



# County of San Mateo

## Inter-Departmental Correspondence

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**Department:** BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
**DISTRICT 1**  
**File #:** 18-787

Board Meeting Date: 9/4/2018

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**Special Notice / Hearing:** None  
**Vote Required:** Majority

**To:** Honorable Board of Supervisors  
**From:** Dave Pine, President, Board of Supervisors  
Supervisor Carole Groom, District 2  
**Subject:** Resolution adopting the Coastal Hope Vision for the protection of coastal habitats

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Adopt a resolution adopting the Coastal Hope Vision for the protection of California's coastal habitats.

**BACKGROUND:**

This September, in San Francisco, the Global Climate Action Summit will bring together leaders from across the world to showcase their achievements and make renewed commitments to put the world on track to prevent the most serious impacts of climate change facing our world today. This event is a key opportunity for communities to elevate timely commitments or statements of action and achievement.

In the Spring of 2018, the California State Coastal Conservancy and The Nature Conservancy released a statewide habitat assessment, entitled "*Conserving California's Coastal Habitats: A Legacy and A Future with Sea Level Rise*," that highlights the urgent need to take action to protect coastal ecosystems from the impacts of sea-level rise. The study found that more than half of California's current coastal habitat by area is highly vulnerable to five feet of sea level rise - that includes 76% of California's iconic beaches, 58% of rocky intertidal habitat, 58% of coastal marshes, and 55% of tidal flats. In addition, sea-level rise will further stress populations of 39 rare, threatened, or endangered species, and 41,000 acres of public conservation lands are projected to be drowned by subtidal waters.

The study presents a blueprint for conservation of coastal habitat in the face of sea-level rise, under which by concerted, coordinated and sustained action it is possible to have as much coastal habitat statewide as there is today despite five feet of sea-level rise.

The County's coastal habitats on the Bayshore and the Coastsides provide important ecosystem benefits and services, including filtration of stormwater runoff and pollutants, nursery habitats for fish, support to commercial fisheries, buffers against wave and storm surge, carbon storage and

sequestration, and recreational opportunities. However, these habitats are at risk of being lost to sea level rise and erosion. In 2018, the County finalized a Sea Level Rise Vulnerability Assessment highlighting the threats of sea level rise to the coastal and shoreline habitats important to the protection of public and private property, tourism and recreation, and biodiversity.

### **DISCUSSION:**

The County of San Mateo's Sea Level Rise Vulnerability Assessment found that with 3.3 feet of sea level rise and a 1% annual chance storm, 7,090 acres of wetlands, 3 miles of beaches, and 11 acres of kelp forests are vulnerable. Across the state of California, habitats along the coast are facing similar threats.

A common vision for California's coast is necessary to guide collective action at local, state, federal and international levels. To that end, the following coastal vision is being considered by multiple local, state and federal agencies for adoption:

*In science-guided, collective action, we will maintain and enhance California's coastal habitats in the face of sea level rise, other climate change-induced challenges, and development, ensuring a protected coast for future generations to enjoy, replete with as much or more habitat and wildlife, as well as social, economic, and recreational benefits, as we have today.*

To date, resolutions have been adopted by the State of California (Assembly Joint Resolution 47), the California Coastal Commission, the Ocean Protection Council, and the State Lands Commission to support the vision to protect coastal habitat in the face of sea level rise. City and county governments considering such a resolution include Los Angeles County, City of Los Angeles, Santa Barbara County, Ventura County, City of Oxnard, City of Santa Cruz, and City/County of San Francisco. In addition, the Central Coast Climate Collaborative, consisting of local and state governments and non-profits in Monterey and Santa Barbara counties has signed onto the resolution and other governmental entities, such as Beach Erosion Authority for Clean Oceans and Nourishment (BEACON), are considering adoption.

All the adopted resolutions will be presented jointly to Governor Brown the week of September 10<sup>th</sup> at the Global Climate Action Summit.

Given the central role the ocean plays in regulating climate and absorbing greenhouse gas emissions and the importance of healthy coastal and ocean ecosystems in safeguarding global populations from climate change impacts, ocean-related actions will be integrated throughout the Summit programming and events. Oceans and coasts will be formally addressed and discussed through one of the five challenge areas of the Summit, the Land and Ocean Stewardship challenge.

County Counsel has reviewed and approved the resolution as to form.

### **SHARED VISION 2025:**

Approval of this resolution contributes to the Shared Vision 2025 outcome of an environmentally conscious community by conservation and protection of important ecosystem benefits, biodiversity, tourism and recreation, and protection of public and private property.

### **FISCAL IMPACT:**

No Net County Cost will be incurred with the adoption of this resolution.