require quarterly monitoring, an easement allowing the County to conduct annual monitoring of these systems, and an annual operating permit.

**Alternative Transportation Mode:** Transportation alternatives to travel by automobile other than public transit. Examples include bicycles, walking, and personal electric assist vehicles such as e-bikes and electric scooters.

**Animal Husbandry:** The raising, breeding, and maintaining of livestock, horses, donkeys, mules, and similar farm animals. Also known as Farm Animal Production

**Aquaculture:** That form of agriculture devoted to the propagation, cultivation, maintenance, and harvesting of aquatic plants and animals in marine, brackish, and fresh water. “Aquaculture” does not include species of ornamental marine or freshwater plants and animals not utilized for human consumption or bait purposes that are maintained in closed systems for personal, pet industry, or hobby purposes. Aquaculture products are agricultural products, and aquaculture facilities and land uses shall be treated as agricultural facilities and land uses in all planning and permit-issuing decisions governed by the California Coastal Act.

**Aquifer:** A geologic formation that stores, transmits, and yields significant quantities of water into wells and springs.

**Arterial:** Medium to high capacity roadway serving primarily through traffic.

**Base Zone:** The zoning district which describes and regulates the predominant use of the land to which additional combining districts may be applied.

**Bikeway:** Any facility that explicitly provides for bicycle travel. Bikeways are classified into three types denoting a degree of separation from the highway, as follows: Class I (completely separated right-of-way designated for the exclusive use of bicycles), Class II (a restricted right-of-way designated for the exclusive or semi exclusive use of bicycles), and Class III (a shared right-of-way designated by signing or stenciling on pavement).

**Biosolids:** Sewage sludge that has been treated, tested and shown to be capable of being used beneficially as a soil amendment for agricultural, silvicultural, horticultural, and land reclamation activities.

**Biotic Resource Area:** Unique or significant plant or animal communities, including estuaries, fresh and salt water marshes, tideland resources, riparian corridors and certain terrestrial communities.

**Bluff:** A high bank or bold headland with a broad, precipitous, sometimes rounded cliff face overlooking a plain or body of water. A bluff may consist of a steep cliff face below and a more sloping upper bluff above.

**Bluff Edge:** The line of intersection between the steeply sloping bluff face and the flat or more gently sloping bluff top; or the upper termination of a bluff, cliff, or seacliff. In cases where the top edge of the bluff is rounded away from the face of the bluff as a result of erosion processes related to the presence of the steep bluff face, the bluff line or edge shall be defined as that point nearest the bluff beyond which the downward gradient of the surface increases more or less continuously until it reaches the general gradient of the bluff. In a case where there is a step-like feature at the top of the bluff face, the landward edge of the topmost riser shall be taken to be the bluff edge. Bluff edges

typically retreat landward due to coastal erosion, landslides, development of gullies, or by grading (cut). In areas where the bluff top or bluff face has been cut or notched by grading, the bluff edge shall be the landward most position of either the current or historic bluff edge. In areas where fill has been placed near or over the historic bluff edge, the original natural bluff edge, even if buried beneath fill, shall be taken to be the bluff edge.

**Bluff Top:** The upper surface of a bluff or cliff.

**Bodega Harbor Tideflats:** A marshy, sandy or muddy nearly horizontal coastal flatland which is alternately covered and exposed as the tide rises and falls. Vegetation is limited to algae and some other wetland vegetation.

**Building Envelope:** A defined location or locations on a parcel.

**Build out:** A theoretical level of development which assumes that every parcel of land will develop to the maximum allowed by a plan or zoning.

**Channelization:** The straightening and/or deepening of a water course for purposes of stream runoff control or ease of navigation. Channelization often includes the lining of stream banks with retaining material such as concrete.

**Circulation:** The movement of goods and people within a region.

**Clear cutting:** A method of timber harvest as defined by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection.

**Clustered Development:** Development in which a number of dwelling units are placed in closer proximity than usual, or are attached, with the purpose of retaining an expanse of undeveloped or less developed land.

**Coast:** The part of the land near the sea; the edge of the land.

**Coastal Bluffs:** Area between the cliff edge and the highest high tide line. Bluffs or cliffs are scarps or steep faces of rock, decomposed rock, sediment or soil resulting from erosion, faulting, folding or excavation. When the top edge of the cliff is rounded away from the face of the cliff, the edge shall be defined as that point nearest the cliff beyond which the downward gradient of the land surface increase more or less continuously until it reaches the general gradient of the cliff.

**Coastal County:** A county or city and county which lies, in whole or in part, within the coastal zone.

**Coastal-Dependent Development or Use:** Any development or use which requires a site on, or adjacent to, the sea to be able to function at all.

**Coastal-Related Development:** Any use that is dependent on a coastal-dependent development or use.

**Coastal Development Permit:** A permit for any development within the coastal zone that is required pursuant to subdivision (a) of Section 30600 of the California Coastal Act.

**Coastal Plan:** The California Coastal Zone Conservation Plan prepared and adopted by the California Coastal Zone Conservation Commission and submitted to the Governor and the Legislature on December 1, 1975, pursuant to the California Coastal Zone Conservation Act of 1972 (commencing with Section 27000).

**Coastal Redevelopment:** Development located between public trust lands and a point 100 feet inland of the top of a coastal bluff, adjoining or near the ocean and land interface, or at very low-lying elevations along the shoreline that consists of: 1) additions to an existing structure; 2) exterior or interior renovations; or 3) demolition of an existing bluff top home or other principal structure, or portions thereof, which results in:

- (1) Alteration of 50 percent or more of major structural components including exterior walls, floor and roof, and foundation; or a 50 percent increase in floor area. Alterations are not additive between individual major structural components; however, changes to individual major structural components are cumulative over time from the effective date of the Coastal Act (January 1, 1977).
- (2) Demolition, renovation, or replacement of less than 50 percent of a major structural component where the proposed alteration would result in cumulative alterations exceeding 50% or more of a major structural component, taking into consideration previous alterations approved on or after the effective date of the Coastal Act (January 1, 1977); or an alteration that constitutes a less than 50 percent increase in floor area where the proposed alteration would result in a cumulative addition of greater than 50 percent of floor area, taking into consideration previous additions approved on or after the effective date of the Coastal Act (January 1, 1977).

**Coastal Prairie and Grassland:** Discontinuous grassland usually within 100 km of the coast; usually on southerly facing slopes or terraces. This habitat type is characterized by a mixture of heavily grazed, introduced annual grasses and some native perennial grasses, generally underlain by sandy to clay loam surface soils. This mapping category does not indicate pristine coastal prairie.

