



Memo

Date: June 8, 2017

To: State Coastal Conservancy Board

From: Sam Schuchat, Executive Officer
Mary Small, Chief Deputy 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 five-year strategic plan for the Coastal Conservancy. With this memo, Conservancy staff is sharing findings from our online survey of stakeholders and seeking Board input on the list of Goals and Objectives. The draft Strategic Plan will be released to the Board and public on September 14, 2017. Staff will present the draft Strategic Plan to the Board on September 28, with public comment ending on October 14. Board and public comment will then be integrated and the proposed adoption of the final Strategic Plan is at the November 30 Board meeting. This memo includes:

- Schedule, page 2
- Mission Statement, page 2
- Stakeholder Survey, pages 3-21
- Key Drivers, pages 22-23
- Goals and Objectives, pages 24-31

Schedule

<u>When</u>	<u>What</u>	<u>Who</u>
June 15	Discussion with Board about survey results and goals and objectives	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

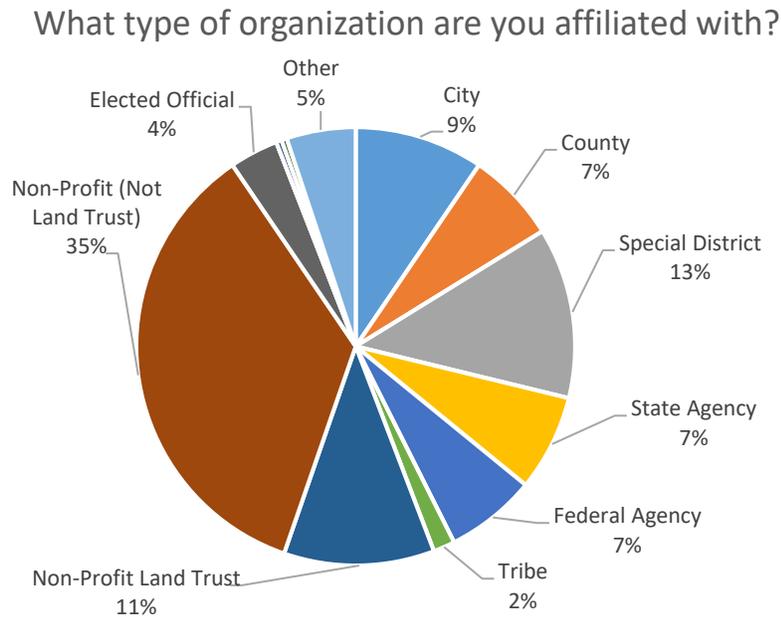
Mission Statement

Based on discussion at the April 27, 2017 Board meeting, we propose the following mission statement:

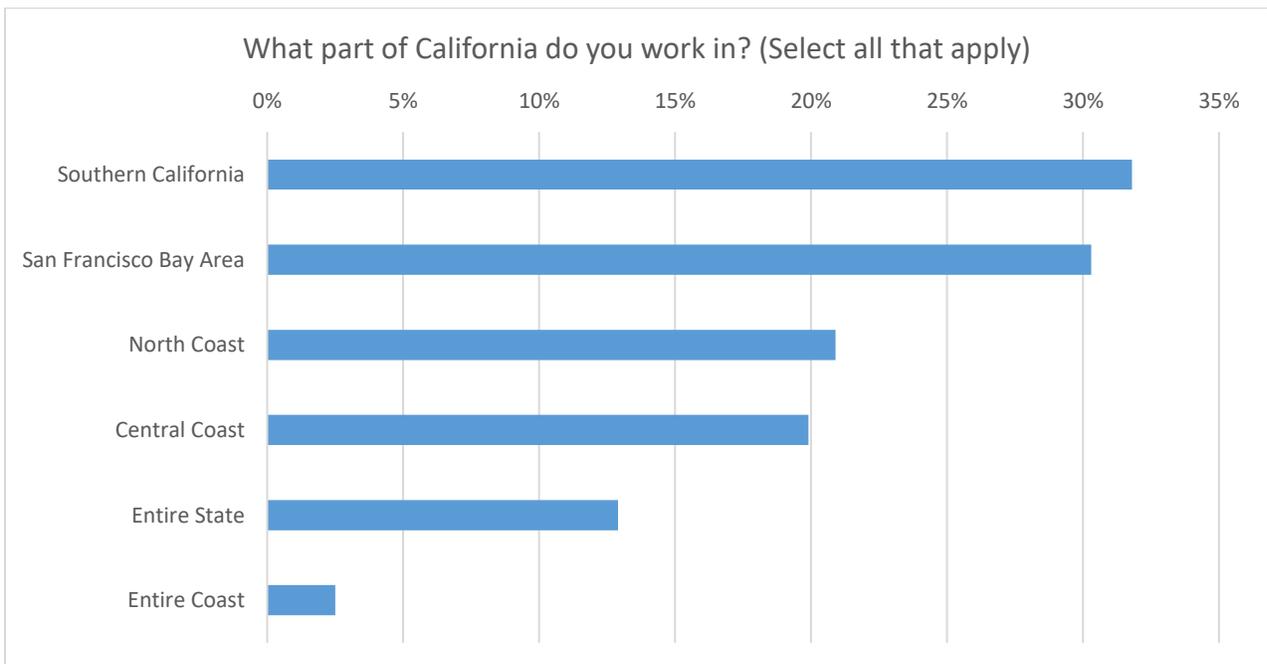
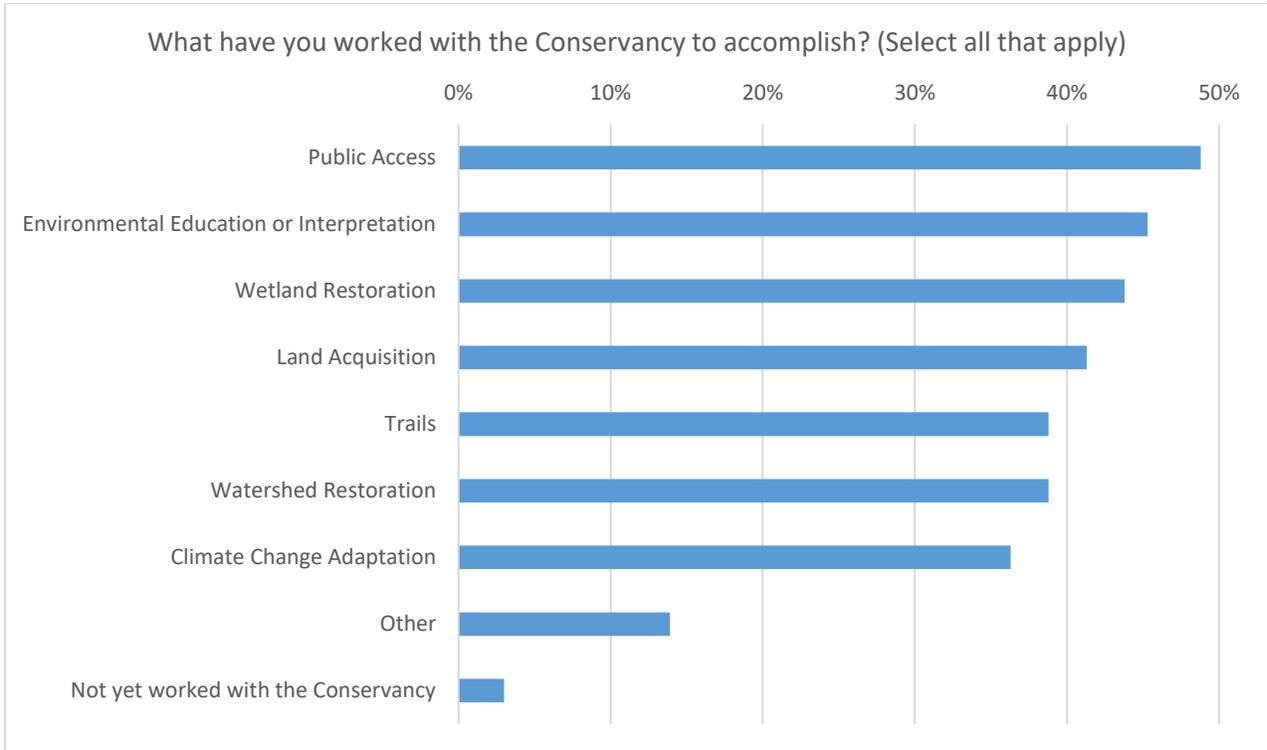
The State Coastal Conservancy's vision is of a beautiful, restored, and accessible coast for current and future generations of Californians. We act with others to protect and restore, and increase public access to, California's coast, ocean, coastal watersheds, and the San Francisco Bay Area.

