























Exhibit 3: Response to Comments Table

Commentor	Suggested Revisions and Comments	Section or Region	Coastal Conservancy Staff Response
The Nature Conservancy	<p>Resolve potential permit roadblocks and coordinate agencies to support implementation of regionally important projects. The Strategic Plan identified this as a key role of the Conservancy to support conservation successes in California and it is equally true of the challenges faced by the North Coast. While sometimes challenging and imperfect, there are existing policy and water rights tools that can help water users achieve their goals and protect instream flows for fish. The North Coast Instream Flow Policy (NCIFP) was specifically created to expedite providing new water right permits to diverters when it often otherwise can take ten years or more. The process to secure a new water rights under the NCIFP is still being developed and the few that have been approved are still taking years and at great expense. Support from the Conservancy is needed to reduce impediments and expedite the process and advance the use of this important tool for increasing instream flows. Funding is needed for projects that advance the use of 1707 permits to protect water intentionally left instream from subsequent diversion while also protecting a water right from being abandoned or lost. Other policy tools like Safe Harbor Agreements and permitting requirements like 1600 permits are similarly critical to improving instream flows but are fraught with lengthy processes that are often caused by a lack of coordination across state and federal agencies. The Coastal Conservancy could play a valuable role in helping to improve coordination and expedite these processes for the benefit of instream flows and endangered fish.</p>	North Coast	See above
The Nature Conservancy	<p>Support collaborative water management efforts consistent with the North Coast Instream Flow Policy's Watershed Approach. Given the decentralized nature of water management diversions in the North Coast, the Conservancy's support is needed for stakeholder-driven and watershed-based approaches to water management that incentivize individual water users to collectively reduce summer diversions to improve streamflows for fish, wildlife and water quality. In 2014, the Regional Water Board adopted the NCIFP and included the Watershed Approach to promote and support voluntary collaborative stakeholder efforts to secure new water rights that improve environmental flows. The approach, however, requires watershed groups to provide specific provisions including formal agreements, management plans, and monitoring to ensure measurable results. Support from the Coastal Conservancy is needed to advance the use of the Watershed Approach. This can be achieved by providing funding for the formation of tributary groups, the development of the required information and the implementation of the projects that reduce summer diversions.</p>	North Coast	See above
The Nature Conservancy	<p>Coastal habitat in California has been lost and degraded for centuries, and sea level rise is exacerbating this loss, as well as threatening coastal communities and shoreline use. It is possible to achieve no net loss of habitat and access by 2100, but it will require tremendous investment in conservation and intervention to influence the choices that people make in response to sea level rise. Although we recognize that this Strategic Plan is due now, we hope that the results of our two ongoing research collaborations – the Coastal Conservation Assessment and the Natural Infrastructure Assessment – will be specifically integrated into the Strategic Plan at a later date. The Coastal Conservation Assessment represents the first statewide, comprehensive coastal habitat assessment in the face of sea level rise, which quantifies the impacts of adaptation strategies on habitats across the coast of California. This Assessment will provide a prioritization framework for both SCC and TNC to guide investments of time and resources in adaptation strategies toward the goal of no net loss by 2100. Specifically, the Coastal Conservation Assessment will provide spatially-explicit recommendations on the protection of future coastal habitat in the face of sea level rise.</p>	How We Work, Key Drivers, Overarching Goals	<p>The Conservancy plans to rely on best available science and assessments to implement the Strategic Plan, and will take into account the results of our collaborative research efforts with The Nature Conservancy as we make investment decisions and set priorities for our conservation work, particularly in the face of sea level rise.</p>
The Nature Conservancy	<p>Similarly, TNC and SCC are partners on the Coastal Natural Infrastructure Assessment project – under California's Fourth Climate Assessment – which will outline technical guidance on the physical and siting requirements for using various natural infrastructure types as alternatives to shoreline armoring. It will also contain blueprints showing where these technical criteria are met in two pilot geographies – Monterey Bay and Ventura County – and case studies of where coastal natural infrastructure has been successfully deployed throughout California. Like the Coastal Conservation Assessment, the Natural Infrastructure Assessment will provide a much-needed framework for prioritizing investment in nature-based approaches to coastal management in the face of sea level rise, and the Strategic Plan should reflect this framework. Further, the Strategic Plan should build in specific objectives around demonstrating and implementing coastal natural infrastructure, according to the guidance in the Natural Infrastructure Assessment, and recommend further developing the datasets needed to create additional regional natural infrastructure blueprints throughout California.</p>	Climate Ready and Protect and Restore the Coast	<p>Objective 8C calls for the Conservancy to: "Implement projects to increase resilience to sea level rise or other climate change impacts using nature-based solutions and other multi-benefit strategies." We have edited the introductory language of the Climate Ready section to read: "The Conservancy will continue to work with other agencies, land managers and partners to share information and support projects that improve understanding of climate change impacts. In concert with these partners, the Conservancy will support adaptation planning and pilot projects to protect coastal resources and increase the resiliency of the natural and built environments, including assistance with planning for shoreline retreat where appropriate."</p>