**Coastal Woodland:** Category grouping the redwood, mixed evergreen, closed cone pine, and oak woodland forests.

**Coastal Zone:** That land and water area of the State of California from the Oregon border to the border of the Republic of Mexico, specified on the maps identified and set forth in Section 17 of that chapter of the Statutes of the 1975-76 Regular Session enacting this division, extending seaward to the state's outer limit of jurisdiction, including all offshore islands, and extending inland generally 1,000 yards from the mean high tide line of the sea. In significant coastal estuarine, habitat, and recreational areas it extends inland to the first major ridgeline paralleling the sea or five miles from the mean high tide line of the sea, whichever is less, and in developed urban areas the zone generally extends inland less than 1,000 yards. The coastal zone does not include the area of jurisdiction of the San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission, established pursuant to Title 7.2 (commencing with Section 66600) of the Government Code, nor any area contiguous thereto, including any river, stream, tributary, creek, or flood control or drainage channel flowing into such area.

**Collector:** A relatively low speed, low volume roadway which provides circulation within and between neighborhoods which is intended to collect trips from local streets and distribute them to the arterial network.

**Combining District:** A zoning designation which is superimposed over a base zoning district to modify the regulations in the base zoning district.

**Commercial Fishing:** See Marine Industrial

**Community Noise Exposure Level (CNEL):** CNEL is a measure of the cumulative effect of individual noise events averaged over a 24-hour period and weighted by the time of occurrence.

**Compatible, Congenial, Harmonious with:** As used in the land use and other elements, referring to land uses and types of development that can exist together without creating a conflict.

**Conservation:** The management of natural resources to prevent waste, depletion, destruction, or neglect.

**Constraints:** Impediments to development, such as slope instability, lack of adequate water.

**Countywide:** Sonoma County in its entirety; both the unincorporated areas and the Cities.

**Cultivation:** The act of preparing the soil for the raising of crops.

**Cultural Resources:** Physical evidence or place of past human activity: site, object, landscape, structure; or a site, structure, landscape, object or natural feature of significance to a group of people traditionally associated with it.

**Cumulative Effect:** The incremental effects of an individual project which shall be reviewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects.

**Defensible space:** A buffer zone created between a building on your property and the grass, trees, shrubs, or any wildland area that surrounds the building in order to slow or stop the spread of wildfire to protect your building from catching fire.

**Density:** As generally used in the land use element, the term refers to the number of acres per residential dwelling unit or the number of dwelling units per acre.

**Development:** On land, in or under water, the placement or erection of any solid material or structure; discharge or disposal of any dredged material or of any gaseous, liquid, solid, or thermal waste; grading, removing, dredging, mining, or extraction of any materials; change in the density or intensity of use of land, including, but not limited to, subdivision pursuant to the Subdivision Map Act (commencing with Section 66410 of the Government Code), and any other division of land, including lot splits, except where the land division is brought about in connection with the purchase of such land by a public agency for public recreational use; change in the intensity of use of water, or of access thereto; construction, reconstruction, demolition, or alteration of the size of any structure, including any facility of any private, public, or municipal utility; and the removal or harvesting of major vegetation other than for agricultural purposes, kelp harvesting, and timber operations which are in accordance with a timber harvesting plan submitted pursuant to the provisions of the Z'berg-Nejedly Forest Practice Act of 1973 (commencing with Section 4511). As used in this definition, "structure" includes, but is not limited to, any building, road, pipe, flume, conduit, siphon, aqueduct, telephone line, and electrical power transmission and distribution line.

**Discretionary Project or Permit:** A project or permit which the decision making body may approve, approve with conditions or deny.

**Disruption of Habitat Values:** Physical removal, destruction, damage, disturbance, fragmentation, or contamination of air, land, water, soil, and vegetation of an area which cause the plant and animal habitats in the area to be removed, replaced by other habitats, or degraded to the point where the habitats are functionally unable to support the plant and animal species originally present.

**Drainage Basin:** A drainage basin is any area of land where precipitation collects and drains off into a common outlet, such as into a river, bay, or other body of water.

**Dunes and Coastal Strand:** Coastal dunes are sandy beach materials formed into dunes by the wind. Most of the ground is bare sand, either actively moving or stabilized by a vegetative cover: low growing annual or perennial herbs with low water requirements and a high salt tolerance. (Coastal Strand is the plant community found on sandy beaches and dunes scattered along the entire coast).

**Dwelling Unit:** A residence containing cooking, sleeping and sanitation facilities used to house the members of a household. While Accessory Dwelling Units, Junior Accessory Dwelling Units, Farmworker and Farm Family Housing are dwelling units, they do not count towards allowed residential land use density.

**Earthquake Epicenter:** The point on Earth's surface directly above the focus point of where the earthquake is originating underground.

**Easement:** Usually the right to use property owned by another for specific purposes.

**Easement; Conservation, Scenic, or Open Space:** An interest in real property whereby open space is secured.

**Effluent:** Liquid waste or sewage discharged into a river or the sea

**Embankment:** A man-made ridge, bank, mound, or dike of earth, gravel, or stone that carries a road or railway or confines or holds back water in a waterway.

**Emergency Service:** Emergency services conducted by public agencies or private firms including the following:

- (1) Fire services including wildland fire suppression
- (2) Police services
- (3) Medical services

**Energy Facility:** Any public or private processing, producing, generating, storing, transmitting, or recovering facility for electricity, natural gas, petroleum, coal, or other source of energy.

**Environment:** The circumstances, objects, or conditions by which one is surrounded. The physical conditions including both natural and man-made, which exist within an area including land, air, water, minerals, flora, fauna, noise, and objects of historic or aesthetic significance.

**Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Area:** Defined by the California Coastal Act Section 30107.5 as "Any area in which plant or animal life or their habitats are either rare or especially valuable because of their special nature or role in an ecosystem and which could be easily disturbed or degraded by human activities and developments."

In the Sonoma County Local Coastal Plan, environmentally sensitive habitat areas include those areas which meet one or more of the following criteria:

- (1) Habitats containing or supporting "rare and endangered" species as defined by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife and/or the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.
- (2) Perennial and intermittent rivers, streams, their tributaries, and associated riparian habitat.
- (3) Coastal tide lands and marshes.
- (4) Coastal and offshore areas containing breeding or nesting sites and coastal areas used by



migratory and resident water-associated birds for resting and feeding.

- (5) Marine mammal haul out areas.
- (6) Areas used for scientific study and research concerning fish and wildlife.
- (7) Lakes and ponds including associated shoreline habitat.
- (8) Wildlife refuges and reserves.
- (9) Sand dunes.