Stakeholder Outreach

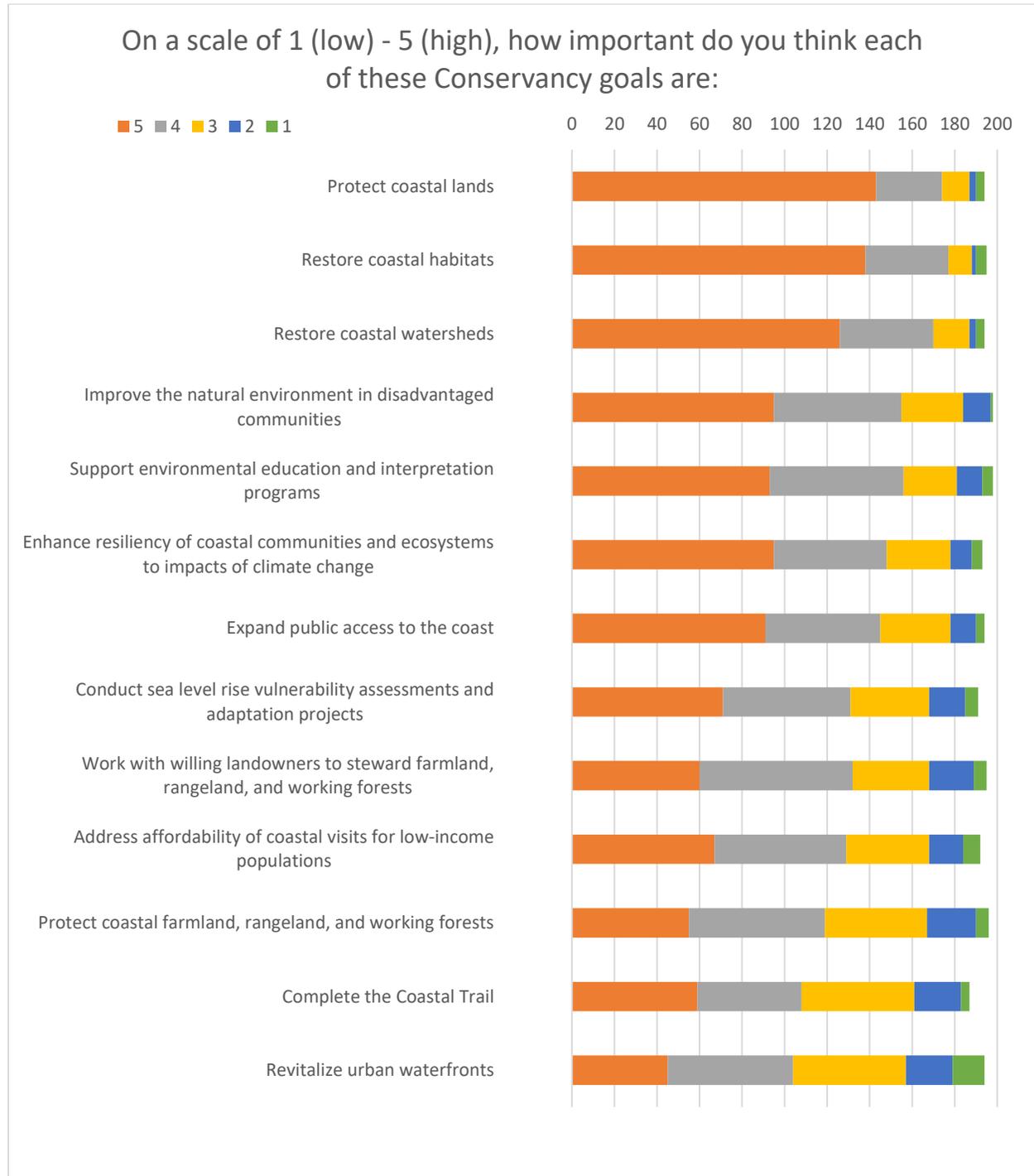
We conducted an online survey of stakeholders (grantees, partner agencies, tribes, elected officials, and others) using Survey Monkey during May of 2017. We sent the survey to over 500 people and over 200 people completed the survey. The pie chart below shows the affiliations of the survey participants. Approximately half of the respondents were with public agencies and half with nongovernmental organizations. Tribal representatives and elected officials also participated.



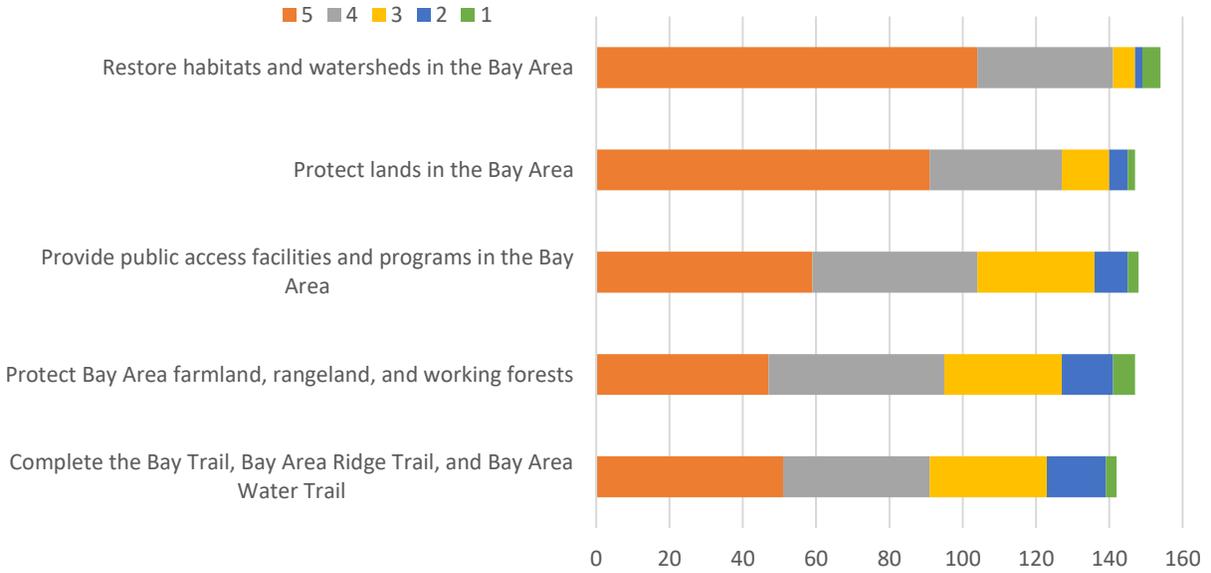
Survey participants have worked with the Conservancy on a wide array of program types and throughout our geographic jurisdiction, as shown in the two charts below.