Exhibit 3: Response to Comments Table

Commentor	Suggested Revisions and Comments	Section or Region	Coastal Conservancy Staff Response
The Nature Conservancy	<p>Through its investment in these and other projects, SCC has established itself as the unequivocal leader among California state agencies in providing science-based sea level rise adaptation solutions, and has leveraged this leadership by generating dialogue among the executive-level leaders at the Ocean Protection Council, State Lands Commission, California Coastal Commission and California State Parks on how to align resources to maximize effective management of California’s coastal natural assets in the face of sea level rise. This Strategic Plan should articulate a commitment and plan for continued leadership in this regard. Specifically, SCC should build on its engagement with State Parks and commit to a partnership in developing a framework for sea level rise adaptation at coastal park units, empowering State Parks with grantmaking and research/planning tools. In addition, SCC should provide similar support and guidance to the other big public land managers on California’s coast – including SLC and Caltrans – to ensure that California agencies have the ability and tools to manage public land and assets in the face of coastal climate change. Importantly, the Strategic Plan should recognize that shoreline retreat is an inevitable component of the overall coastal adaptation blueprint for many coastal communities in the face of sea level rise. SCC’s leadership in planning for and funding a thoughtful, planned approach to this retreat will likely prevent catastrophic, storm-driven “unmanaged retreat” in the future.</p>	Climate Ready and Protect and Restore the Coast	<p>We agree that our role in providing sea level rise adaptation planning is critical and we will continue to work with public land managers and other state agencies to develop sea level rise adaptation strategies, including shoreline retreat. We have edited the Climate Ready description in The Next Five Years section to include some of these concepts, as follows: "The Conservancy will continue to work with other agencies, land managers and partners to share information and support projects that improve understanding of climate change impacts. In concert with these partners, the Conservancy will support adaptation planning and pilot projects to protect coastal resources and increase the resiliency of the natural and built environments, including assistance with planning for shoreline retreat where appropriate."</p>
The Nature Conservancy	<p>In addition to its public agency partners, SCC frequently works with NGO partners outside of their site-based restoration projects. These partners – like TNC – provide additional expertise and capacity on scientific assessments, adaptation demonstrations and restoration. An ongoing commitment to maintaining and growing these partnerships should be made explicit in the Strategic Plan.</p>	Climate Ready and Protect and Restore the Coast	<p>We are very committed to partnerships and regional collaboratives and tried to make this explicit in Objectives 15B: "Participate in or spearhead regional and statewide collaboratives that further Conservancy goals and objectives and support the work of partner organizations" and 15C. We have edited 15C to better articulate our intent: "Work with partner organizations to achieve conservation, climate adaptation, and public access objectives through project facilitation, technical assistance, grant writing, workshops, webinars, and the development and sharing of scientific and management resources, including lessons learned from innovative, multi-objective projects."</p>
The Nature Conservancy	<p>TNC strongly supports the Strategic Plan’s emphasis on environmental justice and coastal access issues. SCC should use the results of our Coastal Conservation Assessment to evaluate ways to support multi-objective projects that maximize outcomes related to environmental justice and natural habitat values simultaneously.</p>	Climate Ready and Environmental Justice and Protect and Restore Coast	<p>We intend to use the results of the the Coastal Conservation Assessment to guide our work under this Strategic Plan.</p>
The Nature Conservancy	<p>We share the concern articulated in the Strategic Plan about the potential limitations on coastal conservation and adaptation in the absence of federal funding. However, we agree that the Conservancy’s role in preserving the resources of the coast and improving public access goes far beyond funding for projects. SCC also provides invaluable support by coordinated permitting processes, facilitating regional collaborations, identifying and applying for alternative sources of project funding, and increasing outreach and communication. All this work is incredibly important. SCC is also a touchstone of interagency collaboration – both at the state and local levels – on sea level rise and coastal adaptation. If federal funding becomes increasingly limited, SCC should double-down on this role, and enhance its leadership on this front.</p>	Future of Federal Funding	<p>Thank you for your comment.</p>
Coastal Commission	<p>... on the section, “Overlapping State Grant Programs”. My suggestion is to highlight the potential overlapping nature of the SCC Climate Ready Grant Program and the Coastal Commission’s LCP Grant Program as both are intended to “support planning to better understand vulnerabilities and adaptation strategies along the coast...”. I think any potential for duplicative grants/efforts between our agencies can be avoided through the on-going, continued coordination between our agencies in review of applications to these programs which we are already doing. The suggestion would be specifically reference this in the paragraph on page 15 that discusses “Overlapping State Grant Programs” and highlight the coordination work that our 2 agencies are doing on this front.</p>	Key Drivers	<p>We have added your statement to the Overlapping State Grant Programs section, as follows: "Another example is the Conservancy’s Climate Ready Grant Program and the California Coastal Commission’s Local Coastal Program Grant Program, as both are intended to support planning to better understand vulnerabilities and adaptation strategies along the coast. These overlaps increase the need for on-going, sustained coordination among the state agencies, such as when staff are reviewing grant applications and making funding recommendations."</p>