**Environmental Justice:** Defined by the California Coastal Act Section 30107.3 as

(a) “Environmental justice” means the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of people of all races, cultures, -incomes, and national origins, with respect to the development, adoption, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies.

(b) “Environmental justice” includes, but is not limited to, all of the following:

- (1) The availability of a healthy environment for all people.
- (2) The deterrence, reduction, and elimination of pollution burdens for populations and communities experiencing the adverse effects of that pollution, so that the effects of the pollution are not disproportionately borne by those populations and communities.
- (3) Governmental entities engaging and providing technical assistance to populations and communities most impacted by pollution to promote their meaningful participation in all phases of the environmental and land use decision making process.
- (4) At a minimum, the meaningful consideration of recommendations from populations and communities most impacted by pollution into environmental and land use decisions.

**Environmentally Suitable:** Having minimal or insignificant adverse impact on the environment.

**Environmental Review:** The identification and analysis of the potential adverse impacts of a proposed development on the environment conducted pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act and the National Environmental Policy Act for project receiving Federal funds or when required by Federal resource agencies. (CCC REVISED)

**Erosion:** The loosening and transportation of rock and soil debris by wind, rain, or other running water or the gradual wearing away of the upper layers of the earth.

**Estuary:** The lower course of a river or stream where tidal influence is noticeable; the mixing zone of fresh and salt waters near the mouth of a river or stream.

**Farm Animal Production:** The raising, breeding, and maintaining of horses, donkeys, mules, and similar livestock and farm animals. Also known as Animal Husbandry.

**Farm Retail Sales:** A small-scale retail facility for year-round sales of agricultural products grown or raised on the site or other properties owned or leased by the farm operator, and pre-packaged goods processed from onsite agricultural production, excluding alcoholic products. Examples include dairy and meat products that require refrigeration. Small-scale farm retail sales must be in compliance with the County Code. Sampling of products grown or processed on-site may be allowed with a Retail Food Facility Permit. Incidental sales of merchandise or goods not produced onsite is limited to ten percent (10%) of the floor area up to a maximum of fifty (50) square feet.

**Farm Stand:** An area for the temporary or seasonal sales and promotion of agricultural products that are grown or raised on the site and pre-packaged, shelf stable goods processed from onsite agricultural production, excluding alcoholic products. Examples include: produce, eggs, honey, jams, pickles, nuts, olive oil, and similar products. Farm stands must be consistent with Section 47050 of the Food and Agricultural Code and Section 113778.2 of the Public Health and Safety Code. Sampling of products grown on-site may be allowed with a Retail Food Facility Permit. Incidental sales of merchandise or goods not produced on site is limited to ten percent (10%) of the floor area up to a maximum of fifty (50) square feet.

**Farmland of Local Importance:** Farmland other than Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, or Unique Farmland. This land may be important to the local economy due to its productivity or value, as defined by the Board of Supervisors.

**Farmstay:** Transient lodging accommodations containing five or fewer guestrooms in a single- family dwelling or guest quarters provided as part of a farming operation, with an on-site farmer in residence, that includes all meals provided in the price of the lodging, and that meets all of the standards in the County Code.

**Farmworker Housing:** A dwelling unit or dwelling units occupied by persons employed by agricultural operations, and their dependents.

**Feasible:** Defined by California Coastal Act Section 30108 as “That which is capable of being accomplished in a successful manner within a reasonable period of time, taking into account economic, environmental, social, legal and technological factors.”

**Federal Coastal Act:** The Federal Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972 (16 U.S.C. 1451, et seq.), as amended.

**Fill:** Earth or any other substance or material, including pilings placed for the purposes of erecting structures thereon, placed in a submerged area.

**Fish or Wildlife Corridor:** A habitat linkage that joins two or more areas of fish or wildlife habitat, allowing for fish passage or the movement of wildlife from one area to another.

**Flood, 100-year:** The magnitude of a flood expected to occur on the average every 100 years, based on historical data. The 100-year flood has a 1/100, or one percent, chance of occurring in any given year.

**Flood Control:** Measures that are taken to increase the hydrologic capacity of a natural water course or to create new man-made channels or reservoirs to drain and contain precipitation that otherwise exceeds the capacity of the water course, in an effort to reduce flood damage, usually to man made improvements.

**Flood Plain:** The land area adjacent to a watercourse, drainage way, or creek which has been or may be covered by floodwaters. The boundaries of a flood plain are typically described in terms of the magnitude of a flood event such as the "100 year flood plain".

**Floodway:** The portion of a stream channel and the adjacent flood plain that must be reserved in order to discharge the 100-year flood without cumulatively increasing the water surface more than one foot. The Flood Insurance Rate Maps show floodway boundaries for those streams studied as part of that program.

**Fluvial:** Of, pertaining to, inhabiting, or produced by the action of a river, creek, stream or other natural waterway. (CCC-REVISED)

**Goal:** A general statement of a desired end toward which an effort will be directed.

**Guest Ranch:** The guest ranch, also known as a dude ranch, is a type of ranch oriented towards visitors or tourism on working ranches. It is also another form of Agritourism. (CCC-REVISED)

**Guest Quarters:** Also know as a “Guest House”. An accessory building to a single family dwelling which consists of a detached living area of a permanent type of construction. A guest house may contain a full or half bathroom, but may not contain provisions for appliances or fixtures for the storage and/or preparation of food, including, but not limited to, refrigeration, dishwashers or cooking facilities. The building shall not be leased, subleased, rented or sub-rented separately from the main dwelling except that a legal, fully permitted guest house may be used as a hosted rental. The floor area of a guest house shall be a maximum of six hundred forty (640) square feet. Floor area shall be calculated by measuring the exterior perimeter of the guest house and the length of any common walls. In the case of straw bale or similar construction, floor area may be calculated using interior dimensions. For the purpose of calculating the maximum size of a guest house, any storage area attached to the guest house, excluding garage, shall be included. A guest house shall be located closer to the primary dwelling on the subject lot than to a primary dwelling on any adjacent lot. The guest house shall not be located more than one hundred feet (100') from the primary dwelling on the subject lot, except where the planning director determines that a greater setback is appropriate in light of topography, vegetation or unique physical characteristics.

**Habitat Connectivity Corridor:** A linkage needed to allow movement of wildlife across the landscape.

**Headway:** The time interval between transit vehicles, such as trains busses or ferries, moving in the same direction on a particular route. A lower headway indicates more frequent service. (TECHNICAL CORRECTION)

**Heritage Road:** A public road with unique scenic, historic, recreational, cultural, archeological and/or natural qualities that may be compromised if the road is fully improved to meet current road standards.