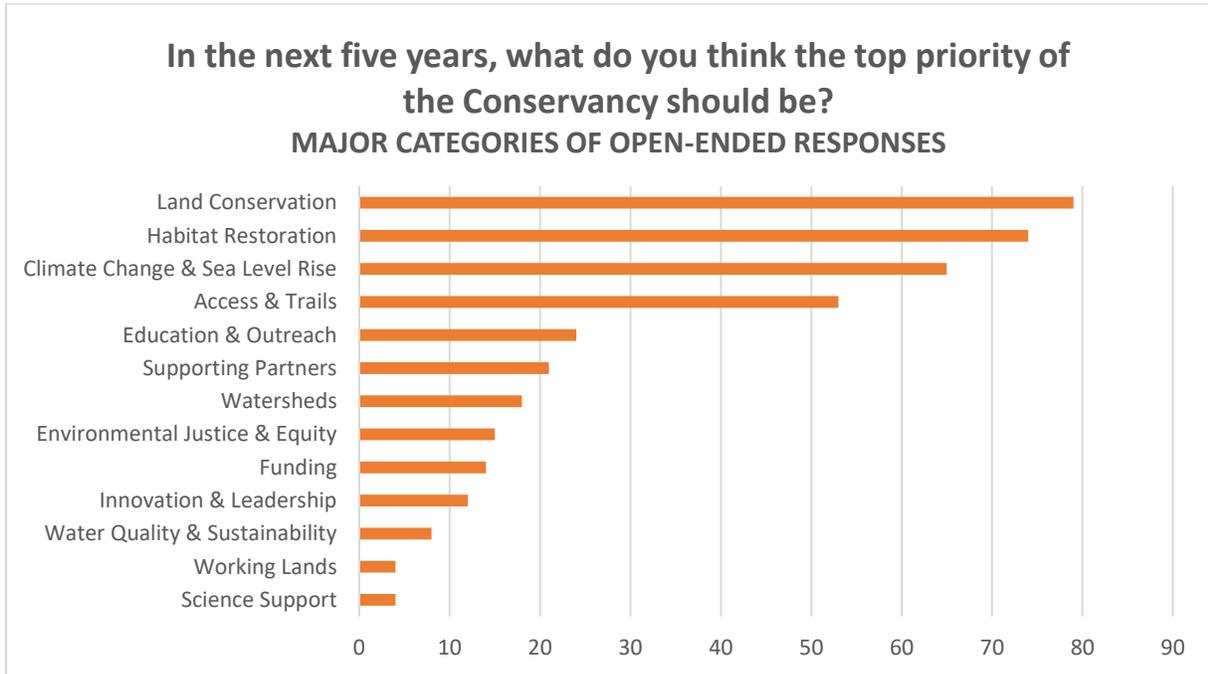
The survey participants **ranked Conservancy goals from 1 (low) to 5 (high)**. The two charts below show their responses, with goals ordered by averaged rank (highest to lowest). The first chart shows statewide goals and the second chart shows San Francisco Bay Area goals. Goals that involve protecting lands, restoring habitats, and restoring watersheds received highest rankings, followed closely by environmental justice, education, climate change, public access, and working lands goals. None of our goals received large numbers of ones or twos.



On a scale of 1 (low) - 5 (high) how important do you think each of these Conservancy goals are for the San Francisco Bay Area?



Survey participants were asked, “In the next five years, what do you think the top priority of the Conservancy should be?” Their open-ended answers were categorized and the chart below shows the most frequently mentioned categories. Many participants listed more than one priority or focused on achieving multiple objectives. Land conservation, habitat restoration, climate change, and public access were the most frequently mentioned, followed by education, watersheds, and environmental justice. Participants also frequently called for the Conservancy to support the work of partners, provide leadership, and generate/distribute funding.



Below are some of the responses to the question: “In the next five years, what do you think the top priority of the Conservancy should be?”

- *Protecting more land that provides multiple benefits including wildlife habitat protection (particularly to build climate change resilience and to maintain wildlife corridors), reduction in pollutants into coastal streams and near shore environments, and to accommodate a rise in the use of public open space that will come with increased population.*
- *Articulating a vision and then then generating resources to help bring the environmental/land conservation community to scale in order to complete on an even plane for other infrastructure (transportation/roads, communications, health, etc).*
- *Vigilance for values for California coast amidst federal challenges on environmental protection and scientific education.*
- *Lead the conversation about how coastal communities will need to adapt to climate change so that public access and public lands are not lost as the result of sea level rise.*
- *Big picture planning and implementation; providing resources for the network of local actors that carry out local planning, implementation, and monitoring in support of these goals.*
- *Outreach/Information Sharing: It's an incredibly uncertain time right now and we're all being called on to defend/sustain/strengthen the progress we've collectively made on behalf of our*

environmental and social health and well-being. For the Conservancy, to the extent bandwidth limitations will allow, reaching out to stay in closer, more regular communication with project partners about emerging threats and opportunities may help safeguard our continued, collective success.

- *Changing the narrative of access on the coast by addressing new challenges.*
- *Providing access and education (as it will leverage conservation good beyond our wildest dreams).*
- *Protecting / restoring the coastal environment in disadvantaged communities and improving access and education for these communities*
- *Ensure coastal lands are preserved for both habitat and recreational purposes.*
- *Expansion of the coastal trail, expanding access to the coast and other public lands, conservation of coastal lands.*
- *Supporting regional adaptation planning and local implementation of resiliency projects, including wetland and habitat restoration.*
- *Enhance resiliency of coastal communities and ecosystems to impacts of climate change. Protect coastal lands. Restore coastal habitats. Restore coastal watersheds. Improve the natural environment in disadvantaged communities.*
- *Increasing resiliency of coastal habitats to improve the likelihood that they will persist in the future for the benefit of our coastal economy and the wildlife that depends on them.*
- *Protect/restore as much coastal habitat as possible prior to sea level rise to buffer the potential impacts.*
- *Supporting partner organizations and local government to address key conservation issues (Sea level rise planning and adaptation, restoration and land protection).*
- *Protect and restore coastal watersheds, enhancing estuary and lagoon habitat, inform climate change adaptation to sea level rise and integrated approaches to coastal communities.*
- *Consider not funding projects threatened by sea level rise in the next decades. Increase education about our coastal areas. Assure access to California's coast to the public.*
- *Working with coastal communities on access for all, affordable overnight accommodations and study of impacts of sea level rise.*
- *Conserve and restore coastal environments and provide access for everyone to enjoy coastal environments.*
- *Partner to protect and restore bay and coastal watersheds and provide opportunities for public access.*
- *Expanding coastal access; watershed restoration; habitat enhancement/protection against invasive species; green infrastructure that protects our water resources; climate adaptation.*
- *Improve the Natural Environment in Disadvantaged Communities.*
- *Strengthen regional and local conservation capacity; maintain independence from political manipulation to achieve science-based conservation objectives; prioritize acquisitions with stacked*

functions, i.e. resource protection AND public access components; prioritize funding for entities actively engaged in outdoor education; prioritize funding to regional and local entities willing to hold fee title and land manage; emphasize sea-level rise and climate change planning for affected coastal areas;

