



# Memo

Date: April 17, 2017

To: State Coastal Conservancy Board

From: Sam Schuchat, Executive Officer  
Amy Hutzler, Deputy Executive Officer

CC: Oversight Members

RE: 2018-2022 Strategic Plan

This memo provides an update on our progress developing the new strategic plan for the Coastal Conservancy. This planning process will be ongoing through 2017. This memo summarizes the proposed schedule, plan for stakeholder outreach, and the key drivers informing the development of the plan. Attached is an annotated outline for the new strategic plan.

## Proposed Schedule

<u>When</u>	<u>What</u>	<u>Who</u>
April	Draft Strategic Plan outline Identify key drivers Draft survey questions Compile list of people/entities to be surveyed Send letters to Tribes	SCC Staff
April 27	Discussion with Board about proposed process, list of key drivers, and outline	SCC Board
May	Conduct survey Analyze results of survey	SCC Staff/Stakeholders

	Write descriptions of key drivers Draft goals and objectives	
June 15	Discussion with Board about survey results, goals and objectives, & descriptions of key drivers	SCC Board
June - August	Write Draft Plan & add numerical objectives	SCC Staff
September 14	Release Draft Plan to Board, public, Tribes	
September 28	Discussion with Board about Draft Plan	SCC Board
October 14	End of Public Comment Period	
October	Revise plan based on feedback from Board, Public, and Tribes	SCC Staff
November 10	Release Final Plan	
November 30	Board meeting, final adoption	SCC Board
January 2018	Publish Strategic Plan and Executive Summary	SCC Staff
2018-22	Work to accomplish objectives Annual progress reports	SCC Board and Staff

### **Stakeholder Outreach**

One of our initial steps in developing the new strategic plan is to conduct surveys of many of our key stakeholders and partners. The purpose of this survey is to ask our partners what they believe are our core strength and weaknesses, as well as what they view as the key drivers facing coastal management and restoration, and specifically facing the State Coastal Conservancy. We will also use these surveys to better understand how the Conservancy's work can be relevant to and support the priorities of our partners in the future and to gather ideas about what efforts the Conservancy should focus on.

We plan to conduct the survey using Survey Monkey (or a similar online survey site). We will send the survey to over 500 representatives from cities and counties; special districts; nonprofits and land trusts; federal and state agencies; Tribes; state, federal, and local elected officials; and advocacy and community organizations. Attached is a draft survey instrument. When we developed the 2013-2018 Strategic Plan, Conservancy Regional Managers and Executive Staff conducted face-to-face interviews to gather this data, but it was an extremely time-intensive effort and we do not believe that repeating the interviews would gain us significant new knowledge. There may also be some advantages to an online survey in terms of

ability to reach a wider audience and the respondents' willingness to share constructive criticism.

### **Mission Statement**

The mission statement in both the Coastal Conservancy's 2007 and 2013 Strategic Plans was:

*The Coastal Conservancy acts with others to preserve, protect, and restore the resources of the California coast, ocean, and the San Francisco Bay Area. Our vision is of a beautiful, restored, and accessible coastline, ocean and San Francisco Bay Area.*

We propose revising the mission statement:

*The State Coastal Conservancy's vision is of a beautiful, restored, and accessible coastline and San Francisco Bay Area for current and future generations of Californians. We act with others to protect, restore, and increase access to California's coast, its watersheds and the San Francisco Bay Area.*

### **Key Drivers**

These five key drivers will guide the development of the Strategic Plan goals and objectives.

#### *Global Drivers*

- Sea Level Rise & Climate Change

The inevitable impacts of climate change, including sea level rise, are a key driver in all of the Conservancy's work. The Strategic Plan update will need to incorporate the latest guidance and projections regarding future sea level. The Ocean Protection Council is updating its sea level rise guidance this spring and that information will be incorporated into the Strategic Plan. The Conservancy will need to continue to evaluate projects and priorities in the context of current understanding of climate change impacts.

- Equity & Vulnerable Communities

The Conservancy strives to benefit all Californians through our projects. There are populations in California (such as disadvantaged communities, persons with disabilities, people who are linguistically isolated, Tribes, and others) that disproportionately confront greater barriers to health and well-being and face increased vulnerability to environmental issues. Our work to restore habitats and watersheds, provide public access and recreational opportunities, and increase resilience to climate change should promote equity and benefit vulnerable communities in California. The goals and objectives in the Strategic Plan will be developed within this context, and we propose adding a new, overarching goal to address this key driver.