Exhibit 3: Response to Comments Table

Commentor	Suggested Revisions and Comments	Section or Region	Coastal Conservancy Staff Response
Stoecker Ecological	<p>1) Sea Level Rise and Dams</p> <p>I request that the plan expand on the relationship between dams, blocked sediment transportation to the coast, well-documented threat to coastal wetlands as a result of this lost sediment input, inability of coastal wetlands to build up with sea level rise when watershed sediment sources are reduced, and how dam removal is a well documented solution to restoring sediment transport and building coastlines in the face of rising seas. Below are scientific study finds and articles that outline this critical problem and show how dam removal is a viable and long-term solution [see list of resources in copy of Stoecker email in the attached comment letters]</p>	Key Drivers	<p>The Conservancy was a leader in the effort to remove the San Clemente Dam on the Carmel River and has listed the removal of the Matilija Dam as one of the Major Efforts in the South Coast over the next five years. We have added the following statement to Key Drivers: Sea Level Rise and Climate Change: "Reduced sediment input (due to dams, modifications to watersheds, and dredge disposal methods) can exacerbate the impact of sea level rise on coastal wetlands."</p>
Stoecker Ecological	<p>2) Lagoons and State Parks</p> <p>Numerous scientific reports have shown the ecological benefits (including for steelhead and salmon) that coastal lagoons and estuaries provide. A major cause of lagoon degradation and reduction here in Southern California, and along the entire CA coast, has been the development of California State Park properties and campgrounds. For example, along the southern Santa Barbara County coast where southern steelhead are endangered, State Park roads, parking lots, and campgrounds have been built on top of once productive portions of lagoons at Gaviota, Refugio, and Carpinteria Creeks. Steelhead resources in these watersheds have been severely impacted by the loss of lagoon size and function due to these State Park developments. I request that the CC Plan address this issue, prioritize an inventory of State Parks that have eliminated or degraded lagoons and make recommendations to remove / relocate infrastructure away from historic lagoons and creeks and restore those areas and lagoon habitat.</p>	Protect and Restore the Coast	<p>The Conservancy will discuss this comment with State Parks, and if requested by State Parks, we could consider supporting their efforts to undertake such an analysis under Objectives 6A or 6C in Protect and Restore the Coast. We also want to support State Parks in maintaining and increasing access to the coast, including low-cost overnight accommodations, as part of our Explore the Coast program.</p>