**High Public Occupancy:** A building or structure with an occupant load of 300 or more persons, as determined by the occupant load calculation in the current adopted California Building Code.

**Hosted Rental:** A single family dwelling, with an owner in residence, where no more than one (1) bedroom, sleeping area or guest quarters, is available, used, let or hired out for transient use, subject to standards in the County Code. See also Vacation Rental.

**Household:** The year round occupants of a dwelling unit.

**Indemnity:** Is a contractual obligation of one party to compensate the loss occurred to the other party due to the act of the indemnitor or any other party.

**Impaired Surface Waters:** A surface body or segment of water that does not meet applicable water quality standards of the State Water Resources Control Board. (TECHNICAL CORRECTION)

**Implementation:** Actions, procedures, programs, or techniques that carry out policies.

**Implementing Actions:** The ordinances, regulations, or programs which implement either the provisions of the certified local coastal program or the policies of this division and which are submitted pursuant to Section 30502 of the California Coastal Act.

**Incidental Sales:** Sales of goods and products that are accessory and subordinate to the primary use of a property and conducted so as not to significantly change the character, appearance, or operation of the primary use.

**Indicators:** Quantifiable parameters and representative measurements of demographic, economic, social, environmental, and other conditions related to the quality of life and the effectiveness of General Plan goals, objectives, and policies.

**Infill Development:** Development of vacant or under used land (usually individual lots or left-over properties) within areas which are already largely developed.

**Infrastructure:** Public services and facilities, such as sewage disposal systems, other utility systems, and roads; generally refers to physical improvements as opposed to social services.

**Junior Accessory Dwelling Unit:** A living space not exceeding five hundred (500) square feet in size and contained entirely within a legally established bedroom within the walls of an existing, fully permitted single-family dwelling. A junior accessory dwelling unit shall include an efficiency kitchen, and may include separate sanitation facilities or share sanitation facilities with the existing structure.

**Land Use:** The occupation or utilization of land or water area for any human activity or purpose.

**Land Use Plan:** The relevant portion of a local government's general plan, or local coastal element which are sufficiently detailed to indicate the kinds, location, and intensity of land uses, the applicable resource protection and development policies and, where necessary, a listing of implementing actions.

**Lateral Accessway:** An accessway that extends from the mean high tide line landward to a defined line, such as the intersection of the sand with the toe of a revetment, vertical face of a seawall, toe of a bluff, or other feature.

**Lead Agency:** Means the public agency which has the principal responsibility for carrying out or approving a project.

**Level of Service:** An evaluation of emergency response time, staffing, equipment, and emergency services offered by a fire department or organization providing initial response to emergencies.

Level of Service also refers to a method used in the past that evaluated traffic impacts based on congestion and delay. Level of Service as a metric for evaluating traffic impacts has been superseded by Vehicle Miles of Travel (VMT), which measures cumulative miles traveled by private vehicles, such as an automobile, van, pickup truck, or motorcycle. Each mile traveled by a vehicle is counted as one vehicle mile regardless of the number of persons in the vehicle. (TECHNICAL CORRECTION)

**Liquefaction:** Occurs when a saturated or partially saturated soil substantially loses strength and stiffness in response to an applied stress such as shaking during an earthquake or other sudden change in stress condition, in which material that is ordinarily a solid behaves like a liquid.

**Live-Work Use:** Conduct of a business within a dwelling unit or accessory structure by occupants of the dwelling unit and employees, with the business activities being subordinate to the residential use of the site. Live/work is distinguished from home occupation, primarily in that the use involves more

intensive activities and includes employees other than the residents of the dwelling. All live/work uses shall be conducted in accordance with the County Code.

**Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO):** A County commission that reviews and evaluates all proposals for the formation of special districts, incorporation of cities, annexation to special districts or cities, consolidation of districts, merger of districts with cities, and setting of spheres of influence. Each county's LAFCO is empowered to approve, disapprove, or conditionally approve these proposals.

**Local Area:** Any of the unincorporated communities within the County or a geographic area, such as a valley, that is lesser in area than the planning area in which it is located.

**Local Coastal Element:** That portion of a general plan applicable to the coastal zone which may be prepared by local government pursuant to this division, or any additional elements of the local government's general plan prepared pursuant to Section 65303 of the Government Code, as the local government deems appropriate.

**Local Coastal Program:** A local government's (a) land use plans, (b) zoning ordinances, (c) zoning district maps, and (d) within sensitive coastal resources areas, other implementing actions, which, when taken together, meet the requirements of, and implement the provisions and policies of, the California Coastal Act at the local level.

**Local Government:** Any chartered or general law city, chartered or general law county, or any city and county.

**Lot:** See Parcel

**Lot Size, Minimum:** The smallest size parcel which is permitted to be created if a lot can be subdivided.

**Major Employment Center:** An area that is exclusively industrial and/or commercial with a total employment of 500 persons or more.

**Major Subdivision:** The division of any parcel or parcels of improved or unimproved land into five (5) or more parcels, pursuant to the provisions of the Subdivision Map Act (Government Code 66410 et seq) and the Subdivision Ordinance (Sonoma County Code, Chapter 25).

**Marine Industrial:** Land designated for or occupied by marine industrial development. The MI land use category encompasses land to accommodate a variety of commercial, light to medium industrial, and service uses which support the commercial fishing and other coastal dependent industries which depend on the marine environment and resources.

**Maximum Single-event Noise Level (L<sub>max</sub>):** L<sub>max</sub> is a measure that indicates the maximum noise level reached during a single event (i.e., aircraft overflight), expressed in dBA, at a specified point of measurement.

**Minor Subdivision:** The division of any parcel or parcels of improved or unimproved land into four (4) or fewer parcels, pursuant to the provisions of the Subdivision Map Act (Government Code 66410 et seq) and the Subdivision Ordinance (Sonoma County Code, Chapter 25).

**Mitigate:** To ameliorate, alleviate, or avoid to the extent reasonably feasible.

**Mitigation Measure:** An action or series of actions designed to avoid or lessen the extent of an adverse impact of a project, pursuant to the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines (14 Cal. Adm. Code Sec 15370).

**Moratorium:** Is a temporary suspension of an activity or a law until future events warrant lifting the suspension or issues regarding the activity have been resolved.