- *Educating the public about sensitive resources and environmental issues through well-designed public access and educational programs.*
- *Conserve coastal native habitats. Restore native coastal habitats for sensitive species. Promote environmental stewardship.*
- *Protect lands critical to public access, local farming, and watersheds in order to help focus housing in infill areas.*
- *Fund projects that improve water quality Fund marine habitat restoration programs that make a difference. Fund watershed education programs.*
- *I guess it's self serving, but ideally they would match our top priorities: Conservation Education for underserved communities Restoring coastal communities Ensuring access to coastal wetlands.*
- *1) Work with the Modoc Tribe 2) Prudent decision making regarding water resources 3) Enhancing existing water resources.*
- *Building constituency for coast, Bay, and watershed conservation through projects and programs that benefit all Californians.*
- *Public Access to the shoreline and in natural areas as a respite to urban living.*
- *Continue providing funding for trail implementation and habitat restoration but also continuing to make parks and open space relevant to a rapidly changing population.*
- *Funding critical infrastructure projects along the CA coastline.*
- *Continue to develop local NGO partnerships and leverage state funding to foster community-based volunteer stewardship of our watersheds.*
- *Obtaining more funding for acquisition of open space and projects that increase public access to it.*
- *Supporting passage and implementation of funding measures for climate-smart conservation programs, including land acquisition.*
- *Practical, measurable, efficient support for wildlife habitat conservation delivery projects. Resource protection, science delivery, public lands access that allows for sustainable ecological functionality of the coastal zone ecosystems.*
- *Invest in our most finite natural lands resource. Help solve regional (Bay-wide) issues that are beyond the scope of a single organization by providing technical assistance, convening, and strategic guidance and direction.*
- *Coastal and Bay habitat protection and restoration. Public access. Coastal farm and rangeland protection.*
- *Public access to the coast FOR ALL.*
- *Protect the coast.*

When asked, **“What two things do you like about working with the Conservancy?”**, the most frequent response was the staff, stated in some manner by 60% of respondents. Staff were described as knowledgeable, helpful, easy to work with, responsive, flexible, and professional. Many staff were mentioned by name in response to this question. Typical statements include:

- *The staff: their approachability, knowledge, and obvious dedication to the work. Best state agency to work with.*
- *Staff are caring and easy to work with and we each want to get projects done.*
- *Great people - they care, are can do and have sophistication to get to the heart of a project. Staff is to the point and collaborative in evaluating a project (great sense of humility and non-hierarchy).*
- *Dedicated, hardworking staff.*
- *Very insightful, smart and professional staff team. Staff is very responsive and reliable and easy to work with.*
- *The knowledgeable staff that understand the complexity of working with different groups of stakeholders.*
- *Staff: unparalleled in their experience, knowledge and accessibility.*
- *Staff are professional, responsive, and enjoyable to work with.*
- *The high quality of staff and leadership. Their apparent love for the work they do translates into solid working relationships and a high level of respect among their peers and colleagues.*
- *The staff!!! Every team member we have worked with is collaborative, accessible, and purposeful.*
- *Great staff - locally knowledgeable and collaborative.*
- *The staff are fantastic, knowledgeable, hard-working solution oriented, positive professionals.*
- *Great staff - everyone I have ever talked to is a good listener, mission-driven, smart, strategic and helpful.*
- *Great staff and project managers. Well informed staff that is highly collaborative and results oriented. Clear process as well!*
- *staff and staff.*

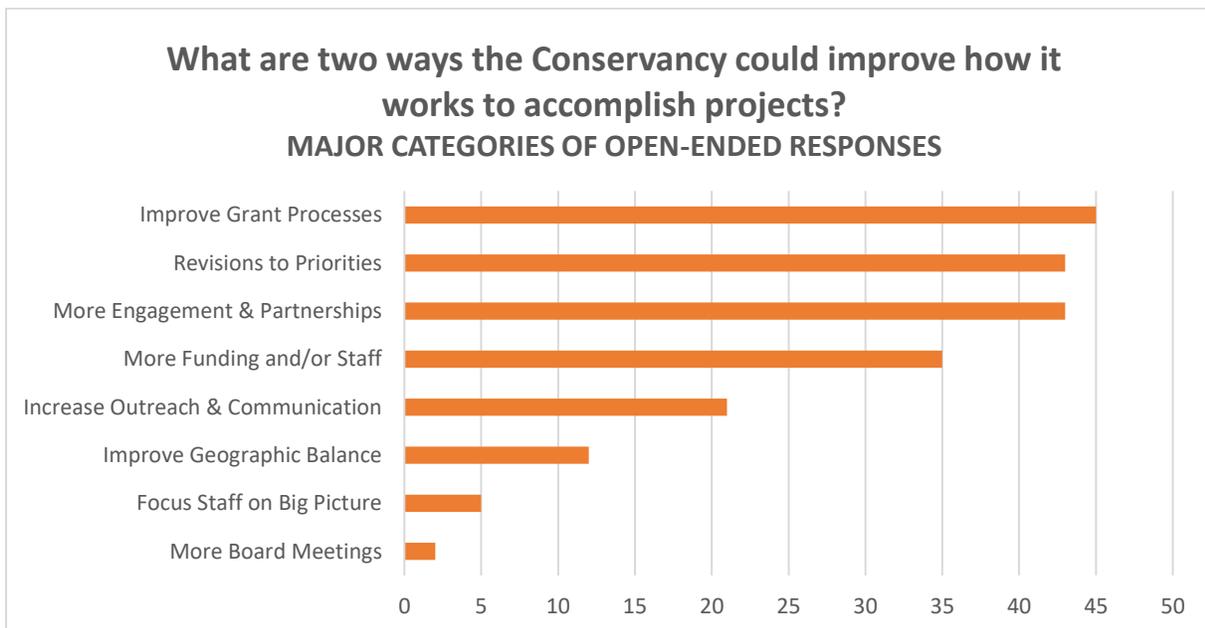
Another frequent set of responses to **“What two things do you like about working with the Conservancy?”** revolved around the type of work that the Conservancy does, the Conservancy’s emphasis on accomplishing projects, and the funding made available to undertake projects. Examples include:

- *The emphasis on "doing"- putting projects in the ground.*
- *Their proactive approach and their willingness to partner to get things done.*
- *Clear programs that are accessible and that support innovative ideas/approaches.*
- *The Conservancy is tremendously supportive of our organizational mission and work to improve coastal access!*

- *The parallels between our organizations goals and the focus of the Conservancy on coastal access and environmental education.*
- *The ability to be a seed funder for a project in order to attract other funds in some instances and to be the principal funder in other situations.*
- *Strategic vision: Small agency with big vision and the creativity to solve big problems.*
- *I like that they work with all the stakeholders on a project. I also admire their goal to preserve, protect and restore the resources of the California Coast.*
- *Very much appreciate the Conservancy's long term vision for investment in planning and implementing projects for sustained watershed health and creating a network of urban trails that will increase non-motorized access to the coast.*
- *I also appreciate the Conservancy's focus on what solutions work for our particular area and not forcing our region to have the same priorities as other areas on the Coast.*
- *The SCC's ability to remain focused on the big picture, straightforward vision, streamlined efficiency/attitude to get things done. Step in where needed but then step away to allow the work to proceed without heavy procedural inefficiencies.*
- *It has the big picture view for the state and the Bay Area, it is a significant source of critical grant funds.*
- *SCC has access to (or is successful at writing grants for) a lot of funding; SCC can work on any lands and across multiple jurisdictions regardless of ownership, public or private, to truly achieve landscape conservation.*
- *The SCC commitment to coastal access and coastal community enhancements. In our area, there is a consortium of SCC funded projects that cross-benefit each other. We feel the SCC has our back!*
- *The Conservancy's approach is always "how do we get this done?", not "there are too many barriers to get this done."*
- *They have latitude and flexibility to meet stakeholder needs, and aren't hamstrung by too much process. They work in key geographies and are willing to tackle challenging agency issues that need to be addressed.*
- *Partnership. Working with Conservancy staff and funding is unlike other grant funding. There is a sense of partnership with the Conservancy. We are working together. It is also more nimble to get the best projects done.*
- *The Conservancy has seemed less political, and therefore less dogmatic and more sensitive to diverse perspectives.*
- *Long-term good relationship in working toward City's preservation/conservation goals.*
- *It seems like the Conservancy more than many other agencies of government is interested in trying new things.*
- *So many projects and areas that the Conservancy works on! From restoration to access!*
- *Environmental vision for the future of California's coast.*

