Conceptual Gleason Beach and Bluff Cleanup In Lieu Fee Program

9-25-2020

The Gleason Beach and Bluff Cleanup In Lieu Fee Program (Program) is proposed to provide mitigation for visual impacts created by Caltrans' Gleason Beach Highway 1 Realignment Project (Project) in Sonoma County between Postmile 15.1 and 15.7. The mitigation program will clean up a significant bluff and shoreline debris field caused by decades of structural collapses from residential and highway development in the area. In addition, a variety of Caltrans emergency repairs installed between 2004 and 2019 will also be removed as required follow-up to Sonoma County emergency coastal development permits for those repairs. See "Coastal Hazards Mitigation Area" and "Caltrans Highway 1 Repairs" figures attached.

Accordingly, this in lieu fee Program proposal is being included with Caltrans' application package for the required consolidated Coastal Development Permit being processed by the California Coastal Commission (CCC). The Program will be funded by a \$5 million in lieu fee that Caltrans will deposit into a special account established by Sonoma County and the Program will be implemented through a Gleason Beach and Bluff Cleanup In Lieu Fee Program Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Sonoma County and the CCC. The in lieu fee amount was jointly developed based on projected costs prepared by experienced Caltrans engineers; the mitigation proposal was developed in partnership between Caltrans and Sonoma County and memorialized in the County's April 17, 2018 Board Resolution Number CPH17-0003, Caltrans District Director 4 Tony Tavares' April 18, 2020 letter to Sonoma County Supervisor Lynda Hopkins and Caltrans Project Manager Lilian Acorda's September 14, 2020 letters to CCC Staff Peter Allen and to Sonoma County Staff Gary Helfrich.

The Program entails removing debris and hazards from the "Coastal Hazards Mitigation Area" identified in Figure(attached), returning the bluff to natural conditions that resemble the undeveloped, similarly-situated bluff areas to the north of the realignment Project, and monitoring of the bluff and shoreline during and after cleanup is complete. Per Caltrans and Sonoma's County's partnership agreement and special conditions to the coastal development permit, the Gleason Beach and Bluff Cleanup In Lieu Fee Program will be guided by a Final Gleason Beach and Bluff Hazards Cleanup Plan (Plan) to be prepared by Sonoma County within eighteen months of receiving the in lieu fee funds and finalizing the MOU with the CCC. The Plan will include:

1. Describing how the entire fee and accrued interest will be used, including overall scope of work, milestones and timelines, to fund administrative, planning, acquisition (if

- needed), hazard abatement, code compliance, construction, oversight, restoration, maintenance and monitoring costs associated with the cleanup and disposal of manmade materials from the debris field along the bluff and shoreline within the identified Coastal Hazard Mitigation Area;
- 2. Abating existing violations of the Coastal Act, Sonoma County Local Coastal Plan, and Sonoma County Building Code (Chapter 7) created by structures such as foundations, septic tanks, and seawalls left in place by private property owners after demolition of homes damaged by landslides, giving priority to phased removal of debris that is toxic or hazardous, that causes visual blight, that blocks public access and/or that creates dangerous conditions on the public beach.
- 3. Phasing removal and disposal of repair structures installed by Caltrans, per requirements from emergency permits issued to stabilize the existing alignment of Highway 1. This phased removal will be designed to extend the life of the California Coastal Trail for as long as possible, while allowing natural forces to contribute toward returning the bluff to a natural condition.
- 4. Creating a monitoring plan that compares the baseline of existing conditions against changes caused by erosion and sea level rise to ensure that appropriate debris removal and cleanup activities are timed and triggered in response to the changing conditions.
- 5. Providing for the submittal of annual status reports to the CCC's Executive Director on the progress made toward the completion of the Plan's goals, milestones timelines and monitoring.

Working with their staff experts as appropriate and a team of qualified consultants and contractors, Sonoma County will scope the completion of the tasks to accomplish the Program's objectives and the County's commitments within the \$5 million budget. With Sonoma County's oversight, construction firms will be hired for the debris collection and disposal and experts experienced with returning coastal bluffs in high erosion zones to a more natural equilibrium (through native planting and other techniques) will be consulted for restoring the aesthetics and natural geology of the cleaned bluffs and beach. The annual monitoring and reporting of changed conditions will allow Sonoma County to facilitate the bluffs' to return to a natural condition while proactively keeping in pace with erosion and landslide events so that cleanup of manmade structures occurs in a timely fashion, along with the managed retreat of a continuous Coastal Trail over time. All of these Program components will be reflected in the Final Gleason Beach and Bluff Hazards Clean Up Plan to be prepared by Sonoma County and submitted to the CCC's Executive Director for review and approval.