**National Hydrography Dataset (NHD):** The National Hydrography Dataset (NHD) is a combined dataset that provides hydrographic data for the United States. The NHD is the culmination of recent cooperative efforts of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) and the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS). It combines elements of USGS digital line graph (DLG) hydrography files and the USEPA Reach File (RF3). The DLG Hydrography layer is primarily focused on flowing water, standing water, and wetlands. According to the USGS, these data are digital vector representations of cartographic information derived from USGS maps and related sources.

**National Wetland Inventory (NWI):** The NWI is a nationwide inventory of U.S. wetlands to provide biologists and others with information on the distribution and type of wetlands to aid in conservation efforts. The NWI maps show the location and type (classification) of wetlands and deepwater habitats (streams, lakes, and estuaries) based on the official FWS wetland classification system (Cowardin et al. 1979).

**Natural Resource:** Something (such as minerals, soil, water, sunlight, plants, or animals) that occurs in nature.

**Noise:** Unwanted sound produced by human activity that interferes with communication, work, rest, recreation, speech, and sleep.

**Non-Conforming Use:** A lawful use existing on the effective date of a zoning ordinance restriction and continuing since that date in nonconformance to the restriction.

**Objective:** A specific detailed statement of a desired future condition toward which the County is committed and progress is measurable.

**Old Growth Forest:** A forest with the following characteristics: (1) trees at least 200 years old present in the overstory, (2) storied canopy including a variety of tree species in the lower levels, (3) openings that allow light into the forest floor where dense vegetation thrives, (4) presence of snags, (5) coarse woody debris on the ground, and (5) the absence of stand-altering disturbance by humans.

**Onsite Wastewater Treatment Systems:** An individual wastewater treatment and dispersal system, small community collection, treatment and dispersal systems, or alternative collection and dispersal systems that use subsurface dispersal. These systems are commonly referred to as “septic systems”.

**Open Space:** Any parcel or area of land or water which is essentially unimproved and devoted to an open space use as defined in Section 65560(b) of the Government Code.

**Parcel:** A legally defined lot, or contiguous group of lots, in single ownership or under single control, usually considered a unit for purposes of development.

**Peak Hour:** For any given roadway, the daily 60-minute period during which traffic volume is highest.

**Performance Standards:** Standards or criteria for regulating or determining the acceptability of certain land uses based upon the performance of the use.

**Permit:** Any license, certificate, approval, or other entitlement for use granted or denied by any public agency which is subject to the provisions of the California Coastal Act.

**Permitted Use:** A typical land use that is allowed within a particular Local Coastal Plan Land Use category. A permitted use is considered to be consistent with and to further the objectives of the Local Coastal Plan and the California Coastal Act. Such a use may also be subject to performance or other development standards and approvals in the zoning ordinance.

**Person:** Any individual, organization, partnership, limited liability company, or other business association or corporation, including any utility, and any federal, state, local government, or special district or an agency thereof.

**Passive Recreation:** Recreational use or activities that require no special or formal facilities or are natural areas. Passive recreation activities include, but are not limited to, bicycle riding, walking, hiking, bird watching, etc.

**Places of Public Assembly:** Meeting halls, schools, hospitals, and other associated medical facilities, mosques, temples, or other places of religious worship.

**Policy:** Specific statement that guides decision making in order to achieve a goal or objective.

**Practical:** See Feasible.

**Preservation:** Restoration or protection from deterioration of features having environmental, cultural, historic, or other resource value.

**Principally Permitted Use:** Within the context of the California Coastal Act, a principally permitted use is a single category of development identified for each land use category that clearly carries out the intent of that land use category and development associated with that use is consistent with the Coastal Act. An example of a principally permitted use would be a single family home within the Rural Residential land use. By designating development as principally permitted, such development will only be appealable to the Coastal Commission if it is otherwise appealable based on its geographic location.

**Prime Agricultural Land:** Those lands defined in paragraph (1), (2), (3), or (4) of subdivision (c) of Section 51201 of the Government Code.

**Productive Agricultural Land:** Land currently used or capable of being used for the production of food, fiber or plant materials.

**Public Services:** Infrastructure, including roads, sanitary sewers, storm drains and water mains and social services, including police, fire, health, schools, transit, recreation and libraries.

**Public Works:** (a) All production, storage, transmission, and recovery facilities for water, sewerage, telephone, and other similar utilities owned or operated by any public agency or by any utility subject to the jurisdiction of the Public Utilities Commission, except for energy facilities; (b) All public transportation facilities, including streets, roads, highways, public parking lots and structures, ports, harbors, airports, railroads, and mass transit facilities and stations, bridges, trolley wires, and other related facilities; (c) All publicly financed recreational facilities, all projects of the State Coastal Conservancy, and any development by a special district; and (d) All community college facilities.

**Public Utility Facility:** A facility for the provision of water, light, heat, communications, power, or for sewage collection, treatment, or disposal.

**Public Water Supplier:** One of the following types of entities:

- (1) Sonoma County Water Agency
- (2) Incorporated Cities
- (3) The following suppliers for Urban Service Areas:
  - Bodega Bay Public Utility District
  - The Sea Ranch Water System
- (4) The following County-operated community systems:
  - Sonoma County Service Area 41 - Jenner
  - Sonoma County Service Area 41 - Salmon Creek
  - Timber Cove County Water District
- (5) The following other community system serving more than 500 year-round residents:
  - Russian River County Water System
- (6) Any new public water suppliers which meet any of the following criteria:
  - Incorporated cities
  - Suppliers for urban service areas
  - County-operated community systems
  - Community systems serving more than 500 year-round residents

**Public Water System:** A connected system of pipelines, pumps, valves, treatment plants, storage tanks, reservoirs and related facilities providing water to multiple users. The California Department of Water Resources, Division of Drinking Water, defines a public water system as any that provides water for human consumption to 15 or more connections or regularly serves 25 or more people daily for at least 60 days out of the year. Public water system can include entities that provide their own water, such as schools, parks, and restaurants, as well as public water districts.

**Recreation Use – Active:** Swimming pools, tennis courts, golf courses, driving ranges, community centers, and similar facilities.

**Recreation Use – Passive:** Outdoor amenities for hiking, viewing, surfing, fishing, swimming, picnicking, non-motorized boating, trail riding, and similar activities.

**Recycled Water:** Water which, as a result of treatment of waste, is suitable for a direct beneficial use or a controlled use that would not otherwise occur and is therefore considered a valuable resource.

**Redevelopment Project:** An activity undertaken by a Redevelopment Agency set up under State law to revitalize blighted areas as defined by the Health and Safety Code.

**Residential Accessory Structure:** All structures on parcels with residential land use designation other than the primary home.