- *When we can say we are affiliated with the Conservancy, it elevates our organization's credibility with our stakeholders.*
- *The Conservancy helps provide funds for so many important projects up and down the coast that would not happen without the Conservancy's support.*
- *They understand the regions they work in and can provide important funds to acquire coastal lands or help leverage additional funds needed for acquisition.*
- *I appreciate the dual mission of conservation and public access.*
- *[Tribal] Consultations and request for our involvement.*
- *Supportive, has allowed our education program through generous funding that has allowed thousands of individuals from inland communities to visit the coast.*
- *The Conservancy's commitment to protect our coast is inspiring. The work the Conservancy supports is diverse and dynamic.*
- *Innovative approach to complex emerging issues like sea level rise adaptation and multi-agency partnerships.*
- *Committed partner from feasibility assessment through implementation.*
- *The Conservancy reporting requirements are not onerous, allowing us to spend most of our time doing the work.*

Participants were also asked, “**What are two ways the Conservancy could improve how it works to accomplish projects?**” and primarily responded with suggestions on improving grant processes, specific revisions to priorities, increasing engagement and partnerships, increasing funding and/or staff, and increasing outreach and communication efforts. About 40 people skipped this question and over 20 said N/A or none.



Below is a nearly comprehensive list of the recommendations for improvements in each category. Many of these responses provide us with actionable ideas for improving the management of our grant programs and projects, while other ideas provide guidance for prioritization of our work.

Improve Grant Processes

- *Prop 1 seemed to really change (for the worse) how well Conservancy staff can communicate or collaborate with applicants. Competitive grants programs do have more transparency, however the new approach has been frustrating since staff seem less able to give advice and guidance on what will qualify as a compelling project. I recommend looking at ways that a balance can be reached by having clear, formal grant application rounds that allow for collaborative project dialogues.*
- *People over process, please. Get rid of points system application which circumvents relationship and, therefore, predictable project approval. Effectively sidelines Coastal as irrelevant to projects that need to close on a timely basis. Projects that should otherwise include their orderly involvement based upon discernment by highly expert staff with significant local knowledge. Unthinkable that Coastal was not able to fund a recent project due to such process. What a missed opportunity for this agency to become involved in one of our region's most important projects.*
- *Direct communication with current grantees regarding future call for proposals.*
- *Offer 12-month pre-notification of grant programs and guidelines. We need to anticipate our grant writing efforts and priorities, and early notice is really helpful to busy staff.*
- *Announce as far in advance as possible forthcoming grant solicitations so we can match potential funding to those acquisition deals that take years to put together.*
- *Cycle grant rounds through specific types, and encourage/fund grant recipients to coordinate/share.*
- *Make funding availability more predictable to enable local agencies to have multi-year strategies.*
- *Streamline the grant process for existing programs that require continued funding.*
- *I believe the grant application process could be streamlined.*
- *There are many prop 1 grants, but we have spent a lot of time submitting applications without getting funding. Maybe make the process easier or provide clearer feedback.*
- *Consider funding (or a funding a renewal for) an organization for less than their proposal rather than a flat decline to fund. We depend on consistent funding, so that we can focus on program delivery and expansion.*
- *Refrain from obligating funding to projects that aren't fully baked. This prevents funding from being obligated towards worthy projects that are under contract and ready to move forward.*
- *Allow the true costs of running a grant to be covered in the budget unless the funding source restricts any funds from that source being billed to those items. Basically, if a consultant can bill \$250 per hour and charge 5%-10% mark-up on subs that a NGO that is billing out the same type of person, should be able to cover a justified overhead rate or include an increased billing rate that fully covers the overhead per staff person.*
- *Remove the restrictions on overhead that are lower than state agencies themselves charge for overhead. It causes us to lose money on Conservancy-funded programs and projects.*

- *Bid projects to minority contractors.*
- *The Conservancy's process can be a bit too bureaucratic.*
- *Longer performance periods for grant contracts (5 years rather than 3 years) and requiring 6 month progress report documentation once the grant is awarded - rather than quarterly updates.*
- *Less interim reports.*
- *Ease of grant billing and reporting.*
- *Reporting processes that are didactic are easier to facilitate for us internally. The flexible approach the Conservancy provides is helpful in some ways, but a more didactic approach can ensure we report correctly every time.*
- *Tailor the grant agreement contracts to reflect unique industry standards, specifically for insurance requirements.*
- *As a business best practice, evaluate procedures, processes, and reporting with an eye on making them simple and easier to accomplish.*
- *More efficient accounting (slow to pay, rigid rules).*
- *The bureaucratic burden can be a little overwhelming for nonprofits without large accounting staff. Many funders are able to provide the funds up front while the Conservancy reimburses us for our work after it is done which does create cash flow challenges.*
- *Reimbursement turnaround from Coastal Conservancy grants seem to be expedited the quickest of any State agency, yet many non-profits still struggle with the delays and restricted overhead ceiling. I would encourage the Conservancy to examine how other agencies (e.g. DWR) are re-tailoring their grant models to better support small and mid-sized NGOs.*
- *Reimbursable grants can be difficult for small organizations; might consider awarding at least part of the funds up front for small grants.*

Revisions to Priorities

- *Increase funding for disadvantaged communities environmental education (culturally relevant).*
- *Not sure since bond language has removed some of the flexibility for project funding. Ideally, the Coastal Conservancy retains their broader focus on healthy landscapes and ecosystems that involve more than just water.*
- *Try to find more funding for acquisition projects. There is still a lot of work to be done to protect our coastal watersheds.*
- *Celebrate / honor local community leaders who are committed to coastal protection, especially those representing disadvantaged communities.*
- *Remain dedicated to the long haul on projects. Keep striving to make sure that work is technically sound.*
- *Buy into larger projects from beginning to end.*
- *Provide bond funding for smaller projects, not just large-scale projects.*

- *Take the risk of making larger investments in fewer projects. Take the risk of not reserving funds just for the sake of perpetuating the agency.*
- *Provide planning grants for regional climate response, carbon farm planning, etc.*
- *Focus less on vulnerability studies-- find other faster ways to get to same end.*
- *Focus on core mission of conservation.*
- *Protect critical wildlife corridors/habitats.*
- *Expand coverage of funding for rehabilitation of existing recreational outdoor facilities.*
- *Continue to allow planning work as eligible funding projects.*
- *Public facing statement of long term coastal restoration goals versus realistic outcomes of beaches, coastal open space, and wetlands for California. That is, we would all like to see wetlands restored, but realistically there is only so much space they can move upland due to sea level rise.*
- *Focus on projects that incorporate sea level rise planning in their designs; recognize that not all sites are suited for public access and plan access accordingly and away from sensitive habitats.*
- *Find ways to help mold grants to actual needs rather than the other way around. I realize this is hard to accomplish but for habitat restoration projects; local site flexibility and temporal variability that can occur during the development and regulatory cycle of a given project leads us to really need flexibility in how funding may be used.*
- *Keep focusing your resources on natural resources (acquisition & conservation), and access and the people will follow.*
- *Emphasize invasive species more.*
- *Support educational programs related to agriculture on the coast.*
- *Make Watershed planning in small coastal watersheds a priority.*

