



## Legislation Text

---

**File #:** 2021-0504, **Version:** 1

---

**To:** Board of Supervisors

**Department or Agency Name(s):** Permit Sonoma, Regional Parks, County Counsel, County Administrator's Office

**Staff Name and Phone Number:** Gary Helfrich 707-565-2404, Ken Tam 707-565-3348, Verne Ball 707-565-2495, Marissa Montenegro 707-565-3771

**Vote Requirement:** Majority

**Supervisorial District(s):** Countywide

**Title:**

Gleason Beach Coastal Access Plan and Debris Cleanup Cooperative Agreements with Caltrans

**Recommended Action:**

- A) Receive Update on Highway 1 Consolidation Project;
- B) Approve Phase I Gleason Beach Coastal Access Plan Cooperative Agreement
- C) Approve Debris Cleanup Cooperative Agreement
- D) Delegate authority to prepare Coastal Access Plan to the Director of Regional Parks. Delegate authority to the Director of Permit Sonoma to finalize and execute a Memorandum of Understanding with the California Coastal Commission, in a form approved by County Counsel, regarding the use of \$5 million in hazards/debris removal funding provided by Caltrans

**Executive Summary:**

The erosion of the coastal bluff at Gleason Beach has destroyed most of the homes west of Highway 1 and has caused extensive damage to the highway itself, which continues to be undermined by coastal erosion and is vulnerable to future storms. To avoid a permanent closure of this important roadway, Caltrans will realign 3,700 feet of Highway 1 approximately up to 400 feet inland of the existing roadway. To expedite this project, your Board approved consolidation of the permitting process on April 17, 2018, relinquishing the County's permitting authority to the California Coastal Commission. In recognition of the impact this project will have on the Sonoma Coast, both the Coastal Commission and Caltrans have worked with the County to assure that the Coastal Commission's Conditions of Approval allow the County to exert significant control over beach access, hazard abatement, and bluff restoration.

At their November 6, 2020 meeting, the Coastal Commission approved the Highway 1 realignment project with special conditions that require Caltrans to provide Sonoma County with \$1.2 million to develop coastal access and \$5 million to remove debris on the beach and along the bluff as well as eventual removal of coastal armoring installed by Caltrans to protect Highway 1 from landslides.

The first phase of funding requires that your Board approve cooperative agreements for Phase 1 of the Coastal Access Plan, and the Debris Cleanup Plan. This would be followed by executing a Memorandum of Understanding with the California Coastal Commission for the debris cleanup and transfer of funds from Caltrans to Sonoma County.

## **Discussion:**

### **Background**

Multiple erosive forces have damaged highway 1 along the Sonoma County coast and the existing two-lane roadway continues to be undermined by coastal erosion and is vulnerable to future storms.

The Caltrans Highway 1 Realignment project seeks to avoid permanent closure of this important roadway, by realigning 3,700 feet of Highway 1 approximately up to 370-400 feet inland of the existing roadway. The scope includes removal of existing culverts and highway infrastructure over Scotty Creek; construction of a new 850-foot long highway bridge over Scotty Creek; construction of new off-road California Coastal Trail segments and related public access amenities, including parking areas and a pedestrian/bicycle bridge over Scotty Creek; transfer of Caltrans' properties to Sonoma County for public access purposes; removal of debris from shoreline and coastal bluff areas, including phased removal of prior emergency highway repair features; construction of new access roads for residential and public access purposes; and habitat restoration with conservation easements. Caltrans Project location is on Highway 1 between post-mile markers 15.1 and 15.7 adjacent to Gleason Beach at Scotty Creek, about 4 miles north of Bodega Bay and 5 miles south of Jenner in unincorporated Sonoma County.

A project of this scope and complexity has required multi-department coordination within the county and significant coordination and collaboration with state agencies.

To address the roadway vulnerabilities and avoid losing California Transportation Commission (CTC) Highway 1 realignment project funding due to permitting delays, Caltrans requested that the Board of Supervisors agree to relinquish local LCP control and allow a consolidated permit to be processed by the California Coastal Commission. On April 17, 2018 the Board approved Resolution 18-0133, approving consolidation of the permit and recognizing the project as "an exemplary model of interagency coordination and cooperation working under various State mandates to create a major transportation infrastructure project that effectively addresses climate change, sea level rise, and protection of coastal resources." The resolution also recognized the desire of the Board to maintain local involvement with project modification and mitigation measures related to hazard abatement, beach cleanup, public access, and development of the California Coastal Trail through the project.

This project represents almost fifteen years of planning and coordination between Caltrans, the California Coastal Commission, and Sonoma County staff as well as outreach to the local community and input from a variety of state and federal agencies. The project special conditions were approved by the Coastal Commission at the November 2020 virtual hearing. Subsequently, project funding was approved by the California Transportation Commission in December of 2020. As part of the project mitigation package, Caltrans is required to provide funding to the County for coastal access improvements and hazard debris cleanup.

### **Agreements**

Based on direction from your Board, staff have continued to negotiate with Caltrans on three cooperative agreements, which describe the funding commitments and responsibilities of Caltrans and the County. The first two involve the preservation and maintenance of public access to the coast, and Regional Parks is the lead department in those agreements. The third involves the removal of coastal hazards that have resulted from the failure of the coastal bluff. Permit Sonoma is the lead department for that agreement. The agreements are

summarized below.