**Responsible Agency:** As defined by the State CEQA guidelines, the term Responsible Agency includes all public agencies other than the lead agency which have discretionary approval power over a project.



**Resource Agency:** A federal or state agency having jurisdiction by law over natural resources affected by an activity or use. Resource agencies include the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, NOAA Fisheries, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, North Coast and San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Boards, State Water Resources Control Board, and other similar federal and state agencies.

**Ridgeline:** A line connecting the highest points along a ridge.

**Right of Way:** The strip of land required to build certain transportation and public use facilities, such as roadways, railways, and public utility lines.

**Riparian:** Associated with or dependent upon a river, stream or other water body.

**Riparian Corridor:** In general, the area occupied by rivers or streams and related plant and animal communities. A line or belt of vegetation following the course of a river or stream on the immediate banks and appearing visually and structurally separate from the surrounding landscape. Boundaries are delineated by the outer edge of riparian vegetation. Riparian vegetation consists of that vegetation in or adjacent to permanent or intermittent freshwater streams and other freshwater bodies where at least 50 percent of the cover is made up of species such as alders, willows, cottonwoods, box elders, ferns, and blackberries. As used in the Open Space and Resource Conservation Element, the areas occupied by rivers or streams designated on **Figures C-OSRC-2a** through **C-OSRC-2k** and related plant and animal communities.

**Riparian Functions:** The beneficial uses of areas in and along streams, including: providing food, water, and breeding, egg deposition and nesting areas for fish, amphibians, reptiles, birds, insects, and mammals; providing protective cover, shade and woody debris to stream channels as habitat for coho salmon, steelhead, freshwater shrimp, and other protected and common aquatic-dependent species; providing movement opportunities, protective cover, and breeding, roosting, and resting habitat for terrestrial wildlife; filtering sediment and pollutants in runoff into streams; providing erosion protection for stream banks; and facilitating groundwater recharge.

**Rocky Intertidal:** Coastal rocky shore between the highest high tide line and the low tide line.

**Rural:** Areas where land use is primarily agricultural, parkland, or low density residential that are not intended for relatively high intensity urban land use.

**Scenic Corridor:** As designated on **Figures C-OSRC-1a** through **C-OSRC-1k** of the Open Space and Resource Conservation Element, a strip of land of high visual quality along a certain roadway.

**Scenic Highway:** Those roadways in Sonoma County that have been so designated by the State of California.

**Scenic Landscape Unit:** A landscape of special scenic importance in Sonoma County which provides important visual relief from urban densities or preserves scenic vistas at landscape level.

**Sea:** The Pacific Ocean and all harbors, bays, channels, estuaries, salt marshes, sloughs, and other areas subject to tidal action through any connection with the Pacific Ocean, excluding non-estuarine rivers, streams, tributaries, creeks, and flood control and drainage channels. "Sea" does not include the area of jurisdiction of the San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission, established pursuant to Title 7.2 (commencing with Section 66600) of the Government Code,

including any river, stream, tributary, creek, or flood control or drainage channel flowing directly or indirectly into such area.

**Sea Level** The locally corrected mean high water level referenced to the average of all the high water heights observed over the 1983-2001 National Tidal Datum Epoch at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Point Reyes Station Datum, Station ID 9415020.

**Sea Level Rise** The increase in the level of the world's oceans due to the effects of global warming. An increase of 7 feet above the locally corrected sea level, as defined above, is used by the Local Coastal Plan for the purpose of development policies, coastal hazard evaluation, and protection of coastal resources.

**Second Dwelling Unit:** An attached or detached residential dwelling unit provided in compliance with Section 26C-325.1, which provides complete independent living facilities for one (1) or more persons, and includes separate permanent provisions for entry, living, sleeping, eating, cooking and sanitation on the same parcel as a single-family dwelling. A second dwelling unit may also be provided as an efficiency dwelling unit and/or a manufactured home, as defined in this section. Also known as Accessory Dwelling Units.

**Secondary Use:** As used in the General Plan land use categories, a use permitted within a special land use category based on its compatibility with the primary or predominant use therein.

**Seiche:** A seiche has to occur in an enclosed body of water such as a lake, bay or gulf. A seiche is a standing wave that oscillates in a lake as a result of seismic or atmospheric disturbances creating huge fluctuations of water levels.

**Sensitive Coastal Resource Areas:** Those identifiable and geographically bounded land and water areas within the coastal zone of vital interest and sensitivity, including the following:

- (a) Special marine and land habitat areas, wetlands, lagoons, and estuaries as mapped and designated in Part 4 of the coastal plan.
- (b) Areas possessing significant recreational value.
- (c) Highly scenic areas.
- (d) Archaeological sites referenced in the California Coastline and Recreation Plan or as designated by the State Historic Preservation Officer.
- (e) Special communities or neighborhoods which are significant visitor destination areas.
- (f) Areas that provide existing coastal housing or recreational opportunities for low- and moderate-income persons.
- (g) Areas where divisions of land could substantially impair or restrict coastal access.

**Setbacks:** The distance a building or use must be withdrawn from a road right-of-way, watercourse, parcel boundary or other designated feature.

**Side Friction:** The movement of vehicles outside of the main flow of traffic which may interrupt the efficient flow of traffic such as parking and entering or leaving driveways.

**Silviculture:** A branch of forestry dealing with the development and care of forests.

**Single-Event Noise Exposure Level (SENEL):** SENEL is a measure of the noise generated by a single aircraft overflight. It includes the loudness of the event during the time interval that the event is above the threshold level.

**Single Room Occupancy Units:** A cluster of residential units, each unit being substantially smaller in size than a typical apartment unit, within a residential hotel, motel, or similar facility providing sleeping or living facilities in which sanitary and kitchen facilities may be either shared within the project or provided in each unit. Single Room Occupancy Units are for the purpose of providing affordable housing, and not for the purpose of serving recreational or travel needs.

**Smart Growth, Planned Growth:** Development that is environmentally sensitive, economically viable, community-oriented, and sustainable. These goals are reached through planning that incorporates the following principles:

- (1) Encourage infill development of urbanized communities
- (2) Create range of housing opportunities and choices
- (3) Encourage compact building design
- (4) Protect agriculture and open space
- (5) Create walkable neighborhoods
- (6) Enable choice in transportation modes that are integrated and consistent with land use objectives
- (7) Create fair and equitable rules for development

**Sonoma County Stream Identification:** The Digital Line Graph (DLG) files from the National Hydrography Dataset are the primary source of stream mapping in Sonoma County. Review of the digital mapping for Sonoma County indicates that the DLG does not map all of the streams within each watershed, particularly smaller tributary streams and those in the uppermost reaches of each watershed. National Wetlands Inventory (NWI) maps are based on the location of wetland habitat and contain comprehensive information on the location and type (classification) of deepwater habitats (streams, lakes, and estuaries). NWI data is more comprehensive than the United States Geological Survey DLG Dataset for identifying the likely location of water-oriented habitat resources within the drainage network. As such, the Local Coastal Plan makes use of NWI in addition to DLG data to identify streams within the Coastal Zone.