More Engagement and Partnerships

- *Reach out to smaller / less powerful community groups to explore partnerships that would better empower them.*
- *Meet with key partners in the region to develop priority project ideas/categories so the Conservancy can weigh in early on the type of projects that want to fund and the local partners can provide feedback on priorities and timelines, etc.*
- *Meet with partner organizations more often to understand local and regional priorities.*
- *It's always challenging bridging being a grant-maker with being an on-the-ground doer. I think SCC staff could move more past grant-making and be a little more roll up the sleeves engaged in projects, especially since staff is so smart and helpful.*
- *More day to day connection to local government staff and electeds.*
- *Establish closer relationships with other state agencies (e.g. Caltrans, Fish & Wildlife). Partner with federal resource agencies.*

- *Partner with state agencies that need help like state parks.*
- *I'd like to see SCC work with and push CDFW to do ecosystem function type projects on our properties (i.e. public land). CDFW has the properties but not the vision. Work with CDFW to create ecosystem function, transparency, direction and help fund that direction and common goal. Grow partners within CDFW, you already have several we just need to push harder and collaborate more.*
- *Partner more directly and strategically with federal partners like marine sanctuaries, wildlife refuges, estuaries*
- *Foster integrated trails program that shares best practices and advocates regional trails (CCT, Bay Trail, Water Trail, Anza Trail, etc.).*
- *Partner with local governments on landbanking. Establish mitigation banks to cleanup brownfields more quickly.*
- *Meet with key partners in the region to develop priority project ideas/categories so the Conservancy can weigh in early on the type of projects that want to fund and the local partners can provide feedback on priorities and timelines, etc.*
- *Continuing to strive for good working relationships with multiple regulatory agencies*
- *Help to improve permitting processes.*
- *Work with regulatory agencies such as Planning Department in this County to speed up their review process.*
- *A lot of staff is based in Oakland and more on the ground visits in the relevant regions would assist even more cohesion on specific programs. The conservancy is a big driver and champion of complex coastal projects, without a financial nexus through a grant it's difficult to justify their involvement - but their involvement should be sustained irrespective of if they are currently funding a project scope to enable continuity and momentum.*
- *We want to make sure that we have better long term continuity and build our relationship by meeting regularly.*
- *Expand partnerships to new audiences.*
- *I think IWRP is the absolute best funding/ partnership/ technical assistance that I have ever worked with in my career. I'm concerned that it is eroding from its original vision and intent. I hope we can make it whole again. It has accelerated conservation in the three counties and enabled us to take on projects based on their priority rather than their feasibility or some window of opportunity.*
- *Do more field outreach to partners. We haven't seen a Coastal Conservancy staff person in Mendocino County for ages...Let us know what sorts of projects you are most interested in funding...*
- *Perhaps have brown bag lunches, webinars, socials, or other informal workshops or networking opportunities to connect Conservancy staff and their priorities to folks in the conservation community.*
- *Provide assistance with getting funding from other state agencies for projects.*

More Funding and/or Staff

- *Realistically, the Conservancy may not be able to improve much because it already does an amazing job. One frustration is that the Conservancy's ability to partner on projects is often tied to the availability of bond funds that focus on different issues, which may create a deficit of funding opportunities in one area and a relative surplus of opportunities in another (i.e., coastal trails and coastal habitat restoration may have less available bond funding than water quality/flood prevention/pollution control). In a perfect world the availability of funding would be available for all of the above areas on a more consistent basis. It would also be great if the funding programs aimed at connecting underrepresented audiences to the coast/nature is sustained and expanded.*
- *Conservancy is limited by access to resources, more funding is needed to support staff and projects. In the past, the staff had capacity to provide technical assistance to local jurisdictions and land trust who were grappling with complex land use/resource issues. Would love to see that capacity return.*
- *Shore up your resources so that California can stay strong in its environmental protection, especially in the face of possible cessation of environmental protection and funding from the federal government.*
- *Have more funds and more staff to help implement projects with those funds*
- *Additional staff, additional resources.*
- *More staff to shoulder the workload, more discretionary funding.*
- *Expanded internship program to provide project support.*
- *Work with the Coastal Commission to receive funding from enforcement and/or mitigation fees/settlements.*
- *Leverage other state programs (IRWM, in particular, but also NPDES). Provide more targeted funding, on as narrow-as-you-are-allowed project types, to create momentum statewide.*
- *Initiate kickstarters/crowdfunding sources for local communities to purchase lands for habitat, public recreation, open space, etc.*
- *Secure additional state bond funding to use as match for federal grants.*
- *The Conservancy should consider revising its policies on mitigation. With a reduction in public funds and an increase in need, mitigation is becoming a leading way that projects get funded.*
- *More funding, and hopefully Measure AA will help with that.*
- *Do more. Accelerate.*
- *Increase the availability of funds available for various projects.*
- *Secure dedicated state funding for CC purposes.*
- *You need more \$\$.*
- *Get more money.*

Increase Outreach and Communication

- *Provide more public education about how resource related projects supported by the Conservancy which address Climate Change benefit entire communities who should be contributing to these projects as well.*
- *Invite more community and public input related to all construction or storage projects that effect our coastline and public resources.*
- *Facilitate and support early and active engagement by a broad constituency. Demonstrate how investments add up to advance strategic priorities.*
- *Look for more Public Relations opportunities and promote their projects better.*
- *More transparency about annual goals.*
- *Based on my limited experience I'd say expand your outreach on issues to the wider scientific land management community because known large entities are not always providing good information.*
- *More outreach with landowners. Develop outreach resources for land managers.*
- *Set specific goals and report back on progress in achieving goals.*
- *Pretty much just keep doing what you are doing; increasing your visibility to the general public would provide benefits.*
- *Build a public awareness of your responsibilities and successes*
- *Possibly more regular communication with partners, past and present.*
- *A little more communication of updates and on project accomplishments.*
- *Increase visibility with the general public.*
- *All agencies want recognition. That's understandable. But its leading to sign clutter, and visual "litter" with brands in natural areas. Please consider on-line recognition or other strategies.*

Improve Geographic Balance

- *Make more grant funds available for urban projects.*
- *Focus attention to rural areas of the state.*
- *Balance out funding between the Bay Area and Southern California.*
- *Outreach to directly support disadvantaged communities. Perhaps a more direct presence in Southern California.*
- *Start a southern California satellite office to make interaction with staff more convenient.*
- *More staff working on the north coast.*
- *Focus on the southern part of the state.*
- *Decentralize offices so that staff can be able to be closer to assigned projects and watersheds.*
- *Work County by County, not across a region, since Counties differ greatly in terms of resources and setting Countywide priorities.*

- *Consider more inland projects in coastal watersheds, even more partnerships with unlikely allies such as CalTrans (fish passage), and DFW (wildlife corridors).*

Focus Staff on Big Picture

- *More site visits, less bureaucracy-micro managing.*
- *While some staff members are helpful, some are hyper focused on details and not the mission which can make it difficult to work with them.*
- *Resist telling grantees how to do their jobs and sometimes trying to be the project manager rather than project partner.*
- *Staff at the Conservancy seems buried in work, thus could be more responsive.*

And finally, here are some last thoughts by survey participants, who were asked: **“Do you have any other comments or ideas?”**