#### *Operational Drivers*

- Overlapping State Grant Programs

Since the last Strategic Plan, several other state agencies have started grant programs that directly overlap with the Coastal Conservancy's programs. As one example, the

California Department of Fish and Wildlife, the Ocean Protection Council and the Delta Conservancy now all have grant programs to fund wetland restoration within the Conservancy's jurisdiction. In identifying priorities for the next five years, the Conservancy needs to consider its role in the context of other, overlapping state grant programs

- State Funding for Operations & Programs/Projects

Recognizing that the bond funds that have supported operations for the past 15 years are running out, the Conservancy has worked to obtain general state operating fund and to diversify the funding sources for agency operations. The last strategic plan included a goal to implement a sustainable funding strategy for the Conservancy. The agency has made significant progress diversifying support funding and bringing in outside funds for staff, but obtaining sustainable state funding for operations is still a key driver for the agency.

- Future of Federal Funding for Conservation

The change of administration at the federal level may profoundly reduce the role of federal agencies in conservation. The 2018 President's budget proposes dramatic cuts in funding for multiple federal environmental programs. These cuts, if approved by Congress, would impact the Conservancy's work to protect and restore coastal resources. Federal funding has been important for implementation of the Conservancy's projects, as well as for staff support. Potential reductions in federal funding would affect what the Conservancy can accomplish over the next five years.

## Draft Survey Instrument

What type of organization are you affiliated with?

- City
- County
- Special District
- State Agency
- Federal Agency
- Tribe
- Non-Profit Land Trust
- Non-Profit (not Land Trust)
- Community Group
- Private Business
- Individual
- Other

What part of California do you work in (select all that apply)?

- North Coast (*coastal Marin, coastal Sonoma, Mendocino, Humboldt, and Del Norte Counties*)
- San Francisco Bay Area (*9-county Bay Area, minus coastal San Mateo, coastal Marin, and coastal Sonoma*)
- Central Coast (*coastal San Mateo, Santa Cruz, Monterey, San Luis Obispo, and Santa Barbara Counties*)
- South Coast (*Ventura, Los Angeles, Orange, and San Diego Counties*)
- Entire Coast
- Entire State
- Other

How long have you worked with the State Coastal Conservancy?

- Over 5 years
- Less than 5 years
- I have not yet worked with the Conservancy

What have you worked with the Conservancy to accomplish (select all that apply)?

- Public Access
- Trails
- Land Acquisition
- Wetland Restoration
- Watershed Restoration
- Climate Change Adaptation
- Environmental Education or Interpretation
- I have not yet worked with the Conservancy
- Other (Allow for fill-in)

On a scale of 1-5, how important do you think each of these Conservancy goals are:

- Complete the Coastal Trail
- Expand public access to the coast

- Address affordability of coastal visits for low-income populations
- Revitalize urban waterfronts
- Protect coastal lands
- Restore coastal habitats
- Restore coastal watersheds
- Protect coastal farmland, rangeland, and working forests
- Work with willing landowners to steward coastal farmland, rangeland, and working forests
- Enhance resiliency of coastal communities and ecosystems to impacts of climate change
- Conduct sea level rise vulnerability assessments and adaptation projects
- Improve the natural environment in disadvantaged communities
- Support environmental education and interpretation programs

San Francisco Bay Area (only for people who indicated they work in SF Bay Area, entire coast, or entire state)

- Protect lands in the Bay Area
- Restore habitats and watersheds in the Bay Area
- Provide public access facilities and programs in the Bay Area
- Complete the Bay Trail and Bay Area Ridge Trail
- Protect Bay Area farmland, rangeland, and working forests

If you had to describe the State Coastal Conservancy in one word, what word would you use?

In the next five years, what will be your organization's top three priorities?

In the next five years, what do you think the top priority of the Conservancy should be?

What two things do you like about working with the Conservancy?

What are two ways the Conservancy could improve how it works to accomplish projects?

Do you have any other comments or ideas?

THANK YOU!

# Draft Annotated Outline

## Introduction

### State Coastal Conservancy's Mission

*The State Coastal Conservancy's vision is of a beautiful, restored, and accessible coastline and San Francisco Bay Area for current and future generations of Californians. We act with others to protect, restore, and increase access to California's coast, its watersheds and the San Francisco Bay Area.*

### Importance of our work to the people of California

### Map of where we do our work

### What are our core jobs and core strengths?

(Fill in info from surveys – below is list of how we view ourselves)

- Relationships with local governments, nonprofits, and other public agencies
- Broad authorities – includes multiple issues, resource protection and economic development
- Collaborating – bringing parties together
- Leading/Facilitating long-term, landscape-scale projects and programs
- Responsiveness – flexibility, adaptability
- Solving problems/conflicts
- Seeking multi-objective solutions
- Piloting innovative solutions to complex problems
- Providing expertise on natural adaptation and green infrastructure
- Essential to health of coastal resources and coastal economy
- Planning – integrating issues and information, bringing science to bear, identifying large scale solutions
- Funding implementation of on-the-ground projects – making things happen
- Identifying and addressing emerging issues

### How We Work (from 2013 Plan)

The Conservancy is a problem-solving agency, emphasizing accomplishment rather than focusing on policies or processes. In order to complete successful projects, the Conservancy has led many regional and local planning efforts to engage local communities and other stakeholders in finding solutions to multi-faceted coastal resource challenges.