### **Phase I and Phase II Gleason Beach Coastal Access Plans**

Caltrans' coastal development permit conditions call for a two-phased disbursement of funds to the County, totaling \$1.2 million (minus the County's commitment of \$64,000 toward the purchase of 0.65 acres of property for public access to Scotty Creek Beach), into an account specifically established by the County of Sonoma to underwrite Sonoma County's planning, design, engineering, construction and management commitments and responsibilities described in the Gleason Beach Conceptual Public Access Plan.

#### **Cooperative agreement (04-2787) Phase I Gleason Beach Coastal Access Plan - \$200,000**

Under the proposed Phase I cooperative agreement, the County will receive a \$200,000 disbursement from Caltrans to pay for Regional Parks costs associated with initial planning, design, and engineering of the public access amenities. Within 3 months of receiving, this funding the County will establish an interagency taskforce to create a public access plan. The taskforce will consist of County, Coastal Commission, State Parks, Coastal Conservancy, and Caltrans. Within 15 months of receiving the funding, the County will produce a Gleason Beach Coastal Access Plan outlining public access and associated amenities, and the County will submit the plan to the Executive Officer of the Coastal Commission for approval.

#### **Cooperative agreement Phase II Gleason Beach Coastal Access Plan - \$ 936,000**

The Phase II agreement is yet to be negotiated, and is not yet needed for Caltrans to commence construction, but it will involve the creation and implementation of a Phase II access plan. Within 60 days of the Coastal Commission approving the Phase I Gleason Beach Coastal Access Plan, Caltrans will transfer the remaining \$936,000 to the County for Regional Parks to complete Phase II Gleason Beach Coastal Access Plan. Phase II includes the construction of the public access amenities.

#### **Cooperative Agreement (04-2822) Gleason Debris Clean Up - \$5,000,000**

Caltrans has creatively worked in conjunction with Sonoma County to develop a Conceptual Gleason Beach and Bluff Cleanup In-Lieu Fee Program to mitigate the scenic resource impacts of their project. Caltrans proposes to work in partnership with Sonoma County for the project to provide for beach and bluff hazards debris clean-up over a nearly 900-foot length of the coastal bluff and shoreline north of Scotty Creek. Caltrans will transfer \$5 million to Sonoma County to carry out this mitigation. The proposed agreement provides that under no circumstances will the County have clean up obligations that go beyond that funded by the \$5 million provided by Caltrans. The County will remove coastal hazards, and the County will also remove prior Highway 1 emergency repair measures over time through the in-lieu fee program and in concert with the other clean-up activities. This phased approach will clean up the failed highway structural debris currently on the bluff and shoreline while avoiding immediate excavation that could impact coastal resources. The approach provides important protection of the coastal trail and other access amenities for a longer period of time.

#### **Memorandum of Understanding with California Coastal Commission concerning \$5,000,000**

The coastal development permit conditions and the cooperative agreement call for a Memorandum of Understanding between the Coastal Commission and the County regarding the use of the Bluff Cleanup In-Lieu

Fee Program. This agreement will address the cleanup and the associated timeline, and it is yet to be finalized. The agreement is not necessary for Caltrans to start construction. Staff recommends the Board delegate authority to the Director of Permit Sonoma to finalize and execute this agreement.

**Prior Board Actions:**

October 20, 2020: Board receives update on the Caltrans Gleason Beach Roadway Realignment of Highway 1 Mitigation and Public Access Funding (Informational Item)

February 11, 2020 (Resolution 20-0059): Board authorizes the acquisition of land for the Scotty Creek Beach access

April 17, 2018 (Resolution 18-0133): Board authorizes the consolidation of the Coastal Development Permit for the Caltrans Gleason Beach Roadway Realignment Project

**FISCAL SUMMARY**

<b>Expenditures</b>	<b>FY 21-22 Adopted</b>	<b>FY22-21 Projected</b>	<b>FY 23-24 Projected</b>
Budgeted Expenses	\$1,200,000	\$2,936,000	\$2,000,000
Additional Appropriation Requested			
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$1,200,000</b>	<b>\$2,936,000</b>	<b>\$2,000,000</b>
<b>Funding Sources</b>			
General Fund/WA GF			
State/Federal	\$6,136,000		
Fees/Other			
Use of Fund Balance			
Contingencies			
<b>Total Sources</b>	<b>\$6,136,000</b>		

**Narrative Explanation of Fiscal Impacts:**

2021-22 project budget will be updated through the mid-year budget adjustment process.

<b>Staffing Impacts:</b>			
<b>Position Title (Payroll Classification)</b>	<b>Monthly Salary Range (A-I Step)</b>	<b>Additions (Number)</b>	<b>Deletions (Number)</b>

**Narrative Explanation of Staffing Impacts (If Required):**

None

**Attachments:**

Cooperative agreement (04-2787) Phase I Gleason Beach Coastal Access Plan Cooperative Agreement

Cooperative Agreement (04-2822) Gleason Debris Clean Up

**Related Items "On File" with the Clerk of the Board:**

None