**Sound:** Variations in air pressure at frequencies that the ear can detect.

**Special District:** Any public agency, other than a local government as defined in this chapter, formed pursuant to general law or special act for the local performance of governmental or proprietary functions within limited boundaries. "Special District" includes, but is not limited to, a county service area, a maintenance district or area, an improvement district or improvement zone, or any other zone or area, formed for the purpose of designating an area within which a property tax rate will be levied to pay for service or improvement benefiting that area.

**Special Treatment Area:** An identifiable and geographically bounded forested area within the coastal zone that constitute a significant habitat area, area of special scenic significance, and any land where logging activities could adversely affect public recreation area or the biological productivity of any wetland, estuary, or stream especially valuable because of its role in a coastal ecosystem.

**Specimen Tree:** Means a tree which has departed in some respect from the standard characteristic of the species and has developed a character of shape, size, or branch structure that gives it special interest.

**Stream:** For purposes of this LCP, stream shall be defined as any blue line stream as mapped by 1) USGS on the 7.5-minute quadrangle series, 2) the USGS National Hydrography Dataset (NHD), 3) the USFWS National Wetlands Inventory (NWI), or 4) any local government-approved stream resource maps. This stream definition shall be used in all LCP contexts when referring to streams. Stream data from the three statewide/national sources in addition to any high resolution local stream mapping sources shall be used to determine the location and identification of streams.

**Subdivision:** The division of any unit or units of improved or unimproved land, or any portion thereof, shown on the latest equalized county assessment rolls as a unit or as contiguous units contiguous units, for the , for the purpose of purpose of lease, sale or financing, whether immediate or future.

**Sustainability:** That which meets our current needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs.

**Sustainable yield:** The amount of water that can be used without exceeding the replenishment rates over time or causing long term declines in available surface or groundwater resources.

**Telecommunication Facility:** Facility that sends and/or receives electromagnetic signals, including antennas and towers to support receiving and/or transmitting devices along with accessory structures, and the land on which they are all situated.

**Temporary event:** An activity or use that constitutes development as defined in Section 30106 of the Coastal Act; and is an activity or function of limited duration; and involves the placement of non-permanent structures; and/or involves exclusive use of a sandy beach, parkland, filled tidelands, water, streets, or parking areas which is otherwise open and available for general public use;

**Traffic Analysis Zones:** A statistical geographical unit for information related to traffic generation and transportation modeling.

**Traffic Calming:** A combination of alterations and improvements to the road network intended to reduce the negative effects of motor vehicle use, alter driver behavior and improve conditions for non-motorized street users. The purpose of traffic calming is to reduce the speed and volume of traffic to acceptable levels for the functional class of a street and the nature of existing uses along the street in order to improve traffic safety and preserve community character.

**Transient Use or Transient Occupancy:** Means occupancy of a lodging facility or residence by any person other than the primary owner by concession, permit, right of access, license, gift or other agreement for a period of thirty (30) consecutive calendar days or less, counting portions of calendar days as full days.

**Transit:** The conveyance of persons from one place to another on a public transportation system.

**Transit Center:** An area that is designed for several bus and/or rail routes. Transit centers will usually have multiple passenger facilities, such as shelters and benches, and also will usually have some form of information available for the passengers, this may include a staffed information center where passengers can buy passes and get printed schedules.

**Transmission line:** A conductor for transmitting electrical or optical signals or electric power such as a cable or power line.

**Transportation:** The conveyance of goods and people from one place to another.

**Transportation Demand Management (Federal Highway Administration) or Traffic Demand Management (Caltrans):** Programs and strategies that reduce congestion through reduction of demand, rather than increasing capacity or supply. The goal of TDM is to reduce the number of vehicles using highway facilities while providing a wide variety of mobility options for those who wish to travel. Examples of TDM are:

- (1) High occupancy vehicle lane
- (2) Alternative work hours
- (3) Ride sharing programs
- (4) Telecommuting
- (5) Land use policies that reduce distance between jobs and housing.

**Unincorporated Community:** Areas within the County's jurisdiction that have some or all urban services that support urban level densities.

**Urban:** Contrasting with rural, pertaining to uses of land typically occurring within cities, such as high density residential, commercial, and industrial uses.

**Urban Development:** Development occurring within urban land use categories (urban residential, commercial, industrial and public/quasi-public categories within Urban Service Areas).

**Urban Growth Boundary:** A voter designated limit to the urban development of a city. No incorporated cities or Urban Growth Boundaries are within the Coastal Zone.

**Urban Service Area:** The geographical area within the Urban Service Boundary that is designated for urban development on **Figures C-LU-1a** and **C-LU-1b** of the Land Use Element.

**Urban Services:** The full range of public services and infrastructures including sewer, water, police and fire protection, roads and transit etc.

**Urban Service Boundary:** A designated limit to the urban development of the cities and unincorporated communities of the County.

**Use Permit:** Required for the use of land or land development when required by the Zoning Ordinance, typically for projects that have potential for negative impacts on the surrounding land uses.

**Short Term Rentals (Vacation Rental):** A property with a single-family home intended for permanent occupancy that is occupied for transient use by any person other than the primary owner; or is

otherwise occupied or used on a transient basis. Vacation rental does not include occasional home exchanges that are not otherwise subject to Transient Occupancy Tax, hosted rentals, or a bed and breakfast inn permitted and operated in accordance with the Sonoma County Zoning Code Regulations.

**Vegetation Removal:** Vegetation means all natural, non-cultivated growth of plant life including the root system, the stem, trunk, crown or branches or leaves or blades. Vegetation removal is the cutting, breaking, burning or uprooting of vegetation or the application of herbicide to vegetation, or the covering over of vegetation with earth or the compacting of the soil under, around or over said vegetation.

**Vehicle Miles of Travel (VMT):** A metric for evaluating traffic impacts by measuring or predicting cumulative miles traveled by private vehicles, such as an automobile, van, pickup truck, or motorcycle for trips associated with a project. Each mile traveled by a vehicle is counted as one vehicle mile regardless of the number of persons in the vehicle. (TECHNICAL CORRECTION)

**Viable:** For land uses, this means a site has the physical characteristics necessary for the intended use or development, regardless of cost or time, consistent with the provisions of the Coastal Act and Local Coastal Plan.