- The Conservancy works on behalf of the citizens of California, developing innovative projects to enhance coastal resources for the benefit of all.

- The Conservancy works on a range of geographic scales to plan and implement projects that achieve multiple objectives, such as restoration of habitats, completion of trails and recreational amenities, and economic enhancement of urban waterfronts.
- The Conservancy employs the best available science for each project, subjecting its projects to independent scientific review when appropriate. The Conservancy employs innovative techniques in resolving land use conflicts, developing plans, and implementing projects.
- The Conservancy staff adds value by its combination of technical knowledge, commitment to community involvement, skill at communicating the needs of the coast and San Francisco Bay region to decision makers, and experience in helping to address coastal issues.
- The Conservancy works through transparent, public processes and Conservancy projects are discussed and acted upon by the board with a full opportunity for public involvement.
- The Conservancy strives to be as efficient as possible by limiting the level of bureaucratic process to what is essential to ensure adequate public involvement and to meet legal requirements.

### **Accomplishments**

- Building Regional Trails
- Restoring Coastal Wetlands and Watersheds
- Protecting Important Coastal Resource Lands
- Preparing for Climate Change
- Leading Multi-Agency Partnerships

## **Context for this plan**

### **Purpose of this Plan**

#### **Statewide Context: Key Drivers**

1. Sea Level Rise & Climate Change
2. Equity & Vulnerable Communities
3. Overlapping State Grant Programs
4. State Funding for Operations & Programs/Projects
5. Future of Federal Funding for Conservation

#### **Regional Context: summaries, major issues, and major efforts**

- North Coast
- San Francisco Bay Area
- Central Coast
- South Coast



## **The Next Five Years (what we want to do)**

The numerical objectives will be determined based on what we believe we can accomplish over five years, assuming annual funding remains at 2017 levels or slightly higher (i.e. Prop 1 funds plus additional source(s) of state funding in next 2-3 years and continued federal grants).

### **Public Access**

Goal 1: Develop the California Coastal Trail as a major recreational amenity, tourist attraction, and alternative transportation system.

Goal 2: Expand the system of coastal public accessways, open-space areas, parks, and inland trails that connect to the coast.

Goal 3: Revitalize coastal and inland waterfronts that provide significant public benefits and promote economic development.

### **Coastal Resources Conservation**

Goal 4: Protect significant coastal resource properties, including farmland, rangeland, and forests.

Goal 5: Enhance biological diversity, improve water quality, habitat, and other natural resources within coastal watersheds.

Goal 6: Enhance coastal working lands, including farmland, rangeland, and forests.

Goal 7: Enhance the resiliency of coastal communities and ecosystems to the impacts of climate change.

Goal 8: Expand environmental education efforts to improve public understanding, use, and stewardship of coastal resources.

### **Santa Ana River Conservancy**

Goal 9: Design and construct new sections of the Santa Ana River Trail.

Goal 10: Improve public access, recreation, and educational facilities and programs within the Santa Ana River Parkway.

Goal 11: Protect and enhance natural habitats and connecting corridors, watersheds, scenic areas, and other open-space resources of regional importance in the Santa Ana River watershed.

### **San Francisco Bay Area Conservancy**

Goal 12: Identify and prioritize long-term resource and recreational goals for the San Francisco Bay Area.

Goal 13: Protect and enhance natural habitats and connecting corridors, watersheds, scenic areas, and other open-space resources of regional importance in the Bay Area.

Goal 14: Improve public access, recreation, and educational facilities and programs in and around San Francisco Bay, along the coast, the ridgelines, in urban open spaces, and natural areas.

Goal 15: Protect Bay Area working lands and support farmers and ranchers in implementing stewardship of the natural resources on their lands.

## **Organizational Goals**

Goal 16: Implement a sustainable funding strategy for the Conservancy's projects and programs.

Goal 17: Align the Conservancy's staff resources with workload and strategic priorities.

Goal 18: Ensure full transparency and accountability, including external communications about the Conservancy's purposes, actions, and accomplishments.

Goal 19: Ensure that the work of the Conservancy promotes equity and benefits vulnerable communities in California.

## **Appendices**

### **Conservancy Statutory Authorities and Programs**

### **2013-2018 Strategic Plan Accomplishments**

### **Project Funding**

### **Support Budget**