- *Work with staff on their thoughts on any alteration of the agencies goals, objectives and policies. Keep the work human with a touch of emphasis on craftsmanship (my pleasant experience). Continue to do good work.*
- *The Conservancy is a great organization and I feel that staff needs more employees to help reduce the workload and stress and increase morale.*
- *Our organization and its accomplishments would not exist without the Conservancy.*
- *Keep up the great work. We need you now more than ever with EPA and USDA NRCS under siege...*
- *The webinar on Grant Writing offered by the Coastal Conservancy was informative and worthwhile.*
- *Develop a campaign with a single focus: Clean Water, or Climate Change, something that shows that the agency has ONE thing to relentlessly pursue and accomplish in the next 10 years.*
- *The reason the Conservancy has received a relatively large percentage of bond funding given the agency's size over the years is their effectiveness of getting the funding out the door towards projects. They need to maintain this reputation.*
- *We have really appreciated the Explore The Coast funding we have received, which has enabled us to provide the opportunity for bay and ocean field trips for hundreds of children and their parents and teachers, who would not otherwise have had this experience.*
- *Regarding ecologically compatible community engagement, this is a tough balancing act that many are struggling with. My sense is that funding of community engagement will take a lot of thought. We can't have too many people tromping through the limited amount of wildland a still left but we need the support of many. Maybe a few high profile projects that promote access to areas in which people can recreate without too much impact. i.e. fishing access, hiking near developed areas, etc. But not at the expense of wildland protection. It is too important to lose sight of.*
- *I think that cultural resources programs should be included in the list of goals.*
- *I fondly recall the days when your main focus was on habitats.*

- *Most research seems to be about sea level rise and sf bay adaptation. What about which species (plant or animal) will be able to adapt to uplands habitats with climate change?*
- *I don't see as many whale tail license plates anymore - is there a way to get the word out about the benefits they provide? Most importantly, thank you for what you do!!*
- *Save the Gaviota Coast.*
- *Thanks! You made the Fort Bragg Coastal Trail happen. We could not have done it without you. The SCC was an early and steadfast partner throughout the project. Thanks, Thanks Thanks!!!!*
- *Keep up the great work on behalf of the CA Coast!*
- *Thank you for all that you do -- keep up the fabulous work and thank you for your service to our Great Golden State!*
- *I am grateful for Conservancy's dedicated and professional staff, especially Bay Program staff and supportive Board!*
- *I've enjoyed working with Coastal Conservancy staff for 8+ years and their dedication and professionalism is to be admired. I appreciate the freedom staff is given as project leaders to "get the job done"...*
- *Just want to say that the Coastal Conservancy is one of the best organizations to work with; great grant managers and regional staff who are directly in touch with the project on the ground; doing a great job all around!!*
- *The SCC is THE BEST partner I've worked with in my 25+ year career in conservation in multiple states.*
- *Thanks for doing this. It is great to have this sort of input.*
- *I hope this is a short strategic plan. SCC is doing good work.*

Key Drivers

These five key drivers, which were presented at the April 27, 2017 Board meeting, have guided the development of the Strategic Plan goals and objectives, and are woven throughout all of work.

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. The Conservancy has long distinguished itself as effectively accomplishing coastal conservation and access projects through engagement with grantees and involvement in funded projects. Project partners have expressed that the Conservancy should continue to provide grant funding, in a way that prioritizes outcomes over process, and, where needed, engage actively in projects in a way that provides support and leadership.

- 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 will 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.

Goals and Objectives

The following pages include the list of proposed Conservancy goals and objectives. These goals and objectives are at the heart of the Strategic Plan.

The goals and objectives are very similar to our 2013-2017 Strategic Plan goals, with three major additions, some edits to existing objectives, and a deletion:

1. The addition of Santa Ana River goals and objectives (page 28);
2. The addition of an overarching goal and three objectives to promote equity and benefit vulnerable communities (page 31);
3. The addition of a leadership goal and objectives to reflect the survey results calling for greater engagement, partnership, and outreach (page 31);
4. The revision of Coastal Trail objectives to reflect current and ongoing efforts to map and sign the existing trail network, and develop an Explore the Coast web app;
5. The revision of climate change resilience objectives to improve clarity, tracking, and to be more in keeping with our other objectives; and
6. The deletion of a previous goal to “reduce conflicts among competing uses in the Coastal Zone”, which was redundant with other goals and proved difficult to quantify.

Conservancy staff plan to develop numerical targets for each objective during July and August. We will develop our targets assuming that funding levels for the Conservancy’s projects and operations will remain at similar levels to FY 17/18 over the next five years and that we will continue to have funding that can be used for all of our major program areas (conservation, public access, education, climate change, etc.).

We will include the numerical targets in the draft Strategic Plan that is released to the public on September 14 and discussed at the September 28, 2017 Conservancy Board meeting. The targets can be revised based on feedback from the public and direction from the Board prior to the release of the final Strategic Plan in November and proposed adoption at the November 30, 2017 Board meeting.

Section	Goal	Obj	Objective Description
Public Access	Develop the California Coastal Trail as a major recreational amenity, tourist attraction, and alternative transportation system.	1A	Implement and support projects to promote awareness and use of the California Coastal Trail, including the Explore the Coast web app.
		1B	Complete and maintain map of existing Coastal Trail network.
		1C	Complete placement of California Coastal Trail signs on existing trails.
		1D	Design new trail segments.
		1E	Construct new trail segments.
		1F	Assist with projects that secure real property or property interests to facilitate the development of the California Coastal Trail.
		1G	Improve support facilities at existing coastal accessway; where feasible include features to improve accessibility for people with disabilities.
	Expand the system of coastal public accessways, open-space areas, parks, and inland trails that connect to the coast.	2A	Implement projects that expand opportunities for barrier-free access to and along the coast and coastal trails.
		2B	Open coastal areas that are currently inaccessible or closed to public use.
		2C	Design facilities to increase and enhance coastal recreational opportunities.
		2D	Fund construction of new facilities, or reconstruction of dilapidated and unsafe facilities to increase and enhance coastal recreational opportunities.
		2E	Design new regional trails and river parkways that connect inland populations to the coast.
		2F	Construct new regional trails and river parkways that connect inland populations to the coast.
		2G	Acquire land to allow for development of new coastal accessways.
	Revitalize coastal and inland waterfronts that provide significant public benefits and promote sustainable economic development.	3A	Develop waterfront revitalization plans that increase accessibility, support fishing, encourage economic revitalization, promote excellence in urban design, enhance cultural resources, and are resilient to a changing climate.
		3B	Implement waterfront revitalization projects that increase accessibility, support fishing, encourage economic revitalization, promote excellence in urban design, enhance cultural resources, and are resilient to a changing climate.
		3C	Complete a plan to expand lower-cost overnight accommodations on public lands along the coast.
		3D	Design lower-cost overnight accommodations to expand access to the coast.
		3E	Construct lower-cost overnight accommodations to expand access to the coast.

Section	Goal	Obj	Objective Description
Coastal Resources Conservation	Protect significant coastal resource properties, including farmland, rangeland, and forests.	4A	Protect significant coastal and watershed resource properties.
		4B	Protect working lands, including farmland, rangeland and forests.
		4C	Implement projects that preserve and restore fish and wildlife corridors between core habitat areas along the coast and from coastal to inland habitat areas.
	Enhance biological diversity, improve water quality, habitat, and other natural resources within coastal watersheds.	5A	Develop plans for the restoration and enhancement of coastal habitats, including coastal wetlands and intertidal areas, stream corridors, dunes, coastal terraces, coastal sage scrub, forests, and coastal prairie.
		5B	Restore or enhance coastal habitats, including coastal wetlands and intertidal areas, stream corridors, dunes, coastal sage scrub, coastal terraces, forests and coastal prairie.
		5C	Develop plans to preserve and enhance coastal watersheds and floodplains.
		5D	Implement projects that preserve and enhance coastal watersheds and floodplains.
		5E	Implement projects to improve fish habitat including projects to remove barriers to fish passage, ensure sufficient instream flow, and provide in stream habitat and favorable water temperatures.
		5F	Complete plans to improve water quality to benefit coastal and ocean resources.
		5G	Implement projects to improve water quality to benefit coastal and ocean resources.
		5H	Implement projects to support the recovery of the southern sea otter.
	Enhance coastal working lands, including farmland, rangeland, and forests.	6A	Develop plans for projects that foster the long-term viability of coastal working lands, including projects to assist farmers, ranchers, and timber producers to reduce impacts of their operations on wildlife habitat and water quality.
		6B	Implement projects that foster the long-term viability of coastal working lands, including projects to assist farmers, ranchers, and timber producers to reduce impacts of their operations on wildlife habitat and water quality.