**Visitor Serving Commercial Facility:** Development that provides basic support services for visitors such as motels, restaurants, grocery stores, auto service stations, and public restrooms. Most of these facilities on the Sonoma County coast are both visitor-serving and local-serving.

**Viewshed:** The area visible from a defined observation point.

**Visitability:** A characteristic of residential development and design incorporating barrier-free design to create homes that are safe and accessible for everyone, regardless of age, physical ability, or stature.”

**Wastewater:** Used water discharged from any combination of domestic, industrial, commercial or agricultural activities, surface runoff / storm water, and any sewer inflow or sewer infiltration.

**Watershed:** The area of land that includes a particular river or lake and all the rivers, streams, and creeks that flow into it.

**Water User:** A person or entity whose diversion, appropriation, extraction, acquisition, storage or usage of water meets all applicable legal requirements.

**Wetland:** Section 30121 of the California Coastal Act defines a wetland as:

*“Wetland means lands within the coastal zone which may be covered periodically or permanently with shallow water and include saltwater marshes, freshwater marshes, open or closed brackish water marshes, swamps, mudflats, or fens.”*

More detail is provided by the California Coastal Commission Administrative Regulations (Section 13577 (b)):

*“Wetlands are lands where the water table is at, near, or above the land surface long enough to promote the formation of hydric soils or to support the growth of hydrophytes, and shall also include those types of wetlands where vegetation is lacking and soil is poorly developed or absent as a result of frequent or drastic fluctuations of surface water levels, wave action, water flow, turbidity or high concentrations of salt or other substance in the substrate. Such*

*wetlands can be recognized by the presence of surface water or saturated substrate at some time during each year and their location within, or adjacent to, vegetated wetlands or deepwater habitats.”*

In the California coastal zone, the California Coastal Commission (CCC), with the assistance of the Department of Fish and Wildlife (DFW) is responsible for determining the presence of wetlands subject to regulation under the California Coastal Act. As the primary wetland consultant to the CCC, the DFG essentially relies on the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) wetland definition and classification system, with some minor changes in classification terminology, as the methodology for wetland determinations. However, one important difference in the DFW delineation process compared to the FWS process, is that the DFW only requires the presence of one attribute (e.g., hydrology, hydric soils, or hydrophytic vegetation) for an area to qualify as a wetland, as opposed to FWS and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers who require all three attributes to be present.

**Wildlife Corridor:** see Fish or Wildlife Corridor

**Williamson Act:** The California Land Conservation Act of 1965 (as it may be amended from time to time) that allows Counties to establish agricultural preserves through agreements with property owners to maintain agricultural uses in exchange for property tax benefits.

**Zoning District:** A designated section of the County for which prescribed land use requirements and building and development standards are uniform.

**Zoning Ordinance:** An ordinance authorized by Section 65850 of the Government Code or, in the case of a charter city, a similar ordinance enacted pursuant to the authority of its charter.

## **AASHTO Road Classification**

A system of road classification based on the intended function of roads within the context of the overall road network. Arterial roads are intended to provide high capacity and mobility between cities, and other major population and job centers. Collectors connect local homes, job, and retail centers to the arterial network. Local roads serve individual homes, farms and businesses, and feed into the collector network. The road network functional hierarchy can be further refined by subdividing collectors and arterials into major and minor subclassifications.

There are slight differences in road geometry between rural and urban road classifications. The principal difference is the proportion of each class in the road network: Urban areas contain a relatively high number of arterials, whereas rural road networks have a fewer arterial and a relatively large number of collectors. In all classifications road width is flexible, and can be modified to suit local conditions, where necessary.

The following are road width standards for two lane roads unless otherwise noted:

***Rural Local Road:*** For roads with design speeds of less than 40 mph and volumes under 400 vehicles per day, the standard road width is 22 feet, with the exception of steep or hilly terrain, where the width may be reduced. Road width for maximum speed (60 mph) and volume (over 2000 vehicles per day) is 40 feet.

***Rural Collector (Major or Minor)***: For roads with design speeds of less than 40 mph and volumes under 250 vehicles per day, the standard road width is 22 feet. Road width for maximum speed (60 mph) and volume (over 2000 vehicles per day) is 40 feet.

***Urban Collector (Major or Minor)***: Standard width is the same as Rural Collectors, with additional allowances for bicycles, sidewalks, curbs, drainage, setbacks for public utilities, street lighting, and parking.

***Rural Arterial (Major or Minor)***: For roads with design speeds of less than 55 mph and volumes under 400 vehicles per day, the standard road width is 30 feet. Road width for maximum speed (75 mph) and volume (over 2000 vehicles per day) is 40 feet. Additional width is suggested if significant truck traffic is anticipated. Arterials are often multi-lane, and may be divided. Parking and individual driveways are discouraged.

***Urban Arterial (Major or Minor)***: For roads with design speeds of less than 45 mph, the standard road width is 30 feet. Standard road width for maximum speed (75 mph) and volume (over 2000 vehicles per day) is 40 feet. Additional width is suggested if significant truck traffic is anticipated. Arterials are often multi-lane, and may be divided. On street parking and individual driveways are discouraged. Allowances should be made for sidewalks, curbs, drainage, setbacks for public utilities, and street lighting. Where urban arterials intersect collectors or local roads, grade separations should be used when feasible.

***Freeway***: Design speed is in excess of 55 mph. Access is limited and the road is grade separated at all intersections. Travel and breakdown lanes are 12 feet wide. Maximum grade is 6%, with less than 3 percent preferred. Design of bridges, culverts, walls, tunnels, other structures should be in accordance with current Caltrans standards and AASHTO Standard Specification for Highway Bridges.

The following are horizontal road clearance standards:

***Rural Local Road***: 7 feet clearance from the edge of the traveled way to unyielding objects such as trees, buildings, or other fixed objects that might severely damage an out of control vehicle. The benefits of removing obstructions should be weighed against environmental or aesthetic impacts.

***Collectors (Rural and Urban)***: 10 feet clearance from the edge of the traveled way to unyielding objects such as trees, buildings, or other fixed objects that might severely damage an out of control vehicle. The benefits of removing obstructions should be weighed against environmental or aesthetic impacts.

***Arterial (Rural and Urban)***: Roadside should be clear and unobstructed as described in the AASHTO Roadside Design Guide. This standard involves detailed road specific calculations, but as a general rule, a clear zone of 20 feet is standard for roads with a 55 mph design speed.