Coastal Resources Conservation	Enhance the resiliency of coastal communities and ecosystems to the impacts of climate change.	7A	Conduct vulnerability assessments and develop adaptation plans to identify specific projects to address sea level rise and other impacts of climate change.
		7B	Plan and design adaptation projects to increase resilience to sea level rise and other climate change impacts.
		7C	Implement projects to increase resilience to sea level rise or other climate change impacts using nature-based solutions and other multi-benefit strategies.
	Expand environmental education efforts to improve public understanding, use, and stewardship of coastal resources.	8A	Through Explore the Coast, support programs and events that improve public understanding of coastal resources.
		8B	Support the design and installation of interpretive or educational displays and exhibits related to coastal, watershed, and ocean-resource education, maritime history, and climate-change.
		8C	Construct or improve regional environmental education centers that educate the public about environmental issues affecting the coast and inland watersheds.

Section	Goal	Obj	Objective Description
Santa Ana River	Improve public access, recreation, and educational facilities and programs within the Santa Ana River Parkway.	9A	Design new sections of the Santa Ana River Trail.
		9B	Construct new sections of the Santa Ana River Trail.
		9C	Plan public access facilities within the Santa Ana River Parkway.
		9D	Construct public access facilities within the Santa Ana River Parkway.
		9E	Implement projects that create, expand, or improve environmental educational or interpretive programs within the Santa Ana River Parkway.
	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.	10A	Protect natural habitats and connecting corridors, watersheds, scenic areas, and other open-space resources.
		10B	Plan for the enhancement of natural habitats and connecting corridors, watersheds, scenic areas, and other open-space resources.
		10C	Enhance natural habitats and connecting corridors, watersheds, scenic areas, and other open-space resources.

Section	Goal	Obj	Objective Description
San Francisco Bay Area	Identify and prioritize long-term resource and recreational goals for the San Francisco Bay Area.	11A	Identify and prioritize resource and recreational goals, including projects that protect and enhance natural habitats and other open-space lands of regional significance and those that improve public access.
	Protect and enhance natural habitats and connecting corridors, watersheds, scenic areas, and other open-space resources of regional importance in the Bay Area.	12A	Protect tidal wetlands, managed wetlands, seasonal wetlands, riparian habitat, and subtidal habitat.
		12B	Protect wildlife habitat, connecting corridors, scenic areas, and other open-space resources of regional significance.
		12C	Develop plans for enhancement of tidal wetlands, managed wetlands, seasonal wetlands, upland habitat, and subtidal habitat.
		12D	Enhance tidal wetlands, managed wetlands, seasonal wetlands, upland habitat, and subtidal habitat.
		12E	Develop plans for enhancement of riparian and riverine habitat or other watershed functions and processes for the benefit of wildlife or water quality, including removal of barriers to fish passage or ensuring sufficient instream flow.
		12F	Enhance riparian and riverine habitat or other watershed functions and processes for the benefit of wildlife or water quality, including removal of barriers to fish passage or projects that ensure sufficient instream flow.
		12G	Develop plans to eradicate non-native invasive species that threaten important habitats in the San Francisco Bay Area.
		12H	Eradicate non-native invasive species that threaten important habitats in the San Francisco Bay Area.
	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.	13A	Develop plans for projects that provide recreational facilities such as picnic areas, docks and piers, campgrounds, parking lots, interpretive signs, interpretive or educational centers, and natural play spaces.
		13B	Implement projects that provide recreational facilities such as picnic and staging areas, docks and piers, campgrounds, parking lots, interpretive signs, interpretive or educational centers, and natural play spaces.
		13C	Complete acquisition projects that increase the amount of land accessible to the public or provide corridors for trails.
		13D	Develop plans for completing segments of the San Francisco Bay Trail.
		13E	Construct segments of the San Francisco Bay Trail.
		13F	Plan segments of the Bay Area Ridge Trail.

San Francisco Bay Area		13G	Construct segments of the Bay Area Ridge Trail.	
		13H	Develop plans for regionally significant public access trails and community connectors, including links between the Bay Trail, Ridge Trail, Water Trail, and Coastal Trail, and links between regional trails and urban communities.	
		13I	Construct regionally significant public trails and community connectors, including links between the Bay Trail, Ridge Trail, Water Trail, and Coastal Trail, and links between regional trails and urban communities.	
		13J	Designate launch sites for the San Francisco Bay Area Water Trail.	
		13K	Enhance designated launch sites for the San Francisco Bay Area Water Trail.	
		13L	Implement projects that expand opportunities for barrier-free access to natural areas.	
		13M	Implement projects that create, expand, or improve environmental educational or interpretive programs, especially those that are available to urban populations.	
	Protect Bay Area working lands and support farmers and ranchers in implementing stewardship of the natural resources on their lands.		14A	Protect working lands, including farmland, rangeland and forests.
			14B	Implement projects that assist farmers and ranchers to steward the natural resources on their lands.

Section	Goal	Obj	Objective Description
Organizational	Provide leadership, partnership, and assistance to organizations engaged in conservation and public access within the Conservancy's jurisdiction.	15A	Articulate and communicate a vision and priorities for conservation and public access along the California coast and ocean, in coastal watersheds, and in the San Francisco Bay Area.
		15B	Participate in or spearhead regional and statewide collaboratives that further Conservancy goals and objectives and support the work of partner organizations.
		15C	Support partner organizations through project facilitation, technical assistance, grant writing, workshops, webinars, and the development and sharing of scientific and management resources.
	Ensure that the work of the Conservancy promotes equity and benefits vulnerable communities in California.	16A	Prioritize projects for funding that are located in disadvantaged communities or directly benefit disadvantaged communities.
		16B	Increase the resilience to climate change impacts of vulnerable communities along the coast of California or in the San Francisco Bay Area that lack capacity due to systemic inequities.
		16C	Increase coastal access for all Californians, by reducing barriers such as transportation and the cost of lodging, by providing information about visitor services, and by supporting organizations that provide coastal experiences to underserved populations.
	Implement a sustainable funding strategy for the Conservancy's projects and programs.	17A	Conduct annual evaluations of the Conservancy's budget against its long-term financial plan.
		17B	Develop and evaluate progress towards achieving annual funding targets, including support funds, funding for programs and projects, and matching funds.
	Organize the Conservancy's structure to align staff resources with the Conservancy's sources of funding.	18A	Develop and continue to adapt the organizational structure to align staff resources with the long-term funding strategy.
		18B	Maintain and consistently upgrade the Conservancy project database and complete required reporting to the Legislature, Resources Agency, and control agencies.
	Ensure full transparency and accountability, including external communications about the Conservancy's purposes, actions, and accomplishments.	19A	Improve and expand our web presence to improve transparency and improve external communications about the Conservancy's work.
		19B	Use our mapping tools and project data for planning, decision making, and reporting.
		19C	Prepare and disseminate compelling regional and topical summary reports of our accomplishments.